

Schools Forum

MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING HELD ON 20 JANUARY 2022 AT ONLINE MEETING VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS.

Present:

Nikki Barnett, Aileen Bates, Lyssy Bolton, Andy Bridewell, Rebecca Carson, Michele Chilcott, Sam Churchill, Stella Fowler, Jon Hamp, John Hawkins, Cllr Ross Henning, Graham Nagel-Smith, Lisa Percy (Chair), John Proctor, Giles Pugh, Nigel Roper, Graham Shore (Vice Chair), Trudy Srawley, Ros Sutton, Ian Tucker, David Whewell, Catriona Williamson and Lynn Yendle

Also Present:

Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager), Helean Hughes (Director – Education & Skills), Cllr Dominic Muns (Portfolio Holder for Education), (Lisa Pullin (Democratic Services Officer), Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education), and Cllr Suzanne Wickham (Portfolio Holder for SEND)

49 **Apologies/Substitutions and Changes of Membership**

Apologies were received from Jo Grenfell (Observer- Post 16 – Wiltshire College), and Georgina Keily-Theobald (Maintained Special School representative).

Apologies were also received from Jane Davies (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, SEND, Transition and Inclusion), Jackie Day (Early Years Observer), Laura Mayes (Cabinet Member – Children, Education and Skills) and Lucy Townsend (Corporate Director – People/Director of Children's Services).

Substitutions

Lynn Yendle was substituting for Jon Hamp
Nikki Bennet was substituting for Jo Grenfell.

Membership changes

Welcome to Lyssy Bolton who is the new Early Years representative (replacing Mark Cawley). Welcome to Ros Sutton who is the new second primary school Governor representative.

50 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 December 2021 were approved.

Resolved:

That the Chairman approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of Schools forum held on 9 December 2021.

51 **Chair's Announcements**

The Chair made the following announcements:

Meeting arrangements for Schools Forum

It had been previously agreed that the December and January meetings of Schools Forum would be held in person at County Hall as it was felt to be easier to make budget decisions around the table, but in response to the national and local Covid rates at the current time this meeting was requested again by the majority to be held virtually.

Passing of a colleague

Schools Forum would like to express its condolences to the family and colleagues of Hazel Ryan. Hazel sadly passed away unexpectedly on 13th December 2021 and leaves behind 2 daughters and 2 lovely grand children. In her role as a School Support Accountant and Strategic Financial Advisor, Hazel had supported all schools in Wiltshire during her 30 year career. She had also supported Schools Forum with preparing and presenting reports, training Headteachers, training Governors and training School Business Managers. Her experience and dedication to supporting Wiltshire schools has been invaluable and she will be missed by all of us.

52 **Declaration of Interests**

There were no interests declared.

53 **Public Participation**

No questions or statements were received in advance of the meeting.

54 **Updates from Working Groups**

The Forum noted the update received by way of the minutes of the meeting of the Early Years Reference Group meeting held on 5 January 2022.

There were no questions arising.

The Forum noted the update received by way of the minutes of the meeting of the School Funding and SEN working group held on 10 January 2022.

There were no questions arising.

Resolved:

That Schools Forum note the minutes of the Early Years Reference group meeting on 5 January 2022 and the joint meeting of the School Funding and SEN working group held on 10 January 2022.

55 **School Improvement Services 2022-23 - National and Local Consultation**

Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) referred to the report which sought to update Schools Forum on the DfE's response to the consultation 'Reforming how Local Authorities School Improvement functions are funded' and provides feedback from the local consultation sessions and highlighted the following:

- The DfE released its consultation on 29 October 2021 with a closing date for responses of 26 November 2021. The Schools Funding and SEN Working Group met to discuss a response – this was shared with schools and all schools, governors and other stakeholders were encouraged to also respond to the consultation;
- The School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grant (SIMB) Grant had been provided to local authorities since 2017 to help fulfil their core school improvement activities;
- The DfE published the results of the consultation on 11 January 2022 and confirmed that they would be reducing the SIMB Grant by 50% in 2022-23 and would remove in full in 2023-24. They would also allow local authorities to fund their school improvement activity via de-delegation from school's budget shares;
- The consultation was well supported with 565 responses which included a significant number from Wiltshire of 40 responses (over 7% of all responses);
- The DfE consider that the SIMB Grant had been primarily used for providing improvement functions including early support and challenge to improve school performance rather than for exercising formal intervention powers;
- Schools had felt that there was a strong argument in favour of early intervention to prevent the need for having to exercise formal intervention, however this appears to have carried little weight for the future funding of the grant;
- The DfE currently expect MAT's and academies to fund this cost from their budgets and for this reason they believe it is right to move towards removing this grant and put school improvement funding on a more even footing;
- The Secretary of State would retain the power to approve the de-delegation contrary to decisions of the Schools Forum if they were

satisfied that the Council had demonstrated that such de-delegation was necessary to ensure the Council is adequately funded to exercise core school improvement activities;

- Obviously, most of the responses to consultation wished for the SIMB Grant to continue, however removal would bring funding arrangements for local authorities' school improvement activity closer in line with academies and would enable Councils to better adjust over time to the Government's long term ambition for all schools to become academies;
- The DfE would update the Schools Causing Concern guidance to ensure that there was more clarity on the core school improvement functions going forward;
- Following a local consultation to gain a steer of opinion - at the December meeting of the Forum, maintained school representatives were asked to give their views and they had asked for the decision to be deferred to this meeting to enable them to carry out further consultation with their maintained school colleagues to gain a broader response;
- The Primary Heads Forum Executive liaised with its members and the Director of Education and Skills arranged two information sessions, including a Q&A opportunity for schools to raise any concerns or queries. Of the local consultation 86% were in support of de-delegation and at the two information sessions 100% and 87% of respondents were in support of de-delegation;
- The consultation for the de-delegation of funding for services for maintained schools must be performed annually and therefore the opportunity exists for maintained schools to participate in shaping the school improvement services in the future;

Cllr Dominic Muns (Portfolio Holder for Education) wished to share the context and thoughts from the Council's elected member perspective – The vast majority of local authority spend was on adult social care and Members had fought hard to ensure that there was adequate funding for children, education and skills with a focus on a level of early intervention so that issues did not get bigger down the line. The Wiltshire Learning Alliance (WLA) had launched in 2021 and school improvement was championed by himself, Cllr Laura Mayes as Cabinet Member and Helean Hughes as Director. Dominic felt that school improvement was crucial that all children were supported with the key point of the WLA being that the closer teams stand together, the better they work together to improve the lives of children and school's performance. Dominic wished to assure Schools Forum that from Cabinet down they understood the importance of school improvement and would provide school improvement support for as long as schools require it.

The Chair reported that she had spoken to Georgina Keily-Theobald (maintained special school representative) prior to the meeting who valued the

school improvement service and felt strongly that she wished to support the proposal for de-delegation of school improvement services.

The Chair of Primary Heads Forum confirmed that there was an interesting response to the PHF consultation and that no schools wanted the budget to be top sliced but the majority agreed that some kind of school improvement service is needed. On that basis PHF members would support the proposal of a top slice to top up the 50% of funding that was being withdrawn by the DfE to ensure there was 100% of school improvement funding for the 2022-23 year but would wish for this decision to be reviewed for the 2023-24 year.

Resolved: That Schools Forum

- 1. Note the outcome from the DfE's consultation and the local consultation responses in relation to the School Improvement Services for the 2022-23 financial year.**
- 2. Agree to de-delegate funding in support of School Improvement Services being provided for the 2022-23 year. (*This decision was made later in the meeting under Agenda item 9*).**

56 **School Budget Setting 2022-23**

56a School Revenue Funding 2022-23 - Funding Settlement and Budget Setting Process

Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) referred to the report which sought to update Schools Forum on the revenue funding settlement and the budget setting process for 2022-23 and highlighted the following:

- The DfE had issued the revenue funding settlement for schools on 16 December 2021;
- In the Autumn of 2019, the Government announced its pledge to boost schools and high needs funding over a 3-year period - £2.6 billion in 2020-21, - £4.8 billion in 2021-22 (increase by £2.2bn) and £7.1 billion in 2022-23 (increase by £2.3bn). In addition, a further £700 million was pledged for high needs nationally in 2020-21, a further £730 million for 2021-22 and £780m for 2022-23;
- The DfE have continued to allocate school funding on the basis of the National Funding Formula (NFF) which should see all schools benefitting from the additional funding. Nationally, the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) shows an average increase of 3.2% in the pupil-led funding factors compared to 2021-22. The 2022-23 year is another "soft" year with Schools Forum still retaining its role in determining the school funding allocation methodology;

- The introduction of mandatory minimum per pupil funding levels for the 2020-21 year have been continued and the rates have increased for the 2022-23 year to £4,265 for Primary and an average of £5,576 for Secondary. The mandatory minimum per pupil funding levels represents a step towards the introduction of a 'hard' formula, where national rates must be implemented without allowing for local discretion;
- Following the (DfE) consultation in 2021, further guidance regarding a move towards a 'hard' formula is expected between now and 2024-25;
- The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) threshold has been adjusted to ensure that all schools gain through the allocations per pupil and it is proposed that this be set at +2%;
- The Sparsity factor has seen the greatest changes of all formula factors. The NFF has increased the maximum sparsity values by £10,000, calculated sparsity distances based on road distances and applied a sparsity taper (making those eligible where the school has a sparsity distance 20% below the main threshold);
- Data for pupils who are eligible for FSM6 funding is now taken from the October census rather than the previous January school census';
- The low prior attainment data from 2019 would be used as a proxy for the assessments which would have taken place in 2020 and 2021 but didn't due to Covid;
- The DfE will pay business rates on behalf of all schools from 2022-23 removing the need for schools to pay their own business rates and then recover the funding;
- There was to be a slight uplift in rates of the Pupil Premium Grant with the numbers of those eligible being taken from the October 2021 census and not the January 2022 census;
- The provisional Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocation for Wiltshire was £422,409,451m which was an increase of £16,067,591m compared with 2022-23;
- The overall uplift in 'real' funding for comparative purposes is 3.95%, split as Schools - 3.42%, Central – 1.52%, High Needs – 8.40%, Early Years – 1.08%;
- Pupil numbers had grown from 62,689 in 2018-19 to 64,246 in 2022-23 although primary numbers had dipped last year and for the current year;
- Included within the Schools Block funding of £328.593m is the amount of £1.913m allocated on the basis of pupil growth within Wiltshire;

- In 2021-22, the DfE stipulated that the funding awarded through the Teachers Pay and Pension elements must be excluded when considering any transfers between the Schools' Block and other Blocks. The requirement has been removed and any transfer would be based upon the Total Funding figure of £328.593m;
- October 2021 pupil numbers have been multiplied by a unit value of £35.96 and a headcount of 64,246 for calculating the funding for the central school's services block;
- The DfE continue with their commitment to reviewing the High Needs NFF and a consultation is proposed and due in the first quarter of 2022-23. The review should cover all factors of the High Needs NFF including the 'Historic Spend' factor and also the weightings applied to each factor;
- The early years indicative hourly rates give some uplift in the values paid through funding;
- The funding regulations do allow for a transfer of funding between the schools' block and other blocks within the DSG of up to 0.5% with the agreement of Schools Forum (this had been previously agreed);
- Local Authorities are required to submit their proposed delegated budget for schools in their areas by 21 January 2022 to the DfE who would then confirm the formula is compliant with the funding regulations. The DfE will then confirm the budgets to academies with the LA also needing to notify maintained schools of their budget shares by the end of February 2022; and
- It had been agreed by the maintained schools' representatives at the December meeting of Schools Forum that the de-delegation of services would continue in 2022-23.

An Early Years representative questioned if those smaller schools that were part of a shared site arrangement would be able to access the sparsity factor funding? Grant Davis outlined the rules around Sparsity funding and how the calculation used individual pupil's postcode information. Split-site schools would be eligible for Sparsity funding where they met the funding criteria, as defined in the NFF.

The Early Years representative questioned whether this was equitable in light of schools federating or joining as the combined school may not be entitled to Sparsity funding, despite one school being rural and small. Grant Davis confirmed that split site funding would still apply and if the combined school was eligible for Sparsity funding, then this would be paid in addition to the split site allowance.

Resolved:

That Schools Forum note the report.

56b Central School Services Block Update 2022-23

Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education) referred to the report which sought to update Schools Forum on issues relating to the central school's block budget for 2022-23 and the decisions that would need to be made as part of the budget setting process. Marie highlighted the following:

- The central school services block budget allocation was £2.604m and this had been calculated using the NFF which applies a unit value of £35.96 to the pupil numbers from the October 2021 census. Funding for historic commitments for 2022-23 is then added to the amount of funding generated by the formula to give the overall total CSSB;
- As allocations were published earlier than usual in July 2021 this budget was agreed in principle at the December 2021 meeting of the Forum;
- Schools Forum approval is required on a line by line basis for the group of services which are funded from central schools' block
- Section A related to copyright licences and no decision was required by Schools Forum;
- Section B related to services previously funded by the Education Services Grant (ESG) and the additional pension costs of centrally retained teachers. Pay inflation at 2% was provided as a best estimate; and
- Section C related to historical commitments with the overall total of £0.293m being allocated.

Resolved:

That Schools Forum note the change to the copyright licence cost for 22-23 and reduction in the contribution to the high needs block in the report from the previous financial year and the required decisions to the central school's block budget for 2022-23 later in the meeting when all information has been received.

56c High Needs Block Update - 2022-23

Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education) referred to her report which sought to update Schools Forum on issues related to the high needs block and the decisions that would need to be made as part of the budget setting process for 2022-23 and highlighted the following:

- The budget proposal for the high needs block was approved in principle at meeting on 9 December 2021 and that the only changes since this are the now confirmed planned places for September 2022 and the DSG management plan in discussion with the DfE;

- The high needs block allocation is £62.691m (which is an uplift of £5.161m – 8.97% on 2021-22). In addition to the allocation, a later supplementary allocation of £2.415m had been added and this was to fund the cost burden of the health and social care levy and other cost pressures;
- Estimated contract inflation of 4% for 2022-23 had been added and a 2% pay inflation for SEN teams;
- £1m had been allocated to a temporary support fund to tackle the SEN waiting lists in schools and £100k was added to increase the Day 6 provision to reduce the risk of exclusion in primary schools;
- An increase to the Inclusion Support Fund (ISF) was proposed to be funded by the high needs block at £180k in addition to the funding for the ISF from the early years block;
- There was an estimated funding shortfall of £11,160m and it was anticipated that there would continue to be an overspend in 2022-23;
- The DfE had allocated an amount of £325m as supplementary funding - £2.415m of which had been allocated to Wiltshire. This was extra funding that recognises the additional costs that local authorities and schools will face in the coming year, which were not foreseen when the original high needs block allocations were calculated, including the Health and Social Care Levy. Due to the lateness of this supplementary funding – detailed modelling had not taken place and Officers met with South West peers on 12 January to discuss and share modelling ideas;
- The preferred approach was to set up interim arrangements supporting specialist planned places for 12 months during 2022-23 as well as allowing for increases in externally commissioned provision. This would allow more time for consultation with schools and parent carers via the Wiltshire Parent Carer Council. The proposal would be a banding review with the supplementary funding increasing the ongoing base budget available for distribution.;
- It was proposed to apply 3% to Special Schools overall funding, to apply 2% to mainstream specialist places and apply in addition to current top up rates and named pupil allowances to take into account the schools block supplementary funding. It was highlighted that special schools had not received any funding increase for some time. Also it was proposed to add 3% to the value of secondary alternative provision service level agreements, to increase further education top up budget by £1.038m and allocate 2% to offset externally commissioned fee increases; and
- The management plan was still being drafted and had been delayed due to staff shortages. When officers had had the opportunity to meet with

the DfE they would bring the plan back to the Forum and would include the DfE's views and commentary.

An early year's representative commented that she appreciated the approach that the local authority had taken with regard to the supplementary funding and asked if the funding would apply to actual place numbers or planned place numbers in Special Schools and High Needs settings.

Marie Taylor reported that this Supplementary Funding was awarded based upon High Needs records held by the DfE and that the funding was a fixed finite pot and therefore apportioning the funding would need to be contained within the cash envelope quantum. She suggested that the September 2022 actual pupil data would be a sensible point in time

The early years representative asked if a threshold % increase would be considered so it was less burdensome for schools?

The Chair reported that funding was determined using a 'moment in time' with regard to learner and place numbers and therefore we should stick to applying funding on this basis and stick with it.

Marie Taylor added that they could look at having an exception – however the total quantum would remain fixed - it was agreed there may need to be a small sum available for exceptions where numbers of children increased significantly after September 2022.

The maintained primary special school governor representative appreciated that special schools would be benefiting from some of the supplementary grant funding and reported that they had been struggling along with no recent funding increases and certainly did not have the large reserves that some schools have to fall back on.

Resolved: That Schools Forum

- 1. Note the pressures on the high needs block for 2022-23 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.**
- 2. Note the continuation of recovery actions feeding into the DSG Management Plan and that this will be brought to a future Schools Forum meeting as part of the High Needs Recovery update report.**
- 3. Approve the approach to deploy supplementary funding in 2022-23 and including future funds into a banding review planned to start this year.**

56d Early Years Block Update 2022-23 (Indicative Allocations)

Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education) referred to the report which sought to update Schools Forum on issues related to the Early Years block for 2022-23 and the decisions that would need to be made as part of the budget setting process and highlighted the following:

- In his 2021 Spending Review, the Chancellor announced a number of national increases to increase early years entitlements. For 2022-23 this would be £160m and this included uplifts to the 2, 3 and 4 year old rates as well as uplifts to the disability access fund and pupil premium. The provisional early years block settlement for Wiltshire for 2022-23 was £28.521m;
- The allocations for the free entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds and 2 year olds are based on the January 2021 census and would be updated during the 2022-23 year for the January 2022 census;
- The *operational guidance for early years entitlements: local authority funding of providers 2022-23* was published in December 2021 and this contained a number of key points for the local authority to include when they were funding their providers;
- The Early Years Reference Group met on 5 January 2022 and considered a number of funding options attached as Appendix 1. The consensus of the group was to support the local authority recommendation of option 3, to passport in full the 2-year-old disadvantaged rate of £5.69 per entitled hour an increase of 21p on the previous year and to set the 3 and 4 year old rate at £4.42 per entitled hour, an increase of 17p per hour on the previous year whilst providing a minimum of £50,000 contingency to absorb any increases in children throughout the 2022-23 financial year;
- The Disability Access Fund is payable as a lump sum once a year per eligible child. If a child is splitting their entitlement between two or more providers, then parents should be asked to nominate the main setting. If a child receiving DAF moves from one setting to another within a financial year the new setting is not eligible to receive DAF for this child within the same financial year; and
- Appendix 2 to the report were the calculations of compliance with a worked example showing 98.3% of pass through. All demonstrated options would also have been compliant.

An Early Years representative expressed his thanks for the work of the Finance Team and for the agreement of option 3 of the funding of the rates. He also asked that the Council make representatives to the DfE to ask them to consider paying the business rates of nurseries/early year settings on a de-delegated basis as they will now be doing for maintained nurseries in schools for

consistency. Marie Taylor agreed to consider the implications of this and raise with colleagues.

Resolved: That Schools Forum

- 1. Note the update on the early years block and proposals in relation to the early years single funding formula and percentage pass through to providers:**

Local Authority preferred proposal:

- i) to increase the current rate of 2-year-old funding to £5.69 and 3 & 4-year-old funding to £4.42 per hour.**
 - ii) Pay inflation be added at 2% to the central early year's teams**
- 2. Note that all other funding factors remain at current 2021-22 levels or, funded levels.**
 - 3. Agree the early years block is to fully fund the Early Years Inclusion Fund at the current level and the high needs block to allocate £0.180m to increase support available in line with the SEN strategy around prevention.**

The Forum agreed to suspend the meeting at 3.02pm for a comfort break. The meeting reconvened at 3.07pm.

56e Schools Block Update 2022-23 (Delegated Budget)

Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) referred to the report which sought to update Schools Forum on issues relating to the schools delegated budget for 2022-23 and the decisions that would need to be made as part of the budget setting process and highlighted the following:

- The DfE had allocated a schools' block quantum to Wiltshire of £328.593m – this included funding of £1.913 million for the growth fund, based on the growth formula;
- The changes to the Sparsity factor were shared with Schools Forum in October 2021 and an 'in principle' decision was agreed to implement the NFF methodology and funding values;
- Modelling work has been prepared to calculate individual school budgets based on the proposed formula which was broadly similar to the formula for 2021-22 but the following changes should be noted:
 - An increase in Pupil and School led funding values of 3%
 - Minimum Funding Guarantee to be set between 0.5% and 2.0% to ensure all schools see a gain in funding on their pupil led funding (2% is proposed for 2022-23)

- Maximum Sparsity funding being increased by £10,000 in both Primary and Secondary schools to £55,000 and £80,000 respectively to support small and rural schools
 - Sparsity distances to be measured using road distances rather than 'as the crow flies' and applying a distance taper for schools within 20% of the distance threshold
 - Increases in the minimum per pupil funding levels (MPPFL) to £4,265 and £5,525 in primary and secondary schools
- Initial modelling suggests that the NFF is fully affordable for all schools in Wiltshire;
 - Since the introduction of the NFF the intention has been to try and move to replicate the formula in the 'soft' years. Where the NFF values could not be afforded, the Free School Meal Ever6 (FSM6) factor was compromised to ensure the other factors were affordable – for the last three years the formula had been fully affordable;
 - Growth allocations for 2022-23 are based upon pupil growth data from the October 2021 census and the October 2020 census. Criteria for growth was agreed at the December 2021 meeting of the Forum. £1,913m was allocated from the DfE for the 2022-23 growth fund. The growth of pupils was 340.5 for Primary and 633.5 for Secondary;
 - There were no plans to open any new schools in the 2022-23 year. The growth fund supports new primary and secondary schools with diseconomy costs for the first 7 years or until the school is full. The Basic Need Class Expansion for additional classes is still to be confirmed with colleagues in the School places team for the 2022-23 academic year. The Infant Class Size increases have been confirmed for 2021-22 with four schools being funded through this factor. Any surplus or deficit in the Growth Fund will form part of the overall DSG surplus or deficit balance;
 - Following the additional funding pledge, the DfE are seeking to ensure that all schools see an uplift in their calculated per pupil funding and have therefore proposed that the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) is set at a positive figure of between 0.5% and 2.0%. Setting a positive MFG of 2% is fully affordable and will ensure that all schools see an uplift in their 'per pupil' funding of at least 2%. The cost to the formula in 2022-23 is less than £0.155m, subject to decisions taken by the Forum later in the meeting;
 - The DfE's consultation in the 2021-22 year, introduced a number of changes to the criteria for the NFF sparsity factor. Schools Forum considered a report in 2021-22 which set out the implications of these changes for Wiltshire and agreed to mirror the NFF within the Wiltshire formula for 2022-23;

- As part of the DfE's proposals to support small and rural schools, the maximum sparsity value for primary schools was increased to £55,000 for Primary and £80,000 for Secondary schools. This would mean that 62 Primary and 4 Secondary schools would be eligible for £2,378,451 of funding;
- The thresholds of the minimum per pupil funding levels (MPPFL) in primary and secondary schools for 2022-23 are £4,265 and £5,525 for primary and secondary respectively. These values include the previous Teachers Pay and Pension Grants which were incorporated into the AWPU funding values from 2021-22; and
- The overall funding allocated through the MPPFL is £4.953m in 2022-23, a decrease of £1.623m on the 2021-22 figure of £6.576m.

The Salisbury Diocesan representative commented that whilst the additional sparsity funding was welcome it was of note that sparsity funding was taken account of in MPPFL's and schools would see an increase in sparsity and this may impact upon a schools eligibility for any MPPFL funding. The Sparsity funding will be a real boost for a number of Wiltshire's small rural schools which are also suffering from the falling birth rate too.

Grant Davis agreed that sparsity fund is well received but highlighted that the that the majority of those schools that receive the MPPFL uplift are larger schools and that most smaller schools were not eligible for MPPFL funding.

Resolved that Schools Forum:

- 1. Note the schools block update report.**
- 2. Agree to apply all the funding factors at the 2022-23 NFF rates.**
- 3. Note the impact of the Sparsity factor.**
- 4. Agree to set the Minimum Funding Guarantee at a level of +2.0%.**
- 5. Agree that the Growth fund be set at £0.725m.**

(The decisions numbered 2-5 above were made later in the meeting under Agenda item 9).

56f Schools Supplementary Grant 2022-23 - Funding and Methodology

Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) referred to the report which sought to update Schools Forum and outline the level of additional funding and how it would be allocated to schools in the 2022-23 year and highlighted the following:

- Schools Forum had previously been advised of additional funding being made available for the 2022-23 year and now that the detail of that

funding had been received;

- In Autumn 2021, the Government's spending review confirmed an additional £1.6bn funding for schools and high needs, in addition to the previous funding pledges. Of the additional funding, £1.2bn has been allocated to schools in support of the costs of the Health and Social Care Levy (employers National Insurance increase of 1.25%) and the wider cost pressures in schools;
- This supplementary grant would be paid to all maintained schools and academies from 1 April 2022;
- For the 2022-23 year this would be paid as a supplementary grant and from 2023-24 this would be baselined into the core income;
- Funding rates have been differentiated between early years pupils in maintained nurseries, mainstream 5-16 year-old pupils and post-16 pupils, with the bulk allocated to the mainstream 5-16 year-old pupils;
- Funding would be allocated using the following three elements, which are already key components of the NFF, using data from the October 2021 census:
 - o A basic 'per pupil' rate based upon the 'key stages'
 - o A lump sum paid to all schools (irrespective of size) - £3,680
 - o A per pupil rate for FSM6 pupils (different rates for primary and secondary)
- This funding would cover the increases in National Insurance (Health and Social Care Levy) and other cost pressures coming through such as inflation and unknown elements for pay awards going forward. This was extra funding and helpful for schools.

An Early Years representative asked who the early years funding was payable to? Grant Davis confirmed that maintained nurseries would receive this funding.

Resolved:

That Schools Forum note the report.

57 **School Budget Decisions 2022-23**

As this was a virtual meeting, the Chair suggested that it may be easier for Forum Members to use the 'raise your hand' function in Microsoft Teams if they were not in agreement to the decisions which were to be made in accordance with the Decisions matrix sheet.

The Chair led the Forum through the Decision Matrix and the decisions as detailed below were made:

Resolved: That Schools Forum

Overall budget

- 1. Agree to set the overall Schools Budget at the level of the DSG Settlement – namely £422,409,451.**

Central Schools Services Block

- 2. Agree as follows the Section B expenditure for the Central Schools Services:**

i) Education Welfare Service	£0.203 million
ii) Asset Management	£0.189 million
iii) Statutory/Regulatory duties	£0.682 million
iv) Admissions	£0.447 million
v) Servicing of Schools Forum	£0.003 million
vi) Centrally retained Teachers additional pension costs	£0.110 million

- 3. Agree as follows the central spend on historic commitments (Section C):**

- i) Funding for LAC Personal Education Plans be funded at £0.103 million;**
- ii) Funding for Child Protection Officer in Schools Adviser at £0.058 million; and**
- iii) Prudential Borrowing at £0.133 million.**

- 4. Note the Local Authority Decision (Section A) to set the budget at £0.409 million for central copyright licences for 2022-23.**

- 5. Note that these allocations allow a transfer of £0.227 million to support the high needs block.**

Schools Block – Delegated Budget

- 6. Agree to apply all the funding factors at the 2022-23 NFF rates.**
- 7. Agree to note the impact of the Sparsity factor and the increased number of schools now eligible.**
- 8. Agree to set the Minimum Funding Guarantee at a level of +2.0%.**
- 9. Agree that the Growth fund be set at £0.725 million split as £0.1 million Infant Class Size and £0.625 million basic need.**
- 10. Agree to transfer up to a maximum of £1.642m (0.5%) from School's block to High Needs block.**

11. Agree that the budgets for De-delegation of central services be as follows:

i) Access Budget Software	£54,646
ii) FSM Eligibility	£28,917
iii) Trade Union	£70,000
iv) EMAS & Travellers	£564,508 (Primary only)
v) Behaviour support	£664,669 (Primary only)
vi) Maternity supply	£571,124
vii) School Improvement	£229,614*

12. That agreement for the de-delegation of 11 vii) above is given by the maintained Primary Heads representatives present subject to there being a review of School Improvement services in the ensuing year.

High Needs Block

13. Agree that top up values for Named Pupil Allowances, Extended Learning Programmes, Resource Bases and Special Schools are to remain at the 2021-22 values and note the proposed consultation and review of High Needs formula proposed for the first quarter of 2022-23.

14. Note the pressures on the high needs block for 2022-23 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.

15. Note the continuation of recovery actions feeding into the DSG Management Plan and that this will be brought to a future Schools Forum meeting as part of the High Needs Recovery update report.

16. Provide views on the approach and approve the approach to deploy supplementary funding in 2022-23 and include this in the proposed banding review starting this year.

Early Years Block

17. Agree to increase the current rate of 2-year-old funding to £5.69 and 3 and 4-year-old funding to £4.42 per hour.

18. Note that pay inflation will be added at 2% to the central early years' teams.

19. Note that Inclusion Support Fund be set at £0.357 million as in the 2021-22 year and agree that the early years block to fund the Inclusion Support Fund at £0.180 million to increase support available in line with the SEN strategy around prevention.

20. Agree up to £800 per child for 2022-23 from the Disability Access Fund – the local authority to passport the funding.

21. Agree that if any significant increase in DfE funding be notified, the Early Years Inclusion fund should be increased accordingly during the financial year, to ensure that at least 95% of funding is passed through to providers.

58 Confirmation of Dates for Future Meetings

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

17 March 2022 (if required)

9 June 2022

6 October 2022

8 December 2022.

59 Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 1.30 - 3.52 pm)

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

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