

AGENDA

Meeting: Schools Forum
Place: Online meeting via Microsoft Teams
Date: Thursday 10 December 2020
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, BA14 8JN.

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

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Membership:	Representing:
Neil Baker	PHF - Maintained Primary Representative
Aileen Bates	WGA - Special School Governor Representative
Andy Bridewell	PHF - Maintained Primary Representative
Rebecca Carson	PHF - Primary Academy Representative
Mark Cawley	Early Years Representative
Michelle Chilcott	WASSH - Secondary Academy Representative
Sam Churchill	PHF - Maintained Primary Representative
Jon Hamp	Special School Academy Representative
John Hawkins	Teaching Association Representative
Cllr Ross Henning	Observer - Local Youth Network
Mel Jacob	WGA - Primary School Governor Representative
Georgina Keily-Theobald	WASSH - Maintained Special School
Denise Lloyd	Observer - Post 16, Wiltshire College
Lisa Percy	WASSH - Secondary Academy Representative
John Proctor	Early Years Representative (PVI)
Giles Pugh	Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education
Nigel Roper	WASSH - Maintained Secondary Representative
Graham Shore	PHF - Primary Academy Representative
Trudy Srawley	Observer - Wiltshire Parent Carer Council
Fergus Stewart	Chair of WASSH - Secondary Academy Representative
David Whewell	WGA - Secondary School Governor representative
Catrina Williamson	PHF - Maintained Primary Representative

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The full constitution can be found at [this link](#).

For assistance on these and other matters please contact the officer named above for details

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 7 - 26*)

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2020 (copy attached).

3 **Chair's Announcements**

To receive any announcements from the Chair.

4 **Declaration of Interests**

To note any declarations of interests.

5 **Public Participation**

Schools Forum welcomes contributions from members of the public. During the ongoing Covid-19 situation the Forum is operating revised procedures and the public are able participate in meetings online after registering with the officer named on this agenda, and in accordance with the deadlines below. A maximum of 15 minutes will be allocated to public participation at the start of each meeting.

Guidance on how to participate in this meeting online.

Statements

Members of the public who wish to submit a statement in relation to an item on this agenda should submit this electronically to the officer named on this agenda **no later than 5pm on Tuesday 8 December (1 clear working day before the meeting)**. Statements should take no longer than 3 minutes to be read aloud.

Questions

Those wishing to ask questions are required to give notice of any such questions electronically to the officer named on the front of this agenda no later than **5pm on Thursday 3 December** to allow a response to be formulated. Questions are limited to a maximum of 2 per person or organisation.

Please contact the officer named on the front of this agenda for further advice.

6 **Updates from Working Groups** (*Pages 27 - 30*)

The Forum will be asked to note the minutes/updates from the following meetings:

- Joint meeting of the School Funding Working Group and SEN Working Group – 30 November 2020
- Early Years Reference Group – 4 November 2020 – *to follow*.

7 **Update on the Multi-Agency Families and Children's Transformation (FACT) Programme** (Pages 31 - 34)

Simon Thomas (FACT Programme Lead) has prepared an update to Schools Forum on the multi-agency Families and Children's Transformation programme.

8 **Dedicated Schools Budget - Budget Monitoring 2020/21** (Pages 35 - 40)

The report of Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education) seeks to present budget monitoring information against the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for the financial year 2020/21 as at 31st October 2020.

9 **Update on behalf of the High Needs Block Recovery Group** (Pages 41 - 48)

Helean Hughes (Director – Education & Skills) will provide the Forum with an update on the progress of the High Needs Block Recovery Group – the minutes of meeting held on 12 November 2020 are attached for information.

There will also be an update from Lisa Fryer (Education Officer, SEND Service) on the Independent Special School deep dive being carried out between September to December 2020.

10 **Dedicated Schools Grant Consultations 2021-22** (Pages 49 - 56)

The report prepared by Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) seeks to update Schools Forum with the results of the most recent Autumn consultations relating to De-delegation of central services and a possible transfer of funds from Schools Block to High Needs Block.

11 **Allocation of Funding for Pupil Growth 2021-22** (Pages 57 - 62)

The report of Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) seeks for an agreement on the methodology for allocating funding for pupil growth from the school's block growth fund in 2021-22.

12 **Dedicated Schools Budget - Provisional Central Schools Block Update 2021-22** (Pages 63 - 68)

The report of Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education) seeks to update Schools Forum on issues relating to the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) budget for 2021-22 financial year and the decisions that will need to be made as part of the budget setting process.

13 **Dedicated Schools Budget - High Needs Block Update 2021-22** (Pages 69 - 76)

The report of Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children & Education) seeks to update Schools Forum on issues related to the High Needs Block for 2020-21

and a pre-briefing for the decisions that will need to be made as part of the budget setting process for 2020-21 at the January meeting.

14 **Dedicated Schools Budget - Early Years Block Update 2021-22** (Pages 77 - 78)

The report of Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children & Education) seeks to update schools forum on issues related to the early years block for 2021-22 and the decisions that will need to be made as part of the budget setting process for 2021-22 financial year.

15 **Covid Costs - Case Studies from Schools and Early Years Settings** (Pages 79 - 82)

The report of Grant Taylor (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) seeks to provide Schools Forum with the results of a recent survey with schools relating to the additional costs being incurred by Schools and Early Years Settings. The report is for information only.

16 **F40 Update** (Pages 83 - 88)

The report of Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) seeks to provide Schools Forum with an update regarding the work of the F40 Group and share their recent communication with the Department for Education, in relation to impact of Covid-19 upon schools.

17 **Update on School Admission Appeals** (Pages 89 - 90)

The report of Libby Johnstone (Democracy Manager) and Clara Davies (School Place Commissioning Lead) seeks to update Schools Forum on the introduction of charges for admission appeals.

18 **Scheme for Financing Maintained Schools 2021-22** (Pages 91 - 94)

The report of Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) seeks to provide Schools Forum with an update on the Wiltshire Scheme for Financing Maintained Schools.

19 **Confirmation of Dates for Future Meetings**

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

21 January 2021
11 March 2021.

20 **Urgent Items**

To consider any other items of business, which the Chair 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 15 OCTOBER 2020 VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS MEETING

Present:

Neil Baker (Chairman), Nikki Barnett, Aileen Bates, Andy Bridewell, Rebecca Carson, Mark Cawley, Michelle Chilcott, Sam Churchill, John Hawkins, Cllr Ross Henning, Mel Jacob, Georgina Keily-Theobald, Lisa Percy (Vice-Chair), John Proctor, Giles Pugh, Graham Shore, Trudy Srawley, Fergus Stewart, David Whewell, Catriona Williamson and Lynn Yendle

Also Present:

Cllr Jane Davies (Portfolio Holder, Education and SEND), Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager), Gemma Donnelly (Head of LA Stakeholder Engagement – ESFA), Alison Enever (Head of Special School Transformation), Helean Hughes (Director – Education and Skills), Cllr Laura Mayes (Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Skills), Cate Mullen (Head of Inclusion & SEND), Lisa Pullin (Democratic Services Officer), Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education)

24 Election of Chair

Resolved:

The Forum agreed to appoint Neil Baker as Chair of Schools Forum for 2020/21.

25 Election of Vice Chair

Resolved:

The Forum agreed to appoint Lisa Percy as Vice Chair of Schools Forum for 2020/21.

26 Apologies and Changes to Membership

Apologies were received from the following Forum members: Jon Hamp (Lynn Yendle in his place), Denise Lloyd and Nigel Roper.

Apologies were also received from the following Wiltshire Council Officers – Helen Jones (Director – Commissioning) and Lucy Townsend (Interim Corporate Director – People).

Membership changes

Georgina (George) Keily-Theobald who is the new maintained special school representative, (replacing Phil Cook) was welcomed to the Forum.

27 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

It was highlighted that there was a transposing error on page 4 of the minutes of the last meeting. Under minute number 16 (Dedicated Schools Budget – Provisional Outturn Budget Monitoring 2019/20) the first key point to be amended to read as below:

Provisional outturn for the financial year 2019/20 – overall overspend was just over £9M. This was essentially an overspend on High Needs coupled with an underspend on school's block, which was largely due to the growth fund. The early years block overspend was due to a larger take up of the scheme than we had funding for.

Resolved:

That the Chairman sign the minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2020 subject to the agreed changes above being made.

28 **Chair's Announcements**

The Chair made the following announcements:

Review of Membership

The Clerk had contacted PHF, WASSH and WGA to ask them to confirm their representatives for Schools Forum for this year. There was one change from WASSH to swap over the maintained special school representative as highlighted earlier in the meeting. PHF did not wish to make any changes. WGA have been reminded that there is still a vacancy for a Primary School Governor. (The Head of Governor Services is in contact with the WGA to arrange for the vacancy to be filled.)

On 30 September 2020, Grant Davis carried out a review of the proportion/membership of Schools Forum. He has looked at the October 2019 census information and updated it for academy conversions since the census was taken. He has concluded that at the present time he would not suggest a change in membership and would look to review this again in the new year, once a verified copy of the October 2020 census information is available. It is anticipated that the most probable change which would take place is that there is a move to the Primary School ratio from 4:2 for maintained schools to academies, to a ratio of 3:3. An update will be provided for the Forum's meeting on 21 January 2021.

Admissions Appeals – Charging Update

The survey to ascertain schools' interest in purchasing the local authority admissions appeals was extended to take account of COVID workloads in schools.

A number of schools had responded to the survey and there was no indication from interest received to date that resources at the local authority would need to be extended. If schools subsequently wish to purchase this service it is possible that the team will be unable to fulfil this however, they are committed to working flexibly to support as many schools as possible. A full update report would be shared at Schools Forum at the December meeting.

Local governance procedure is that charging for a new service requires a Cabinet Member decision. This is a legal process with timelines associated. It has therefore been decided to charge at current rates for the rest of this financial year whilst that decision is ratified. The majority of appeals will need to be heard in the next financial year when the new rates will apply to all schools.

Comfort break

As the Agenda was quite lengthy it was agreed that a 5-minute comfort break would be factored in at an appropriate point.

29 **Declaration of Interests**

There were no interests declared.

30 **Updates from Working Groups**

The Forum noted the update received by way of the minutes of the meeting of the School Funding and SEN working group held on 5 October 2020. There were no questions arising.

The Forum noted the update received by way of the minutes of the meetings of the Early Years Reference Group meetings held on 10 and 24 June, 15 July, 10 and 30 September.

It was noted that the date on the minutes of 30 September should be amended to read 30 September (not 10 September).

An early year's representative asked if the DfE adjustment of £539k which wrote off the overspend in the 2019/20 year was credited into the early years budget for 2020/21. Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education) reported that she would respond to that as part of her budget monitoring update in Agenda item 9.

Resolved:

That Schools Forum note the minutes of the joint meeting of the School Funding and SEN working group held on 5 October 2020 and the Early Years Reference group meetings held on 10 and 24 June, 15 July, 10 and 30 September 2020, subject to the minor amendments of the meeting date on the minutes of 30 September 2020.

31 **Schools Revenue Surplus and Deficit Balances 2019/20**

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 2020 and identified those schools in surplus and deficit. Grant highlighted the following:

- The number of LA maintained schools had decreased from 140 to 130 between 31 March 2019 and 31 March 2020 with 5 schools converting to the Equa MAT on 1 April 2019 and 5 more schools converting to academies during the 2019/20 financial year;
- Last year at this time it was reported that the value of surpluses was £10.29 million and 16 schools were in deficit to a value of £3.668 million;
- Surplus balances for primary schools dropped from £9.268 million in 2018/19 to £8.611 million in 2019/20. The Special Schools deficit balance dropped from £80k to £47k;
- Appendix 1 to the report detailed the revenue surplus and deficit balances for individual schools. Local Authorities can be asked to provide further information to the DfE if they have
 - i) At least 3 schools that have had a surplus of 15% or more for the last 5 years of at least £10k;
 - ii) Schools that have had a deficit of 2.5% or more for the last 4 years and the individual deficit is at least £10k each year
- Appendices 3 and 4 showed that an investigation may be triggered by the DfE as 8 schools have held revenue balances of 15% or more and 5 schools have held deficit balances of more than 2.5% and £10k for the last 4 years;
- The net revenue balance of £6.44 million in 2019/20 had decreased by 2.78% from the 2018/19 balance of £6.62 million; and
- The number of schools in deficit had increased from 16 in 2018/19 to 20 in 2019/20 but the overall gross value of the deficit has decreased. The number of schools in surplus had decreased from 124 to 110 and the overall gross value of the surplus had decreased.

A Forum member asked Gemma Donnelly (ESFA) her if she was aware of what an investigation from the DfE would entail? Gemma reported that she was not

involved in that area of work, but she anticipated that it would trigger a letter to ascertain why there were surplus balances as schools should be spending their allocated budgets. They would wish to know if there was plans for spend and if that was the reasons why balances were being held. Similarly, for deficit schools the DfE would like to have discussions for recovery/management action plans.

It was reported that Grant Davis and his team work very closely with School Effectiveness and any schools that are struggling with their budgets to ensure a combined approach. Grant reported that the revenue funding news to be shared later in the meeting would help schools.

Resolved:

That Schools Forum note the report.

32 **Dedicated Schools Budget - Budget Monitoring 2020/21**

Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education) referred to the budget monitoring report as at 31 August 2020 that was circulated with the Agenda. Marie highlighted the following:

- An overspend of £8.618 million was currently projected against the overall DSG budget;
- Covid had created uncertainty around early years and settings were expected to step up and for the first part of the summer terms, to open up only for children of key workers, those that were vulnerable (Social Worker involvement) and those that had an EHCP. Locally it was agreed that open settings would be paid at 100% with additional incentive payments of £100 per child per week to fund the additional costs of PPE and cleaning. Closed settings were paid at 80%. A hardship fund was set up for closed settings who evidenced financial hardship due to Covid – luckily the take up for that wasn't huge;
- From 1 June it was expected that all settings would be open, and payments continued at 100% for open and 80% for closed settings. Broadly the same number of children are currently in setting as were in Autumn 2019, however dual placements were not currently recommended, and some settings have above average reduced hours and some increased hours. Obviously, the children in settings require funding at the usual rate in order for them to staff appropriately. For some providers seeing a temporary dip, support payments were being made at current hourly rates;
- The LA has a duty of sufficiency for the early years sector and was working closely with providers to provide the support that they were able to within the terms and conditions of the grant funding;

- Due to the uncertainty no variance was forecast on the budgets for free entitlement for 15- and 30-hours childcare, however the modelling included a contingency sum. Officers did not want to fully allocate the budget to have it taken away as the variance next year;
- The high needs budgets are projected to overspend by £11.003 million – the biggest areas of overspend are the Independent Special School packages, NPA's and top ups;
- Whilst the number of EHCP's had increased, there had been a slight dip because of Covid with the increase being 11% compared to 12% last year. 4,289 EHCP's are forecast by the end of the financial year;
- The DSG reserve brought forward of £11.350 million is increased by the positive early years block adjustment of £0.539 million. The forecast overspend would take the reserve into a deficit position of £19.429. This is a major financial risk which is highlighted on the LA's risk register;
- The impact of Covid on the LA's finances is significant and a significant overspend on the Council's general position is anticipated at the end of the financial year; and
- From 2018/19 the DfE have tightened the rules around deficits and require a report from the LA to explain their plans for bringing the DSG account back into balance. With effect from 2020/21 the DfE during expanded the requirements around deficits and these would be outlined later in the meeting, but there was more of an acceptance that there would need to be a longer-term plan for recovery.

An early year's representative reported that he had written to Emily Arch (Senior Policy Advisor – DfE) expressing concern at the future years sustainability of the early years sector across the county, copying in Wiltshire MP's but had not had a response yet.

The Chair asked if there were any known local Schools with increased financial pressures because of Covid. Grant Davis responded that a number of schools had reduced some costs as they had not had to incur supply teaching costs, overtime etc, whilst others did have additional costs relating to PPE and enhanced cleaning. Since the September return to school some had expressed concern about the costs of PPE and sanitisers etc with there being no offsetting saving and those who have staff who are pregnant who are not able to be teaching in classes and there was no additional funding for those circumstances. Grant highlighted that the F40 group were continuing to work to address funding pressures.

Helean Hughes (Director – Education & Skills) reported that from the weekly updates they receive from the DfE they are keen to hear about Schools feeling pressures. It was suggested that Schools Forum members should consider any schools that they were aware of facing pressures and ask for clear details/case

studies of real events that have impacted on a school to submit to the DfE, e.g. deep cleaning costs incurred in the event of Covid cases and additional staffing needs etc. It was agreed that Grant Davis would send a communication via Rightchoice to ask Schools to share their experiences of additional costs.

Resolved:

That Schools Forum note the budget monitoring position at the end of August 2020 alongside the reports later on the agenda focussing on the high needs block recovery working group, the changes in DfE recovery planning requirements around the DSG deficit and the School Revenue Funding 2021/22.

33 Update from High Needs Working Group and Individual Savings Plans

Helean Hughes (Director of Education and Skills) referred to the report contained in Agenda Supplement 1 which updated the Forum on behalf of the High Needs Working Group who were addressing the budget pressures within the high needs budget. Helean highlighted the following:

- The Working Group had last met in early September and were due to meet again on 12 November 2020;
- The Council's SEND Inclusion Strategy for 2020/2023 was co-produced and was agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board in September 2020 and included 6 priority areas. The Inclusion and SEND implementation plan had been developed with partners to address the priorities and the SEND Board would be monitoring the progress of the plan;
- Alison Enever was appointed as Head of Special Schools Transformation in March 2020 and Cate Mullen was appointed as new Head of Inclusion and SEND in September 2020;
- ISOS (consultants) continue to work with the LA and a Strategic Lead had been appointed;
- 97 additional resource base and Special School places were achieved in 2019/20 and 66 places to be added during 2020/21. The free school application was successful in Salisbury and £33 million was approved by Cabinet to provide the System of Excellence which included the creation of the North Wiltshire Special School;
- The number of EHCP's continued to increase and the high needs block was forecast to overspend at £11 million;
- The long term 10-year high needs recovery plan (which assumed a £5 million increase in funding year on year) showed that the movement on the DSG reserve would not start to shift until the latter end of the 10-year period; and

- The High Needs Working Group would be overseeing the implementation and impact of the financial recovery plan. A number of planned initiatives had been delayed due to Covid, but most were now back up and running

Councillor Jane Davies referred to the list of Local Authorities with deficits (Wiltshire being 66th on the list) and asked Gemma Donnelly (DfE) what plans were in place to address this and when they might happen. Gemma responded that the party line was that they were aware that the high needs issues were massive and that it was a ministerial priority and that was shown by the increased funding that was received this year but there were no promises as yet if that were to continue. The issue was not going away and was on the radar of the ministers and the Secretary of State. There was currently a spending review going on and the Department were in talks with the Treasury to ascertain their envelope of funding before this could be passed down to LA's and then schools. High needs were already on the agenda and then Covid hit and they were aware that schools were having additional costs and the DfE would be gathering evidence of that. Although they could not guarantee the £5 million funding, there was no appetite within the department for the funding to be reduced although there were obviously demands from other departments because of Covid and that should be borne in mind. The High Needs spending review was delayed slightly because of Covid but the green paper should be out this side of Christmas. They had submitted a bid for High Needs capital and had good evidence to support that.

The Chair reported that it was continually hard to report an overspend on the High Needs block when in reality it was underfunded in the first place and that 50% of the pot related to historic spend and not current need. And previously that the budget had been based on children aged 5 -16 and then moved from 0 to 25. He felt that it was hard for the Director of Education & Skills to manage such a tricky budget that was underfunded rather than a mismanagement of the budget.

Helean reported that she was glad to hear from Gemma about the bid for capital for high needs and asked how that might be accessed/allocated. Gemma confirmed that this was currently being considered by the Department as to the best process for this.

Councillor Laura Mayes asked if the DfE acknowledged the level of work that Wiltshire were doing to try and make systemic change and improvements to SEND. Gemma confirmed that the DfE were aware of this and following her discussions with Officers prior to the meeting she noted that the authority had a good grasp of its pressures and had a good handle on that. This was appreciated by the Department.

Resolved:

That Schools Forum note the update report on the high needs' budgets.

34 High Needs Funding 2021/22

Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education) referred to the report which outlined the content of the DfE’s operational guidance on High Needs funding for the 2021/22 year. Marie highlighted the following:

- Updates to funding rates are usually announced late in the autumn but it was good to receive news of the allocation in July this year and this was an uplift of £5.5 million which was really welcomed;
- The DfE had also confirmed that they have a limited budget to support those LA’s with the largest proportional deficits – Wiltshire had been assessed as being 66th on the list and for this year the top 6 LA’s were receiving support. We hope that the additional funding would help with the historic deficit and that will be ongoing and that we may move up the list to receive further support; and
- Any LA with an overall deficit on its DSG reserve at the end of the 2019/20 financial year must present a plan to the DfE for managing their future DSG spend, moving away from the expectation that there should be a balanced position within 3 years;
- The DfE had designed a management plan template to help LA’s develop evidence based and strategic plans covering the provision available for children and young people with SEND. This was a good tool to manage the issues and would be shared at the next meeting of the Forum and regularly thereafter.

The Chair asked if the list of LA’s that were in deficit was a published document as he would be interested to find out about the other LA’s on the list to find out if they were local to Wiltshire and may be in a position to share any experiences/knowledge. Gemma Donnelly (DfE) confirmed that the document was not currently published as it was currently based on the draft LA’s accounts – the final accounts were pushed back because of Covid.

The Chair felt that the deficit list reemphasised that high needs is underfunded if the deficits to the DSG are because of high needs and that we are amongst many others LA’s in the same position and it would be useful to know who they are to see if there could be some learning from statistical neighbours etc as to why they are in the position they are in. Gemma reported that the management plan that had been referred to earlier would contain the details of statistical and geographic neighbours so that should be useful for your focus and see who you might partner with and show you where you sit with your outliers.

Gemma reported that there were also a number of LA’s working well within high needs budgets and some having surpluses but accepted that it is harder to turn around a position of deficit than to continue to maintain a surplus budget.

The Chair responded that he felt it still comes down to the original point that it is “the size of the tanker (ours was very small in the first place) and to then have

to take extra load means it is much harder to sail". He would still push it back and felt that it would be useful to find out from those LA's that do have surplus balances to see if their percentage of spend against their income and their needs maybe we could learn from them.

Gemma confirmed that her department were looking at that and that it is not always about a financial thing – as she could see from Wiltshire's recovery plan it has been acknowledged that it is also about culture and systemic change within the authority.

Marie reported that the F40 group had circulated a questionnaire and other authorities were continuing to collate information and so there would be other "unofficial data" which could inform some of our planning whilst we wait for the information to be shared by the DfE.

Marie reported that during the very useful meeting held with Gemma she highlighted that we may want to consider the marketing of the LA's provision in a positive way and speaking to adults who had previously used our own special school provision, but overall it was reassuring to hear that Gemma thought that we were taking the right actions/making the right approaches.

Resolved:

That Schools Forum note the report.

35 **Special School Update**

Alison Enever (Head of Special School Transformation) gave an update on Special Schools and highlighted the following:

- North Wiltshire School had opened as a single school operating over the three existing sites of Rowdeford, Larkrise and St Nicholas on 1st September. A permanent name would be selected through engagement with pupils, staff, parents and carers and governors, and was expected to be announced by Christmas;
- Sean McKeown started on 1st September as Interim Executive Headteacher and was providing leadership and capacity to support the transformation work;
- The Full Governing Board had been formed for the new school and begun to meet;
- A series of co-production workshops to develop a design for the new build on the Rowde site was underway. Workshops were being attended by parents and carers, staff and governors and were being delivered in partnership with Willmott Dixon, the main construction partner for the new build project;

- Co-design work was also taking place with pupils, being supported by school staff, and the content of this is mirroring the co-production workshops;
- There was a continual focus on keeping people informed and engaged on the programme with a programme update alternating monthly with a full stakeholder newsletter;
- They were continuing to work closely with colleagues in Education to take forward the work on the System of Excellence to deliver an even stronger and inclusion-focused offer across both special schools and mainstream for children with SEND, in line with the SEND Inclusion Strategy; and
- They were working in partnership with Reach South Academy Trust and the Department for Education to support a feasibility study to assess the potential of the UTC building on Wilton Road, Salisbury, as the site of the new SEND free school for south Wiltshire.

Resolved:

That Schools Forum note the update on Special Schools.

A brief comfort break was held between 3.10pm and 3.15pm.

36 **School Revenue Funding 2021/22**

Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) referred to the report which sought to update the Forum on the content of the DfE's operational guidance on School Revenue funding for the 2021/22 year. Grant highlighted the following:

- The operational guidance for school revenue funding would normally be announced in the autumn/winter but this year the funding proposal for 2020/21 was received at the end of July which provides Schools Forum and the schools with a greater lead in period of making strategic decisions. The DfE had confirmed their commitment to move to a "hard" National Funding Formula (NFF) in the future but no date is confirmed yet;
- Indicative figures (based on the October 2019 census) were shared showing the anticipated DSG allocations going into 2021/22. It was noted that the schools block and high needs block would receive an uplift of 3.4% and 10.66% respectively and the central block would receive a slight reduction. The early years settlement had not yet been received;
- The Teachers Pay and Pension grants would cease to be paid as separate grants at the end of the 2020/21 year but would be built into the core baseline funding for schools. The good news is that we had

expected the Teachers Pay Grant to cease at the end of the 2020/21 year;

- Overall, there would be roughly a 4% uplift in the LA's funding for the overall DSG next year;
- The AWPU rates would be increased by £180 for primary and £265 for secondary schools in recognition of the ceasing of the Teachers Pay and Pension Grants;
- The minimum per pupil funding levels would be set at £4,180 in primary and £5,415 in secondary schools;
- There would be a 3% increase in the school's formula core pupil and school led factors;
- Premises factors would be funded at the LA level without inflationary increases;
- The IDACI funding had been refreshed;
- There would be an increase in the maximum primary sparsity funding for primary schools from £26k to £45k. All schools should see an increase in their core funding by at least 2%. It was not yet known what the growth funding would look like this year, but protection was being put in place such that no LA should lose out on this because of a drop in growth in their areas;
- Based on the DSG Schools block allocation indication received, less the growth fund and any transfer to other blocks, Officers believe that the allocation should be fully affordable to fund our schools. De-delegation would be discussed later in the meeting;
- Schools Forum would need to consider this year the introduction of the Mobility Factor – last year it was agreed that this would not be introduced, and it freed up £571k that was used to transfer to the high needs block. It was felt at that time that many of the schools affected by the mobility factor were of a service nature and the MOD's have their own Education Support Fund to access and that was one of the key reasons why this was not implemented previously;
- The DfE were increasing the funding available through Sparsity and would be reviewing their support for small rural schools with a consultation out later in the year which would be shared with the Forum;
- The Split site allowance question would be dealt with in a separate report later in the meeting;

- Under the latest guidance we will still be able to transfer up to 0.5% of the school's block allocation to other blocks and historically the LA had done that, and Schools Forum would be asked to consider that at a future meeting;
- These questions were being posed now to allow time for any members to make any observations, raise questions before the points are considered at the School Funding Working Group and Schools Forum meetings in December 2020;

A Secondary School representative asked if the Teachers Pay and Pension grants would remain visible (on a separate line) within the funding to ensure schools can see that it is there. Grant Davis responded that it this amount would not be shown separately as the DfE had decided to include it in the baseline figures, but they had checked that it was included. However, this was good news as it was assumed that this grant would not continue beyond this year. The decision to include it as part of the AWPU per pupil funding ensured the funding would be baselined and continued for all future years.

A Special School representative asked about the Teachers Pay and Pension grants to Special Schools and how they would be reflected in their funding. Grant Davis reported that they were awaiting clarification from the DfE as to how this should be paid but confirmed that they would receive a £660 per place uplift as part of this payment.

The diocesan representative wished to make Schools Forum aware that there was a predominance of small rural schools in Wiltshire/Dorset so for those schools the sparsity factor was a big issue. Nationally there are about 33% of small rural schools – the South West figure was 52% factor. There was a key risk around the small rural schools and keeping that education to a good standard, so it was urged for forum members and their groups to look out for the consultation when it was issued and to respond as appropriate.

Resolved:

That Schools Forum note the report.

37 **Annual Schools Consultation - Delegation of Central Expenditure 2021/22**
Transfer of Schools Block to High Needs Block

Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) referred to the report which sought to brief Schools Forum about the proposed consultation to schools and to agree the questions to be sent out to schools. Grant highlighted the following:

- De-delegation of a limited number of budgets/services was available to maintained schools only and they would be consulted on their views/wishes for the following to be retained centrally;
 - i) Free School Meal Eligibility Service

- ii) Licences (Access Budget Planning (formerly called HCSS))
 - iii) Trade Union Facilities costs
 - iv) Maternity costs
 - v) Ethnic Minority Achievement Service
 - vi) Travellers Education Service
 - vii) Behaviour Support Service.
- The results of the consultation would then be brought back to Schools Forum for a decision to be made by the maintained schools' representatives.
 - There were a number of options available to the voting representatives. If the consensus is for the LA to de-delegate the above services then they would retain a level of funding and provide the service centrally for the schools and this would also guarantee a level of service;
 - Appendix 1 lists the questions that will form part of the consultation – this is a simple form that asks if each service should be delegated or retain centrally for the LA to provide;
 - Appendix 2 letter sets out a letter received from Trade Unions who have written to the LA to pass on to their Schools Forums their request that you continue to support de-delegation;

A maintained primary school representative asked if it would be possible to include on the consultation form the value of budgets available so that schools could assess if they were not looking to delegate the service what effect that would have on their individual budgets and a figure to show what percentage of a schools budget share was given to the de-delegate services. Grant confirmed that this information could be included.

- Last year the Forum had agreed to transfer £2 million (0.7%) from the Schools block to the high needs block but this disapplication request was denied by the Secretary of State who agreed to a 0.5% or £1.465 million transfer;
- As highlighted earlier there was an increase in funding coming through from schools funding and the high needs block which sees £700 million of funding for high needs of which Wiltshire's share will be £5.5 million. Our DSG reserve is in a deficit position as we move forward, currently showing as £11.3 million and likely to move upwards;
- There will need to be a discussion on Schools views on transferring the funding across from the school's block to help with high needs and there were a range of options set out in the questionnaire in Appendix 3. The per pupil values of any proposed transfer had been included. If the DfE were consistent that they would only allow a transfer of up to 0.5% then that would equate to a value of £21.90 per pupil;

- The consultation would give schools the opportunity to express their views and suggest any other ideas to fill the funding gap for high needs;

A secondary academy representative suggested that there could be an indication of what a transfer would mean for the high needs deficit over time e.g. if all things remained the same then a transfer of for example 0.5% would mean that the deficit would be addressed in x number of years. For schools a transfer would be affecting their budgets but if they could see what a difference it may make it may be better understood. what a difference it would make – it means that at this rate in 5 years at this rate in 10 years.

Marie Taylor reported that in the high needs recovery plan they had assumed a 0.5% transfer based on the decision taken by the Secretary of State last year to not go above this percentage and it was assumed that this approach would continue. Also, to remember is that when the NFF hard formula is implemented Officers believe that the LA would lose the ability to transfer between blocks – at present there is a lot unknown. However, Marie felt it would be possible to include information about the impact on the high needs block in future years within the questionnaire.

The Chair asked for clarification – if 100% of schools agreed to a £2 million transfer between blocks – then he assumed that would not be agreed by the Secretary of State. Grant responded that the authority would need to have a very compelling argument for it to transfer above the 0.5% as in the last financial year only two LA's did transfer above 0.5%. Unless they LA could show that all schools in Wiltshire were supporting a higher transfer it would be quite tricky to argue. It was probably more about sending the message that we would want the 0.5% being added to the high needs budget as there were funding issues there so that they had that clear message from us.

The Chair felt that having an option to support more than a 0.5% transfer was not really within the schools' gift but that it would show if there was significant support in Wiltshire for a bigger transfer.

Marie Taylor clarified that if schools voted against a higher transfer then the Secretary of State would definitely not support a disapplication request and even with schools support last year the application was still not approved. The questionnaire would be sent out to schools after half term.

Resolved:

That Schools Forum:

- i) **Agree the consultation questions for maintained schools around delegation/de-delegation of budgets for central services within the schools' block as set out in Appendix 1, subject to the inclusion of values of delegation as requested.**
- ii) **Agree the consultation questions for all schools around setting the 2021/22 Schools Budget as set out in Appendix 3, subject to the**

inclusion of detail of the impacts of the high needs deficit in future years.

38 Split Site Funding Allowance 2021-22

Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) referred to the report which sought to update Schools Forum on the split site allowance for schools in Wiltshire. Grant highlighted the following:

- The use of a split site allowance for mainstream schools was an optional factor and was used to support a single school operating over two separate sites;
- The current criteria for schools in receipt of a split site allowance was agreed by Schools Forum in December 2017;
- There were currently 6 primary and no secondaries operating over a split site in Wiltshire;
- The current level of funding was set at £65,000 for primary and £100,000 for secondary schools. Following the introduction of the NFF the differentiation between primary and secondary lump sum allowances was removed with both being funded at £110,000;
- The difference between the split site allowance and the lump sum for primary schools used to be £20,000 (£85k lump sum and £65k split site allowance). The split site funding equated to 76.5% of the lump sum;
- Following the introduction of the NFF, the lump sum increased to £110,000 and the difference between the lump sum and split site allowance increased to £45,000 (for 2021-22 will be £52,800 less than the lump sum). Aligning the split site allowance to the lump sum, based upon the NFF lump sum for 2021-22, would increase the split site allowance to £90,000. Keeping the split site allowance aligned to the lump sum would ensure that the allowance keeps apace with NFF movements;
- The difference between the lump sum and the split site allowance acts as a disincentive to small schools when considering their future structuring options as the loss of the lump sum overshadows the additional split site funding which would be received
- The DfE fund Wiltshire on the basis of the funding awarded to schools so the impact of uplifting the split site allowance has a neutral impact upon Wiltshire's funding;
- The approach of other LA's varied and some applied a model of a basic lump sum and an amount per pupil put this was more complicated and did not necessarily reflect the true additional costs;

- Schools Forum were being asked to consider retaining the status quo or agreeing to align the split site allowances at 76.5% of the lump sum value.

A Special School Governor representative asked what this meant for Special Schools, especially as the new North Wiltshire School was spread over 3 sites. Grant Davis reported that this allowance was only in relation to mainstream schools and they were not able to give out a split site allowance for special schools. Instead, a top-up rate which reflects the additional costs of the school is applied.

The diocesan representative felt that this was a positive step and his view was that the Forum should support the increase to 76.5% allowance as the schools affected are small rural schools that do have cost pressures and as reported earlier this would be funded and so it was a neutral cost implication for the LA.

The Chair reported that this conclusion was echoed by the Members at the School Funding Working Group and he felt that it was important to follow the sentiments of that group and agree to align the split site allowance to the lump sum value.

Resolved:

That Schools Forum agree to align the split site allowances at 76.5% of the lump sum value.

39 Update on Covid - Exceptional Payments and Catch-up Monies

Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) gave a verbal update on exceptional payments and catch up monies related to Covid. Grant highlighted the following:

- For schools that had incurred exceptional costs due to Covid between March and July 2020 the DfE had now paid out for claims for premises costs, free school meal costs and additional cleaning costs;
- Claims which included “other costs” outside of the categories above were still being considered by the DfE and the outcomes were awaited. There was also pressure on the DfE to put in funding for the autumn term too;
- The DfE were also looking to open a window of time for claims to be made for additional costs that were incurred at the time (March to July 2020);
- In respect of the Coronavirus Catch-Up Premium, a £1 billion funding package had been allocated for the 2020/21 academic year with £650 million being allocated to schools and £350 million for the National Tutoring Programme;

- The payments for the school's allocations would be made in 3 tranches (autumn/spring and summer terms) and would be a total of £80 per pupil for mainstream schools and £240 per place for special schools; and
- Academies should receive their payments direct from the DfE and for maintained schools this would be passed on as soon it was received by the LA.

Resolved:

That Schools Forum note the update on Covid payments and catch up monies.

40 **F40 Update**

Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) referred to the report which sought to update the Forum on the work of the f40 group. Grant highlighted the following:

- A copy of the letter sent by the f40 group collectively to the DfE on the impact of Covid on school and education funding was included in the agenda. The letter highlighted that the existing issues were exacerbated, sought clarity of guidance around costs that could be reclaimed, gave details of additional costs for which they felt additional financial support should be offered, highlighted additional teaching costs, the loss of income for schools who lost their private income streams, sought further information on the Catch-up grant and asked about support/discretion for the September return to school. It was felt that this was a really good letter that clearly set out the evidence for its concerns.

Resolved:

That Schools Forum note the f40 update.

41 **Confirmation of Dates for Future Meetings**

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

10 December 2020
21 January 2021
11 March 2021.

42 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 1.30 - 4.20 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

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Schools Forum

School Funding and SEN Working Group

MS TEAMS MEETING

30th November 2020

Minutes

Present: Marie Taylor (Chair), (Finance, local authority (LA)), Grant Davis (Finance, LA), Neil Baker (Christchurch), John Hawkins (Teacher / Governor rep), Catriona Williamson (Mere), Andy Bridewell (Ludgershall Castle), Lisa Percy (Hardenhuish), Sam Churchill (Hilmarton), Helean Hughes (Director LA) Cate Mullen (Head of Inclusion & SEND, LA), Rebecca Carson (Woodford Valley)

Apologies: Gary Binstead (Children's Commissioning LA)

1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies Apologies were received from GB above. MT explained to the group that Phil Cook had not yet been replaced for the working group however, steps would be taken to address this.</p>	MT
2.	<p>Minutes from previous meeting The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted.</p>	
3.	<p>Matters Arising There were no matters arising.</p>	
4.	<p>Budget Monitoring for the period to 31st October 2020 (MT)</p> <p>MT shared her report with the group. The forecast overspend for 20/21 is £9.105m.</p> <p>Highlights: Early Years - the DfE's adjustment for 19-20 was a positive £0.539m. This reflects the overspend in 2019-20. In addition, the in-year adjustment was a positive £0.943M. MT described the updated guidance and payments for providers around COVID to support the local authority's sustainability duty. No variance is forecast on 2, 3 & 4-year-old grant at this time due to uncertainty around January payments and census data and the local authority commitment to pass the maximum amount of support to providers in the Autumn term whilst there is flexibility within the guidance.</p> <p>School Budgets – the underspend is largely driven by the growth fund and this offsets the DSG overspend position.</p> <p>The HNB forecast overspend is £11.588m – again, based on higher numbers of EHCPS and levels of support requested. This forecast includes an estimate of future growth based on historical trend. The pressures on the HNB continue and the HNB working group will be prioritising demand management, savings projects, commissioning and spend controls.</p>	

	<p>Of major concern is the impact of this on the DSG deficit reserve balance which is held in the local authority's balance sheet. The reserve balance is now forecast to be £19.916m.</p> <p>This overspend will continue to be cash flowed by the local authority as per the DfE guidance.</p>	
5.	<p>Update from High Needs Working Group & Individual Savings Plans (HH)</p> <p>HH took the group through the minutes of the last meeting. COVID had inevitably caused delay to some projects and timelines will need to be recalculated. CM to progress with colleagues.</p> <p>Post 16 pathways to adulthood to be used to update plan</p> <p>AP work led by Vicky Dunncliffe is going well</p> <p>JH asked a question around pressures on the ISS budget, HH shared an extract from the work Lisa Fryer is leading on HH suggested LF attends a future SF or SFWG to explain progress and MT pointed out there have been £266k of costs avoided to date with this programme and suggested as have a "spotlight" on each of the workstreams so that SF can have a full understanding of the approach and successes. The group agreed.</p> <p>NB queried whether when an ISS is in a category, can they really meet need. LF will be able to update.</p> <p>RC asked what position other LAS were facing and MT responded that the majority of other LAS are in similar positions and the DfE appear to accept that there is a national funding shortfall and that although these pressures seem large to us, we are ranked 66th in the DfE's list and they have this year, provided additional DSG to the top 6 LAS.</p> <p>HH has made contact with Northumberland (Northumberland, Thurrock and Wolverhampton were identified by the DfE as LA's who had recovered from a DSG deficit reserve and of those three, Northumberland is statistically the most similar to Wiltshire.)</p>	<p>HH</p> <p>HH / (LD)</p> <p>HH</p>
6	<p>Schools Revenue Funding 21-22 (GD) Results of Autumn Consultations De-delegated Services (maintained schools) Transfer from Schools Block (all mainstream schools)</p> <p>GD took us through his paper.</p> <p>There was an overwhelming support (33/33 responses) to continue with all de-delegated services for 21-22. There were 22 responses to the transfer consultation, 15/22 supported the transfer and 4/22 preferred a hybrid model. No heads supported a % reduction in top ups.</p> <p>SF can approve a transfer of up to 0.5% this would be approximately £1.4 / £1.5M. The funding could be found as below</p> <p>GD initial modelling – the NFF will be affordable</p> <p>Mobility £571k freed up if we do not apply this factor again</p> <p>Sparsity £220k freed up if we do not apply the increase and retain the 20-21 funding rates.</p> <p>The balance would be found from available headroom or surplus Growth funding.</p> <p>LP pointed out that the NFF must be affordable before transfers are made and this is understood.</p>	

	<p>NB said group felt the historical model to exclude mobility and not apply increased sparsity would reflect Wiltshire's needs and asked GD to add a note to the report to refer back to the historical decisions.</p> <p>The report proposal is for SF to agree in principle in December to allow fewer modelling options at the January meeting.</p> <p>NB agreed an approach for fewer modelling options would be beneficial.</p>	
7	<p>The Growth Fund 21-22 (GD)</p> <p>GD took us through his report which included discussion of 'Falling Rolls Fund'.</p> <p>No change is proposed to the current methodology. A final DfE announcement on allocation is anticipated late December, based on the October 2020 census data. This is likely to be lower than 20-21 – this was a particularly high allocation due to the army pupils returning to Wiltshire.</p>	
8	<p>CSSB Update Report 21-22 (MT)</p> <p>MT took us through her report which explained the decisions SF will need to make when setting the budget for 2021-22 financial year.</p> <p>MT has made assumptions around licences and pay inflation which are subject to final confirmations. The CSSB historical allocation is reducing year on year by 20% and therefore the amount of CERA has been reduced to balance. Should the School Effectiveness grant not be received, the CSSB will need review and the transfer to HNB may not be possible.</p>	
9	<p>Early Years Update Report 21-22 (MT)</p> <p>MT took us through her brief report on EY which outlined the recent announcements in the Spending Review. This is good news for the EY sector which has seen a significant amount of turbulence through the pandemic. The EY provisional 21-22 allocations are not yet available.</p>	
10	<p>High Needs Update Report 21-22 (MT)</p> <p>MT took us through her report which explained the estimates of pressures on the HNB for 21-22 financial year. The provisional allocation, savings plans and potential transfers from other blocks will leave a shortfall of £8.091M which cannot be managed. This pressure is in line with recent financial years.</p> <p>Appendix 1 shows the make up of the HNB clock funding – 36% of Wiltshire's funding is calculated using historical data – our rising EHCP numbers means there is a shortfall in funding. Interestingly, average LAS have a historical funding level of 33%.</p> <p>Appendix 2 details the assumptions made in the HNB budget modelling.</p>	

11	<p>Verbal Update – COVID Costs & Funding for Schools (GD)</p> <p>GD updated the group on the funding from the DfE to support schools There is a particular issue around steep rises in numbers of children in receipt of FSM and the funding lag. GD had calculated this to be a minimum of £1.4m. Schools have received Summer term claims for cleaning and PPE however, additional claims for “other” we believe are being challenged and refused. The information will support further lobbying by the LA and the F40 group.</p> <p>GD shared a recent press release from Gavin Williamson around additional funding for the second half of the Autumn term (which means that September and October are not covered) there are new parameters around claims which will restrict schools claims. LP said it was very frustrating that schools who had reserves were punished for careful budget management</p>	
12	<p>F40 Letter (GD)</p> <p>GD shared the letter from the F40 with the group re: a campaign for financial support for schools (attached to minutes)</p>	
13	<p>Admissions Appeals (HH)</p> <p>Unfortunately, HH was called away to another meeting and so MT presented the paper around charging for appeals and the challenges that poses. Another paper will come to the January meeting with 21-22 charges which, can be updated for virtual appeals (lower cost to pass onto schools) Discussions continue with the LA around subsidies. NB asked what powers the LA had to intervene when a school goes over PAN? MT apologised for not knowing the details, but this could be responded to at SF NB suggested if no / limited powers, then a positional statement should be drafted to state the expectations. MT agreed to take forward with the service.</p>	<p>HH</p> <p>MT</p>
14	<p>Scheme for Financing Maintained Schools</p> <p>GD explained that he was finalising an updated scheme for the relationship between the LA and maintained schools, a requirement prescribed by the DfE. The new set of regulations for maintained schools will be taken out to consultation and presented to and signed off by Schools Forum GD explained that a more user-friendly version will be created to help schools with understanding the statutory regulations.</p>	GD
12	<p>AOB</p> <p>There was no AOB</p>	
11	<p><i>Date and Time of Next Meeting</i></p> <p>Next meeting – date provisionally set at: Monday 11th January 2021 @ 8.30am. This is planned as a virtual teams meeting.</p> <p>Next Schools Forum meeting Thursday 10th December 2020 @ 1.30pm. This is planned as a virtual teams meeting.</p>	



FACT: Ambitious Transformation Through Partnership

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide an update to Schools Forum on the multi-agency Families and Children's Transformation programme.

2. BACKGROUND

The Families and Children's Transformation (FACT) Programme is a multi-agency partnership designed to establish and implement integrated systemic approaches that are framed around intervening earlier and building resilience in our communities to support and enable families to care effectively for their children.

As a transformational partnership programme, the benefits from the work undertaken are shared across the whole system improving outcomes for the people of Wiltshire.

The FACT Programme was established in early 2018 to deliver whole system change based on a set of five driving principles:

- 🌱 **Resilient communities with equal opportunity to thrive**
- 🌱 **Help when you need it**
- 🌱 **We are Better Together**
- 🌱 **More time to be with Families**
- 🌱 **Investing in our Staff**

Kindness and care manifests in all the little things we do as part of our daily work with children and families. After listening to vulnerable children and families and understanding how it feels to be supported by our partnership of services, we see that kindness and care means:

- 📌 Not having to frequently repeat my story
- 📌 Making it easy to find the right help, when and where I need it
- 📌 Getting to know me and my family; lots of listening without judging
- 📌 Stop passing me 'from pillar to post', I need you to do something
- 📌 Talking to me in plain English and keeping me in the loop
- 📌 Knowing how to help me help myself and help me dream big
- 📌 Don't use rigid criteria to keep me out of services – trust me when I say I need help
- 📌 Staying with me and never giving up on me – I need you to be with me all the way
- 📌 Working well with others who can help too, so everyone knows what they must do

3. ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

Some examples of achievements to date for FACT projects:

- 📌 Launch of the Support and Safeguarding Service
- 📌 Delivery of Multi-agency Early Support Hub
- 📌 Multi agency agreement to a shared way of working within all our 'front doors' to services
- 📌 An early years E-Toolkit for professionals incorporating Making Every Contact Count (MECC)

- Developed strengths-based new safeguarding thresholds guidance
- Implementing a new multi-agency Young People’s Service - incorporating contextual safeguarding
- Embedding Stronger Families (No Wrong Door) for young people on the edge of care
- Agreed the development of Whole-life services for children and adults with learning difficulties/disabilities
- Implementing a new Early Support Assessment
- Implementing the recommendations of the RESET approach to school effectiveness and improvement
- Developing and delivering Five to Thrive: Attachment, Trauma & Resilience training

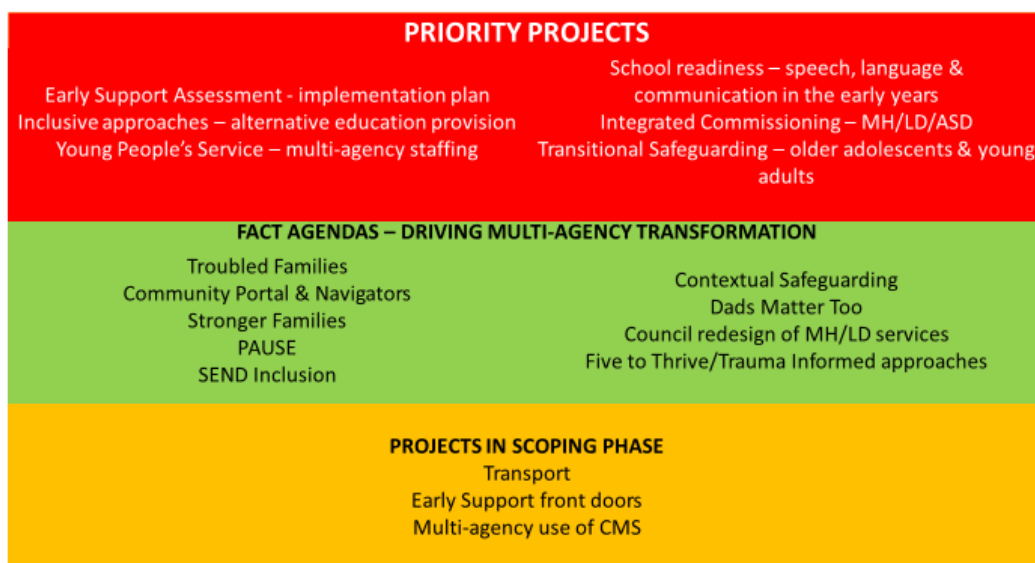
4. UPDATE SINCE LAST REPORT TO SCHOOLS’ FORUM JUNE 2019

Whilst the five driving principles have remained, the programme is constantly evolving as projects have been implemented and as new priorities emerge either based on consultation with families or through robust data analysis.

To ensure the FACT programme remains focussed, effective and true to its core values, we continue to engage regularly with families and children and ensure structured strategic dialogue across the partners to identify ‘wicked issues’ and agendas of mutual priority. The programme structure and priorities have recently been reviewed in the context of post-Covid needs analysis with partners sharing an update on the impact of the Covid period on their service priorities. In accordance with the FACT Executive Board’s challenge to ensure the programme is focussed, manageable, tangible and measurable the future programme structure will be based around the multi-agency agreement on six Priority Projects that will follow the Outcomes-Based Accountability approach.

As well as driving forward the Priority Projects, the FACT Programme also features explicit oversight and monitoring of other transformational projects that are in the implementation or delivery stage and a group of projects that are currently being scoped for potential future development.

PROPOSED PROGRAMME STRUCTURE



5. PRIORITY PROJECTS

The projects are at varied stages of development and operating to different timescales in terms of their predicted end dates. The current focus is on ensuring each project has an effective multi-agency project board driving its progress and a clear set of objectives and milestones.

6. NEXT STEPS

The FACT Operational Board will be undertaking specific reflection activity during the early part of 2021 to ensure that its projects and wider activity continue to drive forward with an updated and informed approach to system-wide transformation. The activity will include a check that all relevant partners are engaged with the programme and, particularly in the context of COVID-19, that the voice of service users is up-to-date to best inform the future activity.

Report Author: Simon Thomas (FACT Programme Lead)

Background papers: none

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Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum Finance & SEN Working Group
30th November 2020

Schools Forum
10th December 2020

DEDICATED SCHOOLS BUDGET – BUDGET MONITORING 2020-21

Purpose of the Report

1. To present budget monitoring information against the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for the financial year 2020-21 as at 31st October 2020.

Main Considerations

2. Appendix 1 to this report outlines the budget monitoring summary as at 31st October 2020.
3. An overspend of £9.105 million is currently projected against the overall schools budget. The main driver for this forecast variance are the on-going pressures on the high needs block, the reasons for these are known and understood. The detailed budget monitoring report is shown in Appendix 1.

Early Years Budgets (Budget £27.827M, forecast variance (0.166M))

4. The pandemic has created much uncertainty around early years and grant guidance around settings has changed following government expectations around opening.
5. Summer Term until 31st May 2020 – the government's expectation was that settings would open to facilitate children of key workers, vulnerable children with a social worker and those children with an education health and care plan. Open settings were paid at 100% with additional incentive payments of £100 per child per week to fund the additional costs of PPE and deep cleaning. Closed settings were paid at 80%. A hardship fund was set up for those closed settings who evidenced financial hardship as a result of COVID19. From 1st June, the Government's expectation was that all settings would be open and therefore payments continued to be made at 100% to open settings and 80% to closed settings with lower payments made to open settings to help fund the additional costs of cleaning and PPE.
6. For the Autumn Term, there have been broadly the same number of children in settings as in the previous Autumn however, dual placements are not currently recommended and therefore some settings have above average reduced hours and some increased hours. Clearly the children in settings require funding at the usual rate in order for them to be able to staff appropriately. No additional payments for PPE and cleaning have been made. For providers who may be seeing a temporary dip, support payments are being made at the current hourly rates, representing above average reductions across the sector over the last three years. Modelling and consultation is currently underway to allocate any surplus funding to settings for the Autumn term.
7. For the Spring Term, the government's expectation is that settings will only be paid for children attending settings.
8. The local authority has a duty of sufficiency in this sector and is working closely with providers to support through these turbulent times, providing additional financial support whilst following the COVID guidance and remaining within the terms and conditions of the grant funding. This means that private income losses cannot be supported.

9. Due to the uncertainty, no variance is forecast on the budgets for the free entitlement for 15 and 30 hours childcare for 2, 3 & 4 year olds however, this will depend on the outcome of the October census, consultation with the sector representatives, increased numbers of children returning to childcare, and children becoming eligible and the DfE's post financial year adjustment which, could be negative if the January 2021 census numbers fall.

	Budgeted PTE	Forecast PTE	Forecast PTE Variance	Budgeted Spend £M	Forecast Spend £M	Forecast spend Variance £M
2 year olds	774	774	Nil	2.382	2.382	Nil
3 & 4 year olds	9,938	9,938	Nil	24.358	24.358	Nil
ISF	447	303	(144)	0.357	0.242	(0.116)

10. The 19-20 adjustment based on the January 2020 census data was an increase of £0.539 million. In addition, the 20-21 allocation increased by £0.943 million. This reflects a higher count of children than the previous year.

Schools Budgets (Budget £293.734M, forecast variance (£2.315M))

11. The forecast underspend on schools largely relates to the schools growth fund which currently shows an underspend and is helping to offset the overall pressure on the DSG.

High Needs Budgets (Budget £51.558M, forecast variance £11.588M)

12. High Needs budgets are projected to overspend by £11.588m. The biggest areas of overspend are Independent Special School packages, Named Pupil Allowances and top ups. When the level of funding available does not match the local needs, the budget cannot be set at an achievable level and so the location of the overspend is not an indication of individual budget issues but that the whole block under significant pressure.

13. The major driver of the increased cost is volume. Activity (volume) is measured in FTE – full time equivalent pupils. Variance analysis is provided at Appendix 2. It is important to note that the number of EHCPs being requested has slowed slightly however this could be due to the COVID restrictions in the Summer term.

	Children with an EHCP in Wiltshire
Number as at 1 st April 2020	3,860
As at September (<i>new academic year</i>)	4,070
Forecast demand (<i>based on historical trend</i>)	4,289
Forecast Year to Date Movement	429 (11.12% increase)

14. As Schools Forum are aware, much work has been done, over recent years to investigate and address the issues. More detail is found in the high needs working group update from the Director, Education and Skills which follows this report.

DSG Reserve

15. The reserve brought forward of £11.350 million is increased by the positive early years block adjustment of £0.539 million. The forecast overspend would take the reserve into a deficit position of £19.916 million.
16. This deficit is cash flowed by the local authority and as such, is a major financial risk. By comparison, at the end of the 2019-20 financial year, the level of the Council's general reserves was £15.456 million.
17. In the current financial year, the impact of COVID on the local authority's finance is significant and the Council's forecast overspend has been offset by national grant of £30 million, compensation for net lost income estimated at £6 million, and the option to spread the impact of the losses from Council Tax and Business Rates (Collection Fund), across three years is forecast. Without additional income, a significant overspend on the Council's general position is anticipated at the end of the financial year.
18. The additional COVID funding available for Councils and Schools for 2021-22 is not yet clear.
19. With effect from 2018-19, the department tightened the rules governing deficits in local authorities' overall DSG accounts, under which local authorities have to explain plans for bringing DSG account back into balance. The DfE required a report from any local authority that had a DSG deficit of more than 1% as at the end of any financial year.
20. With effect from 2020-21, the department further updated the rules governing deficits and expanded the requirements around deficits to include a DSG management plan workbook. A draft of this is included later in the agenda.

	DSG Reserve £ M
2019-20 Brought Forward	(11.350)
2019-20 Early Years Adjustment	0.539
2020-21 Forecast Overspend	(9.105)
2020-21 Forecast DSG Reserve Deficit	(19.916)

Proposals

21. Schools Forum is asked to note the budget monitoring position at the end of October 2020 alongside the reports later in the agenda focussing on the high needs block recovery working group, the changes in DfE recovery planning requirements around the DSG deficit and the School Revenue Funding 2021-22.

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Appendix 1 – Outline of budget monitoring summary as at 31st October 2020.

Appendix 2 – Variance Analysis

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Appendix 1 – Schools Budget Forecast Position as at 31st October 2020

a	b	c	d = (c-b)	e = (d/b)	f	d = (c-b)	g	Previous Report
Service Area	Current Annual Budget £m	Period 7 Forecast £m	Period 7 Forecast Variance £m	%	19/20 Outturn Variance	September forecast variance £m	Budget Move- ment from Previous Report	
Three to Four Year Olds Free Entitlement Funding	24.358	24.358	0.000	0.00%	0.986	0.000	0.000	
Two Year Olds Free Entitlement Funding	2.382	2.382	0.000	0.00%	0.204	0.000	0.000	
Early Years Inclusion Support Fund	0.357	0.242	(0.116)	-32.40%	0.023	(0.116)	0.000	
Early Years Pupil Premium & DAF	0.309	0.309	0.000	0.00%	(0.041)	0.000	0.000	
Early Years Central Expenditure	0.422	0.372	(0.050)	-11.86%	0.000	(0.050)	0.000	
Early Years Block	27.827	27.661	(0.166)	-0.60%	1.172	-0.166	0.000	
Schools Budget Shares Primary & Secondary - Local Authority Schools	110.550	110.550	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Schools Budget Shares Primary & Secondary - Academy Schools	178.310	178.310	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Licences and Subscriptions	0.051	0.047	(0.004)	-8.66%	0.000	(0.004)	0.000	
Free School Meals	0.021	0.021	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Staff Supply Cover (Not Sickness)	0.604	0.434	(0.170)	-28.22%	0.013	(0.181)	0.011	
Behaviour Support Team	0.622	0.622	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement	0.528	0.435	(0.093)	-17.58%	(0.056)	(0.082)	-0.011	
De Delegated Total	1.826	1.558	-0.268	-14.66%	-0.043	-0.267	-0.000	
Growth Fund	3.047	1.000	(2.047)	-67.18%	(2.045)	(2.047)	0.000	
Schools Block	293.734	291.419	(2.315)	-0.79%	-0.288	-2.315	-0.000	
Special School Place Funding	7.678	7.678	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Resource Base (RB) Funding	1.806	1.806	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Enhanced Learning Provision (ELP) Funding	1.926	1.926	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000	
High Needs Block (all schools)	11.410	11.410	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Named Pupil Allowances (NPA)	5.031	8.361	3.330	66.20%	2.295	3.034	0.297	
Special School Top-Up	6.869	9.191	2.322	33.81%	0.893	2.288	0.034	
Resourced Base (RB) Top-Up	1.674	2.264	0.591	35.29%	0.246	0.493	0.098	
Enhanced Learning Provision (ELP) Top-Up	0.933	1.682	0.749	80.31%	(0.402)	0.700	0.049	
Secondary Alternative Provision Funding	2.791	2.791	0.000	0.00%	0.124	0.000	0.000	
Non Wiltshire Pupils in Wiltshire Schools	0.000	0.153	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Devolved to Maintained Total	17.297	24.442	6.992	40.42%	3.157	6.514	0.478	
Wiltshire Pupils in Non Wiltshire Schools	1.761	2.404	0.644	36.55%	0.199	0.560	0.084	
Post-16 Top-Up	3.620	4.748	1.128	31.17%	0.681	0.947	0.181	
Independent & Non-Maintained Special Schools	10.696	13.552	2.856	26.70%	1.533	2.915	-0.059	
SEN Alternative Provision, Direct Payments & Elective Home Education	1.718	2.132	0.414	24.12%	1.834	(0.024)	0.439	
Education Other than at School (EOTAS)	0.413	0.503	0.091	21.93%	(0.028)	0.043	0.047	
High Needs Top Up Funding	18.208	23.341	5.133	28.19%	4.219	4.441	0.692	
High Needs in Early Years Provision	0.454	0.430	(0.024)	-5.36%	0.000	(0.024)	0.000	
Speech & Language	0.566	0.566	0.000	0.00%	0.006	0.000	0.000	
0-5 Inclusion & SEND Teams	2.048	1.803	(0.245)	-11.96%	0.000	(0.124)	-0.121	
Specialist Teacher Advisory Service	1.305	1.048	(0.257)	-19.68%	0.093	(0.101)	-0.156	
Other Special Education	0.271	0.259	(0.012)	-4.29%	0.033	(0.013)	0.001	
Commissioned & SEN Support Services	4.643	4.106	-0.538	-11.58%	0.132	-0.261	-0.276	
High Needs Block	51.558	63.299	11.588	22.48%	7.508	10.694	0.894	
Central Licences	0.382	0.382	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Central Provision (Former ESG)	1.025	1.025	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Admissions	0.448	0.446	(0.003)	-0.57%	(0.008)	0.000	-0.003	
Servicing of Schools Forums	0.003	0.003	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Central Provision within Schools Budget	1.859	1.856	-0.003	-0.14%	-0.008	0.000	-0.003	
Education Services to CLA	0.103	0.103	0.000	0.00%	(0.033)	0.000	0.000	
Child Protection in Schools & Early Years	0.056	0.056	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Prudential Borrowing	0.300	0.300	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Historic Commitments	0.459	0.459	0.000	0.00%	-0.033	0.000	0.000	
Central School Services	2.318	2.316	-0.003	-0.11%	-0.041	0.000	-0.003	
Total Schools Budget	375.437	384.694	9.105	2.43%	8.351	8.214	0.890	
Pupil Premium (academy & maintained)	15.314	15.314	0.000	0				
6th Form Funding Maintained Schools (LSC Grant)	1.182	1.182	0.000	0				
UI Free School Meal Grant Provisional (academy & maintained)	3.345	3.345	0.000	0				
PE & Sports Revenue Grant (academy & maintained)	3.605	3.605	0.000	0				
Teachers' Pension Grant	0.401	0.401	0.000	0				
Teachers' Pay Grant (academy & maintained)	4.101	4.101	0.000	0				
Army Rebasing Funding	1.476	1.476	0.000	0				
Other Schools Grants								
DfE Revenue Grants for all Wiltshire Schools	29.425	29.425	0.000	0				
TOTAL DfE SCHOOLS FUNDING	404.862	414.119	9.105	2.25%				

Appendix 1 - the service forecasts of expenditure as at 31st October 2020 - this is an estimate of net expenditure on the schools budget

Appendix 2 - the service forecasts of planned activity in FTE (full time equivalent pupils) as at 31st October 2020 - this is a measure of volumes of pupil placements / support arrangements

Appendix 2 - Variance Analysis

h	i	j	k = (j-i)	l = (k/i)	m	n	o	n	o
Volume analysis	Budgeted Activity FTE	Period 7 Forecast Activity FTE	Period 7 Forecast Variance FTE	%	19/20 Outturn Volume	Volume movement from Previous Report	Period 1 Forecast Price	19/20 Outturn Price	Unit
Three/Four Year Olds FE	9,938	9,938	0	0%	4,997	- 0	£4.20	£4.20	p/hr
Two Year Olds FE	774	774	0	0%	419	- 0	£5.40	£5.32	p/hr
ISF	0	0	0	#DIV/0!	591	-	£615	£615	pa
							£0.53	£0.53	p/hr
Early Years Block	10,712	10,712	-	0%	6,007	- 0			
ACTIVITY DRIVER DATASET									
Sp Sch Place Funding	768	768	0	0%	716	- 0	£10,000	£10,000	pa
RB Funding	301	301	0	0%	273	-	£6,000	£6,000	pa
ELP Funding	321	321	0	0%	326	-	£6,001	£6,000	pa
	1,390	1,390	0	0%	1,315	- 0			
NPA	1,042	1,457	415	40%	1,162	- 0	£5,739	£5,715	pa
Special School Top-Up	778	892	115	15%	875	9	£10,299	£9,850	pa
RB Top-Up	351	397	46	13%	391	0	£5,703	£5,202	pa
ELP Top-Up	317	385	68	21%	353	- 0	£4,373	£3,132	pa
	2,487	3,131	643	26%	2,781	9	£7,807	£6,615	pa
Non Wiltshire Schools	177	202	25	14%	201	101	£11,908	£10,716	pa
Post-16 Top-Up	394	472	78	20%	443	270	£10,052	£9,873	pa
Ind & Non-Maint Sp Sch	214	260	46	21%	237	- 212	£52,112	£49,673	pa
SEN AP, DP & EHE	164	189	25	15%	199	- 10	£11,283	n/a	pa
	950	1,123	173	18%	1,080	149	£20,778	£18,863	pa
High Needs Block	4,827	5,644	817	17%	5,175	158	£11,215		
ACTIVITY DRIVER DATASET									

The total activity FTE is higher than total no of EHCPs as children in SS, ELP & RB may also have top ups SS, ELP & RB places above those agreed with the DfE are costed to top ups

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Minutes of the High Needs Block Recovery Working Group – 12th November 2020

Present; Neil Baker (Christ Church) James Passmore (Pickwick), John Hamp (Springfield), Sarah Garbutt (Studley Green), Siobhan Cheadle (Larkrise), Helean Hughes, Alison Enever, Cate Mullen, Lisa Fryer, Angela Everett, Marie Taylor, Grant Davis

Apologies; Lisa Percy (Hardenhuish)

Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Minutes and Actions from last meeting
3. DSG Management Plan – MT
4. HNB Recovery Plan - CM
5. HN SEN Data – Wiltshire Schools – GD
6. ISS Work Update – LF
7. Balancing the HN Budget – MT
8. AOB

1. Welcome & Introductions

'Round the Room' introductions

2. Actions from Previous Meeting

High Needs Recovery Plan

Action: GD/MT - Letter sent to Gemma Donnelly at the DfE regarding our DSG Deficit and Recovery Plan proposals seeking approval. A response will be presented to this group and the Schools & SEN Funding Working Groups and Schools Forum.

Subsequent meeting with Gemma and attendance at Schools Forum. Our 10-year recovery Plan has been shared and the LA is now required to complete the DSG Management Plan Template – discussed later.

Action: HH – requested details of any LA's who had overcome or 'turned around' a DSG High Needs Block deficit to see if any lessons could be learned.

Gemma Donnelly at the DfE confirmed that Northumberland, Thurrock & Wolverhampton – all managed a DSG High Needs deficit.

Action: GD/MT - A Disapplication Request to be prepared and may follow to transfer funding (greater than 0.5%) from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block and also to propose a repayment plan which does not accord with the DfE's standard view of recovery plans.

Following discussions with Gemma and Schools Forum, a Disapplication is no longer proposed. For the 2020-21 financial year, only 2 requests in the whole country were approved to transfer a sum greater than 0.5% of the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. The Secretary of State is insistent that 99.5% of the Schools Block funding must be passported to schools, this has been re-iterated by the DfE and therefore submitting a Disapplication is considered a fruitless exercise.

Schools Forum are of the mindset to be able to transfer up to 0.5%, subject to being affordable which early modelling would indicate will be fully affordable.

July Spend

Action: MT to create an exceptions report for next time

This has been superseded by the DSG Management Plan which now needs to be completed and submitted to the DfE. The DSG Management Plan is a huge document. Whilst Marie will co-ordinate the completion of the Plan, the return will draw upon much information from the operational teams.

HNB Recovery Plan and Various Actions

Action: ML - to review SLA's consistency

In progress

Action: ML - to review RAG ratings

RAG Ratings have been adjusted due to the impact of Covid which has had a detrimental impact upon most of the targets

Action: ML – invite Lisa Fryer to attend and update at next meeting

Actioned and Lisa attending to provide an update on her work

Action: A. Everett – look at whole plan, timescales, partly due to Covid and re-prioritising if needed.

In progress

Action: ML to ask colleagues to review the plan in the light of Covid delays, leadership changes and additional areas of focus

In progress

Action: Group – to consider questions below.

- Do Governors understand role of Notional SEN?
- How do we highlight the role of Notional SEN (with Heads, SENCO's, SBM's)?
- How do we call schools to account for Notional SEN?
- Could we incorporate Notional SEN into EHCP process? If so, how?

Notional SEN continues to be an issue. Need to ensure that Internal Staff all have a full understanding of Notional SEN before they are able to question schools use of their Notional SEN funding.

In December, we will be able to revise the proportions which comprise the Notional SEN, as part of the school budgeting process.

Action: GD – to run a session at Governor conference in November on High Needs funding and to incorporate Notional SEN.

2 Sessions being run at the Governor Conference, both focussing on SEN and incorporating Notional SEN within the sessions.

CM ran SEN sessions at the Governor Conference and also incorporated the role of Notional SEN from an operational perspective.

Action: HH – to put JH in touch with Robert Holman in Commissioning as Robert is looking at whole of life package and will be able to work with and support John.

HH has put Jon Hamp and Robert Holman in touch, whole of life pathway work.

3. DSG Management Plan – MT

- The DSG management Plan is a comprehensive document which draws upon various strategic LA documents around SEN, much wider than simply a finance focus. Completion of the management Plan will draw upon the expertise of key LA officers to pull together the finalised document.

Action MT: – has circulated the Plan document and has asked Charlotte for the document to be placed on SharePoint so that all can access the document and maintain a centrally completed version.

- MT confirmed that the DfE recognise the funding shortfall across High Needs and that under-funding remains a cause of the issues faced by LAs up and down the country. The DfE still anticipate completion of the Plan and presentation of the first version of the plan to Schools Forum in time for its budget planning discussions for 2021-22. The final budget discussions take place at the Schools Forum meetings in December and January.

- MT spoken to DfE – given the complexities of completing the plan and, in light of conflicting priorities, there may be extended deadline for completion, but nothing has been confirmed.

4. HNB Recovery Plan - CM

Cate shared Summary recovery plan and worked through the areas in turn.

Dyslexia friendly schools	Ian Abbott	On track	Planning work was able to continue during Covid with planned activity starting from September 2020. The main activity of working with the selected schools has not yet started.
Inclusion and school effectiveness project	Louise Lewis & Cate Mullen	Not Started	Covid has meant engagement for much of the work has been paused. A review of these projects needs to happen ASAP - to track which have begun and which to reengage. Some can also link to TAS. Joint SEND/SE POGs planned to bring together the work of these two areas of E&S. Work relating to development of a Wiltshire OAP is also ongoing.
ELP & Resource Bases	Cate Mullen & Alison Enever	Delayed	Place Planning Group initiated that will review Resource Base and ELP provision across Wiltshire. Rapid piece of work to identify range of provision and areas of unmet need. Will lead to strategic place planning for next 3-5 years. From this can identify work needed to review and update SLAs and outcomes measures and dashboards for RB and ELP provision.
SEND Assessment & EHCP	Cate Mullen & Tim Morgan	Not Started	Acknowledgement that this is a priority area and the scope of the tasks associated with it. Work undertaken in relation to the utilisation of FACT funding to support appeal process and commenced new process for reviewing and support relating to appeals.
Independent Special School Review	Lisa Fryer	On Track	Clear gap in terms of in-county SEMH provision identified. Downland HNU (Secondary) proposal requires MDT development and further S/Officer consideration. No Primary SEMH provision or plan forward is in place, this results in costly ongoing ISS solutions having to be found. Gap in ASD (higher end needs) provision identified resulting in 'no's from S/Fields. Revised approach to supporting D/land and S/Fields to take more challenging is required.
Post 16 Transition	Cate Mullen &	to be	Need to ensure this is aligned with the PFA strategy and SEND Inclusion Implementation Plan. Area relating to dissemination of PFA strategy progressing. Recent discussion with Robert Holman about re-working this area to

Dyslexia Friendly Schools – Ian Abbott has been working on this area and has been providing support for schools. A virtual offer has been offered to schools to support them and this area is on track.

Inclusion and School Effectiveness Project – Covid has led to the pausing of some of the work, therefore LL & CM re-prioritising areas. Much of the work is going on behind the scenes between School Effectiveness and SEN.

ELP & Resource Base's – AE and CM – started in September with EO's looking at provision landscape (Place Planning Group) – places, strengths etc and is on-going but the work is well underway, particularly for Special Schools and ELPs. Further work on SLA's and quality of offer and provision offered is required. SEND Capital funding has been allocated and the additional places have been created in the main. The website has details of all of the places and spend. AE updated group to show places which have been delivered and are up and running.

- Avenue
- Wansdyke
- Castle & River Mead

SG asked a query – Matt Sambrook had started work on SLA's for RB's and ELP's and it was asked if there was an update? If not, SG offered to help if further work is required.

SEND Assessment & EHCP	Cate Mullen & Tim Morgan	Not Started	Acknowledgement that this is a priority area and the scope of the tasks associated with it. Work undertaken in relation to the utilisation of FACT funding to support appeal process and commenced new process for reviewing and support relating to appeals.
Independent Special School Review	Lisa Fryer	On Track	Clear gap in terms of in-county SEMH provision identified. Downland HNU (Secondary) proposal requires MDT development and further S/Officer consideration. No Primary SEMH provision or plan forward is in place, this results in costly ongoing ISS solutions having to be found. Gap in ASD (higher end needs) provision identified resulting in 'no's from S/Fields. Revised approach to supporting D/land and S/Fields to take more challenging is required.
Post 16 Transition	Cate Mullen & Robert Holman	to be amended	Need to ensure this is aligned with the PFA strategy and SEND Inclusion Implementation Plan. Area relating to dissemination of PFA strategy progressing. Recent discussion with Robert Holman about re-working this area to encompass activity relating to pre-16 learners. Update for next meeting
SEND Alternative Provision Project	Vicky Dunncliffe	Delayed	Plan has been revised due to Covid. Project has experienced some delay. Work undertaken with schools colleagues at both primary and secondary phase has progressed well and been positive. Final agreement for secondary SLA pending. New provider list has been published and shared with schools which is an important step in the original aim of HELM dates in place, multi agency sign up x 4 areas across county, cases are coming through to be discussed at HELM, DSC/Portage referring through HELM, key data will be collected and collated to feedback into education outcomes meeting. Wave 1 HELM completed, WAVE 2 November, AE captured themes from HELM to share with teams and managers/colleagues in health, need health input, SALT committed to attend November meetings, AE has meeting this month with Alison Burge, to discuss wider health input.
Early Intervention Project	Angela Everett	On track	

SEND Assessment & EHCPs – huge area of work within SEN and needs ongoing attention to deliver the best outcomes. Funding been made available to help with this work through the FACT programme. Delays are being experienced in the main due to Covid.

ISS review – Lisa Fryer to update the group later in the meeting

Post-16 Transition – Robert Holman to be invited to update the meeting. CM noted that there is ongoing work around PFA and the work in this area. Further work around transition to be reflective of direction of the LA and to incorporate pre-16 too.

SEND AP Project - work progressing with Vicki Dunncliffe but has been delayed due to Covid.

Early Intervention Project - Wave 1 completed helping with transition and strategies. AE is progressing well with the project and meeting health colleagues this month.

5 HN SEN Data – Wiltshire Schools – GD

GD presented SEN data taken from the January 2020 SEN School Level Data census information. The information showed the following:

- SEN Support Pupils per school
- EHCP Pupils per school
- Combined SEN Support & EHCP proportions
- Breakdown by Primary, Secondary, Special and Independent in Wiltshire

The data was presented to show the:

- Top 10 schools with the highest proportion of pupils with SEN Support
- Top 10 schools with the highest proportion of pupils with EHCPs
- Bottom 23 schools with the highest proportion of pupils with SEN Support
- Bottom 23 schools with the highest proportion of pupils with EHCPs

The presented information showed a picture of all schools around the County and their proportions of pupils with recorded SEN.

The core data was taken from the following sources and the spreadsheet attached for reference:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england-january-2020>
<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england>

SG asked about the moderation of the SEN Support data.

NB confirmed that the numbers of EHCP's in a school does not make a school more or less inclusive but does form part of a wider distribution question of EHCP's. Also, is there a pattern around clusters of schools with some being more open, than others?

Action ALL: What does this data tell us and how can we use this data going forwards?

- Setting 'targets' ?
- Good practice from high SEN schools ?

6 Balancing the High Needs Budget - MT

The DfE are looking for us to complete the Management Plan which covers the breadth of our work on High Needs.

JP asked if we were looking to balance the position on the DSG and whether we will be able to recover the deficit.

MT responded that the strategy would be to recover the deficit and a longer-term recovery would be required. The Management Plan will be used to drive forward the work towards the recovery in the High Needs Block, alongside all of the LA's existing work.

HH – Northumberland similar to us but would be good to know how others approach the model. The DfE's model does not support RB's but they are very successful in Wiltshire. DfE's view is Special Schools is the way forward, whereas in Wiltshire we are far more inclusive with mainstream settings.

Action: HH – to make an approach to Northumberland about their work

NB – Notional SEN, some children can join a school and no funding comes with them. Notional SEN discussion around the lag in receipt of pupil funding. Transition Into Primary School (TIPS) funding was made available which did impact upon the numbers of pupils transitioning into schools to prevent EHCP's.

Action: AE - HH asked AE to look at what the impact was of TIPS and AE to share the data she holds in this area.

JP – Asked a question around the Notional SEN and whether it was or could be ring-fenced ?

No, but we are looking to take a tougher stance with it around accountability for use of the funds.

NB commented that schools will ask for more EHCP's if we closely look at how much schools spend on SEN, which could be counter productive.

CM – Notional SEN % across schools does vary massively between , <1% to 15% of the school's budget overall and therefore there is a huge variance across our schools.

7 ISS Work Update – LF

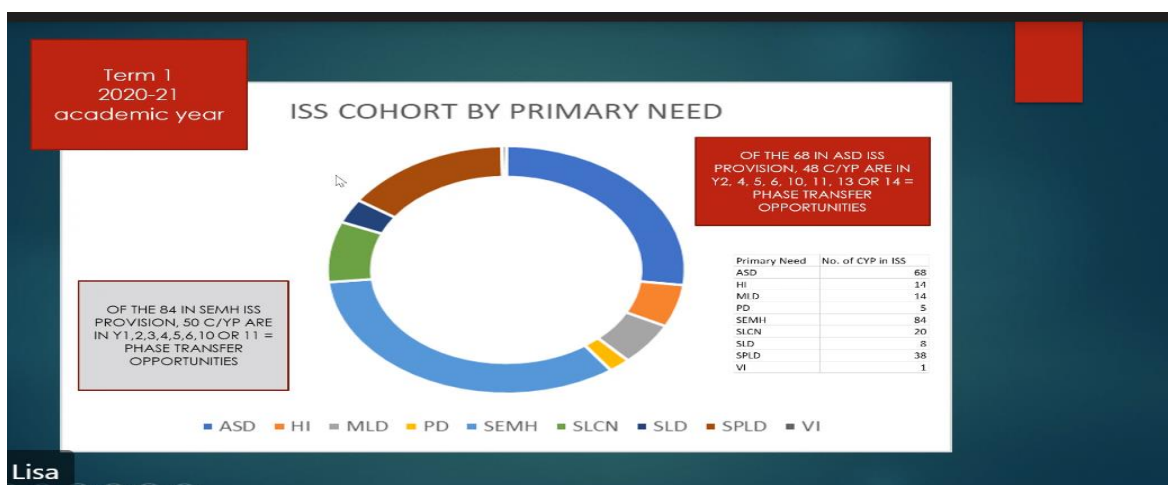
Lisa Fryer worked through her presentation detailing the work she was undertaking, and the progress and milestones achieved.

Lisa been in post since September and is working through the many layers of work and has started making progress in understanding the needs and demands of the cohort of pupils.

Currently 243 people in ISS placements – demand continues

Plotting of the pupils around the County border has raised questions regarding the quality of provision and Ofsted gradings including;

Cohort showing primary need

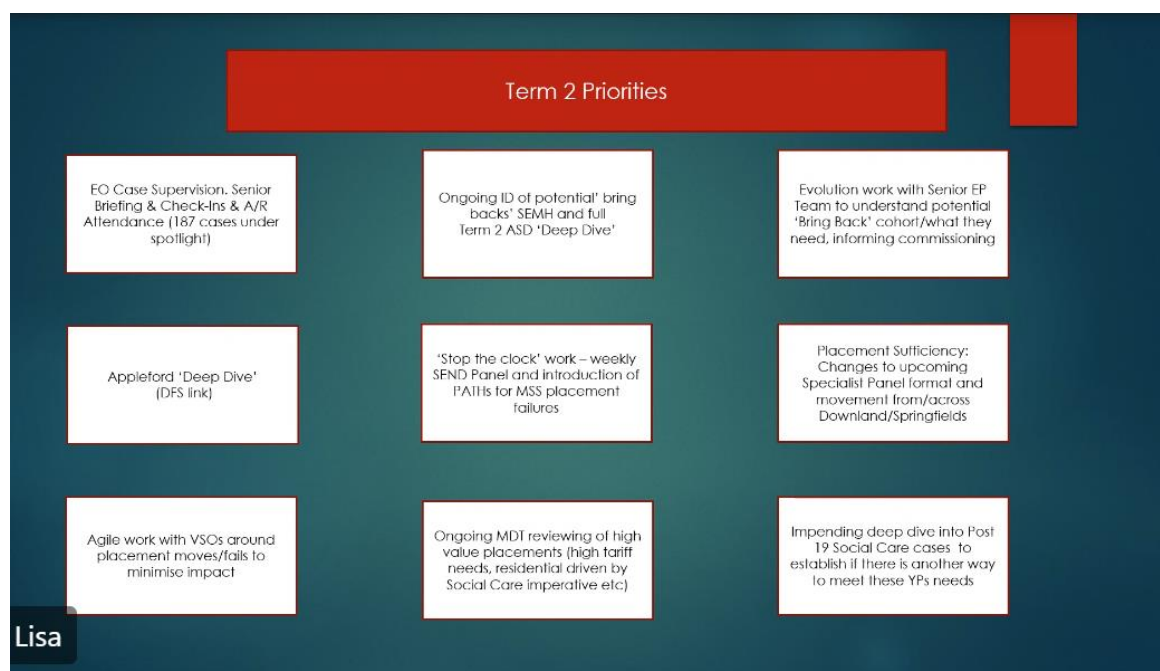


Work Priorities



- Bringing pupils back in could reap savings between £246k to £425k, moving to somewhere different in September 2021, Lisa confident of £246k of savings
- Modelling to take place about pupils and savings from Sept 22 which would reap further savings.
- Pupils who could move into Local Offer from Sept 21 and Sept 22 have been identified.
- Looking at pupils who could move to our schools, working through their cases
- Working with Senior EP's – what support can they provide and are the pupils appropriately placed
- Out of the remaining pupils, 15 still undergoing discussion
- During Deep Dive there will be further savings which will be found. However, further requests for additional placements over time could off-set some of the savings
- Deep dive will also show we need to put more support into our schools.

Term 2 Priorities



- Deep Dive into Appleford to take place – officers visiting school in November.
- How do we stop the dribble of pupils into Special and eventually going to ISS?
- Questioning of pupils going into Rowdeford where they are borderline mainstream / special
- Sufficiency – are we filling our Specials with pupils who could be placed elsewhere
- Work with social care – post-19 students who have been in expensive placements and have plateaued but as there is no other provision available, parents want their child to stay in the education system as they feel it provides safety and stability.

8 AOB

SG - keen to support the transition work from Primary into Secondary and keeping pupils in mainstream schools and is happy to work with officers.

MT – budget for 2021-22 for the High Needs Block will grow by approx. £5.5m (final figures to be released in December)

MT – Current consultation out with schools regarding any 'Block' transfers of funding - agreeing a transfer of 0.5% would deliver around £1.5m extra into the High Needs Block

MT - Centrally allocated Teachers pension cost contribution of £174k – most welcome towards costs of SEN.

Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum

10th December 2020

Dedicated Schools Grant Consultations 2021-22

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Schools Forum with the results of the recent Autumn consultations relating to;
 - De-delegation of central services - Maintained Schools only
 - Transfer of funds from Schools Block to High Needs Block – all schools
2. The survey results will help to inform Schools Forum decisions for setting the budgets for the 2021-22 financial year.

De-Delegation of Central Services Consultation Responses

3. Under the “soft formula”, funding should be fully delegated to schools, however certain central services can be ‘de-delegated’ for maintained schools only, with approval of the respective maintained Schools Forum representatives.
4. The funding regulations require that all maintained schools are consulted and given the opportunity to express their preferences for the services which can be de-delegated. The services consulted as part of the 2021-22 consultation process were:
 - Access Budget Planning Software Licence (formerly known as HCSS)
 - Trade Union Facilities Costs
 - Maternity Costs
 - Ethnic Minority Achievement Service
 - Traveller Education Service
 - Behaviour Support Service
5. The consultation took place through Right Choice with a window of three weeks for schools to consider their responses. Schools Forum members can see the questions and results of the consultation, detailed in Appendix 1.
6. A total of 36 responses were received, 33 responses from Primary Schools and 3 from Secondary Schools. This compares favourably to the consultation for the 2020-21 year where only 20 responses were received.
7. The results received were significantly in favour of retaining the de-delegated services in both the Primary and Secondary schools which will inform eligible Schools Forum members for the maintained schools when voting on the school budgets for 2021-22.

Transfer of Schools Block to Support the High Needs Block

8. Schools have been consulted during recent years regarding a potential transfer of funds between the Schools Block and the High Needs Block of the DSG. Whilst it has been a generally unwelcome question to ask schools, members of Schools Forum have acted in the greater interests of schools and supported a transfer of funds to help with the spiralling demand and costs of SEN within the county.
9. The funding regulations do allow for a transfer of funding between the Schools Block and other blocks within the DSG. In the last two financial years, Schools Forum agreed to the following transfers;
 - 2019-20 - £2.2m which equated to 0.8% of Schools Block
 - 2020-21 - £2.065m which equated to 0.7% of Schools Block, which was subsequently reduced to 0.5% by the Secretary of State.
10. Local Authorities have the flexibility to move up to 0.5%. Anything higher would require approval from the Secretary of State through a disapplication request, which it was agreed at the last Schools Forum meeting would not be applied for.
11. In order for Schools Forum to make a decision about a potential transfer, the autumn consultation questions were agreed at the October Schools Forum meeting and was subsequently issued through the Right Choice as a survey with a window of three weeks for schools to consider their responses.
12. Schools Forum members can see the questions and results of the consultation, detailed in Appendix 2.
13. This consultation was open to all schools, both maintained and academy schools and a total of 22 responses were received, considerably higher than the 9 received last year and can be broken down as follows;
 - 3 secondary schools
 - 1 special schools
 - 18 primary schools
14. Of the schools that responded, the results can be summarised as below;
 - 15 of 22 respondents supported a transfer of funds from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.
 - All 22 respondents did not want a reduction in Top-Up values.
 - Only 4 out of 22 respondents supported a 'Hybrid' option of a block transfer and a reduction in Top-Up values.
 - Of the 15 respondents that supported a transfer, the breakdown of transfer values has been detailed, as below;

Value	Schools	% Support
£0.5m (0.17%)	1	6.67%
£1.0m (0.34%)	4	26.67%
£1.4m (0.5%)	8	53.33%
£1.5m (0.51%)	1	6.67%
£2.0m (0.68%)	1	6.67%

15. This data will inform the decision making around the 2021-22 budget. At the October 2020 Schools Forum meeting, it was highlighted that approximately £800k of funding could be made available if;
- The Mobility factor has not been introduced as part of the Wiltshire formula and by continuing not to introduce this funding factor would release £571k of funding.
 - The maximum Sparsity allowance for Primary schools is to be increased from £26k to £45k and by not moving to this higher level would release a further £220k of funding.

Proposals

16. Schools Forum is asked to note the report local consultation responses in relation to the schools delegated budget for 2021-22 financial year.
17. Schools Forum is asked to make 'in principle' decisions in accordance with the consultation responses as below;
- **De-delegation** of central services for Maintained schools
 - FSM – primary and secondary
 - Licences – primary and secondary
 - Trade Union – primary and secondary
 - Maternity – primary and secondary
 - Ethnic Minority Support – primary only
 - Traveller Education – primary only
 - Behaviour Support – primary only
 - **Block transfer** between Schools Block and the High Needs Block, subject to affordability when school funding for 2021-22 has been confirmed.
 - Transfer of 0.5% of Schools Block to the High Needs Block, the maximum allowable without Secretary of State approval which equates to approximately £1.4m.

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Appendix 1 – Results of De-delegation consultation

Appendix 2 – Results of Block transfer consultation

Appendix 1 – De-Delegation Consultation

Questions

DfE Heading	Wiltshire Budget	Delegate?	Retain Centrally?
Free school meals eligibility	Free School Meals Eligibility Service		
Licences/subscriptions	HCSS Licence		
Staff costs – supply cover	Trade Union Duties		
	Maternity Costs		
Support for minority ethnic pupils and underachieving groups	Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) – Primary		
	Traveller Education Service – Primary		
Behaviour support services	Primary Behaviour Support Service		

Results

A summary of the results is set out below.

PRIMARY	FSM	Licences	Trade Union	Maternity	EMAS	Traveller Education	Behaviour Support
Delegate	0	0	0	0	1	2	1
De-delegate	33	33	33	33	32	31	32
Total	33	33	33	33	33	33	33

SECONDARY	FSM	Licences	Trade Union	Maternity	EMAS	Traveller Education	Behaviour Support
Delegate	0	0	0	0	N/a	N/a	N/a
De-delegate	3	3	3	3	N/a	N/a	N/a
Total	3	3	3	3	N/a	N/a	N/a

Appendix 1 – De-Delegation Consultation

Dedelegated Responses 2021-22							
SCHOOL	RESPONSE						
	FSM	HCSS	Trade Union	Maternity	EMAS	Traveller	Behaviour Supp
1	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
2	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
3	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
4	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
5	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
6	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
7	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
8	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
9	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
10	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
11	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
12	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
13	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
14	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
15	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
16	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
17	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Dedelegate	Dedelegate	Dedelegate
18	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
19	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
20	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
21	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
22	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
23	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
24	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Dedelegate	Retain
25	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
26	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
27	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
28	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
29	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
30	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
31	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
32	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Dedelegate	Dedelegate	Dedelegate
33	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
34	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
35	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
36	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain

Appendix 2 – Block Transfer Consultation

Qu 1 – Please enter your DfE Number and school name here:

--

Qu 2a – Taking the factors above into account, do you support a transfer of funding from the School Block to the High Needs Block?

Yes	
No	

Qu 2b – If you support a transfer, please indicate the amount of transfer:

Value to Transfer	£/Pupil	Please select
£0.0m (0.0%)	£0.00 / pupil	
£0.5m (0.17%)	£7.81 / pupil	
£1.0m (0.34%)	£15.62 / pupil	
£1.4m (0.5%)	£21.90 / pupil	
£1.5m (0.51%)	£23.44 / pupil	
£2.0m (0.68%)	£31.25 / pupil	

Qu 2c - No transfer of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block for 2021-22. - The impact of this would be that Top-Ups and Named Pupil Allowances (NPA) funding levels would have to be reduced to help with cost pressures in the High Needs Block. Do you support a reduction in these rates?

Yes	
No	

Qu 2d) Would you prefer to see a hybrid of the above with a transfer from Schools Block to top up the High Needs Block together with reduced values for top ups and Named Pupil Allowances?

Yes	
No	

2) 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?

Appendix 2 – Block Transfer Consultation

Consultation Responses

High Needs Consultation Responses 2021-22						
SCHOOL	Transfer To High Needs		Reduction In Top Ups		Hybrid Option	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	No
1		✓		✓	✓	
2		✓		✓		✓
3		✓		✓		✓
4	✓			✓		✓
5	✓			✓	✓	
6	✓			✓		✓
7	✓			✓	✓	
8	✓			✓		✓
9	✓			✓		✓
10	✓			✓		✓
11	✓			✓		✓
12	✓			✓		✓
13	✓			✓		✓
14	✓			✓		✓
15	✓			✓		✓
16	✓			✓		✓
17	✓			✓		✓
18		✓		✓		✓
19		✓		✓		✓
20	✓			✓		✓
21		✓		✓	✓	
22		✓		✓		✓
	15	7		22	4	18

Value to Transfer

YES To Transfer Schools Block To HN						
SCHOOL	Value To Transfer					
	0%	0.17%	0.34%	0.50%	0.51%	0.68%
1				✓		
2				✓		
3			✓			
4				✓		
5					✓	
6		✓				
7				✓		
8				✓		
9						✓
10				✓		
11				✓		
12			✓			
13			✓			
14			✓			
15				✓		
		1	4	8	1	1
Amount		£0.5m	£1.0m	£1.4m	£1.5m	£2.0m

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Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum

10th December 2020

Allocation of Funding for Pupil Growth 2021-22

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek agreement on the methodology for allocating funding for pupil growth from the school's block growth fund in 2021-22.

Background

2. Wiltshire currently operates a growth fund and Schools Forum agreed to a number of criteria for the allocation of funding for pupil growth in previous years. The current growth fund criteria has previously been confirmed as being fully compliant by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).
3. There was a change in the methodology for funding local authorities for growth two years ago, however this has not changed the way in which growth funding is allocated locally to schools.

Funding Methodology

4. Growth allocations for 2021-22 will be based on pupil data from the October 2020 census and the October 2019 census.
5. Funding is allocated to local authorities based on the actual growth in pupil numbers they experienced over the previous year. This ensures that over time local authorities are funded on the basis of the actual growth they experience (on a lagged basis), rather than being based upon historic spending decisions.
6. The DfE measure growth within local authorities at **middle layer super output area** (MSOA)1 level. MSOAs are used as these are small enough geographical areas to detect 'pockets' of growth within local authority areas. Growth is measured by counting the increase in pupil numbers in each MSOA in the local authority between the October 2019 and October 2020 censuses. Only positive increases in pupil numbers will be included, so positive growth in one area, and negative growth in another, will not be denied growth funding.
7. In Wiltshire, growth is measured by separating the county into 62 MSOA's with an average of 4 schools in each MSOA area.

8. For each local authority, the growth factor allocates:
 - £1,455 for each primary 'growth' pupil (was £1,425 and £1,370 previously)
 - £2,175 for each secondary 'growth' pupil, (was £2,130 and £2,050 previously) and
 - £68,700 for each brand new school that opened in the previous year. (was £67,000 and £65,000 previously)
9. The DfE have set these values by looking at the amount spent on growth across all local authorities in 2017-18 and uplifted for 2021-22.
10. The DfE do not expect local authorities to use these rates in their local arrangements for funding growth. The growth factor in the national funding formula is a proxy for overall growth costs at local authority level, and not at the level of individual schools. Local authorities generally allocate growth funding using a local arrangement as there is no national method adopted for allocating growth funding. Therefore, schools forum should therefore continue to make decisions about growth funding locally as they do now.
11. In line with other elements of the national funding formula, the hybrid area cost adjustment (ACA) will be applied to growth allocations to reflect the variation in labour market costs across the country. (For Wiltshire, the uplift is 1.00716%)

(The Wiltshire allocation for 2021-22 will be announced in December as part of the schools funding announcement.)

Main Considerations

12. The growth funding forms part of the local authority's Schools Block of funding. For 2021-22, growth funding will be allocated using the formulaic approach, based upon lagged growth data. With regard to allocating funding from the growth fund, the requirements are that:
 - a) can be used only for the purposes of supporting growth in pre-16 pupil numbers to meet basic need
 - b) to support additional classes needed to meet the infant class size regulations
 - c) to meet the costs of new schools
 - d) the fund must be used consistently for the benefit of both maintained schools and academies
 - e) any funds remaining at the end of the financial year will form part of the overall DSG surplus or deficit balance.

- f) local authorities will be required to produce criteria on which any growth funding is to be allocated. These should provide a transparent and consistent basis (with differences permitted between phases) for the allocation of all growth funding. The criteria should both set out the circumstances in which a payment could be made and provide a basis for calculating the sum to be paid
- g) local authorities will need to propose the criteria and size for the growth fund to Schools Forum and gain its agreement on both the criteria and size of the fund, before growth funding is allocated.

Proposed Criteria

13. The proposed criteria for funding pupil growth within the local Wiltshire funding formula in 2021-22 are as follows:

New School Allowance (unchanged from 2013-14):

14. Schools receive funding in advance of pupils arriving in the school, based on the result of the pupil teacher ratio rounded up to the nearest next whole number. The PTRs used are 26.5:1 for KS1 & 27.5:1 for KS2 + 1.1. The topped up element to the next whole number is arrived at by multiplying the result by the salary of a teacher on the top point of the teacher's main scale + on-costs. This element will apply until the first year group has left the school or until the school is full (whichever occurs first).
15. In addition the costs of a head teacher and 10 hours admin support will be available one "old" term before opening. 55% of the Basic Flat Rate will be available two "old" terms before opening. In the first year of opening the school will also receive 34% of the Basic Flat Rate, 17% in the second & 8.5% in the third year after opening. (The Basic Flat Rate is currently £114,400, the NFF rate as agreed in 2020-21).
16. New schools may also receive an estimate of the new pupil intake for the forthcoming academic year. This approach will be in place for the number of years equal to the number of year groups at the school. The initial estimate may be changed at a later date (but no later than the end of Term 6) to more accurately reflect the likely new intake, with the agreement of the school.

Class Expansion for Basic Need (unchanged from 13-14):

17. Where a school is expanded to provide additional classes to meet a basic need for places identified by the LA, from the month of opening for the remainder of the financial year only, the school will receive the relevant 12ths x 30 x relevant AWPU for each additional class. Where a full class may not be needed then the school would receive the relevant 12ths x estimate of increased September intake x relevant AWPU. The definition of "expanded" is that a building project or addition of a mobile classroom has taken place.

Infant Class Size Increases:

18. This is payable to a Primary School with infant classes which is required to set up an additional class in the Autumn term as required by the infant class size regulations, and the school cannot accommodate all of its additional Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils in classes of 30 or less, i.e. the total number of pupils in the 3 year groups exceeds a multiple of 30. Where the total increase in NOR between the two October census dates is greater than 13 and necessitates that an extra class would be required, then additional funding is allocated per additional class.
19. Schools Forum is required to consider and approve the above criteria for application in 2021-22.

Falling Rolls Fund

20. LA's may set aside Schools Block funding to create a small fund to support good schools with falling rolls, where local planning data shows that surplus places will be needed within the next three financial years.
21. Any fund established for the purposes of a Falling Rolls fund would represent a top-slice of the Schools Block. Criteria would need to be established to support the fund, including clear trigger points for qualification. Compliant criteria could include;
 - Support only available to Good or Outstanding schools
 - Surplus capacity exceeds a certain proportion of PAN
 - Local planning data shows that the places will be filled within the next three years
 - The school will be required to make redundancies in order to contain spending within its formula budget
22. Any formula for funding schools could include;
 - A rate per vacant place and maximum number of places
 - A lump sum payment to schools
23. Wiltshire Schools Forum has always resisted the establishing of a Falling Rolls Fund and is being asked to give consideration to establishing such a fund, in light of its previous decisions on this topic and also the additional pressures being placed upon the Schools Block.
24. There has been no pressure from schools or other groups for the establishing of a Falling Rolls Fund.

Proposal

25. It is proposed that:

- a) Schools Forum approve the criteria for allocating pupil Growth Fund in 2021-22.

 - b) Schools Forum agree that the budget for the Growth Fund to be set at its meeting in January 2021, when the full DSG has been confirmed for the 2021-22 year.

 - c) Schools Forum give consideration to the establishing of a Falling Rolls Fund and any criteria befitting such a fund.
-

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Wiltshire Council

Schools Funding Working Group & SEN Working Group
30th November 2020

Schools Forum
10th December 2020

DEDICATED SCHOOLS BUDGET – PROVISIONAL CENTRAL SCHOOLS SERVICES BLOCK UPDATE 2021-22

Purpose of the Report

1. To update schools forum on issues relating to the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) budget for 2021-22 financial year and the decisions that will need to be made as part of the budget setting process.
2. As a result of the provisional allocations being released early in July 2020, Schools Forum are asked to consider this report and agree decisions. Any future changes will be brought to the January 2021 budget setting meeting.

Main Considerations

3. As outlined in the funding settlement paper the DfE has allocated a provisional CSSB allocation of £2.449 million for Wiltshire. This has been calculated using the national funding formula for the CSSB which applies a unit rate of £32.59 to the pupil numbers from the October 2019 census. Funding for agreed historic commitments for 2021-22 is then added to the amount of funding generated by the formula to give the overall total CSSB.

Protection and Funding Changes

4. Schools Forum will remember that the DfE have been reducing historic commitments. Wiltshire has been allocated £0.367m for historic commitments based on those commitments agreed as eligible in 2020-21 reduced by 20% of £0.092m. The DfE apply a maximum per pupil reduction in funding for ongoing responsibilities of -2.5%. Permitted gains are capped at 6.45% for 2021-22.

Function of the CSSB

5. The CSSB allocates funding to the LA to carry out central functions on behalf of pupils of maintained schools and academies. Funding includes:
 - funding previously allocated through the retained duties element of the Education Services Grant (ESG)
 - funding for ongoing central functions, such as admissions, previously top-sliced from the schools block
 - residual funding for historic commitments, previously top-sliced from the schools block
6. The duties included within the CSSB are listed in Appendix 1 to this report.

Additional Funding Changes for 2020-21

7. Additional pension funding that local authorities have claimed for centrally employed teachers will be rolled into the ongoing responsibilities element of the CSSB. This funding will be added as a per-pupil amount to the relevant local authority's per-pupil rate. As this funding is based on local authority claims received in May and June, the DfE will make this

adjustment in DSG allocations later in the year, and these are not included in the provisional NFF allocations.

8. The decisions that schools forum are required to make in relation to the central schools block are listed below. These are in relation to the duties that local authorities have towards all schools.
9. Schools forum approval is required on a line by line basis for this group of services which are funded from central schools block. The tables show each line, the 2020-21 base and the proposed 2021-22 budget.

Approval required & legislative narrative	Services covered	2020-21 Budget £M	Wiltshire Budget Proposal 2021-22 £M
Section A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools forum approval is not required (although they should be consulted) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Copyright Licences for 2021-22 for Wiltshire as set by the DfE. 	£0.382m	£0.392m*
Section B Schools forum approval is required on a line-by-line basis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • back pay for equal pay claims • remission of boarding fees at maintained schools and academies • places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils • admissions • servicing of schools forum • contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for all schools • contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for maintained schools (voted on by relevant maintained school members of the forum only) 	The limitation on increases to centrally held spend has been removed from the budgets for admissions and servicing of schools forums. It is therefore proposed to apply salary inflation to the budget for the central teams and address the safeguarding and admission pressures. This is affordable within the overall CSSB allocation. Services previously funded by the retained rate of the ESG**:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Welfare Service 	£0.194	£0.199
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Management 	£0.181	£0.186
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory / Regulatory Duties 	£0.651	£0.669
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions 	£0.426	£0.438
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Servicing of Schools Forum 	£0.003	£0.003

**the actual amount for copyright licences is calculated by the DfE and will follow its due course. Inflation has been applied at the 2020-21 level above.*

*** Pay inflation has been added at 2.75% - this can be reviewed as national discussions continue.*

Section C – Historic Commitments

10. In 2017-18 the DfE provided supplementary guidance on the funding and reporting of historic commitments within central DSG. The guidance also detailed the evidence that Schools Forum required on each item in order to approve the spend:
 - a. **Minutes from the schools forum prior to 1st April 2013** – schools forum should have agreed the commitment prior to 2013
 - b. **Proof that the commitment extended at least as far as the 2018-19 financial year.** Evidence can include reports which indicated an end date in to 2018-19 or beyond, or where the commitment has no specific end date.
 - c. **Where budgets relate to non-staffing costs, there must be a contractual commitment** (such as a PFI agreement or lease agreement) which extends in to the relevant financial year.
 - d. **Schools forum papers and minutes that show that approval has been granted for the financial year.** The forum is expected to approve each spending line annually. It is important that schools forums have sufficient information to be able to make an informed decision

11. Having considered the guidance and the available evidence, the commitments agreed by schools forum for 2018-19 and therefore funded within the CSSB allocation for 2021-22 are as per the table overleaf. The reduction has been taken from the contribution to CERA in order that vulnerable pupils funding is prioritised.

12. The overall total is within the £0.367m allocated for historic commitments.

13. Schools Forum should consider the DfE's intention to reduce the historic funding over time in this and future years' funding decisions.

Approval required & legislative narrative	Services covered	2020-21 Budget £M	Wiltshire Budget Proposal 2021-22 £M
<p>Section C</p> <p>Historic Commitments:</p> <p>Schools forum approval is required on a line-by-line basis. The budget cannot exceed the value agreed in the previous funding period and no new commitments can be entered into</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> capital expenditure funded from revenue – projects must have been planned and decided on prior to April 2013 so no new projects can be charged contribution to combined budgets – this is where the schools forum agreed prior to April 2013 a contribution from the schools budget to services which would otherwise be funded from other sources existing termination of employment costs (costs for specific individuals must have been approved prior to April 2013 so no new redundancy costs can be charged) Prudential borrowing costs – the commitment must have been approved prior to April 2013 	<p>Funding for LAC Personal Education Plans - Schools Forum decision December 2007 to support PEPs for Looked After Children from 2008/09 financial year as required under "Care Matters". Allocation based on original estimate of £500 per LAC and managed by Virtual Head Teacher. PPG Plus now also supports PEPs <i>and so this funding was reduced to £103,000 in 2018/19 – no change is requested by the Virtual School.</i></p>	0.103	0.103 <i>Meets definition And required evidence is available</i>
	<p>Child Protection in Schools Adviser - Schools Forum decision January 2006 to support staff within Children's Services to provide support and advice to schools enabling them to meet their statutory responsibilities.</p>	0.056	0.056 <i>Meets definition And required evidence is available</i>
	<p>Prudential Borrowing Schools forum decision to support approx. £3m capital financing for 13-year period</p>	0.300	0.208 <i>Meets definition And required evidence is available</i>
Total		0.459	0.367
Balance unallocated and available to transfer to the HNB		0.184	0.195

14. Local authorities can fund services previously funded from the general funding rate of the ESG (for maintained schools only) from maintained school budget shares, with the agreement of maintained school members of the schools forum.
15. The relevant maintained schools members of the schools forum (primary, secondary, special and pupil referral units (PRUs), should agree the amount the local authority will retain.
 - e. If the local authority and schools forum are unable to reach a consensus on the amount to be retained by the local authority, the matter can be referred to the Secretary of State.
16. Local authorities should set a single rate per 5 to 16-year-old pupil for all mainstream maintained schools, both primary and secondary; in the interests of simplicity, this should be deducted from basic entitlement funding.
17. Many schools forums have agreed a top slice of schools funding to meet this shortfall. Wiltshire's schools have benefitted from taken the decision to treat the reduction in ESG funding as part of the general austerity reductions when setting the Council's medium-term financial plan. This has allowed the Council to fund business plan objectives and local priorities. The Council has deliberately selected to offer a level of protection for our school effectiveness services and have managed to avoid seeking approval from Schools Forum to date.
18. In addition, the DfE have provided an alternative transitional grant. The DfE have not yet confirmed that the school improvement monitoring and brokering grant will continue in financial year 2021-22. Should this grant be removed or significantly reduced, the situation will need to be reviewed.
19. There are no proposals to fund services for maintained schools only contained within this report.
20. Assuming the proposed budget is accepted by schools forum, an amount of £0.195m unallocated CSSB is estimated to transfer to fund high needs pressures.

Proposals

1. Schools Forum is asked to note the report and the required decisions in relation to the central schools block budget for 2021-22. Schools Forum is asked to agree these decisions in principle in advance of setting the Schools budget in January 2021.
 - i. Section A – consult only
 - ii. Section B – approve on a line by line basis
 - iii. Section C – approve on a line by line basis

Any updates will be brought to the January 2021 meeting for update and decision.

2. Notification of the school improvement monitoring and brokering grant has not yet been shared by the DfE. If the grant ceases or is significantly reduced, the expenditure plan will need to be reviewed, decisions made will be reconsidered at the next available schools forum meeting.

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Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum Finance & SEN Working Group
29th November 2020

Schools Forum
10th December 2020

DEDICATED SCHOOLS BUDGET – HIGH NEEDS BLOCK UPDATE 2021-22

Purpose of the Report

1. To update schools forum on issues related to the high needs block for 2020-21 and a pre-briefing for the decisions that will need to be made as part of the budget setting process for 2020-21 at the January meeting.

Main Considerations

2. As outlined in the paper on the funding settlement for 2020-21 the high needs block provisional allocation for Wiltshire in 2020-21 is £57.529 million. The high needs block has been calculated according to the new national funding formula for high needs. Appendix 1 shows the calculation methodology for Wiltshire with a comparison to average local authorities. You will note that 36% of Wiltshire's funding is based on historical funding compared to national average of 33%. It is hoped that the long-awaited SEN review will address and re-balance the funding level. As previously reported to schools forum, Wiltshire is on the funding floor for the high needs NFF and therefore has received the minimum increase.

3.

	High Needs
2020-21	£51,987,188
2021-22	£57,528,558
Uplift	£5,541,370
% Uplift	10.66%

4. In addition to the outdated funding model, it has been nationally recognised that the level of funding for the most vulnerable pupils has been historically insufficient and included in the total allocation above is an additional £5.541m announced by the government in July. Whilst this additional funding is most welcome, it does not fully address the magnitude of the cumulative pressures from previous financial years nor does it fully address the anticipated pressure for 2021-22 financial year for Wiltshire.
5. In terms of decision making for the high needs block the guidance on schools forum powers and responsibilities states that all central spend on high needs block provision is decided by the local authority. This would include decisions on top up values. Final allocations are expected later this month, taking the latest census data into account. Because of this and the interdependencies of decisions across all the funding blocks, final decisions on high needs will be presented alongside those that schools forum is required to make on all of the other blocks in January.

Projected Demand on High Needs Block

6. Appendix 2 provides an early assessment of pressure on the high needs block for 2021-22. These are summarised in the table below:

Pressure	£M estimate
Additional Pressure to meet current Spend levels <i>(based on October 2020 forecast overspend over and above additional HNB pupil led funding)</i>	10.144
New funding for centrally employed teacher pension contributions	(0.152)
Estimate of increase in planned places in school (to be confirmed in January)	1.269
Estimated Cost increase based on planned reduced EHCP rate of increase 2021-22 <i>Demand for placements with schools, colleges and external providers is based on SEN planning demography of 11.12%.</i>	4.716
Estimated Contract Inflation 2021-22 @ 2% <i>External Provider Contract inflation is added to Independent Special School Fees and SEN alternative provision at 2%</i>	0.348
Pay Inflation for SEN teams at 0% flat rate <i>The Chancellor has announced a public sector pay freeze to all staff with a salary of £24,000 and above – further detail is awaited</i>	0.000
Savings as per HNB recovery plan	(2.260)
Total Estimated Cost Pressure for 2020-21	14.063

Local Authority Development Fund – “FACT” Flexible Use of Capital Receipts To pump prime and facilitate savings plans	£1.468M
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7. This estimate includes the following assumptions:

- a. Numbers of places for special schools, resource bases and enhanced learning provision (ELP) increase following the place number review.
- b. That the split of funding for the early years inclusion support fund continues to be fully funded from the early years block.

DfE Allocation and Other Potential Funding Options

8. It is not possible to fully fund the pressures above from within the high needs block. In order to partially fund the pressures on the high needs block, the following model could be implemented which includes a transfer from Schools Block.

	£M
DfE HNB Allocation for 2021-22	57.529
Transfer from Central Block (surplus)	0.195
Transfer from Schools Block 0.5%	£1.400
Excess Growth Fund	£TBC
Estimated funding shortfall	£8.091

9. In balancing the budget, it is recommended that;
- a. There is a transfer from the Central Block to High Needs Block – as previous years, any unallocated CSSB is transferred to contribute to the high needs pressures.
 - b. Taking into account the wishes of schools who responded to the Autumn consultation, that there is a transfer of Schools Funding to High Needs Block of 0.5% - approximately £1.4 million to be transferred from Schools Block. This will be dependant on the decisions made by the forum around the schools formula.
 - c. It is possible that the DfE estimated growth fund surplus to estimated growth fund requirements for 2021-22. In the January decision report suite, Schools Forum will be asked to consider the growth fund level.
 - d. The recovery actions of the High Needs Block working group are as presented to Schools Forum are progressed. These assumes a level of success when working with schools on inclusion policy for children and young people.
 - e. Earmarked funding as part of the FACT programme is maximised in order to facilitate changes required to achieve savings.

DSG Reserve

10. The current forecast overspend on the School Funding reserve is £19.916m. This is currently being cash flowed by the local authority.
11. This level of deficit has triggered the requirement to submit a DSG recovery workbook to the DfE. This needs to be signed off by Schools Forum when the 21-22 budget is set. A further report outlines the requirement and draft plan.

Proposals

12. Schools Forum is asked to note the pressures on the high needs block for 2021-22 and the potential options to reduce the shortfall against high needs budgets including agreeing a transfer from Schools Block to balance the high needs pressures. This will be considered in full at the January 2021 meeting.

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Appendix 1 - Calculation methodology for Wiltshire with a comparison to average local authorities.

Appendix 2 – Early assessment of pressure on the high needs block for 2021-22.

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High Needs National Funding Formula - step by step allocation for an individual local authority (LA)

Step-by-step guide for LAs to understand the calculation of their high needs block provisional allocations

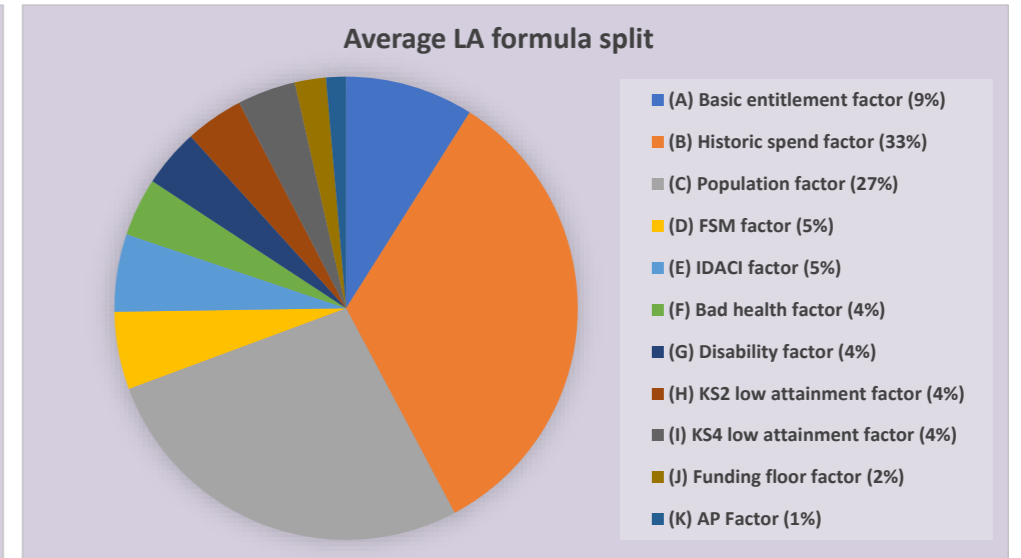
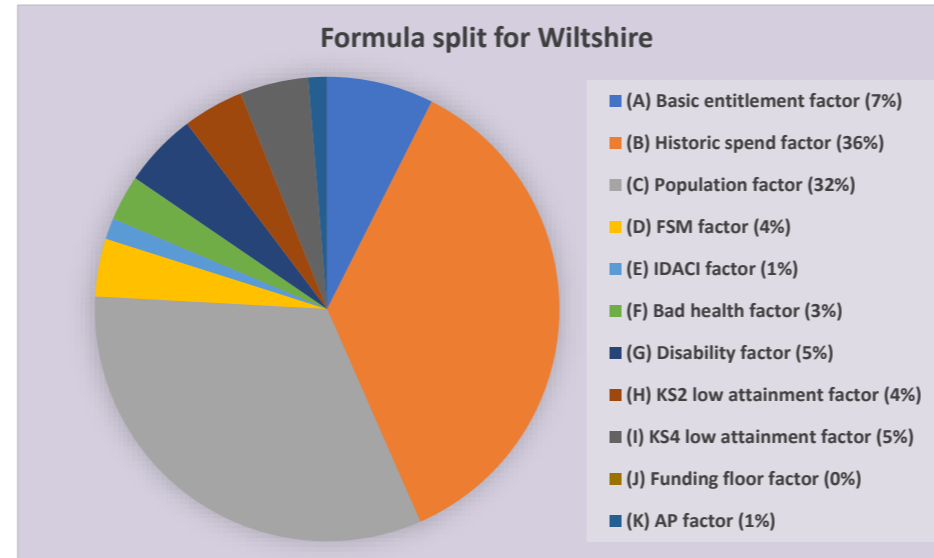
Select LA name
Region
LA code

Wiltshire
SOUTH WEST
865

Area cost adjustment ('ACA')
1.011

(A) Basic entitlement factor (7%)
(B) Historic spend factor (36%)
(C) Population factor (32%)
(D) FSM factor (4%)
(E) IDACI factor (1%)
(F) Bad health factor (3%)
(G) Disability factor (5%)
(H) KS2 low attainment factor (4%)
(I) KS4 low attainment factor (5%)
(J) Funding floor factor (0%)
(K) AP factor (1%)
NFF allocation before provisional import/export adjustment and additional funding for new and growing special free schools (100%)
(L) Import/export adjustment (provisional) (-2.9%)
2021-22 high needs NFF provisional allocation before limit on gains
2021-22 high needs NFF provisional allocation after calculation of gain on 2020-21 baseline up to 12% per head, including the import/export adjustment

£4,404,962
£21,322,449
£19,211,889
£2,390,636
£868,556
£1,876,768
£3,063,860
£2,506,705
£2,823,459
£0
£769,276
£59,238,558
-£1,710,000
£57,528,558
£57,528,558



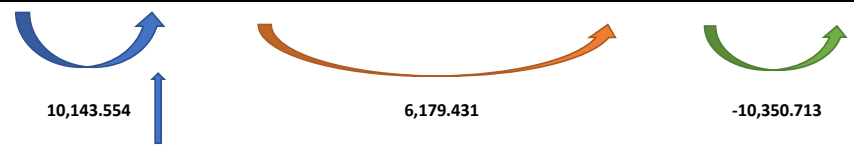
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Appendix 2 - High Needs Budget Proposed Allocation with shortfall allocated as balancing item

	Type of Service	CC	GL	BASE 2021 col a	Forecast Expenditure 20-21 col b	Recharge Teachers Pay Grant (CSSB) col c	Known changes to Places col d	Estimated demand impact (11.12% EHCPs) col e	Apply Contract Inflation Rate col f	Planned Savings per recovery plan col g	Savings targets to balance to allocation col h	Budget Estimate 21-22 col i	Estimated Contract Inflation col j	Notes
High Needs	10041 High Needs fund Sch (SS, ELP & RB PLACES)	10041	790008	11,410.330	11,410.330		1,268.840		0.000			12,679.170	0%	
High Needs	12190 SEND Central Equipment	12190	790008	145.900	145.900			0.000	0.000			145.900	0%	no change
High Needs	12265 DSC & Portage	12265	790008	454.330	429.960			0.000	0.000			429.960	0%	AE no inflation
High Needs	12850 IndepSpecialSchFees	12850	790008	10,696.047	13,552.206			1,461.966	300.283	-507.000	-2,618.905	12,188.550	2%	Framework inflation
High Needs	12851 SEN EHE & AP	12851	790008	1,718.080	2,132.429			237.126	47.391	-93.000	-411.027	1,912.920	2%	Framework inflation
High Needs	12860 Speech and Language	12860	790008	565.690	565.690				0.000			565.690		CC checking
High Needs	12905 Named Pupil Allowances	12905	790008	5,030.570	8,360.811			815.366	0.000	-360.000	-1,559.268	7,256.910	0%	
High Needs	12906 WTop Up Payments Special Schools	12906	790008	6,868.950	9,191.214			972.426	0.000	-600.000	-1,741.470	7,822.170	0%	
High Needs	12907 Top Up Payments Resourse Bases	12907	790008	1,673.750	2,264.464			248.335	0.000	-200.000	-449.049	1,863.750	0%	
High Needs	12908 Top Up Payments ELPS	12908	790008	932.620	1,681.612			184.998	0.000	-200.000	-294.760	1,371.850	0%	
High Needs	12909 TOP UP POST 16	12909	790008	3,619.760	2,790.900			528.001	0.000	-300.000	-543.711	2,475.190	0%	
High Needs	12910 Specialist Provision	12910	790008	124.900	124.900			0.000	0.000			124.900	0%	
High Needs	12951 Wiltshire Pupils NWS	12951	790008	1,760.790	2,404.311			267.359	0.000		-472.520	2,199.150	0%	
High Needs	12970 Secondary Dev Funding	12970	790008	2,790.900	2,790.900			0.000	0.000			2,790.900	0%	
High Needs	13032 SENSORY SERVICE	13032	790008	936.140	936.140	-63.710		0.000	0.000			872.430	0%	Pay inflation unlikely 21-22
High Needs	13050 Behaviour Support Service	13050	790008	368.700	368.700	-25.700		0.000	0.000			343.000	0%	Pay inflation unlikely 21-22
High Needs	13160 EOTAS Service	13160	790008	412.900	503.443	-16.900		0.000	0.000		-0.003	486.540	0%	Pay inflation unlikely 21-22
High Needs	13530 0-25 Inclusion	13530	790008	1,009.490	1,009.490	-46.350		0.000	0.000			963.140	0%	Pay inflation unlikely 21-22
High Needs	13540 0-25 SEND Locality Team	13540	790008	1,038.030	1,038.030			0.000	0.000			1,038.030	0%	Pay inflation unlikely 21-22
				51,557.877	61,701.431	-152.660	1,268.840	4,715.577	347.675	-2,260.000	-8,090.713	57,530.150		

Notes

1. The shortfall in the base is £10 million
2. The 21-22 pressures are estimated at £6 million
3. Savings (to balance) are £10 million, £2 million of this is attached to a plan



Funding available	
Provisional HNB Allocation	£57,528.558
0.5% transfer Schools Block	£1.400
Balance of CSSB	£0.195
rounding	-£0.003
	£57,530.150
Balance (should be zero)	£0.000
Funding Increase	
20-21 Allocation (final)	£51,987.188

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Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum Finance & SEN Working Group
30th November 2020

Schools Forum
10th December 2020

DEDICATED SCHOOLS BUDGET – EARLY YEARS BLOCK UPDATE 2021-22

Purpose of the Report

1. To update schools forum on issues related to the early years block for 2021-22 and the decisions that will need to be made as part of the budget setting process for 2021-22 financial year.

Main Considerations

2. No information for Wiltshire is available yet in relation to Early Years funding, in line with previous years. Details of the 2021/22 EY funding will be received in December together with the rest of the DSG information for 2021/22.
3. In his 2020 Spending Review, the Chancellor announced the following:
 - £44 million nationally for early years education in 2021-22 to increase the hourly rate paid to childcare providers for the government's free hours offers. This is on top of the £66 million national increase for the current financial year. This could represent a 5p per hour increase in funding. December modelling will look to passing the maximum possible increase on to providers.
 - Growing up well (£11.8 million nationally to departments including the Department for Education and others (DHSC, DWP, MHCLG and CO.) This pilot aims to improve cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes (such as language skills and health) for disadvantaged and vulnerable 0-5-year olds through improving the family user experience of early years services and is a welcome investment in closing the gap for disadvantaged children.

Proposals

4. Schools Forum is asked to note the information in the report. The budget for early years will be considered in full at the January 2021 meeting.

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Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum

10th December 2020

Covid Costs – Case Studies from Schools and Early Years Settings

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide members of Schools Forum with the results of a recent survey with schools relating to the additional costs being incurred by Schools and Early Years Settings. The report is for information only.

Purpose of the Survey

2. The Council's Director of Education and Skills has regular contact with colleagues from the Department for Education to discuss current issues. A key topic being raised by schools is the additional cost pressures that schools continue to face since the start of the 2020-21 academic year.
3. The survey was designed to provide schools with the opportunity to demonstrate the additional costs that they are incurring which cannot be met from existing resources and are forcing the school to compromise its financial plans. The results of the survey will be used to help lobby local MP's and the Department for Education for additional funding to support schools through the period of the current pandemic.
4. A '*Case Study Template – Additional Covid costs*' was issued to schools through the Right Choice in October. A similar template was also issued to Early Years Settings, seeking evidence of the additional costs being faced in the Early Years sector.
5. As well as demonstrating the additional costs being faced by Schools and Early Years Settings, the survey also sought evidence of any areas of savings being experienced by schools as a result of the pandemic.

Responses

6. At the time of writing, a total of 30 responses were received, 24 from Schools and 6 from Early Years Settings. Where schools were generally very open about the financial impact upon their budgets, the Early Years sector were less transparent, which could be caused by a need for greater confidentiality of their financial affairs. (More responses have been received subsequently and herald the same concerns as detailed below).
7. A number of common themes were expressed in terms of additional costs being faced by organisations including;
 - Cleaning (deep cleans, materials, frequency and hours each week)
 - Staffing (cover for staff shielding, absent and isolating)
 - PPE Equipment
 - Catering costs (arrangements to ensure bubbles can be retained)
 - IT (to enable working remotely and to communicate with pupils and families)
 - Photocopying (sending work to pupils not in school)
 - Trip monies (unrecoverable)
 - Educational resources (to enable safe usage)
 - Extra FSM pupils

8. In addition to further costs being faced by organisations, a number of 'lost' income sources were also cited including;
- Breakfast and After School clubs
 - Holiday clubs
 - Nursery provision
 - 'Friends' or PTA contributions
 - Lettings
 - Catering
 - 'Earned' income (professional services)
 - Pupils to EHE (Elective Home Education)
9. Some organisations were able to mitigate some of the additional costs through making savings in some of their budgets including;
- Reduction in Supply Costs
 - Reduction in Overtime
 - No swimming costs
 - Trip costs
 - Photocopying and printing
 - Exam and invigilation costs
 - Postage
 - Transport
10. The table at Appendix 1 shows the results for those organisations that responded to the survey.

Free School Meals Eligibility - Growth

11. The Free School Meal (FSM) and Free School Meal Ever6 (FSM6) indicators play a pivotal role in both core school funding and pupil premium funding. During the course of the pandemic, the number of pupils eligible to a Free School Meal has grown significantly.
12. The table below demonstrates the movement in FSM eligible pupils.

Date	FSM Eligible Pupils
October 2019	6,703
April 2020	7,420
October 2020	8,341

13. Under the National Funding Formula (NFF), Wiltshire will be funded on the basis of the number of eligible pupils as at the October 2020 census and pupil premium grant (PPG) allocations will be based upon the January 2021 census.
14. Based upon the growth in FSM eligible pupils, if the trend was to continue at the current rate of 38 additional eligible pupils each day, then the projected number of eligible pupils as at the end of March and June 2021 would be;

Date	FSM Eligible Pupils
January 2021	8,879
March 2021	9,259
June 2021	9,753

15. Given the projected growth in FSM eligible pupil numbers, there is the potential that due to the lag in school funding, schools will be educating significantly greater numbers of pupils eligible for FSM, FSM6 and PPG funding than they are actually funded for.
16. Initial modelling would suggest that this impact upon schools across the County could be significant. The minimum impact is detailed in the table below.

Potential FSM Increase Missing From Budgets To 31.03.21	918	£	413,100.00
Potential FSM6 Increase Missing From Budgets To 31.03.21	918	£	629,212.50
Potential PPG Increase Missing From Budgets To 31.03.21	380	£	328,383.33

Proposals

17. Schools Forum is asked to note the report and support the use of the survey and FSM projections in lobbying for additional funding.

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Appendix 1 – Results of Poll

School	DfE	NOR	Costs	Lost Income	Savings	Net
St Thomas a Beckett	3396	46	2,315	2,150	-	4,465
Broad Town	3019	64	7,169	4,000		11,169
Pitton	5216	73	780	2,000		2,780
Crudwell	3048	118	7,168	1,400	- 1,800	6,768
KSM	3096	134	11,955	8,542		20,497
Minety	3220	145	3,271	4,500	- 550	7,221
Stratford Sub-Castle	3172	145		7,000		7,000
Alderbury	3460	173	18,690	7,500		26,190
Box	3103	173	20,635	1,000	- 3,500	18,135
Southwick	3166	188	3,488	12,362		15,850
Woodlands	2190	190	12,086	2,360	- 2,100	12,346
Winterbourne Earls	3201	197	16,775	3,500	- 6,500	13,775
Westbury Infants	2136	198	6,383	250		6,633
Charter	2226	201	4,596	2,260		6,856
Holbrook	2196	242	25,975	676	- 1,200	25,451
Staverton	3170	248	7,980	9,000	- 6,200	10,780
St Sampsons	3045	304	11,538	10,928	- 6,014	16,452
Kings Lodge	2218	330	8,269	24,089		32,358
Purton St Mary's	3150	371	48,718	14,000	- 16,580	46,138
Grove	2170	373	10,795	9,240		20,035
Greentrees	2004	428	12,670	11,750		24,420
St Josephs	4610	572	40,133	21,000	- 45,143	15,990
Abbeyfield	4000	963	66,413		- 8,000	58,413
Hardenhuish	5414	1,583	85,717	94,220	- 36,400	143,537
			416,087	244,177	- 132,187	528,077

Early Years Setting	DfE	NOR	Costs	Lost Income	Savings	Net
Alderbury		35		2,000	0	2,000
College Fields, Marl.		24				-
Gooseberry Bush		80				-
Paddington		46				-
Peardrops		47				-
Tree Tots		63		6,500	0	6,500
			-	8,500	-	8,500

Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum

10th December 2020

F40 Update

Purpose of report

1. To provide members with an update regarding the work of the F40 Group and share their recent communication with the Department for Education, in relation to impact of Covid-19 upon schools.

Letter dated 20th October 2020

2. The letter has been replicated below and members are asked to note the content. The letter is addressed to Mr Tony Foot (Director of the Education Funding Group, DfE) and Mr Tom Goldman (Deputy Director, Funding Policy Unit, DfE)



October 20, 2020

Continuing impact of Covid-19 on school and education funding

Dear Mr Foot/Mr Goldman

I hope you and your colleagues at the Department for Education continue to be well through these difficult times.

Since I last wrote to you in August, the f40 group has been in dialogue with our members, both from local authorities and schools, about the continuing impact of Covid-19.

While f40 would very much welcome an opportunity to meet with you remotely later in autumn, we felt it would be useful to share now some of the feedback we have received.

We appreciate you are under increased pressure, but feel a grassroots perspective is of benefit.

f40 believes the impact on schools should be continually monitored, and the criteria for claiming back extra expenses regularly reviewed.

While we welcomed the additional funding announced for schools last year, much of it is being swallowed up by the increases to teachers' pay and pensions, and now Covid-19.

In real terms, schools are much worse off than they were five years ago and simply cannot meet the additional demands placed on them now due to the pandemic.

1. Additional teaching costs

Since schools returned in September, one of the greatest challenges for headteachers has been ensuring that their schools have sufficient teaching staff in place every day.

As the number of Covid cases rises, more and more teachers are having to isolate if they have possible symptoms, or if they have been in contact with someone who has tested positive.

Some teachers are also having to stay home to look after their own children who are isolating.

The impact on schools is enormous.

The squeeze on education budgets in recent years has led many schools to reduce the number of teaching staff to the bare minimum. That means they now have no spare capacity when teachers are absent.

During the pandemic, schools are having to increasingly rely on supply teachers to provide cover. This is exacerbated when Covid tests are not quickly or locally available.

If teachers could be tested immediately, those that receive a negative result could return to the classroom, rather than having to spend unnecessary time away from school.

Such is the extent of the issue, many schools have already spent their annual supply teaching budget. As time goes on and costs continue to be incurred, schools are having to consider the trade-off between opening in full and the threat that may pose to the future financial sustainability of the school.

A number of headteachers have considered using their school budgets to buy testing kits themselves – in order to get teachers with a negative result back in the classroom quickly. They were eager to know whether it would be an appropriate use of budget, claiming it was the only way they could keep costs down and schools open during particularly trying times.

We do not believe schools should have to use their teaching budget to pay for Covid tests but agree with them that it would be a better use of their budget if it saved them substantial sums on supply teachers.

Suggestion: f40 believes Government should pay the additional staffing costs of schools, where they have arisen due to the pandemic.

Suggestion: Priority should be given to schools and teachers during the testing process, similar to that given to health care workers, to ensure teachers can return to the classroom at the earliest opportunity.

Suggestion: Additional testing kits should be supplied to schools on a rolling programme.

2. Additional teaching resources

Schools, particularly primary schools, are having to spend more on teaching resources.

Social distancing measures mean children can no longer sit together and share learning resources and equipment, as in the past. This is a direct additional cost to schools caused by the pandemic.

Suggestion: Schools be allowed to claim back extra costs for learning resources brought about by Covid-19.

3. Extraordinary additional costs

The current guidelines around reclaiming additional expenses have been in place since the spring, and we believe they are now too narrow for the current situation. The range and breadth of additional costs for schools is constantly expanding as they navigate their way through the pandemic.

Schools need ongoing assistance with generic extra costs, such as deep cleaning and the displaying of information signs, however, a range of additional 'other' costs are also emerging.

While we encourage schools to make savings where they can, we believe no school should be worse off because of Covid-19.

Some schools may also have unique costs to them, which we believe should be included in the criteria for claiming back expenses.

For example, special educational needs schools are spending substantial sums on PPE, such as aprons, masks, and gloves. This is considered essential as some children with additional needs are prone to spitting, biting, and licking, increasing risk of infection, but it is costly.

Examples of emerging additional extra costs include:

- Additional water usage due to extra hand washing
- More frequent emptying of cesspits due to the increase in water usage
- PPE
- Remote learning platforms
- Extra toilet blocks
- Additional lunch/dining room equipment to aid social distancing (trays, cutlery, crockery)

Suggestion: f40 believes allowance should be made for schools to recoup 'other' extra expenses that are not already included on the claims form, and which may be specific to their situation. At the end of the financial year(s), it should become clear if they need to pay back funds.

4. Winter costs

Schools are expecting their heating costs to rise this winter as a direct result of the pandemic.

In order to reduce the risk of Covid infections passing between pupils and teachers, schools have been advised to keep buildings well ventilated by keeping windows open wherever possible.

This hasn't posed a problem during the warmer months, but now autumn is here, schools are having to use their heating systems more frequently, and increase the temperature, to compensate for the open windows.

Suggestion: Schools should be allowed to claim for additional heating costs by submitting this year's heating bill along with a comparative bill from the same period last year.

5. Loss of income

Many schools are facing financial hardship because their income streams continue to be frozen. These could be after school clubs, or the hiring out of sports and community facilities.

In many cases, while the income is no longer coming in, the costs associated with them, such as staff and leasing costs, are continuing.

Some schools have had no choice but to wind up certain activities, which is a loss to their community and has also incurred associated redundancy costs.

Suggestion: We believe the DfE should support schools who have lost income by agreeing to subsidise a percentage of it – for example, funding 75% of lost income. This would be in line with the approach taken with local authorities.

6. Extra learning support

Many local authorities are reporting a sharp spike in EHCP applications since September.

f40 does not believe EHCPs are the right solution for all children and should only be used when long-term special educational needs are identified.

We feel they should not be applied to children who have fallen behind due to coronavirus, or who have anxieties relating to the pandemic.

However, greater funding for early intervention programmes should be available to restore emotional well-being and provide additional support to children who need it due to the impact of Covid.

While the catch-up grant goes somewhere towards this, it will not be sufficient to meet the demand of every school. Also, schools may have to use the catch-up grant to ease wider funding pressures, rather than targeting it at specific pupil need.

By putting additional funding into learning support now, Government will save money in the long-term on EHCPs and special educational needs.

Local authorities can play a key role in bringing together large numbers of schools, along with other key services, such as social care.

Suggestion: Additional early intervention funding, over and above the £1bn catch-up grant, should be provided to ensure additional emotional well-being and learning support can be provided – reducing the likelihood of children needing EHCPs and to help children progress.

7. School transport

Local authorities and schools welcomed the additional funding to assist with school transport in September and have done incredibly well to ensure children get to and from school according to the new safety measures.

While we welcome the new injection of funds for school transport announced last week, £27m, we fear this will not be enough to meet demand, especially in large rural counties.

For example, in Devon we had a shortfall in extra school transport costs of £100,000 between the start of September and the October half-term. That is additional spending that Devon County Council cannot afford.

We need a commitment to fund the extra school transport required until the Covid restrictions end – whenever that might be.

Suggestion: f40 believes Government should make a long-term commitment to fund all additional extra school transport costs brought about by the pandemic until social distancing measures and restrictions are removed.

8. School census

The school census is taking place this month and concerns have been raised around the accuracy of the census in relation to the funding requirements of each school next year.

In recent weeks there has been a noticeable rise in Elective Home Education (EHE), with one council claiming a 500% rise in applications, from 70 during this period last year to 350 now.

We believe this is a direct result of the pandemic.

Children who are being educated at home will not be included in the school census, and thus not included in school budget forecasts for next year.

However, a large number of these children may return to the school system later this academic year – creating a funding shortage for their schools.

When these children return, they may also require greater learning support and may qualify for Free School Meals, yet their school will not receive funding to cover either purely because they missed the census.

Suggestion: f40 believes the Department for Education should prepare for discrepancies in the census due to the high number of children taken out of schools due to Elective Home Education. We believe schools should be paid an additional sum to cater for the likelihood of children being brought back into the system next year, and to enable them to provide extra learning support where needed.

9. SEND

Special Educational Needs continues to be a major concern for f40, with the needs of pupils outstripping available budgets, and EHCP applications continuing to rise.

The situation is only going to get worse unless the High Needs system is overhauled, with less reliance on EHCPs and greater emphasis on school inclusion.

Many councils have growing deficit SEND budgets and these will continue to increase unless action is taken now to deal with the High Needs crisis.

We urge Government to resume its review of SEND as soon as possible, and report back with recommendations at the earliest opportunity.

Schools need support systems, guidance and additional funding to enable them to be flexible in the way they work, which can enable them to be properly inclusive of pupils with SEND.

And local authorities need additional funding to settle the huge deficit budgets they currently have, which is running close to £20m in some councils.

Suggestion: The review into SEND be resumed as soon as possible.

Suggestion: The SEND system be overhauled, with less reliance on EHCPs and greater emphasis on inclusion at mainstream schools. Schools should be given greater funding,

guidance and support in order to provide the right level of care and education to pupils with High Needs.

Suggestion: Local authorities should be given additional funding to pay off the deficit SEND budgets they have accrued.

Conclusion

Once again, thank you for taking the time to read some of the feedback we have received from our members.

If you would like to discuss it in more detail, don't hesitate to contact me, or f40 Secretary Karen Westcott, and we will be happy to arrange something.

Kind regards

James McInnes
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cc. Karen Westcott
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Proposal

3. Schools Forum are asked to note the content of the letter in support of additional Covid related funding for schools.

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Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum Finance & SEN Working Group
30th November 2020

Schools Forum
10th December 2020

School Admission Appeals

Background

1. Schools Forum will recall that the DfE have updated guidance around admissions appeals and that this poses a number of challenges including confirmation that funding for admissions appeals lies with schools; the subsequent introduction of charges and schools electing to accept pupils above PAN to avoid appeal costs.
2. In response to DfE Guidance Scheme for financing local authority-maintained schools, the Working Group and Schools Forum have previously discussed increasing the Central Schools Services Block or taking an allocation from the budget of maintained schools (dedicated schools block), to provide funding for admissions appeals. Schools Forum and the Working Group did not favour these options as they would affect all schools, including those that do not have appeals. Schools Forum indicated introducing charges to schools that have admission appeals, at a subsidised rate, would be preferable.

Update

3. Over the period July-September 2020 the Local Authority contacted schools to indicate it was likely to introduce charges for admission appeals for all maintained schools, in addition to academy, voluntary aided and foundation schools. Schools were provided details of the current charges applied to academies and were invited to complete a survey to indicate if they would be likely to buy into appeals services at a similar rate.
4. The following promotion of the survey and the latest DfE guidance was undertaken:
 - A notice on the Right Choice website 1 July
 - A notice on the Right Choice website 27 July
 - Notices in the Schools Newsletters
 - Information provided to WASSH network 2 September
 - Announcement at the Headteacher briefing on 10 September
 - Announcement at Governors briefing on 14 September
 - Notice to School Governors 18 September
5. 34 maintained schools responded to the survey, of these 25 schools indicated they would be interested in purchasing appeals support from the council.
6. Comments provided during the consultation included that schools felt it was a contradiction that the council was the admissions authority for maintained

schools) could limit school places, however, also provide an appeals service. Government guidance however requires the admissions authority to make arrangements for appeals to be heard. An independent panel is used to ensure the appeal is independent from the admissions services.

7. Other feedback included that schools are not usually able to admit pupils where this is over the infant class size limit, and therefore the admissions authority has no option to reject an admission request and the school stands the costs of an appeal which would have a high chance of being dismissed. Whilst the council has great sympathy with the impact on schools in these instances, the process is a statutory responsibility.

Next Steps

8. Since the survey, the local authority has become aware of situations where schools would prefer to admit pupils over the Planned Admission Number (PAN) in order to avoid paying for appeals. This would lead to popular schools being over capacity whilst other local schools continued to have surplus places. Some schools also operate waiting lists. If a school wished to create additional places above PAN, those places should be offered to the highest priority applicant on the waiting list, not necessarily the family who have appealed.
9. When this report was considered by the Schools Forum Working Group on 30th November 2020, it was suggested that a Position Statement could be adopted and shared with schools. This Position Statement could set out the expectations of the LA and Schools Forum, in order to avoid the scenarios, set out in para 7. above. Schools could be reminded that once at PAN, applications should be refused unless there is no reasonable alternative. This would help to ensure that admissions policies are adhered to and that schools with available places have higher prospects of those places being filled.

Recommendation

10. To note the update and that the local authority is currently considering representations received following the consultation.
11. To invite feedback from Schools Forum on the issues raised as part of, or following the consultation, including finalising the suggested Position Statement at the January meeting.

30.11.20

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Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum

10th December 2020

Scheme for Financing Maintained Schools 2021-22

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Schools Forum with an update on the Wiltshire Scheme for Financing Maintained Schools.

Background

2. Local authorities (LA's) are required to publish schemes for financing schools setting out the financial relationship between them and the schools they maintain, to meet the provisions of Section 48(4) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, and Schedule 14 paragraph 2A(2) to that Act.
3. The 2020 Wiltshire Scheme for Financing LA Maintained Schools has been updated and amended in accordance with guidance from the Secretary of State for Education.
4. When making any changes to a Scheme, LA's are required to consult all maintained schools in their area and then obtain the approval of the members of Schools Forum, representing maintained schools, except for any 'Directed Revisions' requested by the Secretary of State.
5. The power of 'directed revision' is used by the government either to remove outdated provisions or insert new provisions to reflect latest legislation or policy. In this instance, LA's are directed by the Department for Education (DfE) to incorporate within, or remove from, their schemes specific wording and no consultation with maintained schools or approval of the Schools' Forum is necessary.
6. Wiltshire's current scheme document is considerably dated and a wholesale re-write has been undertaken to bring the Scheme up to date and therefore will be the subject of consultation and approval by Schools Forum.

The Funding Framework

7. The funding framework which replaced Local Management of Schools is set out in the legislative provisions in section 45 to 53 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.
8. Under this legislation, local authorities determine for themselves the size of their Schools' Budget and their Non-Schools Education Budget, although at a

minimum the LA must appropriate its entire Dedicated Schools Grant to their Schools' Budget.

9. The categories of expenditure which fall within the two budgets are prescribed under regulations made by the Secretary of State, but included within the two, taken together, is all expenditure, direct and indirect, on the Authority's maintained schools except for capital and certain miscellaneous items.
10. Local authorities may deduct funds from their Schools' Budget for purposes specified in regulations made by the Secretary of State under section 45A of the Act (the centrally retained expenditure). The amounts to be deducted for these purposes are decided by the LA following consultation with maintained schools and gaining the approval of Schools Forum.
11. The balance of the Schools' Budget left after deduction of the centrally retained expenditure is termed the Individual Schools Budget (ISB). LA's must distribute the ISB amongst their maintained schools using a formula which accords with regulations made by the Secretary of State and enables the calculation of a budget share for each maintained school.
12. This budget share is then delegated to the governing body of each school, unless the school is a new school which has not yet received a delegated budget, or the right to a delegated budget has been suspended in accordance with section 51 of the Act.

The Outline Scheme

13. The regulations state that schemes must deal with the following matters:
 - the carrying forward from one funding period to another of surpluses and deficits arising in relation to schools' budget shares;
 - amounts which may be charged against schools' budget shares;
 - amounts received by schools which may be retained by their governing bodies and the purposes for which such amounts may be used;
 - conditions prescribing financial controls and procedures;
 - terms on which services and facilities are provided by the authority for schools maintained by them;
 - the times at which amounts equal in total to the school's budget share are to be made available to governing bodies and the proportion of the budget share to be made available at each such time;
 - the virement between budget heads within the delegated budget;
 - the use of delegated budgets and of sums made available to a governing body by the local authority which do not form part of delegated budgets;
 - borrowing by governing bodies;
 - the banking arrangements that may be made by governing bodies;

- a statement as to the personal liability of governors in respect of schools' budget shares having regard to section 50(7) of the 1998 act;
- the keeping of a register of any business interests of the governors and the head teacher;
- the provision of information by and to the governing body;
- the maintenance of inventories of assets;
- plans of a governing body's expenditure;
- insurance;
- the use of delegated budgets by governing bodies to satisfy the authority's duties imposed by or under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974;
- the provision of legal advice to a governing body;
- how complaints by persons working at a school or by school governors about financial management or financial propriety at the school will be dealt with and to whom such complaints should be made

The Role of the Scheme

14. The scheme defines the financial relationship between the Local Authority and the maintained schools which it funds.
15. The requirements of the scheme relating to financial management and associated issues are binding on both the Authority and schools. They ensure compliance with statutory requirements, accounting and auditing standards and codes of practice which are established by the professional accounting bodies and shall apply to all staff employed at the school, including consultants.
16. Section 48(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act provides that where there is any inconsistency between the scheme and any other rules or regulations made by the LA relating to the funding or financial management of schools which they maintain, the terms of the scheme shall prevail.

Proposal

17. It is proposed that:
 - a) Schools Forum are aware of the proposed consultation with maintained schools.
 - b) Schools Forum consider the introduction of the new Scheme for Financing Maintained Schools at a future meeting, based upon the consultation responses.

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