

AGENDA

Meeting: Schools Forum
Place: Kennet Room - Wiltshire Council Offices, County Hall, Trowbridge
Date: Thursday 6 December 2018
Time: 1.30 pm

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Lisa Pullin, Tel 01225 713015 or email committee@wiltshire.gov.uk, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line or email

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Membership:	Representing:
Neil Baker	PHF - Primary Headteacher Representative
Aileen Bates	WGA - SEN School Governor Representative
Andy Bridewell	PHF - Primary Headteacher Representative
Mark Cawley	Early Years Representative
Michelle Chilcott	Secondary Academy Representative
Sam Churchill	PHF - Observer
Phil Cook	WASSH - SEN Headteacher Representative
Tracy Cornelius	PHF - Primary Headteacher Representative
Jon Hamp	Special School Academy Representative
John Hawkins	Teaching Association Representative
Mel Jacob	WGA - Primary School Governor Representative
Sue Jiggins	WGA - Primary School Governor Representative
Jen Jones	Wiltshire College (Head of Learning & Skills Development Service)
Lisa Percy	WASSH - Secondary Academy Representative
John Proctor	Early Years Representative (PVI)
Giles Pugh	Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education
Nigel Roper	WASSH - Secondary School Headteacher Representative
Neil Spurdell	Chair of WASSH - Secondary Academy Representative
Trudy Srawley	Observer - Wiltshire Parent Carer Council
Lindsay West	PHF - Primary Academy Representative
David Whewell	WGA - Secondary School Governor representative
Catriona Williamson	PHF - Primary Headteacher Representative

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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 note any apologies and changes to the membership of the Forum.

2 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** (*Pages 5 - 14*)

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2018 (copy attached).

3 **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive any announcements from the Chair.

4 **Declaration of Interests**

To note any declarations of interests.

5 **Reports from Working Groups** (*Pages 15 - 20*)

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

- Early Years Reference Group (attached)
- SEN & Finance Working Group (to follow).

6 **Virtual School Update** (*Pages 21 - 24*)

To receive a DSG update from Wiltshire Virtual School from Chris Whitfield (Virtual School Head)

7 **Budget Monitoring 2018/19** (*Pages 25 - 30*)

The report of Marie Taylor (Interim Head of Finance – Care) presents the budget monitoring information for the financial year 2018/19 as at 31 October 2018.

8 **High Needs Block Working Group Update** (*Pages 31 - 46*)

The report of Marie Taylor (Interim Head of Finance – Care) provides an update on the High Needs Block Working Group.

9 **Special Schools in Wiltshire Update**

To receive an update at the meeting on Special Schools in Wiltshire from Judith Westcott (Acting Head of Commissioning and Joint Planning).

10 **Forum Updates**

The Forum will receive verbal updates from Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) on the following:

- New Pay Scales for APT&C staff
- October National Funding Formula meeting.

11 **Confirmation of Dates for Future Meetings**

To confirm the dates of future meetings, as follows, all to start at 1.30pm:

17 January 2019
28 March 2019
13 June 2019.

12 **Urgent Items**

To consider 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

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING HELD ON 11 OCTOBER 2018 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - WILTSHIRE COUNCIL OFFICES, COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE.

Present:

Neil Baker (Chairman), Aileen Bates, Andy Bridewell, Phil Cook, Tracy Cornelius, Nicola Coupe, John Hawkins, Mel Jacob, Sue Jiggins, Jen Jones, Lisa Percy (Vice-Chair), John Proctor, Nigel Roper, Trudy Srawley, Lindsay West and Catriona Williamson

Also Present:

Emma Cassidy (Head of Education – Greatwood Charity), Sam Churchill (PHF Observer), Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager), Joanne Hobbs (Business Analyst), Lisa Pullin (Democratic Services Officer), Alan Stubbersfield (Interim Director – Education and Skills) and Marie Taylor (Interim Head of Finance for Children’s Services)

38 Election of Chair

Resolved:

The Forum agreed to appoint Mr Neil Baker as Chair of Schools Forum for 2018/19.

39 Election of a Vice Chair

Resolved:

The Forum agreed to appoint Lisa Percy as Vice Chair of Schools Forum for 2018/19.

40 Apologies and Changes of Membership

Apologies were received from the following Forum members: Mark Cawley (Early Years Rep), Michelle Chilcott (Secondary Academy Rep), Jon Hamp (Special School Academy Rep), Neil Spurdell (Secondary Academy Representative), David Whewell (Secondary School Governor Rep).

Apologies were received from the following Wiltshire Council Officers: Nick Breakwell (Head of SEND Service), Helen Jones (Director – Commissioning),

Tamsin Stone (Lead Commissioner), Judith Westcott (Acting Head of Commissioning and Joint Planning), and Cllr Phil Whalley (Portfolio Holder for Education & Skills).

The following changes to the membership of the Forum were noted:

Neil Spurdell (Head of Sheldon School, Chippenham is the new Chair of WASHH). Neil replaces George Croxford (Head of Royal Wootton Bassett) on the Forum.

At the last meeting, we identified where there were gaps in the membership and we are pleased to announce that the following vacancies have been filled –

- Primary academy representative – Lindsay West - Principal - Durrington Infants School
- Secondary School Governor representative – David Whewell, Governor – John of Gaunt School
- Primary School Governor representative – Mel Jacob – Chair of Governors at The Mead School

You also requested that we seek representatives from the other groups and the following have been nominated to attend our meetings with observer status

Wiltshire Parent Carer Council – Trudy Srawley

Wiltshire Children and Families Voluntary Sector Forum – no rep identified as yet

Local Youth Network – no representative identified as yet.

41 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 June 2018 were approved as a correct record.

Resolved:

That the Chairman sign the minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2018.

42 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman welcomed all to the Forum and asked all others present to introduce themselves.

The Chairman invited Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) to provide the following verbal updates:

Teachers Pay Award

The Teachers pay award had finally been agreed and circulated to schools through Right Choice, with provided schools with additional funding to meet the

increased costs associated with the agreed Teachers pay award. Schools were able to set their own rates and schools that “buy in” to our services have been sent details of the options available to them. Schools should have expected (and therefore budgeted for) at least a 1% increase in pay costs and the DfE are looking to fund anything above that level. Funding from the DfE would be awarded to schools on a per pupil basis, but there was no clarity as yet on when the funding would be received by the local authority to pass onto schools.

Teachers’ Pension

The Teacher’s pension scheme is revalued every 3 years and employer contribution rates were due to change from September 2018. It was delayed until 1 April 2019 and has now been pushed back to 1 September 2019. The DfE have given indicative figures for employer contributions rising from 16.48% to 23.6% (a 7.12% increase) which was previously anticipated at 2%. This significant increase would cause huge budgeting issues for schools. The DfE are to put cushioning in place for 2019/20 so schools are not so badly affected. Nothing has been confirmed past 2019/20 as that goes into a new Government spending review period.

Interim arrangements regarding Directors and Heads of Service of Finance Education & Skills Teams

The interim S151 Officer (Director of Finance), Ian Duncan is leaving Wiltshire for a post in Northampton. Becky Hellard will be covering the role on an interim basis until a permanent replacement is appointed, hopefully by February 2019. Marie Taylor will remain in post as Interim Head of Finance for Children’s Services until 31 January 2019.

A permanent Director of Education & Skills has been appointed (Helean Hughes) who will commence in the role on 5 November 2018 to replace Alan Stubbersfield who has been covering the role in the interim. Alan will continue to work on the Special Schools project for the next six months.

The Chair, Neil Baker wished to thank Alan Stubbersfield for all his work and support he has provided to Wiltshire Schools.

Letter from National Association of Headteachers – Support for de-delegation funding for supply cover costs/trade union time

Grant referred to a letter that had been received from the NAHT urging Councils to support the de-delegation funding for supply cover costs and to continue to support a mechanism whereby academies are able to buy into a central fund for trade union time. A copy of the letter is **attached as Appendix 1** to these minutes and Grant asked schools to be aware of the request.

High Needs Block Recovery Group

Marie Taylor (Interim Head of Finance – Children’s Services) reported that a working group had been set up with the sole aim of identifying contributing

factors and to make proposals to reduce the cost pressure on the high needs block. Neil Baker and Lisa Percy were part of the working group.

43 **Appendix 1 to Minutes - Letter from National Association of HeadTeachers Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

44 **Update from the Families and Children's Transformation (FACT) Programme Board**

Jo Hobbs (Business Analyst – Programme Officer) referred to the FACT programme update that was circulated with the Agenda and reiterated that they were keen to ensure that Schools engaged with the programme. The email address which is open to all is FACT@wiltshire.gov.uk and the programme was developing a website which would contain all of the latest news - <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/children-young-people-fact>

She confirmed that following the suggestions made at the last meeting the FACT Teams had attended meetings of Primary Heads Forum and Wiltshire Association of Secondary School Heads and were yet to go to a meeting of the Wiltshire Governors Association.

Resolved:

That the FACT update be noted.

45 **Reports from Working Groups**

The meeting noted the update received by way of the minutes of the School Funding Working Group and SEN Working Group that were circulated with the Agenda.

Resolved:

That Schools Forum note the minutes of the joint meeting of the School Funding Working Group and SEN Working Group held on 26 September 2018.

46 **Schools Revenue Surplus and Deficit Balances 2017/18**

Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) referred to the report which presented the position of revenue balances for Wiltshire maintained schools as at 31 March 2018 and identified those that were in deficit. Grant also explained the appendices in some detail, particularly about the schools with large and/or long-term deficits and those also with significant uncommitted/ringfenced surpluses without explanations such as rising or falling rolls.

Of particular discussion because of its deficit position was Abbeyfield School which had risen from a deficit of £687k in 2014/15 to £2.216m in 2017/18.

The Forum discussed what was put in place to support schools with deficit balances. Offers of financial recovery planning assistance is made to schools identified as requiring support from the Accounting & Budget Support Team and despite this being part of the LA's strategic role and not chargeable, the take up was low.

Deficit budgets and recovery plans are approved and are supported by a local authority licenced deficit over an agreed payback period. If a school was to be placed into special measures from Ofsted then additional funding from the DfE would be applied for in the form of a SIF (School Improvement Fund) bid to support that school and to turn things around.

Grant reported that previously Schools Forum had considered how best to enable the Local Authority to fulfil its key role in supporting and challenging schools with excessive surplus balances and had agreed that schools would be presented with an annual School Financial Management Information Statement (SFMIS) at year end (example circulated at the meeting) which it had been doing since 2016/17. The SFMIS was a backward-looking document and was not necessarily indicative of future financial plans within the school.

Grant was proposing that in future a School Strategic Financial Management Statement (SSFMS) and a RAG rated Finance Audit matrix (examples circulated at meeting) be given to schools. These documents were drawn up because it had become clear that not all schools were having a conversation with their Governors about their surplus balances.

The question for some schools was "You have a surplus budget but poor performance with regard to your results – what are you going to do about it?" The documents also presented a forward-looking position for schools which would be beneficial in future financial planning.

The colour coded self-evaluation matrix sheet should guide discussion to ascertain if there was no realistic plan, a spending plan and/or a strategic plan within the school and aid discussions around management of surplus or deficit balances. The matrix sheet could support discussions between the schools and their CASP (Challenge & Support Partner) and could be provided to the CASP in advance of their meetings at the school.

A forum member asked if the documents would be shared with the CASP and Grant recommended that they should have sight of this information as part of their visits and be involved in their completion.

The differences between the two documents was discussed, with the Chairman also discussing how the SSFMS fitted in with work being performed by the Education Transformation Board (ETB).

The proposal put forward to Schools Forum was that the new SSFMS be introduced and replace the current SFMIS and that the new Statement be distributed to schools as soon as practical.

Resolved:

The Forum agreed that the School Strategic Financial Management statement (and related documents) should replace the previous School Financial Management Information Statement to assist schools with the financial management.

47 **Dedicated Schools Budget - Budget Monitoring 2018-19**

Marie Taylor (Interim Head of Finance for Children's Services) referred to the Dedicated Schools Budget Monitoring 2018/19 report that was circulated with the Agenda. Marie highlighted the following:

- That an overspend of £0.925 million was currently projected against the overall schools' budget. Although this was the first report of the new financial year, the likelihood of an overspend was raised at the January 2018 meeting when the pressure on the high needs block was estimated at £0.843 million;
- The annual prior year adjustment has been made by the DfE on the early years block allocation - for 2017/18 this was minimal at £35k and represents the updated census data feeding into the allocated formula. The early years block has previously significantly underspent but this pattern is not forecast to continue in 2018/19 – Marie noted an explanation for this is that the 30 hours per week offer may be more useful to working parents and therefore have a higher take up;
- Of most concern was the projected overspend on the high needs budget which related to independent special school packages, named pupil allowances and top ups in non-Wiltshire provision, but these were our most complex children and the authority would continue to do what was best for them;
- In view of this ongoing pressure as previously mentioned a High Needs Working Group had been established with school and local authority officers to identify contributing factors and to make proposals to reduce the cost pressure on the high needs block. Two meetings had been held so far.

A Forum member expressed disappointment that there had always appeared to be discussions about the overspend on the high needs block for a number of years now and we still appeared to be in the same position.

Marie Taylor reported that Wiltshire was not alone in this predicament, almost all other Local Authorities were reporting this position.

Alan Stubbersfield reported that the Local Government Association were so concerned with this recognised problem that they had commissioned research into it which Wiltshire is taking part in.

Resolved:

That the Forum note the budget monitoring position as at the end of August 2018 and the continued pressure on the high needs budgets and to support and contribute to the work of the High Needs Working Group.

48 **Update on Dedicated Schools Grant/School Funding Guidance**

Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) referred to the reported circulated with the Agenda which sought to provide the Forum with an overview of the key headlines from the “Schools Revenue Funding 2019 to 2020 – Operational Guide (July 2018)”. Grant highlighted the following:

- On 24 July 2018, it was confirmed that the “soft” formula for the national funding formula (NFF) would continue for another year and that Local Authorities with their Schools Forum would continue to determine their funding formulae in 20220/21;
- That looking at the indicative figures from the DfE at paragraph 10 of the report (actual figures would not be released until December) it was felt that Wiltshire Schools are still being poorly funded;
- There was to be a level of local flexibility which would enable up to 0.5% of the total schools’ block to be transferred to other areas, but any movements would require approval from Schools Forum. A 0.5% transfer of the schools’ block would equate to £1.362m (based on the provisional allocation of £272.436m and any transfer would require consultation with all LA maintained schools and academies prior to being presented to Schools Forum;
- The DfE had committed to supporting schools with an additional £1.3billion over the next 2 years which included a cash increase for every pupil of 0.5% and increases in minimum funding per pupil in primary and secondary schools as part of the NFF; and
- Schools Forum had not previously supported the sparsity factor and it was only introduced for 2018/19 as it formed part of the NFF. At present a total of 25 primary and 2 secondary schools received funding paid through the Sparsity factor.

The Forum noted that they would be asked to propose a funding methodology for 2019/20 considering the published undated NFF and that they would need to consider the option of moving funding between the blocks.

Resolved:

That Schools Forum note the contents of the report.

49 **Update on High Needs Funding Guidance**

Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) referred to the report that was circulated with the Agenda which provided the Forum with an overview of the key headlines from the recently published guidance on High Needs National Funding 2019/20.

Grant reported that there were no significant changes to the formula proposed, with an indicative increase of £730k which was yet to be confirmed and should be treated with caution.

The final allocation was due to be announced in December and this would then need to be considered by the Forum at their December or January meeting (depending when the announcement was made).

Resolved:

That Schools Forum note the report.

50 **Confirmation of Dates for Future Meetings**

The Forum noted that the future meetings would be held on:

6 December 2018
17 January 2019
28 March 2019
13 June 2019.

51 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 1.30 - 3.25 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Lisa Pullin, tel 01225 713015 or email committee@wiltshire.gov.uk of Democratic Services

Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114/713115



Dear Director

We are writing on behalf of all employees working within the boundaries of your local authority area who are members of NAHT and the National Education Union.

You will recall that, from last April, local schools agreed through your Schools Forum to 'de-delegate' funding for supply cover costs, including for trade union facilities time. We believe that this was the right decision – and a very big majority of Schools Forums made the same decision, acting in accordance with advice issued by the Local Government Association and the National Employers' Organisation for School Teachers in October 2015.

We believe that the central retention and distribution of the fund is the most effective and efficient arrangement and we would like to work with you to ensure that this arrangement continues. Discussions are now taking place in your authority on funding arrangements for supply cover costs from April next year and we are asking you to pass the information in this letter to members in your Schools Forum and to encourage them to vote again for de-delegation of funding arrangements for supply cover costs.

Successive governments have recognised the importance of good industrial relations and have legislated to provide a statutory basis for facilities time as follows.

- Paid time off for union representatives to accompany a worker to a disciplinary or grievance hearing.
- Paid time off for union representatives to carry out trade union duties.
- Paid time off for union representatives to attend union training.
- Paid time off for union 'learning representatives' to carry out relevant learning activities.
- Paid time for union health and safety representatives during working hours to carry out health and safety functions.

These provisions are contained within the Employment Relations Act 1999 and the Trade Union Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 and the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977.

NAHT and NEU have members and union representatives in academies as well as maintained schools within your local authority area and, in addition to seeking your support for continued de-delegation, we are seeking your agreement for the local trade union funding arrangement to be formally extended to academies within your local authority boundaries.

As the DfE Advice on Trade Union Facility Time acknowledges, the trade union recognition agreement between the authority and the recognised unions will have transferred to the academy school as the new employer of the transferred staff as part of the conversion process to academy status under TUPE. We believe that, following conversion, academies should also become parties to local authority trade union facilities arrangements.

The academies within your boundaries will have received funding for trade union facilities time in their budgets and they are entitled to use that funding to buy-back into local authority arrangements. Indeed, many academies across England have already agreed to buy in to local authority trade union facilities arrangements.

Pooled funding will help the local authority and all schools to meet their statutory obligations on trade union facilities time. Setting up a central funding arrangement will allow academies to pay into a central pool if they wish to. But most importantly it will help maintain a coherent industrial relations environment where issues and concerns whether individual or collective can be dealt with more effectively. All these points are echoed in the advice issued by the LGA and NEOST.

We urge you therefore to support the de-delegation funding for supply cover costs and to continue or establish (if you did not do so previously) a mechanism whereby academies within your boundaries are able to buy into a central fund for trade union facilities time. If you agree to do so, we will write to academy principals to encourage them to buy in to your arrangement.

Yours sincerely

Paul Whiteman
Mary Bousted
Kevin Courtney

Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum

6th December 2018

Minutes from the Early Years Reference Group

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the minutes of the Early Years Reference Group on the 16th November 2018.

Main Considerations

2. Please refer to the minutes attached.

Proposals

3. Schools Forum is asked to note the minutes.

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Wiltshire Council

Early Years Reference Group

Minutes of a meeting held on Friday 16 November 2018 at County Hall, Trowbridge

1.0 Welcome and Introductions

Angela Brennan, Mark Cawley, Rosemary Collard, Jennifer Harvey (minutes), Sarah Hawkins, Clare MacKinnon, Russ Martin, John Proctor (chair), Trudi Surman, Fiona Webb

2.0 Apologies

Jane Boulton, Ashley Harris, Nicola McCann

3.0 Minutes of last meeting held on 4 May 2018

The minutes of the meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4.0 Matters arising

Item 4 – Outstanding action, JP isn't sure if all providers have received a copy of the School Readiness document.

ACTION: JH to obtain copy from AB and send out to group with the minutes, and AB to organise distribution to the sector

Item 4 – Outstanding action, has Emily Wood made the necessary changes to the 30 hours code checking consent form?

ACTION: AB to check with Emily Wood

Item 6 - Has Lucy-Anne Bryant investigated whether better use of social media can be made for Better 2gether funding

ACTION: AB to check with Emily Wood.

Item 7 – Has Emily Wood enquired if WCSB can email the EY sector with updates, new advice/procedures?

AB reported that the Childcare team will increasingly be using the new Right Choice website to disseminate information out the EY sector.

MC reported that he had recently called MASH as he couldn't contact the designated officer, only to be surprised to find his call was transferred to Customer Care. JH informed the group that this was a recent change.

ACTION: AB to check with Emily Wood

Item 11 - Buddying scheme. AB has not been able to address this as yet.

Item 14 – GDPR advice. AB has been advised that it isn't the Childcare team's role to provide advice on GDPR; this is available on a corporate level from Wiltshire Council.

5.0 2018/2019 budget monitoring and 2019/2020 budget

Unfortunately, the group received late apologies after the meeting had started from Marie Taylor. The group were very disappointed and concerned that MT wasn't able to attend. There hasn't been a Finance representative at the group since Liz Williams left Wiltshire Council earlier in 2018, and there is concern that financial issues aren't being addressed.

Whilst MC has recently had more positive conversations with the Wiltshire Council Business Rates section, he reported that business rates will be reduced by one third but for retail businesses only. MC has sent a letter to his local MP, James Gray requesting business rate relief for childcare businesses, but when forwarded on to Ministers, the response received has only been about encouraging local authorities to reduce rates. MC is aware of two, possibly three local authorities who have given a rate reduction to childcare businesses. Rates increased significantly last year, and with no possible change in the Free Entitlement funding rate until 2020, current funding levels are not enough (locally and nationally).

JP informed the group that Schools Forum has been very supportive of EY funding. Recently when it was proposed that SEND and admin costs were to be funded by the EY funding, JP argued against this and Schools Forum voted in favour of the extra SEND top up being taken from the High Needs budget. EY always has surplus budget and High Needs is always in deficit, so any surplus across the board is used to balance the overall Schools Forum accounts. Group members asked if there was any way EY could access this underspend and divide between providers, and/or increase hourly rate. JP informed the group that some budgets are ring fenced.

JP reported that we only received funding for actual take up now. The issue is that EY figures are submitted retrospectively with the funding being agreed on what they think take up will be.

AB reported that actual take up for Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) has declined, and everyone wanted to know what happens to the underspend, and could it be accessed for other activities such as Free Entitlement funding? The group also asked if any staff savings from the EY Childcare team could be accessed for training. AB wasn't sure if this would be possible.

A recent Nursery World article stated that a number of mainly London local authorities have made cut backs. Service delivery levels have now been cut back to statutory duties only.

Nurseries are experiencing income deficits due to reduced funding, and for some this is forcing closure. We need to be able to prove this is the case, so central government can be challenged. JP feels the biggest pressure is being felt by the voluntary nurseries, with a number being taken over by schools or larger voluntary organisations.

MC informed the group that NDNA and their champagne nurseries campaign are trying to organise a national walkout which will have a huge impact. All agreed that campaigning of MP's needs to continue. The next funding review is in 2020, so there is another financial year to get through with the current funding rates and ever mounting financial pressure from other areas such as living wage and 3% pension increases. Unless there is a national walkout, the situation will remain as it is. It was felt that some MP's do not want to deal with any negative issues, but hopefully with regular campaigning, interest in this issue might increase.

ACTION: January 2019 meeting – All agreed that the main focus should be finance. JH to liaise with MT.

6.0 Childcare team update

AB informed the group that some members of her teams are now on secondments to other work areas. Two people are working with Troubled Families and one person is acting up as part of the Commissioning Team. As a result, AB is having to refocus the remaining team members work to statutory duties only.

There are 2 new directors in Wiltshire Council – Helen Jones, Joint Commissioning where AB's team sits, and Helene Hughes, School Effectiveness where Natalia Reyner's team sits.

ACTION: None

7.0 Workforce Development Update

SENCO training – Wiltshire College is involved in the delivery of this.

The focus of the Workforce strategy will be less around qualifications, and more around general CPD.

The group discussed an overall ongoing struggle with recruitment. Some providers have experienced people wanting mainly term time, school hours only with a reluctance to do wrap around hours. Also, due to the inequality in funding levels at primary, secondary and Early Years, providers are not able to offer the wages that they would like to and need to. School leavers aren't wanting to go into Childcare as a career as there isn't enough money, and with their higher levels of qualifications they are going into other fields. AB stated that the team have gone to some careers fairs in the past but there is currently no capacity to do so.

Temporary and permanent solutions put in place by some members of the group are growing their own, helping people in the community get their English and Maths GCSE's and then Level 2 whilst working in the provision on a voluntary basis for 16 hours, and offering split shifts.

Due to the army rebasing programme, AB has visited Germany and Windsor recently with some army parents expressing an interest in taking up childminding as a career. Information has been distributed to Newcastle, Germany and Windsor.

The Early Years Conference took place recently after a hiatus of several years. So far, feedback about the event (venue and speakers) has been good.

ACTION: None

8.0 Childcare Sufficiency

The main areas of concern across the county are Malmesbury, Sherston (due to a nursery closure), and the ongoing Army rebasing. MC asked why the nursery had closed, and AB said that they had chosen to close. AB and her team are working with partners in the area to ensure families have been able to find alternative childcare. No parental complaints have been received to date.

JP and TS raised concerns over an after school club in their area that recently closed with very short notice, and if the new proposed person who has been approached to take over is correctly registered with Ofsted. AB asked JP to provide her name as a contact and she will talk with them.

AB raised concern over the decline in Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) take up. Initial indications for Autumn 2018 is that take up is at 5% when the authority's target has been 20%. AI reported a decline in the number of parents applying via the Parent Declaration form as most now say they don't meet any of the eligibility criteria. The decline has certainly been since the introduction of Universal Credit and 30 hours. The Better 2gether funding has enabled some parents to get a job, and whilst probably not a huge wage, they are eligible for the 30 hours which cancels out any eligibility for EYPP on economic grounds. The group felt that there does appear to be an issue with the income thresholds for these funding streams that perhaps central government need to look at.

ACTION: None

9.0 Confirmed dates for future meetings

Date	Day	Time	Venue
11 January 2019	Friday	10.00 – 12.00	Lacock Room, County Hall, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN
10 May 2019	Friday	10.00 – 12.00	Lacock Room, County Hall, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN

10.0 Any other business

SH is experiencing a blanket block on references for new staff. The only information she seems to be given are the dates of employment; there is no further information given for safeguarding. AB and the group said that DBS checks will cover the safeguarding element, and ensure there is evidence of what has been done/tried to be done, i.e. obtaining references. AB mentioned that they could show that the new person has been asked if there is anything they would like to share from a safeguarding perspective by enabling them to divulge any information themselves and get them to sign it.

ACTION: None

Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum

6th December 2018

DSG Expenditure Update from Wiltshire Virtual School

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the forecast expenditure on Children Looked After in full time alternative education provision for the financial year 2018/19.

Main Considerations

2. Please refer to the report attached.

Proposals

3. Schools Forum is asked to note the expenditure forecast at the end of October 2018.

Report Author: Chris Whitfield, Virtual School Head

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December 2018

For financial year 2018/19, £102,800 was allocated to the Virtual School from the DSG budget, this was to provide fulltime alternative education for the small number of Looked After Young People who do not have an EHCP or receive education as part of a Care Package but cannot manage within a mainstream setting. The amount was reduced by £100,000 from 2017/18 to reflect the increase in pupil premium from April 2018.

The increase has been allocated to schools as part of the universal support, funding for Looked After Young People who are on a school roll but require extra support to maintain their school place is now provided from the top sliced Pupil Premium Grant.

There continues to be a small number of Wiltshire Young People who require more specialist support, 5 have been placed on roll in fulltime provision during this financial year. The actual costs are outlined below, all of them are now in year 11 so the amount includes costs up to the end of March 2019.

Year Group	Provision	Cost
Year 11	Living in Somerset Fulltime Alternative Provision	£22,105.20
Year 11	Living in Wiltshire. Fulltime place at Catch22	£17,136
Year 11	Living in Bristol. Fulltime Alternative Provision.	£19,500
Year 11	Living in South Wiltshire Fulltime placement at Wessex College Education	£16,800
Year 11	Living in Hertfordshire. Fulltime Alternative Provision.	£24,700
Total		£100,241.20

Most of the allocated DSG funding has been used for these students, their needs are complex so expenditure is unavoidable. If there are any other cases that fall into this category during the next 3 months there is only £2,000 left, any further costs would need to be funded from Pupil Premium Grant.

Many young people who fall into this category are managed in school until later in KS4, each year there tends to be a similar number who require this kind of support.

There has been no increase in the general Pupil Premium Grant from the DfE so the Virtual School will not have the financial capacity to fund such placements in the next financial year.

I would like to request the same amount of £102,800 for the financial year 2019/20.



Chris Whitfield, Virtual School Head.

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DEDICATED SCHOOLS BUDGET – BUDGET MONITORING 2018-19

Purpose of the Report

1. To present budget monitoring information against the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for the financial year 2018-19 as at 31st October 2018.

Main Considerations

2. Appendix 1 to this report outlines the budget monitoring summary as at 31st October 2018.
3. An overspend of £3.238 million is currently projected against the overall schools budget. The forecast overspend on the High Needs Block is £4.1million and this is offset by underspends in early years and central blocks.
4. The High Needs Working Group was set up in September to identify contributing factors and to make proposals to reduce the cost pressure on the high needs block. An update from the High Needs Working Group summarising progress to date and proposed mitigation plans is a separate agenda item.

Early Years Budgets

5. Budgets for the free entitlement for 30 hours childcare for 2, 3 & 4 year olds are currently forecast to be underspent by £0.769 million. This estimate is now wholly based on a full year of 30 hours entitlement. It is important to note that the underspend reported above for 2, 3 and 4-year-old grant will have a post financial year adjustment from the DfE - previously this has borne little relation to the final variance due to the formula and floors and ceilings used by the DfE in their calculation.

The table below show this forecast underspend relates to volume of take up.

	Planned Volume (in FTE)	Forecast Volume (in FTE)	Forecast Volume (in FTE)
2-year-old Funding	417	436	17 (or 4%)
3 & 4-year-old Funding	4,943	4,802	(141) (or 3%)
Overall	5,360	5,238	(122) (or, 2%)

High Needs Budgets

6. High Needs budgets are projected to overspend by £4.125m. The biggest areas of overspend are Independent Special School Fees, Named Pupil Allowances and top ups in non-Wiltshire provision. The post-16 budget shows an underspend which is partially offsetting the overspend in other areas.
7. This significant overspend must be viewed alongside national factors. Nationally, Wiltshire is seventh from the very lowers funded local authority in the Country.
8. The demand for high needs funding is out-stripping the budgets available to local authorities across the country, resulting in serious deficits in the high needs block in over half of all local authorities. Many are finding it extremely difficult to recover these

deficits and cuts to existing high needs services and pupil top-up funding makes what provision that is available simply unsustainable.

9. There is an emerging crisis in high needs funding, created in part by the continued use of historic funding levels, that Fair Funding Groups, local authorities and Schools have been keen to urge government to address before permanent damage is done to very many vulnerable pupils.
10. The solution will need to be increased base budget to allow strategic plans to be rolled out as opposed to an amount of one off funding.
11. The complexity of the high needs services demanded by more and more children (and their parents) is far greater than was the case just a few years ago, more accurate medical assessment and improved methods of treatment increase demand still further. Such increasing needs requires recognition through the national high needs formula.
12. The High Need Block Working Group paper includes an appendix shows the position of neighbouring authorities.
13. One of the major drivers of the increased cost is volume. Activity (volume) is measured in full time equivalent placements. (FTE) the table below show that volume has increased at a higher level (21%) than expenditure (11%) which could be an indicator that we have more children and young people with lower levels of need.

	Budgeted	Forecast	Forecast Variance
HNB Spend	£38.422M	£42.547M	£4.125M (11% increase)
EHCP	2,626	3,182	556 (21% increase)

In view of the on-going pressure on the high needs block, a report from the High Needs Working Group is a separate agenda item at today's meeting. The report will include all mitigating actions proposed by the group.

Central Schools Budgets

14. There is a small forecast underspend on central school budgets held and managed by the local authority on the schools behalf – including maternity and copyright licences. Some of this surplus might be available to fund other identified funding pressures such as union duties – as previously discussed at Schools Forum.

DSG Reserve

15. The reserve brought forward of £0.846 million is reduced by the early years block adjustment of £0.035 million. The forecast overspend would take the reserve into a deficit position of £2.427 million. This overspend equates to 1.3% of total DSG.
16. The DfE has issued the consultation about the detailed implementation of the tightening of the rules governing deficits in local authorities' overall DSG accounts, under which local authorities have to explain their plans for bringing DSG account back into balance. The DfE intend to require a report from any local authority that has a DSG deficit of more than 1% as at 31 March 2019. This report will need to have been discussed with the Schools Forum. Wiltshire will be submitting a response by the required deadline.

Proposals

17. Schools Forum is asked to note the budget monitoring position at the end of October 2018 and the continued pressure on high needs budgets and to support and contribute to the on-going work of the High Needs Working Group.

18. The proposals of the High Needs Working Group should be examined for benefits, risks, feasibility and timescale. These should form part of an action plan being drawn up by Childrens Services. A further report should be brought to the next Schools Forum.

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Financial Monitoring

Service Areas	Current Budget 2018-19 £m	Projected Outturn for Year £m	Variation for Year £m	% Variance	Movement from Period 4
1 Funding Schools					
DSG Funded Expenditure - Schools Funding Delegated to Schools	112.149	112.149	0.000	0.0%	0.000
DSG Funded Expenditure - High Needs Block Delegated to Schools	4.579	4.579	0.000	0.0%	0.000
De-delegated DSG removed from School Budgets	-1.831	-1.831	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Contingency & Growth Fund	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Total Funding Schools	115.898	115.898	-	0.0%	-
2 0-25 SEND Service					
Pre-16					
Independent Special Schools incl 6th Form	7.137	8.665	1.528	21.4%	0.948
Named Pupil Allowances	3.107	5.145	2.038	65.6%	0.617
Top Up Budgets - Wiltshire Maintained Schools & Academies	10.334	10.741	0.407	3.9%	0.921
Top Up Budgets - Non-Wiltshire Maintained Schools & Academies	0.966	1.948	0.982	101.6%	0.151
Post-16					
Top Up Budgets - Post- 16 Placements	4.331	3.563	-0.768	-17.7%	0.302
Support Services					
Specialist Provision and EY Inclusion	0.685	0.666	-0.019	-2.7%	-0.019
Other SEND Services	2.017	1.975	-0.042	-2.1%	-0.042
Ethnic Minority Achievement Service & Traveller Education	0.506	0.506	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Secondary Devolved Funding - Alternative Provision	2.791	2.791	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Education Other than at School (EOTAS)	0.542	0.542	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Behaviour Support	0.819	0.819	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Total 0-25 SEND Service	33.235	36.541	4.125	12.4%	2.877
3 Commissioning and School Effectiveness					
Schools Maternity Costs	0.514	0.473	-0.040	-7.8%	-0.040
Trades Union Facilities Costs	0.060	0.055	-0.005	-8.1%	-0.005
SIMS & HCSS Licences	0.051	0.051	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Speech & Language	0.509	0.509	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Child Protection in Schools	0.041	0.041	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Other Costs incl. Copyright Licences	1.146	1.066	-0.080	-7.0%	-0.080
Admissions Service	0.245	0.252	0.008	3.1%	0.008
Total Commissioning & School Effectiveness	2.566	2.448	-0.118	-4.6%	-0.118
4 Early Years Services					
Early Years Single Funding Formula - 3 & 4 year olds	23.440	22.638	-0.803	-3.4%	-0.757
Early Years Single Funding Formula - 2 year olds	2.531	2.564	0.034	1.3%	0.310
Other Early Years Support	0.462	0.462	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Early Year Childcare & Early Development Team	0.231	0.231	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Early Years Pupil Premium Grant & DAF funding	0.253	0.253	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Total Early Years	26.917	26.148	-0.769	-2.9%	-0.447
5 Children's Social Care					
Looked After Children Education Service	0.133	0.133	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Support & Safeguarding Service	0.190	0.190	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Total Childrens Social Care	0.323	0.323	-	0.0%	-
6 DSG Within Corporate Services					
Gross Expenditure	1.642	1.642	0.000	0.0%	0.000
Total	1.642	1.642	-	0.0%	-
	180.580	182.999	3.238	0.050	2.312

Note POSITIVE variances = OVERSPEND

0.000

Notes to the report for Schools Forum working Group only:

1. Early Years Forecast

The underspend reported above for 2, 3 and 4 year old grant will have a post financial year adjustment from the DfE - previously this has not borne any relation to the final variance due to the formula and floors and ceilings used by the DfE in their calculation.

	2 year old	3 & 4 year old	2, 3 & 4 year old
Budgeted Volume in FTE	417	4,943	5,360
Projected Volume in FTE	436	4,802	5,238
Projected Variance in FTE	19	-141	-122

2. High Needs Block Activity

The provision funded by the high needs block is wide ranging, covering support in mainstream school through to independent sector purchases. Best value for all schools happens where children & young people are placed in Wiltshire schools. Where additional support is required in school or alternative placements need to be sourced, unit costs rise. Alongside this, demand has increased since the budget was set :

Budgeted Volume in FTE	2,626
Projected Volume in FTE	3,182
Projected Variance in FTE	556

3. The DSG Reserve

17/18 Balance brought forward	-0.846
Early Years 17/18 Adjustment	0.036
Projected Current Variance 18/19	3.238
Projected DSG Variance	2.427

Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum

6th December 2018

DEDICATED SCHOOLS BUDGET – HIGH NEEDS BLOCK WORKING GROUP UPDATE

Purpose of the Report

1. To examine the current position of the forecast expenditure within the High Needs Block (HNB) alongside the position of other neighbouring local authorities.
2. To present an update including mitigating actions proposed from the work of the group so far for further exploration

Main Considerations

3. The first budget monitoring report as at 31st August 2018 to Schools Forum identified a £1.2 million overspend. The High Needs Working Group was set up in September to identify contributing factors and to make proposals to reduce the cost pressure on the high needs block.
4. Members of the group comprise Wiltshire headteachers, a representative from the Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (WPCC) and local authority officers from Childrens Services including commissioning, SEN and finance.

Background

5. The High Needs Block expenditure has exceeded the Block allocation for a number of years. All schools receive funding from the HNB through named pupil allowances (NPA), resource base top ups and ELPs and top ups. These overspends have been previously offset by underspends in other funding blocks.

Year:	HNB Variance:	Year end DSG reserve:
15/16	£1.855M	£0.591M
16/17	£1.02M	£0.583M
17/18	£1.70M	£0.846M
18/19	Forecast £4.125M	Estimated forecast (£2.427M) DEFICIT

6. This significant overspend must be viewed alongside national factors. Nationally, Wiltshire is seventh from the very lowest funded local authority in the Country for Education.
7. The demand for high needs funding is out-stripping the funding available to local authorities across the country, resulting in serious budget deficits in the high needs block in over half of all local authorities. Many are finding it extremely difficult to recover these deficits and cuts to existing high needs services and pupil top-up funding makes what provision that is available simply unsustainable.
8. There is an emerging crisis in high needs funding, created in part by the continued use of historic funding levels, that Fair Funding Groups, local authorities and Schools have been keen to urge government to address before permanent damage is done to our most vulnerable pupils.
9. Any national solution will need to be an increase in the base budget to allow strategic plans to be rolled out as opposed to non-recurrent one off funding.
10. The complexity of the high needs services demanded by more and more children (and their parents) is far greater than was the case just a few years ago, more accurate medical assessment and improved methods of treatment increase demand still further. Such increasing needs requires recognition through the national high needs formula.

11. One of the major drivers of the increased cost is volume. Activity (volume) is measured in full time equivalent (FTE) placements. The table below shows that volume has increased at a higher level (21%) than expenditure (11%) which could be an indicator that we have more children and young people with lower levels of need. This is on top of the higher number of children and young people who are most vulnerable with a range of complex medical, education and social care needs.

12. Table to show where the money is being spent

	Total HNB Spend 18/19	Devolved or delegated to Schools	Centrally retained teams / services	Externally Commissioned Services
Budgeted 18/19	£38.422 m	£20.958 m (55%)	£3.484 m (9%)	£13.980 m (36%)
Forecast 18/19	£42.547 m	£23.361 m (55%)	£3.484 m (9%)	£15.702 m (37%)
Variance 18/19	£4.125 m	£2.403 m	0.000 m	£1.722

13. Table to compare spend with numbers of EHCPs

A more detailed schedule showing a comparison of 2015 and 2018 pupil numbers is attached at appendix 1.

	Budgeted	Forecast	Forecast Variance
HNB Spend	£38.422M	£42.547M	£4.125M (11% increase)
EHCP	2,626	3,182	556 (21% increase)

Cost Drivers Identified by the Group

Noting the quality of SEN provision had been rated as good by Ofsted in a recent inspection, the group suggested the following drivers for the financial pressure:

- Austerity in Local Government and Schools Funding
- Nationally, Wiltshire is the seventh from the very lowest funded local authority in the Country for Education (source – F40)
- Historical HNB - DfE calculation which is based on Wiltshire having a significantly lower number of EHCPs
- Non-inclusive Schools (exclusions, league table pressures)
- The reduction in Schools mainstream funding and an increase in the number of schools with either current or planned deficit budgets has impacted on the schools' ability to accept children without a financial package attached
- Notional SEN in mainstream budgets not clearly linked to SEND pupils
- Lack of local provision in mainstream schools (confidence and ability, potential training need)
- Changing role and responsibility nationally of the local authority leading to the lack of ability to direct or influence schools
- Lack of communication of the pressures and plans to schools via PHF and WASSH
- Lack of national Capital Grant Funding available for required new Special Schools Places leading to a local authority budget pressure in establishing a capital budget and financing the repayment of the principal and borrowing costs
- Step rise in the number of EHCPs – currently above statistical neighbours

- Lack of clarity / policy around Complex Needs Funding for jointly funded places
- Panel arrangements
- EHCP – not just education needs – schools are funding additional support in school for health and care needs schools are reporting that health colleagues are recommending parents and schools support an EHCP for medical needs
- Changes in the health professional approach including earlier diagnoses of autism – which is later identified as delay puts more children into the EHCP system
- Ability to respond to childrens needs where these are linked with family need
- Ability to shape the marketplace: Lack of sufficiency in the private sector, where an independent provision would be most appropriate
- Placement & Brokerage – where this best sit in the local authority's structure
- SEND services – where these best sit in the local authority's structure

This list may not be exhaustive.

It is clear that the drivers for this financial pressure are many and varied and that change is required in order to reduce spending to align with DfE allocated funds. Long term and future plans also need to include building capacity in special schools and other provision to provide the additional 220 places required by 2026 due to demographic growth, new housing and military families returning to Wiltshire.

Neighbouring Local authorities

14. Please see appendix 2 for the positions which have been shared. Many local authorities transferred funding from their Schools Block in 2018/19. Wiltshire has instead funded 13 additional places at Exeter House and invested new provision with 32 places in the South of the County to mitigate the larger pressure of supply of places for children with ADHD.

Actions taken to date

15. Review of unfilled places in resource bases has led to savings to be recycled back into the HNB in year
16. Central Schools spend block transferred an amount of £0.263 million into the HNB in the 2018/19 budget setting process to aid HNB funding pressures
17. Creation of increased capacity for strategic vision and leadership with a new Director for Skills & Education post in the local authority
18. Additional consultant resource until 31st March 2019 to focus on Special School Expansion Programme.
19. Additional Childrens Commissioner consultant resource to examine complex needs and other placements 18-25 years focus.
20. New brokerage officer in the Childrens Commissioning team.
21. Centre of Excellence (SEMH) at Castlemead Primary School opened September 2018 – 12 places.
22. Creation of 50 additional places at Wiltshire College for Post 16 provision.
23. Springfields Satellite at Sarum Academy – opens Spring 2019 – 32 places.
24. The Council has been taking part in surveys and research from groups such as F40 and the Local Government Association (LGA) the results of which will be shared with the Secretary of State for Education.
25. Consultation using a schools survey in November 2018 seeking views on transfer of funding between blocks to reduce pressure on the HNB. A 0.5% top slice would create approx. £1.3M capacity in 2019/20. School views were also sought on alternative service / system changes.
26. Cabinet are considering Special School Provision in the North of the County at their meeting on the 27th November 2018. All proposals would lead to an additional 50 places.
27. Longer term the local authority has been exploring opportunities to secure funding to invest in Special Schools. A Free School Bid has been submitted around Special

School Provision in the South – this fund has been previously oversubscribed so the success factors are approximately 50%.

28. Military Families - a bid to the MOD Education Support Fund has been submitted to assist with the pupils currently in Germany in receipt of SEN support.
29. The Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills and the Portfolio Holder for SEND & Safeguarding have been fully updated on the financial position and the links to expansion of Special School provision within Wiltshire.
30. The Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills and the Portfolio Holder for SEND & Safeguarding have been fully updated on the financial position and the links to expansion of Special School provision within Wiltshire.

Future Actions Proposed for Consideration

31. The group came up with a wide ranging selection of ideas which will need to be examined further by the Director of Childrens Services with regard to risk, equality, financial viability and best value. These are to be considered alongside timescales.
32. The group was clear that the most appropriate change would need to least impact vulnerable groups and provide a level of protection to those schools with an inclusive approach who educate our most vulnerable children and young people.
33. With any area where change is being considered there are various approaches which include removal or reduction of services, trading of services, outsourcing services as well as reducing values of payments to schools and bringing into play the DfE's guidance around top slicing funding from schools block to fund the high needs block overspend.
34. Consider if affordable, new investment following an invest to save approach.
35. Where possible, the agreed actions will be linked to current transformational change programmes currently underway in the local authority.
36. Commissioning colleagues to engage with health professionals outlining the purpose of High Need Block funding and limitations on its use.
37. Engage with a provider or providers through a competitive process to seek costs estimates to commission new school places – either on a mutually short-term basis or long term in order to avoid capital investment.
38. Further to this a letter has been drafted to Wiltshire Members of Parliament requesting support at both local and national level.
39. Expand the use of MyPlans with SMART targets,
40. Consider the inclusion of SMART targets on EHCPS
41. Explore the use of SLAs with schools / colleges funding outcomes for children & young people
42. The local authority utilising the limited flexibility to transfer up to 0.5% of their schools block funding into another block, with the approval of their schools forum following a consultation. Schools Forum should take into account the views of the schools responding before giving their approval.
43. Consultation results were limited and so further discussion is proposed at Primary Heads Forum on the 22nd November 2018.
44. Further consultation options with parents, carers, secondary and special school heads will be explored to seek views of any proposals.
45. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out on all proposals.

Proposals

46. There are two approaches which will need to be followed, the first is around aligning spending levels to available funding:
47. Schools Forum are asked to agree to the Director for Education and Skills post having the lead for strategic SEN planning and reducing spend in the high needs block working closely with the Heads of Service for Childrens Commissioning, SEND and Childrens Finance to work up a costed plan with timescales and targets. This will include a gap analysis comparing current and future need compared with current resource bases and placements across each type of SEND.
48. In addition, options for savings to centrally managed budgets will include:

- a. examination of liability under the statutory duty around all SEN services to consider removal, reduction or alternative delivery models or offers linked to a central (i.e.: non-school block) saving target.
- b. Modelling around redrafting values of payments to schools to support vulnerable pupils on a temporary basis
- c. Commissioning modelling work to be carried out
- d. Establishing the affordability of ringfenced Cluster Funding (Pilot) funding which would need to be new monies identified which would be delegated to heads to control (avoid funding linked to EHCP numbers)
- e. Consideration of a future move to delegating control of centrally managed budgets such as Named Pupil Allowances (NPA) to said clusters if this model proves successful

49. The second round movement between blocks;

50. School Forum are asked to agree to the transfer of 0.5% between blocks to limit the need to reduce bandings or high needs rates. As an example, appendix 3 shows the value of removing 0.5% from the 18/19 allocations for schools by NOR banding to provide schools with a guideline. When we bring the 19/20 budget paper to Schools Forum in January, the actual 19/20 allocations will be known and modelling shared. In light of the size of the forecast overspend, Schools Forum members may feel a transfer larger than 0.5% is appropriate in which case the local authority must submit a disapplication request to the Secretary of State. For this reason, information is also provided in appendix 3.

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Schools Forum – 6th December 2018

High Needs Block Working Group Update Report Appendices 1-4

Appendix 1

Analysis Provided by SEND - Comparison of Volumes of EHCP by type of Placement in 2015 and 2018 (a snapshot)

	Volume 2015	Volume 2018	Movement in Volume
TOTAL EHCP	2,305	3,269	964
Independent Special Schools			
<i>38 week placements</i>	10	32	22
<i>52 week placements</i>	10	12	2
<i>Day</i>	56	114	58
Named Pupil Allowances (NPA)	562	961	399
Special School top up	565	727	162
Resource Base top up	245	321	76
ELP top up	330	385	55
Non-Wiltshire Schools			
<i>Main</i>	37	67	30
<i>Special</i>	104	116	12
16+ top up	338	266	-72
Other			220
TOTAL			964

Appendix 2

South West Authorities – Agreed & Proposed Transfers

	2018/19	2019/20	Comments
Somerset	0.50%	0.50%	£5.6M overspend
Gloucestershire	0.00%	0.25%	£3M overspend
N. Somerset	0.97%	2.40%	£2.8M overspend
Bournemouth	1.00%	3.00%	£2.7M overspend (Move to Unitary)
Bristol	1.40%	1.40%	£3.7M requested, overspend £5M +
Dorset	0.35%	1.48%	£3m overspend
S. Gloucestershire	2.00%	4.00%	£6m anticipated overspend
Hereford	0.00%	0.30%	<£1M - Only asking from Primary

Appendix 3

Example at 18/19 Prices of the impact of a top slice across bands of numbers on roll at school

NOR band Primary	Average total funding 18/19	Average notional SEN funding 18/19	Average 0.5% value	Average 1.0% value
0-50	£0 - £300,00	£20,000	£0 - £1500	£0 - £3,000
50-100	£300,000 - £420,00	£54,000	£1,500 - £2,000	£3,000 - £4,000
100-150	£420,000 - £560,000	£75,500	£2,000 - £2,900	£4,000 - £5,800
150-200	£560,000 - £750,000	£98,250	£2,900 - £3,800	£5,800 - £7,600
200-250	£750,000 - £900,000	£123,750	£3,800 - £4,700	£7,600 - £9,400
250-300	£900,000 - £1,100,000	£150,000	£4,700 - £5,600	£9,400 - £11,200
300-400	£1,100,000 - £1,400,000	£187,500	£5,600 - £7,000	£11,200 - £14,000
400+	£1,400,000+	£210,000+	£7,000+	£14,000+

NOR band Secondary	Average total funding 18/19	Average notional SEN funding 18/19	Average 0.5% value	Average 1.0% value
300 - 600	£1,500,000 - £3,000,000	£225,000	£7,500 - £15,000	£15,000 - £30,000
600 – 1,000	£3,000,000 – £4,750,000	£387,500	£15,000 - £23,750	£30,000 - £47,500
1,000 – 1,500	£4,750,000 – £7,000,000	£587,500	£23,750 - £35,000	£47,500 - £70,000

TOTAL ESTIMATED TOPSLICE TO TRANSFER TO HNB	£260m	£33.1m	£1.3m	£2.6m
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Appendix 4

November 2018 School Survey Results / Feedback

There were 7 responses to the survey and further invitations for feedback at Primary Heads Forum on 22nd November 2018.

Q1 a) Do you support a transfer of funding from the School Block to the High Needs Block?

Yes	No	Neither Agree nor disagree
2	5	

b) If you support a transfer, please indicate the amount which you feel is appropriate.

£0.5m (0.187%)	1
£1.0m (0.374%)	1
£1.34m (0.500%)	0
£2.0m (0.748%)	0

c) Do you agree to not transfer any funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block for 2018-19 on the understanding that all top-up and Named Pupil Allowance (NPA) funding levels would have to be reduced to keep the High Needs Block within budget?

Yes	No	Neither Agree nor disagree
3	2	* 1

*It needs to be one or the other not both. I am not sure that either option will make up the shortfall without additional more radical considerations. As a school with a high number of young people with top-ups, this money does not cover the interventions needed to support them and reducing this further will inevitably reduce the provision.

If you do not agree to the transfer of funds or the reduction of top-up funding levels, how else do you suggest that we fill the funding gap that we have for High Needs?

We are TOTALLY committed to high needs provision. In our school we take a large number of increasingly high needs students and make the very best provision we can for them, despite inadequate funding. School budgets are under unprecedented pressure and I cannot support any further erosion, which would be to the further disadvantage of our students. Last week I had to send a letter to parents asking for regular giving to help support education in our school. How can I, in good conscience, now agree to give away more of our budget? The pressure on the high needs block is appalling, indeed a national disgrace. This requires government intervention, not further depletion of school budgets. I have made this point repeatedly to the DfE, MPs and the Parliamentary enquiry.

Further lobbying at national level, in particular to reduce the amount of double and triple funding of disadvantage etc. Make Pupil Premium the only source of additional revenue

for schools to support disadvantaged pupils, then make the spend accountable...the reduction in funding that would result could fill the hole in SEND
Reduce the number of pupils who are educated out-of-county at high cost
Reduce the costs of administration and expenses at County level (following recent negative media coverage)

The reason that I DO NOT support the idea of 'top slicing' for High Needs Funding is that this is exactly what has been tried by several local authorities across the country for 2018-2019. This has had a detrimental effect on school budgets, meaning that schools are below the £4,600 NFF 'guarantee'. That is simply not acceptable, and will (in my view) be resisted if it is proposed in Wiltshire. In my school's case we are currently some way below the £4,600 due to top slicing, and yet we get virtually no benefit from any other form of funding to compensate. I would much prefer a hard formula in any case, so that top slicing cannot happen in the first place...

Stop sending people out of county and to private institutions which costs a ludicrous amount of money!

Any choice made on the above options will result in a significantly poorer educational experience for young people in Wiltshire. Where the funding gap exists, money will need to be transferred from other sources outside of frontline education to make up the shortfall. We cannot any longer accept additional reductions to school budgets in any form without a massively detrimental effect on the young people we serve.

Reduce the number of students being sent out of county to private specialist provision.

...although it is frustrating that the amount of money coming to schools will be further reducing I think it is fairer for this to come from all schools rather than just those with a higher number of High Needs young people (through Top-up/ NPA reduction) being penalised.

- Consideration of central service spend (Sensory Service/ Behaviour Support/EOTAS)
- Reduction in ISS spend
- Consideration of top-up thresholds

At Primary Heads Forum, feedback included;

Mental health monies for pupils – where is it going?

Paediatrics recommending to parent & heads they should seek an EHCP for medical needs

Opportunity to temporarily remove plan as a "test" of the child's progress (use as early intervention)

Expansion of Resources Bases with pupils remaining on local school roll

Return of Special School pupils to mainstream, resource base to mainstream

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Damian Hinds MP
Secretary of State for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith St
Westminster
London SW1P 3BT

27 November 2018

Dear Secretary of State

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - High Needs Funding

We are writing in our roles as Presidents of our respective Treasurer Societies, both for the County Councils and London Boroughs, to highlight the continued concern and pressure across the country regarding shortfalls in funding for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), via the High Needs Block of DSG.

The majority of Councils that we represent are in real difficulty with many not only reporting in-year deficits of costs against allocated funding, but also with deficits being carried forward on their balance sheets with no prospect of these positions being improved. Much work is being done by all Councils to jointly share ideas and best practice to try and minimise demand and costs, but this isn't going to be anywhere near enough to recover the position. There is only limited scope for moving money out of direct school budgets to help with this pressure, and in any case with many schools finding it difficult to cope with the new National Funding Formula this isn't an ideal or sustainable solution.

The graph attached gives a very clear indication of the reason for this significant increase in demand. It shows that since the introduction of the Children and Families Act 2014 there has been a 35% increase nationally in the number of Education and Health Care Plans, and yet the eligible child population over the same period has only increased by 1%.

Research recently carried out by both Societies show that 94% of surveyed Counties are expecting a deficit on the DSG high needs block this year and for London the figure is 88%, with 100% expected to be in deficit the following year. Many authorities are already carrying forward cumulative deficits from the previous year, which is predicted to rise to almost £250m for those authorities by the end of this year.

Significant work is being done to try to manage this additional demand and rising costs, but this is not sustainable going forward and is rapidly creating a financial crisis in some Councils. The DfE consultation paper recently issued on consistent accounting for these deficits and proposing three year recovery plans is nowhere near being a sufficient response given the tidal wave of demand that you have created.

We ask that the DfE quickly injects more funding into the system, whilst it carries out a post-implementation review of The Children and Families Act in 2014 to assess whether this was what was intended by the new policy and if it was then to provide a more sustainable level of funding for the longer term in order to properly resource your policy objectives.

We would be happy to work with you to support this review and provide further detailed data and case studies to inform your work. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely



Gerald Almeroth
President of the Society of London Treasurers



John Betts
President of the County Treasurers

**Cc. James Brokenshire MP, Secretary of State
for MHCLG**

Society of County Councils (SCT): the professional network representing the Directors of Finance for all County Councils.

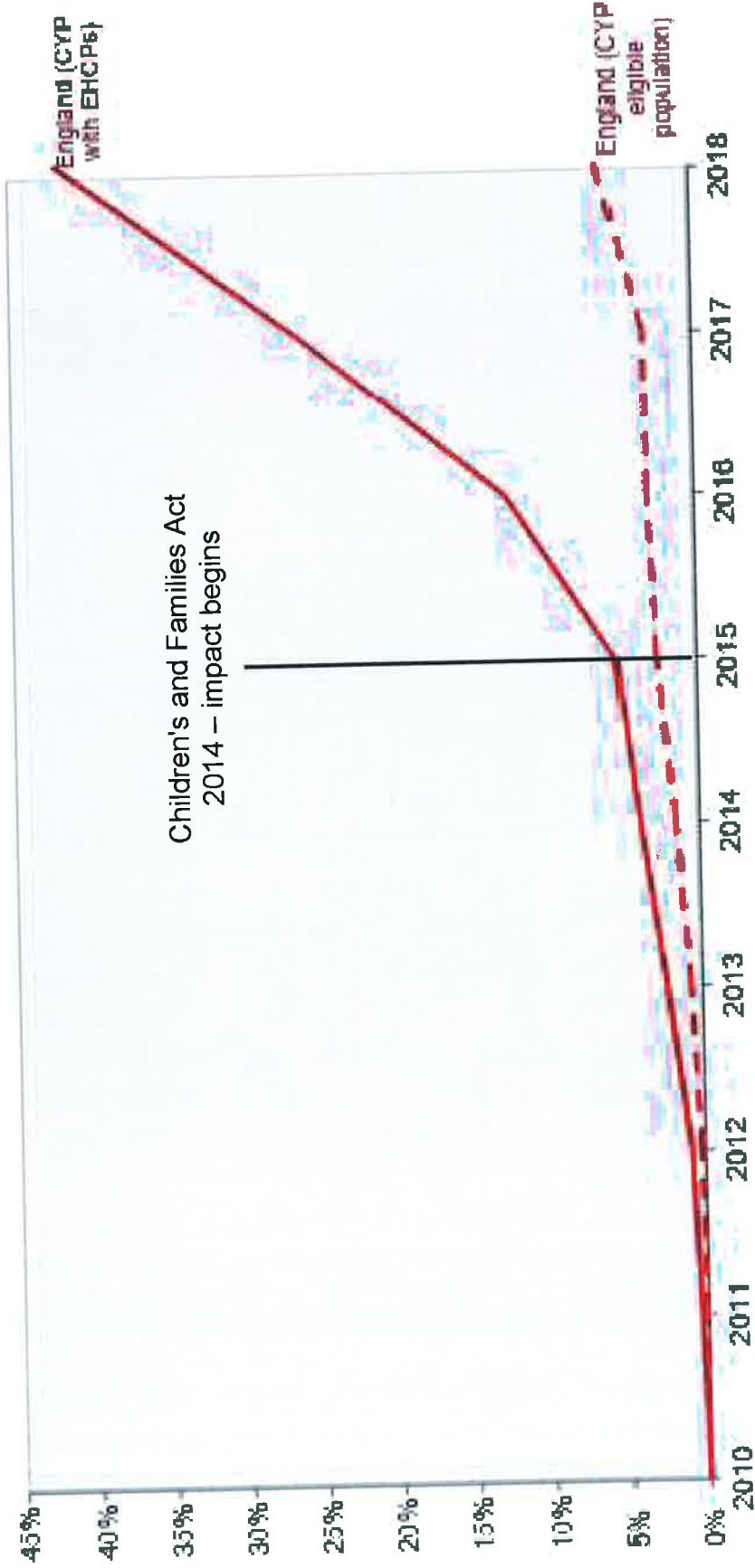
Society of London Treasurers (SLT): the professional network representing the Directors of Finance for all 32 London boroughs, the City of London Corporation, the GLA and its constituent bodies.

Appendix A



The no. of CYP with an EHCP has risen significantly across England – particularly since 2015

Change in Children and young people (CYP) population and EHCP numbers



Source: ONS (MYE and SNPP) estimates; DfE (SEN2 data)

- The number of children and young people with an EHCP/ Statement has increased by 40% nationally since 2010/11
- The eligible child population has increased by 3% nationally since 2010/11

