

AGENDA

Meeting: Schools Forum
Place: The Kennet Room - County Hall, Trowbridge BA14 8JN
Date: Thursday 12 January 2017
Time: 11.00 am

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Edmund Blick, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 718059 or email edmund.blick@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225) 713114/713115.

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Membership:

Mr N Baker (Chairman)	Mr J Hawkins
Mr M Watson (Vice Chairman)	Mrs S Jiggins
Mrs A Bates	Mr J Proctor
Ms A Burnside	Mr N Roper
Ms M Chilcott	Ms I Sidmouth
Mrs J Finney	Mr D Whewell
Mrs R Collard	Mr S White
Miss Tracy Cornelius	Mrs C Williamson
Mr J Hamp	

Substitutes:

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AGENDA

PART I

Items to be considered whilst the meeting is open to the public

1 **Apologies and Changes of Membership**

To receive any apologies for absence and note any change of membership.

2 **Minutes of the previous Meeting** (*Pages 7 - 14*)

To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 6th October 2016 (copy attached)

3 **Declaration of Interests**

To receive any declarations of disclosable interests or dispensations granted by the Standards Committee.

4 **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive any announcements from the Chairman.

5 **Children and Young People's Trust Board Update**

To receive a verbal update from the Associate Director of Commission Perform School Effectiveness and Head of Commissioning and Joint Planning.

6 **Budget Monitoring** (*Pages 15 - 18*)

To receive budget monitoring information for the financial year 2016-17.

7 **National Funding Formula for Schools 2018-19: Phase II Consultation and High Needs funding formula consultation** (*Pages 19 - 22*)

To consider a report which sets out the headlines from the proposed National Funding Formula, as issued by the Education Funding Agency on the 12th December 2016.

8 **Reports from Working Groups** (*Pages 23 - 34*)

To receive minutes, reports and/or verbal updates from the following working groups:

- Early Years Reference Group meeting on Friday 18th November 2016.
- School Funding Working Group and Special Educational Needs Working Group meeting on Tuesday 22nd November 2016.
- School Funding Working Group and Special Educational Needs Working Group meeting on Wednesday 4th January 2017 (this report will be submitted late as a supplementary item to enable the minutes to be finalised).

9 **Exceptional Numbers of Statements (EHCP's) Formula** *(Pages 35 - 38)*

To consider a report on the options for supporting exceptional levels of SEN in schools.

10 **School Revenue Funding 2017-18 - Funding Settlement and Budget Setting Process**

This report will be submitted late to take in to account the Schools Revenue Finance Settlement issued on 20th December 2016 and the discussions at the joint meeting of the Schools Funding Working Group and SEN Working Group on 4th January 2017.

11 **Update reports on DSG Funding Block**

To give updates on funding for each of the DSG blocks including changes in funding and decisions to be considered. These reports will be submitted as late supplementary items to include the considerations of the joint meeting of Schools Funding Working Group and SEN Working Group on 4th January 2017.

11a **Schools Block- Central Budgets**

11b **Schools Block- Delegated Budget**

11c **High Needs Block**

11d **Early Years Block**

12 **Budget 2017- 18: Decision Paper**

To be submitted late to take into account the discussions at the joint meeting of the Schools Funding Working Group and the SEN working group on 4th January 2017.

13 **Confirmation of dates for future meetings**

To confirm the dates of future meetings, as follows:

- Thursday 9th March 2017
- Thursday 22nd June 2017
- Thursday 5th October 2017

14 **Urgent Items**

Any other items of business, which the Chairman agrees to consider as a matter of urgency.

PART II

Item(s) during consideration of which it is recommended that the public should be excluded because of the likelihood that exempt information would be disclosed

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SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING HELD ON 6 OCTOBER 2016 AT THE KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Mr N Baker (Chairman), Mr M Watson (Vice Chairman), Mrs A Bates, Mrs R Collard, Miss Tracy Cornelius, Mr J Hawkins, Mrs S Jiggins, Mr J Proctor, Mr N Roper, Mr S White, Mrs C Williamson and Miss Cathy Shahrokni

Also Present:

37 Apologies and Changes of Membership

Apologies were received from Mrs Chilcott – South Wilts Grammar; and David Whewell – Wiltshire Governors Association, and Amanda Burnside who was substituted by Cathy Sharokni.

38 Minutes of the previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2016 were considered.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 15 June be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

39 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest made.

40 Chairman's Announcements

There were no announcements from the Chair.

41 Children and Young People's Trust Board Update

The Service Director for Commissioning and Performance, Department for Children and Education provided a verbal update regarding the Children and Young People's Trust Board.

The meeting noted the update.

42 **Budget Monitoring**

The meeting received a report, circulated as a supplement, which provided budget monitoring information against the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for the financial year 2016/17.

Issues highlighted in the course of the presentation and discussion included: that was a projected £420k underspend against the budget; that the underspend had mainly been in the Early Years budget; and that top up budgets were, broadly, breaking even, but that there was a separate paper on that matter.

Resolved

To note the budget monitoring position at the end of August 2016.

43 **Reports from Working Groups**

Minutes and updates on working groups of the Forum were provided and considered as follows:

43a Report of Meetings of Early Years Reference Group - 16 September 2016

Resolved

To note the minutes of the Early Years Reference Group meeting.

43b Report of School Funding Working Group meetings 5 July and 20 September 2016

The Forum considered the notes and any matters arising.

Resolved

- 1. That Schools Forum notes the minutes of the School Funding Working Group meeting.**
- 2. To agree not to amend the current formula for split site allowances for mainstream schools (paragraph 3)**
- 3. To agree to not allocate a split site allowance from the High Needs Block for Exeter House (paragraph 3)**

4. That in considering proposals for the delegation and de-delegation of budgets to maintained schools, Schools Forum note the recommendations of the School Funding Working Group (paragraph 5)
5. That Wiltshire Council incorporate the School Financial Management Statement in the Wiltshire Scheme for Financing Schools, including it as part of the compliance process (paragraph 6). – agreed as part of discussion in item 11.
6. That in considering the proposal to review ELP guidance, Schools Forum note that the Schools Funding Working Group is in support of the proposal (paragraph 7)

44 **Early years Block 2017-18**

The meeting considered the report that provided an update regarding the DfE proposals for changes to the funding for the free entitlement to childcare for 3 & 4 year olds and the extension to 30 hours of free childcare for children of eligible working parents; and asked the Schools Forum to consider the implications of the proposed changes for the Wiltshire Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF).

Issues highlighted in the course of the presentation and discussion included: that the consultation was out on the 11th August and was required to be submitted by the end of September, so consultation was undertaken with the Early Years Reference Group not the whole Schools Forum; that the overall view was broadly sympathetic in respect of the proposal for a national funding formula but with some specific concerns, highlighted in the report; the main implications for the single forum; that Wiltshire was ahead with regard to some aspects but other actions will need to be taken; the new supplements that can be included in the Formula; the optional supplements that could be offered and the impact on the baseline budget allocation; that the Officers would review the formula taking into account the changes and bring proposals to the EY reference group in November and then bring proposals to Schools Forum in December; and the concerns, expressed by some, that the change in formula could affect the quality of provision.

Resolved

1. To note the report and the response to the DfE consultation.
2. To agree that the Wiltshire EYSFF should be reviewed in the context of the DfE consultation and that proposals will be brought to the December meeting. The outcome of the review will include options for changes to the EYSFF and in relation to the % pass-through of funding.

45 **High Needs Block**

The meeting considered the following items:

45a High Needs Block Update Report

The meeting considered a report, circulated as a supplement, on savings implemented within the 2016-17 high needs budget; and provided an update on placements in Independent Special Schools as requested at the previous meeting.

Issues highlighted in the course of the presentation and discussion included: The comparison of changes in volume and changes in unit cost; the changes in the projected spend, and that the increase is mostly due to volume but also, in part, due to increase in unit cost; the issue of upskilling and providing facilities within mainstream schools; where the more complex needs are more appropriately addressed; and that the Wiltshire college work had been recognised to meet local need.

Resolved

To note the report.

45b High Needs Post 16 Data Analysis and Funding Report

The meeting considered a report on the analysis of activity and spend on the Post- 16 high needs element of the High Needs Block.

Issues highlighted in the course of the presentation and discussion included: that Wiltshire was a high recipient of young people placed from out of the area; that there had been a significant increase in number of post16 high needs learners, but that the total amount of spend has decreased; it was projected that this amount should decrease; the significant improvement in quality all local post 16 provision; that officers had successfully reduced amount of bureaucracy; that a better choice within the County could be offered to Wiltshire families; and the individual decision that had been made, sometimes based on locality choices.

The Chairman thanked the officers for their thorough report.

Resolved

To note this report.

45c High Needs - Exceptional Numbers of Statements Formula

The meeting considered a report which outlined the current formula for funding schools where there is an exceptional number of statements/EHCP's in a school and the associated implications for the High Needs budget, costs, along with proposals for the future funding of this factor. It was noted that the paper had been published as result of the Schools Funding Working Group.

Chair proposed to defer consideration of this report and refer it back to the Working Group to ask them to consider how the report can best reflect the scope of the issue.

Resolved

To defer consideration of the report to December.

45d Proposal to Review Enhanced Learning Provision Guidance

The meeting considered a report that highlighted the on-going pressure on the High Needs Block (HNB) of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). A number of actions have been taken to address this pressure, all have focused on achieving savings and efficiency whilst at the same time achieving parity and fairness in the system and the best possible outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and/ or disability (SEND).

This paper asked the Schools Forum to support a proposal to review the Enhanced:

- Learning Provision (ELP) Guidance to ensure that it;
- Contributes to the need for financial efficiency
- Is aligned with the reforms set out in the Children and families Act 2014
- Is in accord with the new Wiltshire SEN Banding arrangements

Issues highlighted in the course of the presentation and discussion included: the ongoing pressure, with actions being taken, and how it was hoped to ensure parity and fairness across the system; and how the guidance had changed.

Resolved

To support the proposal that, in order to support the management of the high-needs budget and review some of the discrepancies between secondary and primary funding, the Head of Commissioning and Joint Planning reviews and updates the guidance for ELP to bring it into line with the 2014 Children and Families Act and Wiltshire's new SEND Banding system (the current ELP guidance was last reviewed in 2011).

46 **Schools Block 2017-18**

The meeting considered the report which outlined the key details of the DSG Baseline Funding and the Operational Guidance for Schools Revenue Funding for 2017-18.

Issues highlighted in the course of the presentation and discussion included: budgets for all schools will be submitted in January; that the changes in the baseline funding which would be neutral; that the operational guidance issues this year referred to there being no additional funding; and whether there would be an increase in future funding.

Budget/Service	Proposed Year to Delegate		
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Maternity costs - postponed until Dec 16 Mtg	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Free School Meal Eligibility Service		✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
Licences - SIMS	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Licences - HCSS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓
Subscriptions	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trade Unions facilities costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓
School contingency budget	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Behaviour Support Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travellers Education Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ethnic Minority Achievement Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>

Resolved

- a) **To approve the criteria for allocating pupil Growth Fund in 2017-18, as per the 2016-17 criteria – agreed**
- b) **To agree that the budget for the Growth Fund is retained at a maximum of £1.00m for 2017-18, as per the 2016-17 baseline figure, confirmed by the EFA – agreed**
- c) **To agree to continue funding schools where there are exceptional premises factors, as in 2016-17 – agreed**
- d) **To consider the proposed services to have the funding delegated or de-delegated and agree the delegation for 2017-18.**
 - i.) **To leave Free Schools Services as de-delegated.**
 - ii.) **Defer Maternity Schools decision for December Forum if figures is there.**
 - iii.) **SIMs delegate,**

47 **Schools Revenue Balances 2015-16**

The meeting considered the report which presented: the position of revenue balances of Wiltshire maintained schools as at 31st March 2016 and identifies those that are in deficit; the analysis of net revenue balances excludes those schools that converted to academy status during the financial year but includes those that converted post 31st March 2016. It was noted that Members had last considered a report on schools' balances and deficits in November 2015, and that in that report the value of surpluses was £10.753 million and 18 schools were in deficit with a total value of £2.27 million.

Issues highlighted in the course of the presentation and discussion included: that historically Wiltshire Council had operated a clawback facility until 13/14; how the DfE had started to challenge schools where they had relatively high surpluses; that a School Finance Statement was made available for all schools to improve their headline budget, making it clear whether they had breached the threshold guidelines for surpluses.

Resolved

That Wiltshire Council incorporate the School Financial Management Statement in the Wiltshire Scheme for Financing Schools, including it as part of the compliance process (*paragraph 6*).

48 **Confirmation of dates for future meetings**

The meeting confirmed the dates of meetings for the remainder of 2016/17, as follows:

- 8 December 2016
- 12 January 2017
- 9 March 2017

49 **Urgent Items**

(Duration of meeting: 1.30 - 3.47 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Yamina Rhouati of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718059, e-mail edmund.blick@wiltshire.gov.uk

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DEDICATED SCHOOLS BUDGET – BUDGET MONITORING 2016-17

Purpose of the Report

1. To present budget monitoring information against the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for the financial year 2016-17 as at 30th November 2016.

Main Considerations

2. Appendix 1 to this report outlines the budget monitoring summary as at 30th November 2016.
3. An overspend of £0.585 million is currently projected against the overall schools budget. This is an adverse movement of £0.981m since the position reported to the October meeting.
4. The biggest movement in spend is within high needs budgets and the projected overspend on top up payments (including Independent Special Schools) has increased by £1.2m since the previous report which was based on the position at the end of August. The position at the end of November should reflect the full impact of all transitions to special school, ELP and post-16 at September 2016, although there would still be some movement expected between now and the end of the financial year to reflect assessments of pupils who may have changed or started school in September.
5. Budgets for the free entitlement for 15 hours childcare for 3 & 4 year olds and for vulnerable 2 year olds are projected to underspend by £0.353m. A projected overspend against the budget for 2 year olds is offset by a projected underspend against the budget for the free entitlement for 3 & 4 year olds.
6. The current projected overspend is just within the level of DSG reserve rolled forward in to 2016-17. The reserve currently stands at £0.591m. Any increase in the overspend between now and the end of the year would result in an overspend being carried forward in to 2017-18.

Proposals

7. Schools Forum is asked to note the budget monitoring position at the end of November 2016.

Report Author: Liz Williams, Head of Finance

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Financial Monitoring

Service Areas	Current Budget 2016-17 £m	Projected Outturn for Year £m	Variation for Year £m	% Variance	Movement from Period 5
1 Funding Schools					
DSG Funded Expenditure - Delegated to Schools	122.823	122.823	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Contingency & Growth Fund	1.058	0.858	-0.200	-18.9%	-0.200
Total	123.881	123.681	- 0.200	-0.2%	- 0.200
2 0-25 SEND Service					
Pre-16					
Independent Special Schools	3.356	4.403	1.047	31.2%	0.473
Named Pupil Allowances	1.971	2.454	0.483	24.5%	0.257
Top Up Budgets - Wiltshire Maintained Schools & Academies	9.984	9.454	-0.530	-5.3%	0.267
Top Up Budgets - Non-Wiltshire Maintained Schools & Academies	0.966	1.275	0.309	31.9%	0.013
Post-16					0.000
Top Up Budgets - Post- 16 Placements	5.362	5.077	-0.285	-5.3%	0.180
Support Services					
Specialist Provision and EY Inclusion	0.575	0.680	0.105	18.3%	-0.107
SEND Service	2.017	2.076	0.059	2.9%	0.120
Total 0-25 SEND Service	24.232	25.419	1.187	4.9%	1.203
3 Commissioning & Performance and School Effectiveness					
Schools Maternity Costs	0.576	0.458	-0.118	-20.6%	-0.118
Trades Union Facilities Costs	0.035	0.068	0.034	97.7%	0.016
SIMS & HCSS Licences	0.173	0.179	0.006	3.6%	0.000
Other Costs incl. Copyright Licences	0.402	0.365	-0.037	-9.2%	0.000
Strategic Planning	0.052	0.052	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Admissions Service	0.245	0.223	-0.021	-8.8%	-0.011
Total Commissioning, Performance & School Effectiveness	1.481	1.344	-0.137	-9.2%	-0.113
4 Early Years Services					
Early Years Single Funding Formula - 3 & 4 yo	16.115	15.367	-0.748	-4.6%	-0.335
Early Years Single Funding Formula - 2 yo	2.564	2.959	0.395	15.4%	0.570
Other Early Years Support	0.462	0.400	-0.062	-13.4%	-0.062
Early Years Pupil Premium Grant	0.235	0.235	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Total Early Years	19.376	18.961	-0.415	-2.1%	0.173
5 Safeguarding					
Child Protection in Schools	0.028	0.028	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Total	0.028	0.028	-	0.0%	-
6 Early Help Services					
Assisted Places Scheme (ceased July 2016)	-	0.024	0.024		0.047
Ethnic Minority Achievement Service & Traveller's Education	0.474	0.443	-0.031	-6.5%	-0.022
Alternative Provision/EOTAS	3.233	3.391	0.157	4.9%	-0.059
Behaviour Support	0.774	0.723	-0.052	-6.7%	-0.001
	4.481	4.556	0.075	1.7%	-0.082
7 Children's Social Care					
Looked After Children Education Service	0.203	0.278	0.075	37.0%	0.000
Total	0.203	0.278	0.075	37.0%	0.000
8 DSG Within Corporate Services					
Gross Expenditure	3.594	3.594	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Total	3.594	3.594	-	0.0%	-
	177.276	177.860	0.585	0.3%	0.981

Note POSITIVE variances = OVERSPEND

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Schools Forum

Agenda Item:

12th January 2017

National Funding Formula for Schools – Phase II Consultation and High Needs funding formula consultation

Purpose of Report

1. To set out at a high level the headlines from the proposed National Funding Formula, as issued by the Education Funding Agency on the 12th December 2016. The consultation period is open for 14 weeks and is due to close on the 22nd March 2017. At the same time the EFA also issued proposals for a high needs national funding formula
2. Further details will be brought to the next School Funding Working Group meeting, after the budget setting has been completed for 2017-18, which must be given immediate priority. Schools Forum will consider a detailed response at the March 2017 meeting.
3. The results from the consultation are due to be published in July 2017.

Background

4. Between the 7th March and 17th April 2016, the Department for Education (DfE) consulted on the implementation of a Schools National Funding Formula. This consultation sought views on proposals to introduce a national funding formula for schools.
5. The consultation set out how the DfE planned to deliver “A fair, transparent funding system where the amount of funding children attract for their schools is based on need and is consistent across the country”.
6. The consultation process had been broken into two stages. The first consultation looked at the principles which should underpin a fair funding formula as well as seeking views on the overall funding system.
7. The second stage was due to be released later in 2016, however following the Brexit decision and the cabinet reshuffle, which took place due to the appointment of Theresa May as Prime Minister, the new Education Secretary Justine Greening announced that the timetable would be delayed by a year. She stated "We must get our approach right, we will run a full consultation, and make final decisions early in the ‘new year’". The implementation of the new National Funding Formula has therefore been delayed and will apply from 2018-19.

Phase I Consultation

8. Schools Forum responded to the Phase I consultation document which contained the seven principles which the DfE said would underpin their proposals:
- A funding system that supports opportunity
 - A funding system that is fair
 - A funding system that is efficient
 - A funding system that gets funding straight to schools
 - A funding system that is transparent
 - A funding system that is simple
 - A funding system that is predictable

Creation of a Fourth DSG Block

9. The current Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) comprises three blocks, Schools Block, High Needs Block and the Early Years Block. Following the planned removal of the Education Services Grant (ESG), a new fourth Block, the Central Services Block has been created from 2017-18 which will comprise funding for;
- Central school services
 - Historic LA spending commitments
 - Retained duties previously funded through the ESG

Reforming the Schools Block

10. As part of the Phase 1 consultation, it was proposed that a 'soft' formula be introduced for 2017-18 and 2018-19, with a move across to the 'hard' National Funding Formula (NFF) from 2019-20.
11. The result would be that the vast majority of funding each pupil attracts to their school would be determined nationally, not locally. This move to hard funding (and the corresponding removal of the requirement for local authorities to set local formula) would require a change to the School Standards and Framework Act (1998).
12. Despite the announcement of a one year delay, the full implementation of the formula is still expected in 2019-20 with a transitional soft introduction in 2018-19.

Impact of the Proposed National Funding Formula

13. The EFA have issued their proposals for a NFF and its proposed impact upon every school in England, **for indicative purposes only**. The documents can be accessed at the following address, although the full details behind the formula have not been made widely available.
- <https://consult.education.gov.uk/funding-policy-unit/schools-national-funding-formula2/>

14. An initial analysis of the data does show a favourable position generally for Wiltshire schools, although movement to the full NFF would require transition to protect schools from massive swings in funding. The key underlying assumptions based around the proposed NFF are;

- Capping any gains at 3%
- Protecting any losses individual school losses at -1.5%
- Introduction of the sparsity factor, favouring small rural schools
- Increased funding for Deprivation and Prior Attainment factors

15. The EFA's analysis has been prepared using the 2016-17 pupil data and whilst it is indicative, does not provide any guarantee over future years funding. The analysis below provides an initial snapshot of the overall Wiltshire position and further details will be presented at the next SFWG meeting.

	Current Funding	Full NFF Funding	% Change	Transitional Yr1 Funding	% Change
Primary	£140,829,000	£144,666,000	2.72%	£142,794,000	1.40%
Secondary	£113,324,000	£115,582,000	1.99%	£115,069,000	1.54%
TOTAL	£254,153,000	£260,248,000	2.40%	£257,863,000	1.46%

Table 1: Indicative Funding for Wiltshire under a NFF

	No. of Schools	Gainers	Losers	No Change
Primary	201	176	23	2
Secondary	30	23	6	1
TOTAL	231	199	29	3

Table 2: Numbers of Wiltshire Schools Gaining and Losing under the NFF

	Overall	Gainers	Losers	Average Gain
Primary	1,965,000	2,176,000	-211,000	£9,776
Secondary	1,745,000	1,939,000	-194,000	£58,167
TOTAL	3,710,000	4,115,000	-405,000	

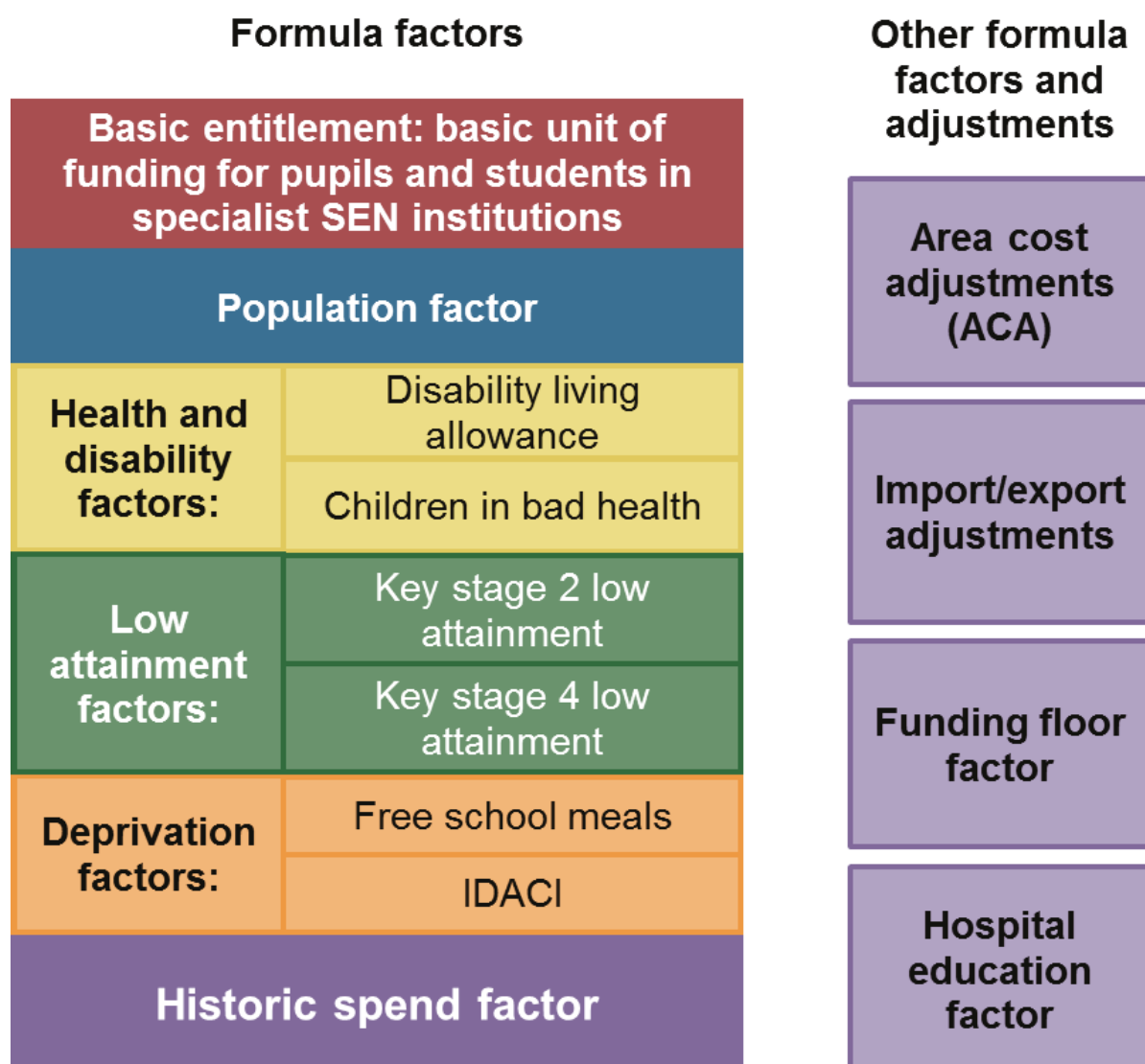
Table 3: Amounts Gained and Lost under the NFF

16. Based upon the above analysis, the average gain for a Primary is £9,776 and for a Secondary is £58,167, however not all Wiltshire schools would gain under the NFF.

National Funding Formula for High Needs

17. The EFA has also issued proposals for a national funding formula for high needs. The response date for this consultation is also 22nd March 2017. In order to maintain some stability in funding levels, it is proposed that 50% of funding for high needs will be based on current spending patterns and 50% according to a formula.

The relative weightings of the proposed formula factors are still to be agreed. The proposed formula factors are as follows:



18. Initial indications are that Wiltshire will not gain funding from the proposed new formula and will in fact be on the funding floor in the first year of implementation. Whilst this means that Wiltshire will not lose funding it also means that funding for high needs will be frozen under the proposed new model.

Proposal

19. School Funding and SEN Working Group note the contents of the paper and agrees that further analysis and detail will be presented at the March meeting so that the consultation response can be agreed

Report Author: Grant Davis, Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager
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Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum
12th January 2017

Report from the Early Years Reference Group

Purpose of report

1. To report on the meetings of the Early Years Reference Group held on 18th November 2016.

Main considerations for School Forum

2. The minutes of the meeting are attached at Appendix 1.
3. The Working Group considered proposals in relation to the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) for Wiltshire. The proposals were based on the DfE consultation on a national funding formula for early years however the proposals agreed at the November meeting are now superseded by the government's response to the consultation issued in December 2016. The revised government proposals are covered in the early years update report elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting.

Proposals

4. That Schools Forum notes the minutes of the Early Years Reference Group meeting.

Report author: Liz Williams, Head of Finance

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Wiltshire Council

Early Years Reference Group

Minutes of a meeting held on Friday 18 November 2016 at County Hall, Trowbridge

1.0 Welcome and Introductions

Angela Brennan, Dawn Bryant, Mark Cawley, Lisa Flenley (Snapdragons representative for Rosemary Collard), Jenny Harvey (minutes), Juliette Heal, Russell Martin, Clare Palmer, John Proctor (chair), Fiona Webb, Liz Williams

2.0 Apologies

Jane Boulton, Rosemary Collard, Ashley Harris, Nicki Henderson, Barbara Sealey

3.0 Minutes of last meeting held on 16 September 2016

The minutes of the meeting were agreed as an accurate record of discussion.

4.0 Matters arising

Item 5 – AB confirmed Angela Everett is on leave this week so this point will be carried forward to next meeting. LW confirmed that AE does need to be involved in the next meeting as it will be used for budget setting.

Item 6 (from matters arising) – Shelley Hibbard attendance - This point will be carried forward to the next meeting.

Item 6 (from matters arising) – Capital bids - AB confirmed the DfE will be informing local authorities of their decisions next month.

Item 8 – National Workforce Development strategy - AB confirmed that the DfE will be releasing details of the strategy in late Autumn 2016. Work has been carried out in relation to recruitment people into childcare through range of methods, attendance at recruitment fayres, promotion in libraries and other council buildings etc. We will continue with recruitment advertising for the sector. There will be increased recruitment advertising for the sector, and AB is looking at developing briefing sessions for those interested in working in the childcare sector. She is also liaising with Natalia Reyner who has links with the University of Bristol.

Item 12 (from matters arising) - EY tracker language – JP is still receiving comments that the category judgement language used in the tracker feels negative in connotation i.e. below and well below. It was suggested that maybe this could be looked at and changed to something more encouraging, especially as providers are sometimes sharing this data with parents.

5.0 EY Funding review

LW circulated a paper to the group detailing the initial outcomes of the modelling work that has been carried out including the possible options to be considered for Schools Forum recommendation.

LW said it was worth noting that whilst Wiltshire funding is expected to increase, our relative position will decrease significantly. From April 2017, we will be the 8th lowest funded local authority. DB stated that due to the higher hourly rate figures mentioned by central government, it's perceived in the sector that hourly rates will be increasing significantly.

Following the last meeting, it has been assumed that the only supplements that will be included in Wiltshire's formula will be deprivation and rurality in order to ensure the basic hourly rate is as high as possible.

LW confirmed that Wiltshire currently doesn't top slice the Early Years Single Funding Formula budget to cover administration costs. However options for 2017-18 include a percentage being removed to cover additional staffing and improving IT systems required to implement the additional 15 hours.

The group discussed a number of variations on the possible options and hourly rates, with some calculating to be unaffordable such as increasing the base rate of £3.81 by 3.39% to £3.93. LW warned that a recommendation for the highest hourly rate possible would mean that Wiltshire Council will be seen as not incentivising early years providers to deliver the 30 hours.

There was group discussion about encouraging providers to offer the additional 15 hours, and offering a financial incentive to do so. Wiltshire Council need to encourage providers to deliver the additional hours to reflect the new central government policy but to do so offering a financial incentive would mean a reduction in the basic hourly rate. The financial viability of delivering the 30 hours was also discussed including what the group's Schools Forum representative – John Proctor could take to the next meeting to highlight the non-viability of the additional hours such as requesting that funding isn't deducted for ISF or topsliced for administration costs.

LW said that we could try and predict where the additional hours places could be and fund them, but this would be problematic if these places don't materialise and the council is therefore funding empty places. If Wiltshire Council delivers fewer hours then less funding will be received.

Action: To recommend to Schools Forum to adopt Option 2 in which the basic rate and the existing supplements are increased to reflect the increase in funding, with no differentiation for the additional 15 hours. Option 2 includes the assumption that £150,000 will be top sliced for administration and £110,000 for the required increase to the inclusion support fund.

Action: JH to confirm with JP if early years provider contact information can be used for campaigning

6.0 Impact of business rate increases

This topic was included within the overall discussion of the EY funding review and implementation of the 30 hours. The increase in business rates along with the funding rates and the introduction of the 30 hours are currently having and will have a further detrimental effect on the sustainability of many providers within the childcare sector

JP felt that a major campaign was now needed from the sector to highlight the issues being faced and to get business rates either reduced or completely removed in order to support the sustainability of the sector. He felt providers had received no support from either the town councils or Wiltshire Council. MC confirmed that it was the town council rather than Wiltshire Council who made the final decision on the refusal to reduce his business rates.

Communication with the whole sector is needed to encourage lobbying of Wiltshire Council and town councils as well as writing to and getting local MP's involved. Wiltshire Council cannot be seen as not being behind central government policy as it is their statutory duty to deliver the policies. All agreed that group representatives would liaise with settings in their area about the issue and get them to start lobbying for zero business rates.

Action: JP /MC to prepare a letter template for group representatives to use for sector communication.

7.0 Qualified staff shortage

JP reported settings are experiencing a shortage of appropriately qualified managers and lower qualified staff. JP asked AB if council representatives are in contact with schools and returnees to work to encourage them to look at careers within the childcare sector. AB confirmed the team are looking at bringing something together for people interested in working in the sector.

FW mentioned that there is currently a DfE consultation on proposals to amend the literacy and numeracy qualification requirements for level 3 early years educator staff. AB confirmed the consultation closes at 5pm on 28 November 2016, and that Wiltshire Council will promote the date again to providers via the Newsletter.

Action: JH/AB to liaise with Emily Wood for an article on the DfE qualification requirements consultation

8.0 Tax Free childcare

This is a national scheme that is being implemented from April 2017, where both parents and providers need to register. Where some providers own a number of nurseries, each individual nursery will need to register to take part in the scheme. JP asked if every nursery would be aware of this and asked if this could be included in the next newsletter.

Action: JH to organise for Tax Free Childcare item to be included in the next Newsletter

9.0 Sufficiency moving forward

This topic was included within the overall discussion of the EY funding review and implementation of the 30 hours. A number of people reported they had noticed an increased number of childcare businesses going up for sale within the county. Owners are wanting to move out of the sector due to it being unsustainable.

There was discussion about whether providers would have to offer 30 hours to all children, or whether a provider could restrict the number of 30 hour places available to parents. JP stated that such a restriction would have an impact on the local contractual agreement in place between Wiltshire Council and early years providers signed up to deliver the Free Entitlement funding. JP asked JH if providers would be able to do this. Under the current agreement this wouldn't be possible, however a new model agreement is being developed by the DfE. JH confirmed that AB and herself will be attending a Progress Sharing meeting on the 29th November 2016 in Ilminster. DfE representatives plus an Early Implementer local authority will be presenting, so JH will pose the question to them and feedback to the group.

Action: JH to liaise with the DfE regarding restricting the number of 30 hours places and feed back to the group

10.0 Children's Centres update

RM reported that the 22 new providers are still in the settling in phase, and there are currently a number of role vacancies across the county.

The main focus for Children's Centres over the next 6 months will be working with the disadvantaged learner group with Natalia Reyner looking at how they work with childcare providers in their area in order to narrow the gaps. Children's centre staff will be having conversations around what changes could be made and what could be done to improve things for providers. CP said they are working really well with their local children's centre with both offering support and signposting to other services when they can't help. JP also confirmed that Corsham Children's Centre is building relationships with the South Hills Corsham nursery.

RM said there shouldn't be any changes in current funding for the remainder of this financial year.

It was also confirmed that Judith Gingell no longer works for Spurgeons, and therefore Children's Centres no longer has a representative on this group. JP asked RM to liaise with the Children's Centre leads to seek a new representative.

Action: RM to liaise with Children Centre leads to ask for a new Children's Centre representative for the Early Years Reference Group

11.0 Childcare team update

The childcare team have been busy promoting employment in the Early Years sector at a number of exhibitions across the county as well as distributing promotional material in libraries, job centres, doctors surgeries etc

A number of people said that we should be approaching school leavers and using their media channels which would be Facebook and Twitter. AB confirmed that both are currently used by the team.

The childcare team are supporting settings around safeguarding and welfare requirements. 2 joint meetings with PsLA were recently held and were both well attended. The next round of meetings will be open to all PsLA members.

Data for the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment report is in the process of being collated, and the finalised report is scheduled to be published in April 2017.

The team's main focus is those providers with a 'requires improvement' Ofsted judgement, and those accessing the new Quality Improvement scheme. In addition, the team will also be concentrating on offering line management training for committee members.

New provision set up enquiries have been received in areas across the county where housing is being increased.

JP thanked AB and the Childcare team for all their support in times of a reduced team.

11.0 Confirmed dates for future meetings

Date	Day	Time	Venue
3 February 2017	Friday	10.00 – 12.00	Lacock Room, County Hall, Trowbridge
12 May 2017	Friday	10.00 – 12.00	Lacock Room, County Hall, Trowbridge

12.0 Any other business

Sector campaign for zero business rates

MC just wanted to confirm who to contact when lobbying about zero business rates. MC's contact to date has been within the Rating department at a town council. JP advised that providers need to contact their local councillors, local MP's, town councils and Wiltshire Council.

JP reminded the group that when they were trying to organise campaign meetings in their area that they need to ensure that they are well managed and constructive, and with the invitation extended to local MP's.

School Places notification days

AB confirmed that the notification of school places days given out by the School Admissions team are set nationally and cannot be changed.

Report from the SEN Working Group and School Funding Working Group

Purpose of report

1. To report on the joint meeting of the SEN Working Group and the School Funding Working Group held on 22nd November 2016.

Main considerations for School Forum

2. The minutes of the meetings are attached at Appendix 1.
3. The working group agreed the changes in high needs places to be included in the submission to the Education Funding Agency on 25th November.
4. Proposals in relation to the funding formula for targeted funding over and above notional SEN were discussed, including examples from other local authorities. It was agreed that the recommendation to Schools Forum should be that the formula should remain unchanged for 2016-17 with funding capped at £100,000, but that for 2017-18 Schools Forum should consider options to utilise the funding in a more proactive way to support pupils at key transition points

Proposals

5. That Schools Forum notes the minutes of the School Funding Working Group meeting.
6. That Schools Forum notes the recommendation of the School Funding Working Group in relation to the formula factor on targeted SEN funding.

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Joint Meeting of School Funding Working Group and SEN Working Group

22nd November 2016, 8:30am

Bradford on Avon Fire Station

MINUTES

Present: Liz Williams, Grant Davis, Susan Tanner, Martin Watson, Catriona Williamson, Neil Baker, John Hawkins, Phil Cook

Apologies: Tracey Cornelius, Simon White, Carol Grant, Debbie Bennett

1	<i>Minutes from Previous Meeting</i> The minutes of the meeting of 20 th September 2016 were reviewed, there were no outstanding actions not covered on the agenda	
2	<i>High Needs Places Review 2017-18</i> GD outlined the process for reviewing and submitting requests for changes to high needs places for 2017-18. GD had carried out a review with Judith Westcott of high needs places in schools. Pre-16 – some reductions in place numbers for Enhanced Learning Provision (ELP) in secondary schools. These have been discussed and agreed with each school. There are some increases to be requested in primary schools to reflect growth in resource base places for Greentrees and Castlemead Primary Schools. Overall pre-16 place numbers to remain broadly the same as 2016-17 Post-16 – it was agreed that post-16 places should be removed from schools as they do not reflect where pupils are actually in attendance. The places should be added to the numbers for Wiltshire College. It was confirmed that if a school did have a high needs student in post-16 provision they would be funded appropriately. It was also proposed to apply for the number of places at Wiltshire College to be increased to 304 to reflect demand from Wiltshire and neighbouring authorities. The submission was to be made by 25 th November 2016.	GD
3	<i>Formula for Exceptional Numbers of Statements</i> This issue had been referred back to this meeting following discussion at the October meeting of Schools Forum. GD presented a paper outlining the EFA guidance for targeting funding to schools with exceptional numbers of high needs pupils, including the criteria that should be met through any agreed formula. The paper also included examples of formulae from other local authorities, these were taken from the EFA guidance document and therefore were known to be compliant with the funding rules.	

	<p>The exemplifications were discussed with particular attention on the Cheshire West & Chester formula which was based on the difference between the notional SEN funding and the numbers of pupils with EHCPs/Statements x £6,000.</p> <p>After considerable discussion it was agreed that the limited amount of funding allocated for this purpose could be more effectively invested in “up front” funding, such as funding to support pupils at key transitional points, rather than retrospectively via a formula. It was therefore agreed that the current mechanism should remain unchanged for the financial year 2016-17 but that Schools Forum should consider options for transitional funding for high needs pupils for 2017-18. Proposals are to be brought to the January 2017 meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that the Group did discuss the option of adding the budget of £100,000 to the Named Pupil Allowance budget but considered it would not make sufficient difference to the value of the top-up.</p>	EW/GD
4	<p>Early Years Single Funding Formula</p> <p>EW presented a paper that had been considered by the Early Years Reference Group on 18th November. The paper summarised the outcome of the review of the Wiltshire Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) and presented options for the hourly rates from April 2017. EW noted that the EYRG had recommended a single flat rate with no enhancement for the additional 15 hours for children of working parents. The proposed option would give a basic hourly rate of £3.85 per hour for each type of setting.</p>	
5	<p>Schools Block 2017-18</p> <p>EW gave a verbal update on the following issues:</p> <p>Changes to Education Services Grant (ESG) – it was expected that the £600m (national total) savings from ESG would still be implemented from September 2017. Detailed options to be brought to Schools Forum in January.</p> <p>Central DSG Historic Commitments – the DfE has published supplementary guidance relating to items of expenditure identified as historic commitments within Central DSG, including definitions of eligible expenditure and the evidence that Schools Forum would require in order that items could be approved in 2017-18. EW noted that there were a number of areas of spend that may not be eligible going forward and that further work was required to identify the evidence required and confirm eligibility of spend. It was agreed that further detail would be brought to the January meeting, including identification of the consequences for schools of any item that was no longer considered to be eligible spend.</p> <p>National Funding Formula – no update on this had yet been received but there was an indication from the DfE that further detail on the second consultation would be published in December 2016.</p>	EW EW
	Date of Next Meeting	

	Joint Meeting of the SEN Working Group and School Funding Working Group to be held on 4th January 2017, 8:00am, County Hall, (North Wilts room booked from 08:00 – 13:30)	
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Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum
8th December 2016

Exceptional Numbers of Statements (EHCP's) Formula

Purpose of report

1. To outline the current formula for funding schools where there are an exceptional number of statements / Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP's) in a school and to outline proposals for the future funding of this factor.

Background

2. The EFA encourage LA's to provide '**Targeted support above the notional SEN budget**', specifically to support schools where the number of High Needs pupils cannot be fairly reflected in their formula funding. This applies where it would be unreasonable to expect schools to pay for the costs of £6,000 of additional support for all high needs pupils.
3. Targeted support can also be provided where there are a disproportionate number of pupils with a type of SEN. For example, a primary school may have developed a reputation for meeting the needs of high achieving pupils with autistic spectrum disorder, or pupils with physical disabilities. Through the funding formula it is not possible to target additional funding to the school through the prior attainment or other factors, even if the needs are below the £6,000 threshold.
4. Wiltshire has for a number of years recognised that some schools attract a higher proportion of pupils with statements / EHCP's than others. The formula provides additional funding to schools where the number of pupils with a statement is equivalent to 3.5% or above, of the school population (based on the October census). As per the example below;

Number of Pupils	91
Number of Statements	4
% of Pupils Statemented	4.40%
3.5% of pupils on roll	3.18
Number of Statements	4.00
Number exceeding 3.5%	0.82
Funding per Pupil	£6,602
Amount Payable	£5,381

5. The funding for this factor has grown over the last four financial years and the table below sets out the numbers of schools entitled to the funding and the amounts awarded annually.

Year	Schools Entitled	Total Awarded
2012/13	2	£20,309
2013/14	8	£34,914
2014/15	8	£45,817
2015/16	14	£151,812

6. The exceptional statements funding is paid from the High Needs Block and does not form part of the Wiltshire funding formula. (The current formula for allocating funding is checked each year to ensure that it is fully compliant with the EFA's guidance.) The cost pressures in the High Needs Block do not allow for the expenditure to increase indefinitely.
7. The Schools Funding and SEN Working Groups were tasked to give consideration to the funding of exceptional numbers of statements / EHCP's. In addition, the groups discussed the current formula to consider whether it is the most appropriate vehicle for delivering and targeting funding.

Options Considered

8. The EFA's Operational Guidance for 2017-18 provides that the criteria for awarding funding should be
- Clear and as simple as possible
 - Apply targeted funding to the minority of schools
 - Avoid creating perverse incentives
 - Agreed with schools (schools forum)

9. The Working Groups considered six main Options as detailed below;

Option 1	Continue with the current formula and threshold of 3.5%
Option 2	Continue with the current formula and uplift the threshold
Option 3	Apply a flat rate for every pupil with a statement
Option 4	Award funding based upon exceptional numbers in a Year Group
Option 5	Panel Decision
Option 6	Consider the approach of other authorities

10. The group considered approaches from a number of other local authorities, particularly those that were featured in the EFA Guidance as examples of good practice.
11. After giving due consideration to all of the options, the group agreed that the limited amount of funding allocated for this purpose could be more effectively invested in "up front" funding, such as funding to support pupils at key transitional points, rather than retrospectively via a formula. It was felt that this could have more impact, and potentially prevent some statutory plans through enabling earlier, more targeted support.

12. It was therefore agreed that the current mechanism should remain unchanged for the financial year 2016-17, to be capped with a budget of £100,000 but that Schools Forum should consider options for transitional funding for high needs pupils for 2017-18.

Proposal

13. It is proposed that:
- a) Schools Forum note the content of the report
 - b) The current formula remain unchanged for 2016-17
 - c) The budget be capped at £100,000 for 2016-17
 - d) Options are to be brought to the January 2017 Schools Forum for funding to support pupils with additional needs at key transitional points

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