

DBV Stage 2 – Tameside MBC



Stage 2 : Tameside MBC

Additional grant criteria

Local Authorities have evidenced that, alongside the service delivery opportunities that the diagnostic has quantified, they have identified significant additional opportunities to achieve a sustainable in-year balanced position as soon as possible and have committed to the development of a robust DSG Management Plan to deliver these by the first quarterly monitoring meeting.

1. Stage 2 opportunity areas

Description of initiative	What it involves	Potential financial impact by 2026-27	Key risks to implementation and potential mitigations.
1. Contributions for Health and Social Care Provision	Individual Funding Panel and Continuing care Panel arrangements and attendance from all partners (including SEND) will be strengthened. This will ensure that all partners contribute appropriately to specialist packages of provision that are commissioned for individual children and for jointly commissioned services. Estimated financial impact based on 8 significantly high cost placements and an average 20% contribution from health and social care.	£153,000 pa and £459,000 over the three years 2024-25 – 2026-27). The 8 high cost placements range from £90,000 to £103,000 pa and therefore the assumption is that these are complex children that are highly likely to have health and social care need. The estimated 20% contribution is based on previous Local Authority experience of multi-agency funding panel arrangements (£ actual cost to health / social care / tripartite and 50 / 50 funding arrangements.	Health and social care system leaders do not engage with changes required to agree appropriate contributions and budget constraints across the system inappropriately impact on decisions. The Council's senior management will mitigate by active involvement in establishing the right processes / approvals and principals.

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<p>2. SEND Commissioning Capacity</p>	<p>The Council will build capacity in the Commissioning Team that will have a dedicated focus on SEND. This will enhance the uplift challenge that already happens and join up with Annual Reviews of pupils in INMSS / AP to undertake Quality Assurance visits to challenge value for money, outcomes and step down in fee levels. The capacity will also allow internal challenge at panel to ensure all alternatives are exhausted before an INMSS is considered.</p> <p>Health have provided £100k to implement a review of complex placements to ensure value for money, identify any step down opportunities and lessons learned re the journey that preceded the placement being made.</p> <p>The additional Commissioning resource will allow the Council to make full use of the North West SEND Flexible Purchasing System for INMSS.</p>	<p>£185,000 pa and £555,000 (cumulative over the three years 2024-25 – 2026-27)</p> <p>Based on experience of Tameside commissioners quality assurance work in other local authorities and the early Tameside work to challenge uplifts, it is assumed that on average fees for 15 pupils with the highest cost placements (ie 15% of INMSS cohort) could reduce by on average £10k pa (current fees range from £35k to £103k pa). It is also estimated that negotiating volume discount / block purchase arrangements with our high volume providers (ie we have 34 placements with one provider at £1.7m pa) could save £35,000 pa.</p>	<p>Council re-structuring / investment doesn't go ahead. Mitigation – a strong invest to save case is already building within Children's Services and DBV has strengthened the case.</p>

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3. Block Transfers	Ongoing annual requests to Schools Forum for approval to block transfer up to 0.5% of DSG to support the High Needs Block. This has been agreed for the last three years and indications are that this commitment will continue.	£1.069m in 24-25 and circa £3.26m over three years 2024-25 to 2026-27. Calculation based on 0.5% of the Schools Block element of the DSG.	Schools Forum do not approve the block transfer. Continuing to effectively report to Schools Forum at regular intervals throughout each financial year, including evidence of other routes to balancing the position has and will help School Forum agree block transfers.
4. Special School – PFI Contract Review	One of our special schools has a PFI style contract. A review of this contract will be undertaken to see if it represents value for money. It is envisaged savings could be found from this contract. This review will be undertaken with the support of the LEP, the outcome of which will be considered by Elected Members at Executive Cabinet.	£279,000 pa and £558,000 over two years 2025-26 to 2026-27). Calculation based on actual value of special school PFI contract.	Difficulties in ceasing existing agreement mitigated by continued communication with school in question and reports brought to Senior Leadership Team.
Total potential financial impact from taking forward initiatives		Potential financial impact 2024 -25 – 2026-27 = £4,832,000	

Stage 2 : [LA NAME HERE]

- The Council is fully committed to developing these initiatives and incorporate them, as appropriate, in a DSG Management Plan to be submitted in December 2023.

2. Actions taken to address any outstanding issues raised in Stage 1 of your grant application

- There is nothing outstanding from Stage 1.