

# AGENDA

**Meeting:** Schools Forum

**Place:** Conference Suite, 1st Floor, County Hall, Trowbridge

**Date:** Thursday 18 January 2024

**Time:** 1.30 pm

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Lisa Pullin, Tel 01225 713015 or email [committee@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:committee@wiltshire.gov.uk) of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN.

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<b>Membership:</b>	<b>Representing:</b>
Aileen Bates	WGA - Special School Governor Representative
Lyssy Bolton	Early Years Representative
TBC	Observer - Children and Families Voluntary Sector Forum
Andy Bridewell	PHF - Maintained Primary Representative
Helen Carpenter	Chair of WASSH - Secondary Academy Representative
Rebecca Carson	PHF - Primary Academy Representative
Michele Chilcott	WASSH - Secondary Academy Representative
Stella Fowler	WGA - Primary School Governor Representative
Jo Grenfell	Observer - Post 16, Wiltshire College
John Hawkins	Teaching Association Representative
Cllr Ross Henning	Observer - Local Youth Network
Georgina Keily-Theobald	WASSH - Maintained Special School Representative
Graham Nagel-Smith	PHF - Primary Academy Representative
Nick Norgrove	WASSH - Maintained Secondary School Representative
Lisa Percy	Secondary Academy Representative
Giles Pugh	Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education Representative
John Read	PHF - Maintained Primary Representative
Graham Shore	PHF - Primary Academy Representative
Trudy Srawley	Observer - Wiltshire Parent Carer Council
Ros Sutton	WGA - Primary School Governor Representative
Mike Thomas	WASSH - Special School Academy Representative
Karen Venner	Early Years Representative
David Whewell	WGA - Secondary School Governor Representative
Catriona Williamson	PHF - Maintained Primary Representative

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## PART I

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

1 **Apologies, Substitutions and any Changes of Membership**

To note any apologies, substitutions and changes to the membership of Schools Forum.

2 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** (*Pages 9 - 18*)

To approve as a correct record and sign the Part I (public) minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2023 (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 who are able to ask questions or make a statement in relation to the responsibilities and functions of the Forum at each meeting. A maximum of 15 minutes will be allocated to this at the start of each meeting, and each question or statement should last no longer than 3 minutes. Please register with the Officer named on this agenda, and in accordance with the deadlines below.

### 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 the agenda **no later than 5pm on Tuesday 16 January 2024**. Statements must not be defamatory, frivolous, offensive, vexatious, unlawful or otherwise improper. They must not name or identify individual service users, members of staff or members of partner agencies.

### Questions

Those wishing to ask questions are required to give notice of any such questions to the Officer named on the front of this agenda **no later than 5pm on Thursday 11 January 2024** to allow a response to be formulated. Questions are limited to a maximum of 2 per person/organisation. A response will be given as either a direct oral answer or a written reply. Questions must not require the disclosure of confidential information. The Chair's ruling on rejection of a question is final.

6 **Updates from Working Groups** (*Pages 19 - 22*)

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 – 8 January 2024 (*attached*)
- Early Years Reference Group – 8 January 2024 (*to follow*)

7 **Update on FACT (Families and Children Transformation) Programme**

Schools Forum will receive an update on the FACT programme from Simon Thomas (FACT Programme Lead).

8 **Dedicated Schools Budget - Budget Monitoring 2023-24** (*Pages 23 - 28*)

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 2023-24 as at 30 November 2023.

9 **School Budget Setting 2024-25**

To consider the budget for 2024-25.

The following update reports provide details on the overall funding settlement on each of the funding blocks, the decisions will be made after consideration of all the update papers via the decision matrix.

9a **School Revenue Funding 2024-25 - Funding Settlement and Budget Setting Process** (*Pages 29 - 38*)

The report of Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) seeks to update Schools Forum on the revenue funding settlement and the budget setting process for 2024-25.

9b **Dedicated Schools Budget - Schools Block Update 2024-25 (Delegated Budget)** (*Pages 39 - 46*)

The report of Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) seeks to update Schools Forum on issues relating to the schools delegated budget for 2024-25 and the decisions that need to be made as part of the budget setting process.

9c **Dedicated Schools Budget - High Needs Block Update 2024-25** (*Pages 47 - 56*)

The report of Liz Williams (High Needs Block Sustainability Finance Lead) seeks to update Schools Forum on issues relating to the high needs block for 2024-25 and the decisions that will need to be made as part of the budget setting process.

9d **Dedicated Schools Grant - Early Years Block Update 2024-25 (Indicative Allocations)** (*Pages 57 - 72*)

The report of Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education) seeks to update Schools Forum on issues relating to the early years block for 2024-25 and the decisions that will need to be made as part of the budget setting process for 2024-25.

9e            **Dedicated Schools Budget - Central School Services Block  
Update 2024-25** *(Pages 73 - 84)*

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 the 2024-25 financial year and the decisions that will need to be made as part of the budget setting process.

10            **School Budget Decisions 2024-25**

Schools Forum will be asked to consider the Schools Budgets for 2024-25 and make relevant decisions using the decisions matrix.

11            **Safety Valve Programme Update** *(Pages 85 - 94)*

The report of Liz Williams (High Needs Block Sustainability Finance Lead) seeks to update on the draft Safety Valve plan and highlight the changes that were made, in response to Department for Education feedback, in advance of 12 January 2024 submission. This version will now go forward for Secretary of State approval and to form the basis of a Safety Valve Deal for Wiltshire.

12            **Confirmation of Dates for Future Meetings**

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

14 March 2024  
27 June 2024  
10 October 2024  
12 December 2024  
23 January 2025  
13 March 2025.

13            **Urgent Items**

To consider any other items of business, which the Chair agrees to consider as a matter of urgency.

14            **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

To consider passing the following resolution:

To agree that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the business specified in Item Number 15 because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

## **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

15 **Schools Forum Minutes** (*Pages 95 - 108*)

To approve as a correct record and sign the Part II (confidential) minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2023 (copy attached).

## Schools Forum

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### **MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING HELD ON 5 DECEMBER 2023 AT CONFERENCE SUITE, 1ST FLOOR, COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE.**

#### **Present:**

Andy Bridewell, Helen Carpenter, Rebecca Carson, Stella Fowler, John Hawkins, Cllr Ross Henning, Georgina Keily-Theobald, Graham Nagel-Smith, Nick Norgrove, Lisa Percy (Chair), Giles Pugh, John Read, Graham Shore (Vice-Chair), Trudy Srawley, Ros Sutton, Mike Thomas, David Whewell, and Catriona Williamson

#### **Also Present:**

Adam Smith (Primary Heads Forum), and Cllr Suzanne Wickham

Sharon Buxton (School Support Accountant)  
Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager)  
Kathryn Davis (Head of Targeted Education)  
Ellen Ghey (Democratic Services Officer)  
Lisa Pullin (Democratic Services Officer)  
Liz Williams (Finance Lead – High Needs Block Sustainability)  
Lloyd Williamson (Data Analyst – Children’s Services)

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#### **46 Apologies/Substitutions and Changes of Membership**

Apologies for absence from Members were received from:

- Aileen Bates
- Angela Brennan
- Michele Chilcott
- Jo Grenfell

Further apologies were noted from:

- Councillor Jane Davies
- Richard Hanks (Co-Director – Education & Skills)
- Helean Hughes (Co-Director – Education & Skills)
- Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education)

The Chair announced the following Membership changes:

- Helen Carpenter was welcomed to the Schools Forum as the Chair of WASSH (Wiltshire Association of Secondary and Special School Heads) and Secondary Academy Representative, taking over from Ian Tucker.

- Karen Venner was welcomed to the Schools Forum as an Early Years Representative, taking over from Emma Osmund.

It was confirmed that Angela Brennan was standing down as the Chair of the Children & Families Voluntary Sector at the end of December 2023. The Chair thanked Angela for her contributions while a part of the Schools Forum and informed Members that notification of her replacement would be received in due course.

47 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 October 2023 were presented for consideration.

Following which, it was:

**Resolved:**

**The Schools Forum approved and signed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 October 2023 as a true and correct record.**

48 **Chair's Announcements**

The Chair made the following announcement:

- It was noted that upon publication of the Agenda, Item 11 – Update on Safety Valve Plan, was due to be discussed under Part I of the meeting. However, in the time since publication, it was explained that Cabinet had requested that the Agenda Item be considered as a Part II item in which the public and press be excluded due to the meeting of the Schools Forum being held before the 12 December 2023 Cabinet meeting. As such, it was noted that the order of the Agenda would be amended to facilitate this.

49 **Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

50 **Public Participation**

There were no questions or statements submitted.



## 51 **Updates from Working Groups**

The Chair raised the updates from the last meeting of the Early Years Reference Group and the last joint meeting of the School Funding Working Group and SEN Working Group held on 29 September and 27 November 2023 respectively. There being no questions or comments on the updates, it was then:

### **Resolved:**

**The Schools Forum noted the updates from the last meeting of the Early Years Reference Group and the last joint meeting of the School Funding Working Group and SEN Working Group held on 29 September and 27 November 2023 respectively.**

## 52 **National Funding Formulae for Schools and High Needs - 2024-25**

Grant Davis, Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager, referred to the report which updated the Schools Forum on the National Funding Formula (NFF) for 2024-25, following the notification received from the Department for Education (DfE) on 6 October 2023, of an error made during the NFF calculations. Furthermore, officers were seeking 'in principle' decisions from the Schools Forum with regards to the Wiltshire's local school formula for the 2024-25 year. The following was then highlighted:

- The background to the report was detailed as per Paragraphs 5 to 7.
- It was noted that at the last meeting of the Schools Forum on 5 October 2023, the key funding arrangements as published by the DfE were presented. However, in light of the DfE error made in the NFF calculations, those proposals were revised for the 2024-25 year.
- Paragraphs 9 to 11 detailed where the NFF calculation error lay and how it would impact Wiltshire's Schools Block; namely, a £3.3m reduction in proposed funding, equivalent to 0.9%.
- Paragraph 12 listed the changes between the formulas for 2023-24 and 2024-25, and Appendix 2 set out the funding values from previous years alongside the revised values.
- The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) was then discussed as per Paragraphs 13 to 18, and it was explained that officers were proposing setting the MFG between 0.0% and 0.5% to be consistent with previous years and to ensure that all schools received a minimum uplift in their per pupil funding of 0.5%.
- As Wiltshire's local school formula already mirrored the NFF, it was emphasised that any tightening of the formula would have a minimal impact on Wiltshire schools. Furthermore, the initial modelling of the Schools Block demonstrated that the NFF was affordable and could be fully implemented, based upon the October 2022 census data.

- The budget setting process for 2024-25 was briefly detailed as per Paragraphs 22 and 23, and it was highlighted that all schools would be notified of their allocated funding by 28 February 2024 to support schools in their financial planning for the academic year 2024-25.
- It was emphasised that the decisions made by the Schools Forum in this meeting would be 'in principle', with final approval being made at the January 2024 meeting of the Forum.

There being no questions or comments on the report, it was:

**Resolved:**

**The Schools forum made 'in principle' decisions for the following formula factors to enable school budgets to be prepared ready for the January 2024 meeting.**

- To apply all the National Funding Formula factors in full.**
- To set the Minimum Funding Guarantee between 0.0% and 0.5%, in line with the National Funding Formula and subject to affordability.**

**53 Allocation of Funding for Pupil Growth 2024-25**

Grant Davis, Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager, referred to the report which sought agreement on the methodology for allocating funding for pupil growth from the School's Block Growth Fund in 2024-25. The following was then highlighted:

- The Department for Education's (DfE) School Funding Operational Guidance for 2024-25 as per Paragraphs 4 and 5 were listed and it was confirmed that Wiltshire's Growth Fund Criteria was fully compliant.
- The funding methodology and growth allocations were detailed; namely, that the DfE measured growth within Local Authorities (LAs) by middle layer super output areas (MSOA) which could be defined as small geographical areas to detect pockets of growth within LAs by counting the increase in pupil numbers in each MSOA between the October 2022 and October 2023 censuses. It was confirmed that Wiltshire was separated into 62 MSOA's, with an average of 4 schools in each MSOA.
- Paragraph 10 listed growth allocations used for each LA; however, it was explained that LAs generally allocated growth funding using local arrangements by applying local knowledge and intelligence as there was not a national method adopted for allocating growth funding. In Wiltshire, it was confirmed that this would continue to be the responsibility of the Schools Forum with the 2024-25 growth funding being set in the January 2024 meeting of the Forum.

- The requirements with regard to allocating funding from the Growth Fund were listed in Paragraph 14, with officers explaining the calculation applied as per Paragraph 15.
- The proposed criteria for funding pupil growth within the local Wiltshire funding formula for 2024-24 was then detailed.
  - Firstly, New School Allowance was briefly explained as per Paragraphs 18 to 21 of the report, but it was confirmed that as no new schools were planned for 2024-25, officers would not be applying that funding.
  - Secondly, Class Expansion for Basic Need was briefly explained as per Paragraphs 22 to 23 of the report, with officers confirming that the Wiltshire criteria was fully compliant.
  - Thirdly, Infant Class Size Increases was briefly explained as per Paragraphs 24 to 25 of the report.
  - Finally, the Falling Rolls Fund was explained in more detail as per Paragraphs 26 to 38 of the report. It was confirmed that LAs would continue to have discretion over whether to operate a Falling Rolls Fund, but officers would not be able to estimate the level of funding that could be received until the October 2023 census data was published. It was highlighted that less than 30 LAs across the country had set Falling Rolls Funds and although Wiltshire had previously resisted the establishing of such a Fund, and there being no pressure from schools or other groups to establish one, officers were asking Members to consider that the setting of such a Fund would place additional pressures upon the School's Block. However, it was emphasised that no decisions would need to be made until the full Dedicated Schools Grant had been confirmed.

In response to a question, it was clarified that despite there being many new developments being built in areas such as the North of Wiltshire, there were no plans for the development of any additional schools as there was sufficient capacity in existing schools. Further discussions were had on the declining birth rate across the County and the impact that this had on the long-term viability of smaller, more rural Primary Schools. As such, Members noted that future discussions on the topic would need to focus on how to attract potential pupils to those smaller Primary Schools.

Following which, it was:

**Resolved:**

- a) **The Schools Forum approved the criteria for allocating pupil Growth Fund in 2024-25.**
- b) **The Schools Forum agreed that the budget for the Growth Fund be set at its meeting in January 2024, when the full Dedicated Schools Grant had been confirmed for the 2024-25 year.**

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

54 **Dedicated Schools Grant Consultations 2024-25**

Grant Davis, Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager, updated the Schools Forum on the results of the recent Autumn consultations relating to:

- De-delegation of central services – *Maintained Schools Only*
- De-delegation in support of the former Local Authority Monitoring and Brokering (LAMB) Grant – *Maintained Schools Only*
- Transfer of funds from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block – *All Schools*

The following was then highlighted:

*De-delegation of Central Services*

- Paragraph 3 was briefly reiterated alongside the list of services consulted on as part of the process as per Paragraph 4 of the report.
- The full set of questions and responses could be seen in Appendix 1 of the report, with a breakdown of the responses and the conclusions drawn detailed for Members as per Paragraphs 6 and 7.

*De-delegation in Support of the Former LAMB Grant*

- The context behind the consultation was briefly recapped as per Paragraphs 8 to 10 of the report.
- Paragraphs 11 to 13 were then detailed which included a breakdown of the responses and conclusions drawn. Officers noted that it was widely recognised that there was a lower response rate due to the majority of Wiltshire schools' confidence in the decisions being made by the Schools Forum on their behalf.

*Transfer of Funds from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block*

- Paragraphs 16 to 20 of the report were detailed, which noted past transfers from the past 5 financial years, the agreement of the Schools Forum to allow for the flexibility of moving up to 0.5% of the School's Block funding, and the current Safety Valve agreement in place.
- The full set of questions and responses could be seen in Appendix 2 of the report, with a breakdown of the responses and the conclusions drawn listed in Paragraphs 22 to 25. It was emphasised that any decisions in relation to any transfer from the School's Block to the High Needs Block

would need to be considered in the context of the Council's Safety Valve agreement which would be discussed under Agenda Item 14.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that approximately 104 Maintained Schools could have responded to the consultations, thereby giving a response rate of roughly 25%. Despite this, officers emphasised that as the Schools Forum was comprised of elected Members, many Maintained Schools were confident with the decisions being made by the Schools Forum on their behalf and therefore did not feel the need to respond to the consultation as they were happy with the direction of travel. However, Members associated with the Primary Heads Forum and WASSH (Wiltshire Association of Secondary and Special School Heads) noted that they would raise the topic at relevant future meetings.

Members discussed the transfer of funds from the School's Block to the High Needs Block and stressed that affordability was the key criteria in order to ensure that schools could continue to be funded at the National Funding Formula.

Finally, it was highlighted that with regard to central services, some of the services had changed over the years across the County which at times, had led to reduced basic support on the ground for schools.

At the conclusion of the discussion, it was:

**Resolved:**

- a) **The Schools Forum noted the local consultation responses in relation to the Schools Delegated Budget for the 2024-25 financial year.**
- b) **The Schools Forum made 'in principle' decisions in accordance with the consultation responses as below:**
  - a. **De-delegation of central services for Maintained Schools**
    - i. **FSM – *Primary and Secondary***
    - ii. **Licences – *Primary and Secondary***
    - iii. **Trade Union – *Primary and Secondary***
    - iv. **Maternity – *Primary and Secondary***
    - v. **Ethnic Minority Support – *Primary Only***
    - vi. **Traveller Education – *Primary Only***
    - vii. **Behaviour Support – *Primary Only***
  - b. **Delegation of funding to support school improvement services for Maintained Schools. To continue to fund at the rate of 100% loss in funding (£459k).**

- c. Block transfer between the Schools Block and the High Needs Block, subject to affordability when school funding for 2024-25 had been confirmed:**
- i. In principle, transfer of 0.5% of the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, the maximum allowable without Secretary of State approval, which equates to approximately £1.8m**
  - ii. To support the transfer of 0.55% of the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, subject to both affordability and approval from the Secretary of State. Such a transfer would equate to £2m and would require the submission of a disapplication request to the Secretary of State.**

55 **Additional Support for Maintained Schools in Financial Difficulty in 2023-24**

Grant Davis, Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager, referred to the report which set out the details behind the additional support funding for Maintained Schools in the 2023-24 year, and sought agreement from the Schools Forum for the distribution of the support funding to Maintained Schools currently in a financial deficit. The following was then highlighted:

- Officers explained Paragraphs 3 to 7 of the report, which noted the reasons behind the additional funding and the methodology used to determine allocation eligibility. It was emphasised that the funding was 'one-off' and there were no plans for the Department for Education (DfE) to make similar additional funding available again in 2024-25.
- It was noted that the DfE were giving Local Authorities (LAs) significant flexibility over how the funding could be used in order to best support their schools in the individual circumstances in which they found themselves. Furthermore, the conditions of the grant would allow the funding to be used for the purposes of eliminating deficit balances and to prioritise those schools in greatest need on a case-by-case basis depending on the severity of their financial position.
- Reference was made to the table in Paragraph 13 of the report alongside each of the 3 options presented in Paragraphs 14 to 17.

It was highlighted that the Schools Funding Working Group had discussed the same 3 options and had concluded that as the funding was a 'one-off' injection of cash, Option 1 seemed the most equitable as it would ensure that all schools with a deficit would receive an allocation of the funding.

It was suggested that the funding be used to support those relevant schools in developing robust, long-term financial planning management to ensure that their individual deficit positions would not reoccur. In response, the different circumstances that could lead to a school entering into deficit were noted, and

Members were reassured that officers were already working with those relevant schools to support them in making extensive and bespoke contingency plans and strategies to ensure long-term financial viability. It was then suggested that as that support was already in place for each individual school, there was scope to instead focus on those in a more severe position, therefore maximising the impact of any additional funding and ultimately benefitting those communities and pupils on roll. Members debated the merits of that suggestion with regards to fairness and the complications of using the funding for additional resources.

Members acknowledged that officers held an extensive knowledge of the local areas across the County, and therefore agreed that as officers were recommending that Option 1 was the most objective and equitable choice, their suggestion should be trusted and implemented as such.

Following which, it was:

**Resolved:**

**The Schools Forum adopted Option 1 as the most equitable approach for the distribution of funding on behalf of Maintained Schools.**

56 **Urgent Items**

There were no Part I urgent items.

57 **Confirmation of Dates for Future Meetings**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 18 January 2024 at 1.30pm and was planned to be held in person at County Hall, Trowbridge.

Future meeting dates were confirmed as below:

14 March 2024 – 1.30pm  
27 June 2024 – 1.30pm  
10 October 2024 – 1.30pm  
12 December 2024 – 1.30pm

58 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

The Schools Forum considered the recommendation to exclude the public. Following which, it was:

**Resolved:**

**To agree that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting for the business specified in Item Number 14-15 because it is likely that if members of the public**

were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

59 **Update on Safety Valve Agreement**

Liz Williams, Finance Lead – High Needs Block Sustainability, delivered a presentation which updated the Schools Forum on the draft High Needs Block Sustainability Plan to be submitted to the Department for Education’s (DfE) Safety Valve Programme.

**Resolved:**

- a) **The Schools Forum supported the submission of the draft Safety Valve Plan to the Department for Education on 15 December 2023.**
- b) **The Schools Forum supported the submission of a final Safety Valve Plan to the Department for Education on 12 January 2024, subject to approval from the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education, and Skills, and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, SEND, and Inclusion.**
- c) **The Schools Forum agreed that a written paper be brought to the Schools Forum meeting on 18 January 2024, to set out any changes made to finalise the Safety Valve Plan.**
- d) **The Schools Forum noted the proposals in relation to transfers from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block as contained in the draft plan, and supported the proposed transfer of 0.55% (£2m) for 2024-25.**

60 **Urgent Items**

There were no Part II urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 1.30 - 4.30 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Ellen Ghey Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718259 , e-mail [committee@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:committee@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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## Schools Forum

### School Funding and SEN Working Group

#### MS TEAMS MEETING

8 January 2024

#### Minutes

**Present:** Marie Taylor (Chair), (Finance, local authority ((LA)), Liz Williams (Finance, LA), Grant Davis (Finance, LA), Lisa Percy (Chair of SF / Hardenhuish), John Hawkins (Teacher / Governor rep), Catriona Williamson (Mere) Graham Nagel-Smith (Morgan's Vale & Woodfalls), Graham Shore (Deputy Chair SF / Holy Trinity), Georgina Keily-Theobald (Downland) Rebecca Carson (Woodford Valley), Ben Stevens (HNB Recovery, LA)

**Apologies:** Simon Thomas (LA), John Read (Lyneham)

Andy Bridewell (Ludgershall Castle) is now represented by CW at the working group.

1.	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>	
2.	<b>Minutes of last meeting – 27 November 2023</b> There were no outstanding actions.	
3.	<b>Matters Arising</b> There were no matters arising.	
4.	<p><b>Dedicated Schools Grant Funding Settlement Update Report 2024/25 (GD)</b> GD shared his report with the group, highlights:</p> <p><b>Schools Block</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Uplift in Schools Block nationally of £1.8bn</li> <li>- Uplift in High Needs Block nationally of £440m</li> <li>- Teachers Pay Additional Grant (TPAG) continuing for 2024-25, nationally £900m</li> <li>- Teachers Employers Pension Contributions increase of 5% from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, additional funding will be made available</li> <li>- Mainstream Schools Additional Grant (MSAG) rolled into core funding for 2024-25</li> <li>- Uplift in core school funding factors of 1.4%</li> <li>- 2024-25 is another 'soft' year with Schools Forum having discretion over funding decisions – a 'hard' formula is due from 2027-28</li> <li>- Overall pupil numbers in Wiltshire have dropped by 274 pupils, with Primary numbers falling by 636 but growth in Secondary numbers by 362</li> <li>- Total Schools Block of £364.468m includes Growth and Falling Rolls funding of £1.810m</li> <li>- Applying the National Funding Formula factors for all schools is fully affordable</li> <li>- A transfer of £2m between the Schools Block to the High Needs Block is affordable</li> <li>- Setting a Growth Fund of £0.734m is affordable</li> </ul> <p><b>High Needs Block</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The NFF for funding High Needs in LA's is unchanged and retains the same pupil, historic and proxy factors</li> <li>- Total High Needs Block funding of £73.465m</li> </ul> <p><b>Early Years Block</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased funding to reflect the growth in provision for 2 year olds and the under-2's</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extension of Pupil Premium, Disability Access Funding for 2 year olds and under-2's</li> <li>- Uplift in funding rates for all Early Years children</li> <li>- Growth in Early years Block of approximately £20m compared to 2023-24</li> </ul> <p><b>Central Services Block</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Small increase in overall Block funding of £0.043m</li> <li>- Continued reduction of 20% for Historic Commitments</li> <li>- Overall Block funding of £2.644m</li> </ul> <p>A Block Transfer of £2m (0.55% of Schools Block) is affordable and a Disapplication request has been submitted to the Secretary of State.</p> <p>LP – noted, what a fortunate position we were in compared to other LA's who did not align to the NFF as early as we did - who were now struggling to afford the NFF LW added this was important as we progress with the Safety Valve plan as the proposed block transfers may impact on affordability of the NFF factors</p>	
5.	<p><b>Schools Block Update 2024/25 (GD)</b></p> <p>GD shared his report with the group – highlights: NFF fully affordable – all NFF factors applied MFG set at 0.5%, as agreed with Schools Forum members in December 2023 HNB transfer at £2m (0.55%) Growth Fund £0.734m which will be sufficient to meet needs in 2024-25 Sparsity – mirrors the NFF with 64 eligible schools in Wiltshire Split site – mirrors the NFF – 5 schools receive maximum funding and one school will receive a slightly reduced level of funding due to not meeting the full distance threshold and will receive a tapered reduction MPPFL – the number of schools in receipt of MPPFL is reducing as you would expect with the NFF being in place for a number of years</p> <p>LW – the deadline for the disapplication to transfer more than 0.5% of Schools Block is 12 January 2024 so we will need to apply before the SF meeting on 18 January 2024, but will need a specific vote, count votes and minute – GD to update his report to include that decision (also to be included in the Decision Matrix)</p>	GD
6.	<p><b>High Needs Block Update 2024/25 (LW)</b></p> <p>LW shared her report with the group – highlights:</p> <p>DfE increase of 3.% - £2.6m – DfE have advised SV councils to assume a 3% per annum increase in funding for future years £5m of investment and savings in year 1 of the SV plan including 4% on top ups which, would more than cover the DfE's 0.5% Special School MFG requirements Forecast in budget monitoring takes us to a £56m deficit reserve balance so imperative that SV actions</p> <p>LP – good to design comms around 4% uplift linked to expectations around OAPL LW – confirmed comms would be going out once SF had ratified budgets and that would be a good opportunity to link these GKT – to confirm the 4% uplift was just for top ups not place funding? Equivalent to approximately 2.3% - LW confirmed this was the case, but higher than the DfE minimum.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Early Years Block Update 2024/25 (MT)</b></p> <p>MT took the group through her report Unfortunately, the EY reference group are not meeting until later today so their views could not be shared with the SFWG. The increased age group entitlements mean there are more options – some were discounted on the grounds of affordability – four were</p>	

	<p>considered and modelled for the 95% pass through for consultation. MT was recommending maximising the 3&amp;4 year old grant to £5.21, passporting in full the disadvantaged 2 year olds and reducing the Under 2 years to £ and 2 years to £ This ensures sufficient central resources are available to fund the increases in central costs including additional staff required and increasing the SENIF to reflect current demand plus a sum of £0.2m earmarked to support inclusion in EY which will be part of the recovery actions.</p> <p>MT to confirm the EYRG consultation feedback in the report</p> <p>NOTE: THE EYRG were supportive of the LA recommendation – Option 13</p>	MT
8.	<p><b>CSS Block Update 2024/25 (MT)</b></p> <p>MT took the group through her report.</p> <p>Whilst the historical block is being reduced by the DfE at 20% pa – this has so far not impacted services – however this will need to be considered in 2025/26</p> <p>KD commented that the CiC budget has underspend for the last few years and so that budget should be considered for reduction.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Budget Monitoring Report to 30 November 2023 (MT)</b></p> <p>MT took the group through her report.</p> <p>The forecast position leads to a DSG deficit of £56.247m and despite a forecast underspend of £1m in EY the overall pressure above DfE grant and block transfers is £21.034m – high needs driven</p> <p>Forecast EHCPS are forecast to be 15% increase for 23/24 FY</p> <p>LP it would be useful for the SFWG (and SV/HN working parties) to have sight of an age analysis as we have had in the past which might also help us to forecast future years spend.</p> <p>MT confirmed that we routinely produced spend per type of primary disability and age group and LW had been working on many data sets. LW confirmed she would be able to provide this</p>	LW
9.	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>There was not any - any other business</p>	
10	<p><b><i>Date and Time of next Meeting</i></b></p> <p>The next Schools Forum meeting after our January meeting will be <b>14<sup>th</sup> March however, this will be cancelled if there is insufficient business to discuss.</b></p> <p>The date of the next meeting of this group is <b>26<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 8.30am.</b> This is planned as a virtual teams meeting.</p>	

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**Schools Forum Funding & SEN Working Group  
8 January 2024**

**Schools Forum  
18 January 2024**

**DEDICATED SCHOOLS BUDGET – BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To present budget monitoring information against the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for the financial year 2023-24 as at 30 November 2023.

**Main Considerations**

2. Appendix 1 and 2 to this report outlines the budget monitoring summary as at 30 November 2023 including activity information for demand driven budgets.
3. An overspend of £4.385 million is currently forecast against the overall schools budget. The main driver for this forecast variance is the on-going pressures on the high needs block, the reasons for these are known and understood.
4. As the local authority must make arrangements to finance this pressure, some expenditure in the Schools Budget is ultimately financed from the DSG reserve. The drawdown upon this reserve since 2018 has created a deficit reserve position. In acknowledgement of deficits held by local authorities, which are estimated at £2.6bn nationally, the government introduced a three-year statutory override in 2020 which separates local authorities' DSG deficits from their wider financial position, this has now been extended until 2026.
5. Wiltshire's planned transfer from the DSG reserve is based on forecasts of expenditure to 31 July 2024 and is estimated at £16.648million. The overspend forecast of £1.971 million on the grant plus this transfer from reserves mean the overall estimated DSG pressure is therefore £18.619m.
6. Table 1 below shows the forecast variances by individual DSG block.

	DSG Allocation from the DfE £m	Wiltshire Transfers £m	Current Annual Budget £m	Forecast Outturn £m	Forecast Outturn Variance £m	% Variance
Early Years Block	32.563	0.180	32.135	31.130	(1.004)	-3%
Schools Block	346.293	(1.717)	344.577	344.511	(0.066)	0%
High Needs block	70.798	1.797	91.492	97.098	5.606	6%
Central Block	2.600	(0.260)	2.340	2.190	(0.151)	-6%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>452.254</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>470.544</b>	<b>474.929</b>	<b>4.386</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Planned transfer to DSG reserve (overspend)</b>					<b>16.648</b>	
<b>Net in year forecast movement to the DSG reserve</b>					<b>21.034</b>	

***Early Years Budgets (Budget £32.563M, forecast variance (1.004M))***

7. The early years budgets are projected to underspend by £1.004m. For this financial year, the budgets have been decreased by the planned transfer to the DSG reserve. For early years this is £2.250m. This will facilitate improved budget monitoring and should reflect the DfE's post year adjustment of the variance. The variance is due to

actual childrens attendance and therefore payments, being less than those calculated by the DfE using the updated census data.

8. The DfE have now adjusted the early years allocations as follows:
  - a. Post year adjustment to 2022/23 financial year – an uplift of £35,133
  - b. In year adjustment (2023/24 financial year) – an uplift of £77,322

	Budgeted	Actual	Forecast PTE Variance	Budgeted Spend	Forecast Spend	Forecast Spend Variance
	PTE	PTE	PTE	£M	£M	£M
3- & 4-year olds	9,873	9,561	-312	26.336	25.714	(0.622)
2-year-olds	664	720	56	2.178	2.213	0.035
ISF	308	289	-19	0.99	0.873	(0.117)
	hours	hours	hours			

\*PTE = part time equivalent learners

9. The local authority has a duty of sufficiency in this sector and is working closely with providers to support through these challenging times of rising costs and a highly competitive recruitment marketplace.

#### **Schools Budgets (Budget £344.577M, forecast variance (£0.090M))**

10. The minimal forecast underspend on schools relates to central teams and is helping to offset the overall pressure on the DSG.

#### **High Needs Budgets (Budget £91.546M, forecast variance £5.606M)**

11. The High Needs budgets are projected to overspend by £5.606m. For this financial year, the budgets have been increased by the planned drawdown from the DSG reserve. For high needs this is £18.898m. This will facilitate improved budget monitoring, setting targets and measuring success in recovery planning.
12. The major driver of the increased cost is volume. Activity (volume) is measured in FTE – full time equivalent pupils. Full variance analysis is provided at Appendix 2. It is important to note that the number of EHCPs being requested continues to increase post pandemic.

	Children with an EHCP in Wiltshire	Prior Year Data (2022-23)	Prior Year Data (2021-22)
As at November 2023	5,441		
Estimate as at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024 (based on estimates for SV Plan)	5,617	4,762	4,371
Annual movement	<b>855</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>253</b>
% Movement	15.7%	8.2%	5.8%

The forecast pressure has significantly increased with September placements confirmed as well assessments and decisions being made which reduce the pandemic backlog. The biggest areas of growth are in our own special and mainstream provision with an additional 496fte since 2022/23 financial year. There are 119fte more pupils in post 16 education, 32fte more in independent provision than in the 2022/23 financial year and 69 more pupils in EOTAS education.

Whilst we have been able to respond to the increasing demand with DfE capital grant to increase primary resource base provision; two new pilot secondary resource bases and the new 150 place free school; SAIL these developments have had a subsequent

impact on expenditure levels. There has been particular pressure on the named pupil allowances which support children in mainstream settings.

Full detail on all activity data forecasts can be found at Appendix 2 and 3, highlights of the demand in FTE are included in the table overleaf.

	Budgeted Volume FTE	Actual Volume FTE	Volume variance FTE	% change in volume	Actual unit rate
<b>Wiltshire School Provision</b>					
Special School Places	910.75	910.75	0	0%	£10,000
Special School Top Ups	1,041.05	1,035.45	(6)	-1%	£13,418
ELP Places	294.83	294.83	0	0%	£6,000
ELP Top Ups	623.82	593.45	(30)	-5%	£5,278
Resource Base Places	413.28	413.28	0	0%	£6,000
Resource Base Top Ups	636.11	531.11	(105)	-17%	£6,647
Named Pupil Allowance - Prim	813.97	1,071.24	257	32%	£6,347
Named Pupil Allowance - Sec	541.48	562.80	21	4%	£5,309
Transition Support Funding	313.25	279.31	(34)	-11%	£4,000
<b>Independent / External Provision</b>					
Independent Special School Fees	302.27	314.55	12	4%	£64,242
6th Form	688.76	732.69	44	6%	£11,562
Wiltshire College Places	386.33	386.33	0	0%	£6,000
Inter Authority Recoupment	248.84	285.42	37	15%	£14,908
Alternative Provision & DP (SEN)	501.20	542.06	41	8%	£14,584

13. As Schools Forum are aware, much work has been done, over recent years to investigate and address the issues. The Placement Strategy has expanded places however managing demand remains challenging. There is an update later in the agenda from the High Needs Sustainability team on their work with the DfE and partners.

### **Central School Services Budgets (Budget £2.340m, forecast variance £0.151m)**

14. The small forecast underspend in this area is a combination of an underspend on central services and an underspend in admissions due to appeals panel income.

### **DSG Reserve**

15. The deficit reserve brought forward of £35.249 million is decreased by the positive early years block adjustment of £0.035 million. The planned drawdown of £16.648m and forecast overspend of £4.385 will take the reserve into a forecast deficit position of £56.247 million.

	<b>Total 23/24 FY £M</b>
Balance Brought Forward from 22/23	35.249
Early Years Adjustment (prior year)	(0.035)
Planned drawdown from reserve	16.648
Actual Variance 23/24	4.385
Balance CFWD 2023/24	<b>56.247</b>

### **DSG Management Plan**

16. Every Local Authority in England that has a deficit against their high needs block is required to hold a DSG Management Plan and the financial summary of the Wiltshire plan has been reported to Schools Forum on a regular basis.

17. The report to the Schools Forum meeting in June 2023 confirmed that the DSG Management Plan was being updated to share with the DfE's consultants Newton Europe Ltd as part of the Delivering Better Value (DBV) programme. Since that meeting the Council has joined the Delivering Better Value programme for councils with

significant DSG deficits, and submitted its DSG Management plan which has been updated to reflect current estimates of demand, income and expenditure with an estimate of the impact of the currently agreed mitigations. There is more detail on the work in this area in the high needs update. The final plan will need to be signed off with the DfE in January 2024. The Transformation Board chaired by the Chief Executive of the Council has approved project spend of £1.620m over 23/24 and 24/25 financial years to deploy temporary resources to drive the change programme forward.

18. The purpose of the plan is to demonstrate how the deficit in the high needs block will be reduced. As part of the Safety Valve Programme the council will need to be able to demonstrate that it can achieve in year financial balance by the end of the plan period. At this stage the plan does not achieve financial balance and therefore further work is required to develop a plan that can be implemented as part of a Safety Valve deal for Wiltshire. The final plan will need to be signed off with the DfE in January 2024. The Transformation Board chaired by the Chief Executive of the Council has approved project spend of £1.620m over 23/24 and 24/25 financial years to deploy temporary resources to drive the change programme forward.

### **Proposals**

19. Schools Forum is asked to note the forecast budget monitoring position including the balance on the DSG reserve at the end of November 2023 together with the report later in the agenda on the HNB recovery plan and the Safety Valve programme.

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Appendix 1 – Schools Budget Forecast Position as at 30th November 2023

a	b	c	d = (c-b)	e = (d/b)	f	d = (c-b)	g
Service Area	Current Annual Budget	Period 8 Forecast	Period 8 Forecast Variance		22/23 Outturn Variance	October forecast variance	Budget Move- ment from Previous Report
	£m	£m	£m	%		£m	
Three to Four Year Olds EY Entitlement Funding	26.336	25.714	(0.622)	-2.36%	(2.178)	0.067	-0.689
Two Year Olds EY Entitlement Funding	2.178	2.213	0.035	1.63%	(0.178)	(0.046)	0.082
Supplementary Funding	1.642	1.513	(0.129)	-7.85%	0.000	(0.303)	0.174
Early Years Inclusion Support Fund	0.990	0.873	(0.117)	-11.79%	0.223	(0.117)	0.000
Early Years Pupil Premium & DAF	0.359	0.348	(0.012)	-3.23%	0.011	0.056	-0.068
Early Years Central Expenditure	0.630	0.470	(0.160)	-25.43%	(0.023)	(0.168)	0.008
<b>Early Years Block</b>	<b>32.135</b>	<b>31.130</b>	<b>-1.004</b>	<b>-3.12%</b>	<b>-2.145</b>	<b>-0.512</b>	<b>-0.492</b>
Schools Budget Shares Primary & Secondary - Local Authority Schools	113.299	113.299	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Schools Budget Shares Primary & Secondary - Academy Schools	228.279	228.279	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Education Functions	0.460	0.460	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Licences and Subscriptions	0.057	0.057	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Free School Meals	0.030	0.030	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Staff Supply Cover (Not Sickness)	0.635	0.635	0.000	0.00%	(0.183)	0.000	0.000
Behaviour Support Team	0.695	0.695	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement	0.590	0.524	(0.066)	-11.14%	(0.085)	(0.064)	-0.002
<b>De Delegated Total</b>	<b>2.007</b>	<b>1.941</b>	<b>-0.066</b>	<b>-3.27%</b>	<b>-0.268</b>	<b>-0.064</b>	<b>-0.002</b>
Growth Fund	0.533	0.533	0.000	0.00%	(0.953)	0.000	0.000
<b>Schools Block</b>	<b>344.577</b>	<b>344.511</b>	<b>-0.066</b>	<b>-0.02%</b>	<b>-1.221</b>	<b>-0.064</b>	<b>-0.002</b>
Special School Place Funding	9.108	9.108	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Resource Base (RB) Funding	2.480	2.480	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Enhanced Learning Provision (ELP) Funding	1.769	1.769	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
<b>High Needs Block (all schools)</b>	<b>13.356</b>	<b>13.356</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
Named Pupil Allowances (NPA)	8.215	9.762	1.547	18.83%	0.893	1.026	0.521
Special School Top-Up	12.337	13.894	1.557	12.62%	1.951	1.872	-0.315
Resourced Base (RB) Top-Up	3.816	3.531	(0.285)	-7.48%	1.395	(0.285)	0.000
Enhanced Learning Provision (ELP) Top-Up	3.221	3.132	(0.089)	-2.75%	0.265	(0.089)	0.000
Estimate of Transitional Support (TSP) payments	1.253	1.117	(0.136)	-10.83%	0.126	(0.079)	-0.057
Secondary Alternative Provision Funding	3.011	3.011	0.000	0.00%	(0.200)	0.000	0.000
Non Wiltshire Pupils in Wiltshire Schools	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00%	0.055	0.000	0.000
<b>Devolved to Maintained &amp; Top Up Total</b>	<b>31.852</b>	<b>34.446</b>	<b>2.594</b>	<b>8.15%</b>	<b>4.486</b>	<b>2.445</b>	<b>0.150</b>
Wiltshire College Places	2.318	2.318	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Wiltshire Pupils in Non Wiltshire Schools	3.428	4.255	0.827	24.12%	0.945	0.827	0.000
Post-16 Top-Up	7.613	8.471	0.858	11.28%	0.463	0.858	0.000
Independent & Non-Maintained Special Schools	17.374	20.207	2.833	16.31%	4.305	2.779	0.054
SEN Alternative Provision, Direct Payments & Elective Home Education	6.634	7.905	1.271	19.17%	3.742	0.644	0.627
Education Other than at School (EOTAS)	0.519	0.385	(0.134)	-25.81%	(0.153)	(0.143)	0.009
<b>Funding for Places outside Schools</b>	<b>37.886</b>	<b>43.542</b>	<b>5.656</b>	<b>14.93%</b>	<b>9.302</b>	<b>4.966</b>	<b>0.690</b>
High Needs in Early Years Provision	0.768	0.457	(0.310)	-40.43%	(0.026)	(0.310)	0.000
Speech & Language	0.764	0.560	(0.204)	-26.74%	(0.005)	(0.204)	0.000
AP & SEND Support Services	0.389	0.377	(0.012)	-3.21%	0.004	(0.019)	0.007
0-25 Inclusion & SEND Teams	3.069	2.727	(0.341)	-11.13%	0.012	(0.363)	0.021
Specialist Teacher Advisory Service	1.687	1.297	(0.390)	-23.13%	(0.176)	(0.392)	0.002
Other Special Education	1.721	0.336	(1.386)	-80.49%	(0.097)	(1.397)	0.011
<b>Commissioned &amp; SEN Support Services</b>	<b>8.398</b>	<b>5.754</b>	<b>-2.644</b>	<b>-31.49%</b>	<b>-0.289</b>	<b>-2.686</b>	<b>0.041</b>
<b>High Needs Block</b>	<b>91.492</b>	<b>97.098</b>	<b>5.606</b>	<b>6.13%</b>	<b>13.499</b>	<b>4.725</b>	<b>0.881</b>
Central Licences	0.457	0.457	0.000	0.00%	(0.000)	0.000	0.000
Central Provision (Former ESG)	1.171	1.133	(0.039)	-3.30%	(0.224)	(0.031)	-0.008
Admissions	0.474	0.445	(0.029)	-6.11%	(0.032)	(0.026)	-0.003
Servicing of Schools Forums	0.003	0.003	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
<b>Central Provision within Schools Budget</b>	<b>2.105</b>	<b>2.038</b>	<b>-0.068</b>	<b>-3.21%</b>	<b>-0.256</b>	<b>-0.057</b>	<b>-0.011</b>
Education Services to CLA	0.103	0.020	(0.083)	-80.84%	(0.037)	0.000	-0.083
Child Protection in Schools & Early Years	0.056	0.056	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Prudential Borrowing	0.076	0.076	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
<b>Historic Commitments</b>	<b>0.235</b>	<b>0.152</b>	<b>-0.083</b>	<b>-35.42%</b>	<b>-0.037</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>-0.083</b>
Central School Services	2.340	2.190	(0.151)	-6.44%	(0.293)	(0.057)	(0.094)
<b>PLANNED DRAWDOWN FROM DSG RESERVE AT YEAR END</b>	<b>-16.648</b>	<b>-16.648</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Total Schools Budget</b>	<b>453.896</b>	<b>458.281</b>	<b>4.385</b>	<b>0.97%</b>	<b>9.840</b>	<b>4.092</b>	<b>0.293</b>
Pupil Premium (academy & maintained)	17.725	17.725	0.000				
6th Form Funding Maintained Schools (LSC Grant)	1.330	1.330	0.000				
Teachers Pension Employer Contribution Grant Apr-Aug 23	0.924	0.924	0.000				
National Tutoring Programme AY 22/23 & recovery	0.332	0.332	0.000				
UI Free School Meal Grant Provisional (academy & maintained)	3.451	3.451	0.000				
PE & Sports Revenue Grant (academy & maintained)	3.608	3.608	0.000				
<b>DfE Revenue Grants for all Wiltshire Schools</b>	<b>27.371</b>	<b>27.371</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0</b>			
<b>TOTAL DfE SCHOOLS FUNDING</b>	<b>481.266</b>	<b>485.652</b>	<b>4.385</b>	<b>0.91%</b>			

March 23 allocations subject to change by DfE  
Figure from S251  
As per published May & Oct figures  
May payment  
To be published - June 23  
As per published Nov 1st figures

Appendix 1 - the service forecasts of expenditure as at 30th June 2023 - this is an estimate of net expenditure on the schools budget

TREND ANALYSIS HAS BEEN APPLIED TO FUTURE DEMAND - however this is based on bet estimates at Q1 and will be subject to

Appendix 2 - the service forecasts of planned activity in FTE (full time equivalent pupils) as at 30th April 2022- this is a measure of volumes of pupil placements / support arrangements

Appendix 2 - Variance Analysis

<i>h</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>j</i>	<i>k = (j-i)</i>	<i>l = (k/i)</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>p</i>
Volume analysis	Budgeted Activity FTE	Period 8 Forecast Activity FTE	Period 7 Forecast Variance FTE	Variance %	22/23 Outturn Volume	Volume movement from Previous Report	Forecast Average Prices	22/23 Actual Average Prices	Unit	Movement from Previous Report
Three/Four Year Olds	9,873	9,561	(312)	-3%	9,721	- 259	£4.68	£4.42	p/hr	
Two Year Olds	664	720	56	8%	828	27	£5.75	£5.69	p/hr	
Supplementary Funding	1,315	1,212	(103)	-8%	0	140	£1.10	£0.00	p/hr	
ISF	308	289	(19)	-6%	0	0	£3,023	£3,213	per child	
							£828	£615	pa	
							£0.53	£0.53	p/hr	
<b>Early Years Block ACTIVITY DRIVER DATASET</b>	<b>12,160</b>	<b>11,782</b>	<b>(378)</b>	<b>-3%</b>	<b>10,549</b>	<b>- 92</b>				
Sp Sch Place Funding	911	911	0	0%	806	0	£10,000	£10,000	pa	
RB Funding	413	413	0	0%	329	0	£6,000	£6,000	pa	
ELP Funding	295	295	0	0%	315	0	£6,000	£6,000	pa	
	<b>1,619</b>	<b>1,619</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1,449</b>	<b>0</b>				
NPA	1,355	1,634	279	21%	1,215	79	£5,974	£5,889	pa	
Special School Top-Up	1,041	1,035	(6)	-1%	872	21	£13,418	£11,394	pa	
RB Top-Up	636	531	(105)	-17%	383	9	£6,647	£10,257	pa	
ELP Top-Up	624	593	(30)	-5%	444	2	£5,278	£4,964	pa	
TSP	313	279	(34)	0%	95	14	£4,000	£2,755	pa	
	<b>3,970</b>	<b>4,073</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3,009</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>£8,456</b>	<b>£8,029</b>		pa
Wiltshire College Places	386	386	0	0%	350	0	£6,000	£6,000	pa	
Non Wiltshire Schools	249	285	37	15%	216	1	£14,908	£13,419	pa	
Post-16 Top-Up	689	733	44	6%	544	5	£11,562	£10,783	pa	
Ind & Non-Maint Sp Sch	302	315	12	4%	259	4	£64,242	£56,075	pa	
SEN AP, DP & EHE	501	542	41	8%	197	26	£14,584	£12,914	pa	
	<b>2,127</b>	<b>2,261</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>1,566</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>£19,257</b>	<b>£17,448</b>		pa
<b>High Needs Block ACTIVITY DRIVER DATASET</b>	<b>7,716</b>	<b>7,953</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>6,024</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>£12,209</b>	<b>£11,512</b>		

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 DiE are costed to top ups

## Wiltshire Council

### School Funding & SEN Working Group 8 January 2024

### Schools Forum 18 January 2024

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## Schools Revenue Funding 2024-25 - Funding Settlement & Budget Setting Process

### Purpose of the Paper

1. To update Schools Forum on the revenue funding settlement and the budget setting process for 2024-25.
2. The report will outline the funding settlement announced by the Department for Education (DfE) on 19 December 2023 and the impact on school budgets arising from the settlement. The report will also outline the decision-making process for the 2024-25 budget.
3. Further details on each of the funding Blocks and the specific decisions required will be set out in separate papers on this agenda. A separate decision paper will also be provided so that decisions can be considered after all the update reports have been discussed.

### Introduction to Funding Changes for 2024-25

4. The 2024-25 year represents another year where the Government has pledged to boost schools funding, with an increase of £1.8bn (3.1%) into the overall Schools Block compared to the 2023-24 year. In addition, a further £440m (4.3%) has been pledged for High Needs in the 2024-25 year.
5. This compares to an increase of £2.3bn in Schools Block funding and £400m for High Needs in the 2023-24 year. The total quantum of funding within the Schools Block now stands at £59.6m and the High Needs Block at £10.5m.
6. In addition, the Teachers Pay Additional Grant (TPAG), designed to fund the 'unfunded' 3% of the Teachers Pay Award from September 2023, will continue in the 2024-25 year, totalling a further £900m.
7. There will also be an additional grant for the 2024-25 year to reflect the additional costs of the increase to employer contribution rates for the Teachers Pensions' Scheme from April 2024. The contribution rate is increasing by 5 percentage points from 23.68% to 28.68%. Details of how this grant will be calculated will be made available in due course.

8. In the Chancellor's Autumn Statement for 2022, the '*Mainstream Schools Additional Grant*' was announced, providing a further £2bn of funding for schools in 2023-24. This grant has now been 'rolled into' core school funding rates for the 2024-25 year.
9. The Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) has been awarded an increase of 1.4% for the core funding factors compared to the 2023-24 year.
10. The DfE will allocate school funding to Wiltshire based on the National Funding Formula (NFF). The funding has then been run through the local funding formula, taking account of Schools Forum decisions, to create individual school budgets, in line with the NFF.
11. The 2024-25 year is another 'soft' year with local Schools' Forum still retaining their role in determining the school funding allocation methodology. The DfE have confirmed their intention to move to a 'hard' national funding formula and are continuing to propose a move to the full hard formula by 2027-28.
12. In the meantime, there will be a continued gradual tightening of local formulas towards the full NFF. As Wiltshire has already made the decision to mirror the NFF, there are no implications from this tightening for Wiltshire schools.
13. The introduction of mandatory '*minimum per pupil funding levels*' for the 2020-21 year represents a step towards the introduction of a 'hard' or 'direct' NFF and the rates have increased for the 2024-25 year as detailed in the table below.

<b><u>MPPFL</u></b>	<b><u>2020-21</u></b>	<b><u>2021-22</u></b>	<b><u>2022-23</u></b>	<b><u>2023-24</u></b>	<b><u>2024-25</u></b>
Key Stage 1&2	£3,750	£4,180	£4,265	£4,405	£4,610
Key Stage 3	£4,800	£5,215	£5,321	£5,503	£5,771
Key Stage 4	£5,300	£5,715	£5,831	£6,033	£6,331

14. The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) threshold has been adjusted to ensure that all schools gain through the allocations per pupil and must be set between 0.0% and +0.5%. Schools Forum agreed at the December 2023 meeting to set this at the maximum 0.5%.

15. The main formula for the 2024-25 year is broadly similar to the formula for the 2023-24 year however there are some changes, as detailed below.
- a. Overall, funding through the NFF has increased by 2.7%
  - b. Core pupil-led funding factors and the lump sum increased by 1.4%
  - c. The '*Minimum per pupil funding level*' to increase by 4.8% to
    - i. £4,610 for Primary
    - ii. £5,995 for Secondary
  - d. The Free School Meals factor (for the costs of providing a meal for eligible pupils) has increased by 2%
  - e. A transfer of up to 0.5% of Schools Block funding to the High Needs Block is permitted, subject to Schools Forum approval and a higher level of transfer is subject to Secretary of State approval
  - f. All NFF factors must be used in the formula
  - g. The LAMB grant has been phased out completely and local authorities (LA) are able to continue to de-delegate funding from maintained schools only, to support LA school improvement services
16. Following the cancellation of the 2020 and 2021 school assessments due to Covid-19, the Low Prior Attainment data from 2019 will continue to be used as a proxy for the assessments which would have taken place in 2020 and 2021.
17. The DfE will continue to pay Business Rates on behalf of all Wiltshire schools, as introduced in 2022-23. The DfE will liaise directly with Wiltshire Council for the payment of Business Rates, removing the need for schools to pay their own Business Rates and then recovering the funding.
18. Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) funding will continue in the 2024-25 year, with the rates being uplifted from the current 2023-24 rates, by 1.5%. The DfE have confirmed that the numbers of eligible PPG pupils will be taken from the October 2023 census. The funding rates for 2024-25 are set out in the table below.

<u>Premium</u>	<u>Primary</u>		<u>Secondary</u>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>
FSM6 (Deprivation)	£1,455	<b>£1,480</b>	£1,035	<b>£1,050</b>
LAC and Post-LAC*	£2,530	<b>£2,570</b>	£2,530	<b>£2,570</b>
Service	£335	<b>£340</b>	£335	<b>£340</b>

\* - LAC PPG is payable to the LA's Virtual Headteacher. Where a pupil has previously been LAC but has left LA care through adoption, special guardianship order or child arrangements order, then the PPG is payable to the school.

## School Revenue Funding Settlement 2024-25

### Dedicated Schools Grant 2024-25

19. The DfE issued the revenue funding settlement for schools on 19 December 2023. The provisional Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocation for Wiltshire Council is **£493.461m**. This is an increase of **£41.165m** compared with 2023-24. The table below shows the breakdown of the Blocks.

<b>Block</b>	<b><u>2021-22</u></b>	<b><u>2022-23</u></b>	<b><u>2023-24</u></b>	<b><u>2024-25</u></b>
Schools Block	£317,724,345	£328,593,782	£346,293,208	£364,467,745
Central Block	£2,565,122	£2,604,175	£2,600,176	£2,643,673
High Needs Block	£57,835,120	£62,690,534	£70,917,828*	£73,464,566
Early Years Block	£28,217,273	£28,520,960	£32,485,360	£52,885,506
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>£406,341,860</b>	<b>£422,409,451</b>	<b>£452,296,572</b>	<b>£493,461,490</b>

\* Includes Additional High Needs Allocation in 23-24 of £2.942m (Chancellor's Autumn Statement)

20. The increase reflects the impact of the uplift to the Schools' and High Needs Blocks incorporating the additional funding pledged by the government.
21. The increase in the Schools Block reflects the core increase and the additional funding from the Schools Supplementary Grant in 2022-23 and for the Mainstream Schools Additional Grant in 2023-24.
22. The split of funding between the Blocks is set out below to show the year-on-year movements.

	<b><u>2019-20</u></b>	<b><u>2020-21</u></b>	<b><u>2021-22</u></b>	<b><u>2022-23</u></b>	<b><u>2023-24</u></b>	<b><u>2024-25</u></b>	<b><u>Increase</u></b>	<b><u>(%)</u></b>
Schools Block	275,215,164	293,142,767	317,724,345	328,593,782	346,293,208	<b>364,467,745</b>	<b>18,174,537</b>	<b>5.25%</b>
Central Block	2,570,343	2,479,715	2,565,122	2,604,175	2,600,176	<b>2,643,673</b>	<b>43,497</b>	<b>1.67%</b>
High Needs Block	47,091,825	51,996,188	57,835,120	62,690,534	70,917,828	<b>73,464,566</b>	<b>2,546,738</b>	<b>3.59%</b>
Early Years Block	26,768,825	26,884,359	28,217,273	28,520,960	32,485,360	<b>52,885,506</b>	<b>20,400,146</b>	<b>62.8%</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>351,646,157</b>	<b>374,503,029</b>	<b>406,341,860</b>	<b>422,409,451</b>	<b>452,296,572</b>	<b>493,461,490</b>	<b>41,164,918</b>	<b>9.10%</b>

23. The **Schools Block** has been calculated based on the NFF funding factor values published initially in July 2023 and amended in October 2023 and applied to the October 2023 census information. These have been used to calculate a PUF and SUF (primary unit of funding and secondary unit of funding) for Wiltshire. These units of funding have been multiplied by the numbers of primary and secondary pupils to arrive at the Schools' Block total for 2024-25. (In 2024-25, the rates include the Mainstream Schools Additional Grant (MSAG) funding from the 2023-24 year.)
24. The PUF and SUF rates for 2024-25 are detailed in the table below.

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Increase / %
<b>PUF</b>	£3,849.15	£4,079.69	£4,432.68	£4,574.45	£4,801.29	<b>£5,075.59</b>	<b>£274.30 / 5.71%</b>
<b>SUF</b>	£4,885.94	£5,092.09	£5,514.14	£5,659.78	£5,951.59	<b>£6,258.62</b>	<b>£307.03 / 5.16%</b>

25. Pupil numbers have moved in each phase, as per the table below:

	<u>2018-19</u>	<u>Inc.</u>	<u>2019-20</u>	<u>Inc.</u>	<u>2020-21</u>	<u>Inc.</u>	<u>2021-22</u>	<u>Inc.</u>	<u>2022-23</u>	<u>Inc.</u>	<u>2023-24</u>	<u>Inc.</u>	<u>2024-25</u>
<b>Primary</b>	38,218	15	38,233	262	38,495	-45	38,450	-297	38,153	-566	37,587	-636	36,951
<b>Secondary</b>	24,471	412	24,883	481	25,364	242	25,606	487	26,093	675	26,768	362	27,130
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>62,689</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>63,116</b>	<b>743</b>	<b>63,859</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>64,056</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>64,246</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>64,355</b>	<b>-274</b>	<b>64,081</b>

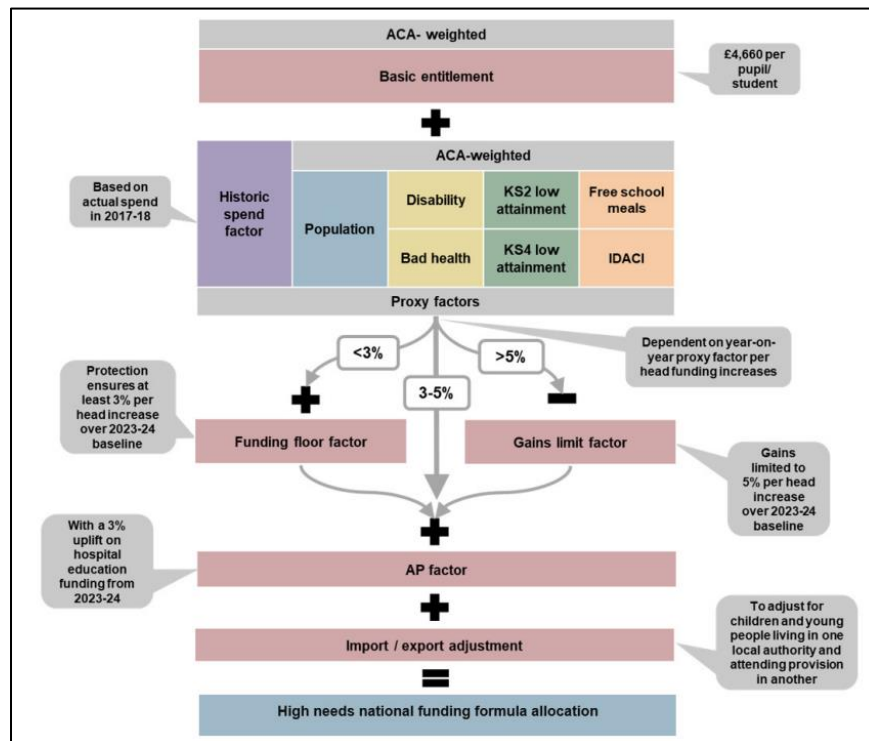
26. Included within the Schools Block of funding of £364.468m is the amount of £1.810m allocated on the basis of pupil growth and falling rolls, within Wiltshire. A breakdown of the elements comprising the Schools' Block is detailed in the table below.

<b>Funding 2024-25</b>	<b>Amount £</b>
Core funding – PUF's (36,950 x £5,075.59)	£187,545,589
Core funding – SUF's (27,130 x £6,258.62)	£169,799,490
Premises Factors (NNDR, split sites, rents, PFI)	£5,313,078
Growth funding	£1,527,503
Falling Rolls funding	£282,085
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>£364,467,745</b>

27. The **Central Schools Services Block (CSSB)** has been calculated according to the national funding formula for the CSSB. October 2023 pupil numbers have been multiplied by a unit value of £38.32 and a headcount of 64,081. Funding for agreed historic commitments has then been added to that total. The Block is calculated as.

Funding 2024-25	Amount £
Pupil Funding (£38.32 x 64,081)	£2,455,584
Historic Commitment Funding	£188,089
<b>Total CSSB Funding</b>	<b>£2,643,673</b>

28. The **High Needs Block** has been allocated as per the baselines notified to local authorities in December 2023. These baselines are calculated according to the NFF for high needs.



- The basic entitlement amount reflects the numbers of pupils in special schools and has been updated to reflect the October 2023 census. (This performs a similar role to the PUF's and SUF's in mainstream schools)
- A significant percentage of funding is allocated according to historic spend and provides every local authority with a set percentage (50%) of their 2017-18 spending on high needs to reflect past spending patterns.



- Of the other Proxy factors.
  - The Population factor sets out the number of pupils aged 2-18 living within the LA area
  - The remaining 6 factors allocate funding specifically based upon levels of attainment, deprivation and health/disability
- The Funding Floor and Gains Limits ensure that no LA receives a drop in 'per head' funding of greater than 3% or enjoys an increase in excess of 5% 'per head'.
- The AP factor provides funding for Hospital Education and other alternative provision.
- The Import/Export Adjustment reflects the impact of Wiltshire pupils attending a provision in another LA area and vice versa. Wiltshire is a net exporter of pupils and the High Needs Block is reduced accordingly.
- After the adjustments have been made, the resulting High Needs Block allocation has been calculated as follows.

<b>Funding 2024-25</b>	<b>Amount £</b>
Basic Entitlement	5,763,094
NFF Funding from Proxy factors	69,106,789
AP / Hospital	940,683
Import / Export Adjustment	-2,346,000
<b>Total High Needs Funding</b>	<b>73,464,566</b>

29. The **Early Years Block** reflects the indicative hourly rates announced for 2024-25 and an estimate of the full year effect of the entitlement to an additional 15 hours of childcare for children of working parents of 3 and 4 year olds which came into effect in September 2017.
30. Funding within the Early Years Block has increased provisionally by over £20m. This is not a mistake, but reflects the increased provision being made available within the early years sector. The extended funding reflects the following funding changes and extension in provision.
- Introduction of 2 year old entitlement for working parents
  - Introduction of under 2's entitlement funding
  - Early Years Pupil Premium for 2 year olds
  - Early Years Pupil Premium for under 2 year olds
  - Disability Access funding for 2 year olds
  - Disability Access funding for under 2 year olds
  - Increase in entitlement rates for 3 and 4 year olds
  - Increase in 2 year old disadvantaged entitlement rates
31. The Early Years provisional allocation has been calculated as follows

<b>Funding 2024-25</b>	<b>Amount £</b>
Universal entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds	22,347,050
Additional 15 hours for eligible working parents	11,083,480
2 year old disadvantaged entitlement	3,101,130
2 year old entitlement for working parents	9,256,020
Under 2's entitlement	6,357,318
Pupil premium for 3 and 4 year olds	262,890
Pupil Premium for 2 year olds	142,874
Pupil Premium for under 2's	7,144
Disability Access Fund for 3 and 4 year olds	245,700
Disability Access Fund for 2 year olds	67,340
Disability Access Fund for under 2's	14,560
<b>Total Early Years Funding</b>	<b>52,885,506</b>

32. It should be noted that the Early Years Block will be updated during the 2024-25 financial year to reflect the January 2024 and January 2025 Early Years census data and that the above figures are provisional.

## Block Transfers 2024-25

33. The funding regulations do allow for a transfer of funding between the Schools' Block and other Blocks within the DSG. Local authorities have the flexibility to move up to 0.5% from the Schools' Block to the other Blocks including the High Needs Block, with the agreement of Schools Forum. It has previously been agreed by Schools Forum that a transfer up to a maximum of 0.55% (£2m) would be supported, if affordable.
34. Due to the requirement that any transfer in excess of 0.5% would require the express approval from the Secretary of State, a Disapplication Request to transfer 0.55% has been submitted and a decision is pending but expected to receive support in light of the LA's Safety Valve programme and Schools Forum support.

## Budget Setting Process 2024-25

35. Local authorities are required to submit the proposed delegated budget for schools in their areas to the DfE by 22 January 2024. The DfE are required to confirm the formula is compliant with the funding regulations and will then confirm budgets to academies by the end of February 2024. The LA is required to notify maintained schools of their budget shares by the end of February 2024.
36. In terms of setting the budgets for schools for 2024-25, financial modelling has confirmed that the NFF is fully affordable taking account of the Block transfer of £2m and setting a Growth Fund of £733k. The amount of funding required to fund all schools in accordance with the NFF is £358.042m. The Schools Block funding available for distribution to schools in 2024-25 is calculated as follows:

DSG Schools Block Allocation	364,467,745
Less: NNDR (Business Rates)	3,691,968
Less: Growth Fund	733,508
Less: Transfer to Other Blocks	2,000,000
Total available for School Funding	<b>358,042,269</b>

37. The update reports will show that many of the decisions in relation to individual funding Blocks will impact on the affordability, or otherwise, of other proposals. It will be important for members of Schools Forum to be aware that the full NFF is affordable for the 2024-25 year and that this confirmation can be taken into account when considering the final decision paper.

## **De-Delegation**

38. There are a number of budgets that maintained primary and secondary schools can agree to de-delegate so that services continue to be provided centrally. De-delegation cannot be applied to amounts delegated to academies or special schools.
39. At the December 2023 Schools Forum meeting, it was agreed by the maintained schools voting members that the de-delegation of services would continue in 2024-25, as in 2023-24. The amount of each de-delegated service budget is based upon the relevant formula factors for maintained schools.
40. In addition, it was agreed that maintained schools would de-delegate funding to support school improvement services, previously funded from the LAMB grant, which was phased out at the end of March 2023.

## **Proposal**

41. Schools Forum is asked to note the report.

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Wiltshire Council

School Funding & SEN Working Group  
8 January 2024

Schools Forum  
18 January 2024

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## **DSG Budget – Schools Block Update 2024-25 (Delegated Budget)**

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To update Schools Forum on issues relating to the schools delegated budget for 2024-25 and the decisions that will need to be made as part of the budget setting process.

### **Main Considerations**

2. As outlined in the funding settlement paper the Department for Education (DfE) has allocated a schools' block quantum to Wiltshire of £364.467 million. This includes funding of £1.810 million for growth and falling rolls, based on the growth and falling rolls formula, detailed later in this report.
3. Modelling work has been prepared to calculate individual school budgets based on the DfE's National Funding Formula (NFF). The main funding formula for 2024-25 is broadly similar to the formula for 2023-24 but the following changes should be noted.
  - An increase in Pupil and School led funding values of 1.4%
  - Minimum Funding Guarantee to be set between 0.0% and 0.5% to ensure all schools see a gain in funding on their pupil led funding
  - Increases in the minimum per pupil funding levels (MPPFL) to £4,610 and £5,995 in primary and secondary schools
  - Amended split site criteria which now incorporates a 'basic' eligibility element and a 'distance' element
4. Financial modelling has been completed for the 2024-25 and suggests that the NFF is fully affordable within the funding envelope provided by the DfE. The Schools Block of funding is sufficient to afford the full NFF, including a transfer to the High Needs Block, with further discussion of some factors detailed in this report.

## The National Funding Formula

5. Since the introduction of the NFF, it has been Wiltshire’s intention to move across to mirror and replicate the formula in the ‘soft’ years, prior to moving to the ‘hard’ formula. Over the last six years, Wiltshire has moved across to funding schools, subject to affordability, using the NFF factor values. Where the NFF values could not be afforded, the Free School Meal Ever6 (FSM6) factor was compromised to ensure the other factor values were affordable. For the last five years, the formula has been fully affordable.
6. The DfE published their NFF factor values in the Summer of 2023 (amended October 2023) and following the announcement about the size of the DSG, the funding formula has been modelled to incorporate the NFF factor values (see Appendix 1 for rates).
7. Based upon the Schools’ Block allocation, the formula is fully affordable for the 2024-25 financial year, applying all the NFF factor values. Wiltshire has been funded through the NFF and this has ensured that Schools Forum is presented with a position of affording the full NFF.
8. Within the modelling, the following elements have been included, as agreed with Schools Forum in December 2023:
  - Full NFF values applied for all funding factors
  - MFG set at the maximum level of +0.5%
  - Transfer from Schools’ Block to High Needs Block of 0.55% (£2.0m)
9. The table below sets out the funding position having applied all the NFF values and taken account of any proposed transfers, to demonstrate the affordability position.

<b>Funding 2024-25</b>	<b>Amount £</b>
Core funding	£362,658,157
Growth and falling rolls funding	£1,809,588
<b>Net Funding</b>	<b>£364,467,745</b>
Less: NNDR Business rates	(£3,691,968)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£360,775,777</b>
Transfer to High Needs Block (0.5%)	(£2,000,000)
<b>Available for School Funding</b>	<b>£358,775,777</b>
NFF requirements	£358,042,269
Growth Fund	£733,508
<b>Schools Block Allocated</b>	<b>£358,775,777</b>

## Growth Funding & Falling Rolls Allocation 2024-25

10. Growth and Falling Rolls allocations for 2024-25 are based upon pupil data from the October 2023 census and the October 2022 census.
11. The county is separated into 62 Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOA) with an average of 4 schools in each MSOA area. Growth is measured by counting the increase in pupil numbers in each MSOA between the October 2022 and October 2023 censuses. Only positive increases in pupil numbers are included, so positive growth in one area, and negative growth in another, will not neutralise the position and funding for the positive growth will stand.
12. For the first time, the DfE has issued funding to LAs based on falling rolls. The formula for allocating funding to LA's is measured by looking at the MSOA's between the October 2022 and October 2023 censuses. Where a fall in pupil numbers of greater than 10% is experienced, then for each MSOA area experiencing the fall, an allocation of £141,042 will be allocated.
13. Schools Forum took a decision at its December meeting, based upon several factors, not to introduce a Falling Rolls Fund in 2024-25. Indeed, nationally the majority of Schools Forums' have not introduced such a fund.
14. The DfE take a formulaic approach to calculating both growth and falling rolls funding. They do not expect local authorities to use these funding rates in their local arrangements for funding growth and falling rolls but instead they act as a proxy for calculating funding for supporting schools at LA level.
15. At the Schools Forum meeting in December 2023, the criteria for allocating Growth funding in the 2024-25 year was confirmed. The amount of funding allocated to Wiltshire for the 2024-25 year is set out in the table below.

<b><u>Funding 2024-25</u></b>	<b><u>Primary</u></b>	<b><u>Secondary</u></b>	<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>
<b>Growth in Pupils</b>	260.5	479.5	
<b>Rate</b>	£1,561.54	£2,337.27	
<b>Amount</b>	<b>£406,781</b>	<b>£1,120,722</b>	<b>£1,527,503</b>
	<b><u>Eligible Areas</u></b>	<b><u>Funding</u></b>	
<b>Falling Rolls</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>£141,042</b>	<b>£282,085</b>
<b>Total Funding</b>			<b>£1,809,588</b>

### Historical Position

16. Growth funding forms part of the Schools Block of funding. Schools Forum has historically agreed an annual budget to be retained for funding pupil growth and has operated successfully within this funding envelope. In the financial year 2024-25 it is proposed to set the budget once again in line with the affordability, having applied NFF rates for the funding factors.

## **Affordability**

17. There are no plans to open any new schools in the 2024-25 year. The growth fund supports new primary and secondary schools with diseconomy costs for the first 7 years or until the school is full.
18. The Basic Need Class Expansion for additional classes is still to be confirmed with colleagues in the School Place Planning Team for the 2024-25 academic year. However, growth is being experienced in some areas as new housing becomes available across the County, despite a falling birth rate being experienced more generally.
19. The Infant Class Size increases have been confirmed for 2023-24 and four schools are to be funded through this factor.
20. The total Growth Fund requirement for 2024-25 is anticipated to come within the proposed budget of £734k, based upon the funding of all the NFF factors in full. Any surplus or deficit in the Growth Fund will form part of the overall DSG surplus or deficit balance.

## **Minimum Funding Guarantee**

21. The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) was designed to prevent schools from experiencing significant reductions in their calculated 'per pupil' funding, year on year. Historically, the MFG had been set at -1.5% to prevent reductions in 'per pupil' funding of greater than 1.5%.
22. Following the 2024-25 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 MFG is set at a positive figure of between 0.0% and 0.5% for 2024-25. At the December Schools Forum meeting, it was agreed to set the MFG at 0.5%, subject to affordability.
23. As in the 2023-24 year, modelling of the MFG is no longer a significant issue, as the majority of schools have moved off the MFG funding and as a result, no capping of schools would be required to fund the MFG again this year. This correlates with the DfE's intention to move all schools across towards the NFF, with an intention of introducing a 'hard' formula in due course.
24. Setting a positive MFG of 0.5% is fully affordable and will ensure that all schools see an uplift in their 'per pupil' funding of at least 0.5%. The cost to the formula in 2024-25 is £0.213m (0.06% of Schools Block funding).



## Sparsity

25. The DfE introduced changes to the Sparsity funding as part of the NFF in 2022-23. Schools Forum agreed to mirror the NFF sparsity changes within the Wiltshire formula.
26. The criteria for Sparsity funding are based upon size and sparsity distance. The threshold is for primary schools of 150 pupils or less and secondary schools of 600 pupils or less. The distance threshold is based upon the average road distance from the pupil's home to next nearest compatible school.
27. Where this distance is greater than 2 miles for primary and 3 miles for secondary pupils a school is eligible for funding. The NFF introduced a 'distance taper' which now means that primary and secondary schools with a sparsity distance within 20% of the threshold (1.6miles and 2.4miles for primary and secondary), are now eligible for funding, using a tapering mechanism.
28. The formula also uses a tapering mechanism based upon size of the school such that schools receive a weighted proportion of the maximum value.
29. As part of the DfE's proposals to support small and rural schools, the maximum sparsity value for primary schools has now increased to £57,100, with Secondary schools increasing to £83,000. The table below shows the impact of these changes on the 2024-25 formula.

<b><u>2024-25</u></b>	<b><u>Primary</u></b>	<b><u>Secondary</u></b>	<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>
Eligible Schools	62	2	<b>64</b>
Funding	£2,480,245	£96,003	<b>£2,576,248</b>
<b><u>2023-24</u></b>			
Eligible Schools	66	2	<b>68</b>
Funding	£2,402,634	£107,562	<b>£2,510,196</b>
<b><u>2022-23</u></b>			
Eligible Schools	62	4	<b>66</b>
Funding	£2,236,040	£142,411	<b>£2,378,451*</b>
<b><u>2021-22</u></b>			
Eligible Schools	28	2	<b>30</b>
Funding	£295,939	£49,594	<b>£345,533</b>

\* – This represents 0.71% of the total Schools Block Allocation

## Split Site Funding

30. Split site funding is awarded to schools operating across more than one site and has formed part of the Wiltshire formula for many years. The DfE have now determined that funding for this factor will be based upon a two-pronged criterion.

- **Basic eligibility** – schools attract a lump sum of funding for each additional eligible site (up to a maximum of three sites). Funding for this element in 2024-25 will be £54,300
- **Distance funding** – the additional site must be at least 100 metres from the main site. A tapering calculation will apply for distances between 100 metres and 500 metres, with the maximum funding being £27,100 and the minimum funding £0. The tapering will be on a straight-line basis
- The maximum amount of funding a school can receive for split site funding will be £81,400 for having two sites

31. Wiltshire currently has six split site schools. Five of these schools will receive the maximum allocation of £81,400 and one will receive a lower allocation of £73,292, due to the distance between the two school sites falling below 500 metres. The total funding awarded through this factor is £480,292, which equates to 0.13% of the schools block funding.

## Minimum per Pupil Funding Levels (MPPFL)

32. The MPPFL's were introduced as part of the NFF and have been increased annually as part of the DfE's proposals to standardise funding across the country. These are mandatory as part of the NFF and there is no scope for amending these values without permission from the Secretary of State.

33. The thresholds in primary and secondary schools for 2024-25 are £4,610 and £5,995 for primary and secondary respectively.

34. The overall funding allocated through the MPPFL is £2.215m in 2024-25, a decrease of £0.282m on the 2023-24 figure (£2.497m). This follows the trend of year-on-year reductions required for the MPPFL.

35. As the NFF is embedded, the quantum of funding awarded through the MPPFL and the number of schools eligible to receive funding should continue to decrease.

Year	Schools Eligible		Funding to Schools		
	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Total Funding
2021-22	75	14	£3,833,014	£2,743,228	<b>£6,576,242</b>
2022-23	61	11	£3,076,671	£1,874,834	<b>£4,951,505</b>
2023-24	32	4	£1,700,428	£796,828	<b>£2,497,255</b>
2024-25	29	3	£1,486,911	£728,348	<b>£2,215,259</b>

## **Proposals**

36. Schools Forum is asked to note the report.
37. Schools Forum to confirm its intention to apply all the funding factors at the 2024-25 NFF rates.
38. Schools Forum to confirm setting the MFG at a level of 0.5%, as being fully affordable.
39. Schools Forum to confirm transferring 0.55% of the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, £2.0m, as the full NFF funding formula is affordable. *(As this exceeds the 0.5% threshold for Schools Forum approval, the DfE require confirmation that Schools Forum members have voted on this proposal and recorded the response rate)*
40. Schools Forum to agree the level of the Growth fund at £0.734m.

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## Appendix 1

Factor	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 Original	2024-25 Revised
Primary KS1&2 AWPU	£2,747	£2,857	£3,123*	£3,217	£3,394**	£3,597***	£3,562***
Secondary KS3 AWPU	£3,863	£4,018	£4,404*	£4,536	£4,785**	£5,072***	£5,022***
Secondary KS4 AWPU	£4,386	£4,561	£4,963*	£5,112	£5,393**	£5,717***	£5,661***
Primary & Secondary FSM	£440	£450	£460	£470	£480	£490	£490
Primary FSM6	£540	£560	£575	£590	£705**	£830***	£820***
Secondary FSM6	£785	£815	£840	£865	£1,030**	£1,210***	£1,200***
IDACI Primary Band A	£575	£600	£620	£640	£670	£685	£680
IDACI Primary Band B	£420	£435	£475	£490	£510	£520	£515
IDACI Primary Band C	£390	£405	£445	£460	£480	£490	£485
IDACI Primary Band D	£360	£375	£410	£420	£440	£450	£445
IDACI Primary Band E	£240	£250	£260	£270	£280	£285	£285
IDACI Primary Band F	£200	£210	£215	£220	£230	£235	£235
IDACI Secondary Band A	£810	£840	£865	£890	£930	£950	£945
IDACI Secondary Band B	£600	£625	£680	£700	£730	£750	£740
IDACI Secondary Band C	£560	£580	£630	£650	£680	£695	£690
IDACI Secondary Band D	£515	£535	£580	£595	£620	£635	£630
IDACI Secondary Band E	£390	£405	£415	£425	£445	£455	£450
IDACI Secondary Band F	£290	£300	£310	£320	£335	£345	£340
Prior Attainment – Primary	£1,022	£1,065	£1,095	£1,130	£1,155	£1,185	£1,170
Prior Attainment – Secondary	£1,550	£1,610	£1,660	£1,710	£1,750	£1,790	£1,775
EAL – Primary	£515	£535	£550	£565	£580	£595	£590
EAL - Secondary	£1,385	£1,440	£1,485	£1,530	£1,565	£1,605	£1,585
Mobility – Primary	£0	£875	£900	£925	£945	£970	£960
Mobility – Secondary	£0	£1,250	£1,290	£1,330	£1,360	£1,395	£1,380
Lump Sum	£110,000	£114,400	£117,800	£121,300	£128,000**	£135,700***	£134,400***
Sparsity – Primary (Max.)	£25,000	£26,000	£45,000	£55,000	£56,300	£57,700	£57,100
Sparsity – Secondary (Max.)	£65,000	£67,500	£70,000	£80,000	£81,900	£83,900	£83,000
Primary - MPPFL	£3,500	£3,750	£4,180	£4,265	£4,405	£4,655	£4,610
Secondary – MPPFL	£4,800	£5,000	£5,415	£5,525	£5,715	£6,050	£5,995

\* - Includes the Teachers Pay and Pension Grants of £180 for Primary and £265 for Secondary

\*\* - Incorporates the Schools Supplementary Grant funding for 2022-23 for AWPU, FSM6 and Lump Sum

\*\*\* - Incorporates the Mainstream Schools Additional Grant for 2024-25 for AWPU, FSM6 and Lump Sum

**Wiltshire Council  
Schools Forum Finance & SEN Working Group  
8 January 2024**

**Schools Forum  
18 January 2024**

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## **DEDICATED SCHOOLS BUDGET – HIGH NEEDS BLOCK UPDATE 2024/25**

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To update schools forum on issues related to the high needs block for 2024/25 the decisions that will need to be made as part of the budget setting process for 2024/25.
2. The budget approach for 2024/25 was approved in principle at the December 2023 meeting. Since this meeting, final allocations have been published. Proposals for the expenditure plan are in this report.
3. Budget proposals for 2024/25 reflect year 1 of the proposed Safety Valve Plan submitted by Wiltshire Council in December 2023. The final draft of the plan is to be submitted on 12 January 2024.

### **Main Considerations**

4. As outlined in the paper on the funding settlement for 2024/25 the high needs block provisional allocation for Wiltshire in 2024/25 is £73.465 million, a 3.7% increase on the 2023/24 allocation. The high needs block has been calculated according to the national funding formula for high needs. As previously reported to schools forum, Wiltshire is on the funding floor for the high needs NFF and therefore has received the minimum increase. The additional high needs block grant allocated in 2023/24 has been absorbed into the allocation for 2024/25.
5. The table below shows the allocation and increase on 23/24:

	<b>High Needs</b>
2024/25	£73,464,566
2023/24	£70,851,828
Uplift	£2,612,738

6. 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. 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.

### ***Proposed High Needs Budget 2024/25***

7. The proposed budget for 2024/25 reflects year 1 of the proposed Safety Valve plan for Wiltshire. It is projected that in 2024/25 the overall DSG deficit will increase by £28.173m in order to meet demand pressures and to support the investment needed to achieve the required mitigations in Safety Valve plan.
8. The increase in the deficit takes into account the provisional high needs block allocation announced in December 2023 and an assumption of a transfer of £2m from the schools block, agreed in principle by Schools Forum in December 2023. A disapplication request will need to be submitted to request the £2m transfer as the value of the proposed transfer exceeds 0.5% of the schools block.

9. Appendix 1 provides an assessment of pressure on the high needs block for 2024/25 which have been taken into account in the calculation of the unmitigated forecast for 2024/25. The bases for the initial estimate include the following:
- Full year effect of current commitments across all provision types including new special school and resource base places delivered in September 2023.
  - Estimated additional demand for 2024/25.
  - Proposed inflation of top-up values of 1.4% (in line with the increase in the mainstream NFF).
  - Pay and contract inflation.
10. The impact of these pressures gives an unmitigated in year deficit of £28.535 million. If further actions are not taken to address this position then the deficit will continue to increase year on year. This represents a significant financial risk to the Council.
11. The Council has proposed a Safety Valve plan to the Department for Education (DfE) aimed at bringing high needs block spend into an in year balanced position within a 5 year period. A number of mitigations are proposed and in order to achieve the outcomes detailed in the plan the proposed budget for 2024/25 covers year 1 of that plan and includes costs and savings arising from the planned mitigating actions as follows:

<b>Action</b>	<b>Investment</b>	<b>Saving</b>	<b>Safety Valve workstream</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	
Delivery of additional special school places	2.144		2
Delivery of additional Resource Base places	0.570		2
Commissioning of further Alternative Provision places		-0.367	3
Manage contract inflation within existing budgets		-0.619	3
Increased support for mainstream inclusion	0.983		1
Reductions in independent sector placements resulting from increased in house capacity		-1.995	2
Initial actions focused on bringing EHCP numbers in line with other Good/Outstanding councils		-1.920	1,2,4
Increase inflation on top-ups to 4% across mainstream, resource base/ELP and special school provision	0.841		2
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.539</b>	<b>-4.900</b>	

12. The proposed mitigated budget for 2024/25 is shown in Appendix 2 to this report.

## **Special School Minimum Funding Guarantee**

13. The 2024/25 guidance requires local authorities to set a minimum funding guarantee for special schools within a range of 0.0% to 0.5%. To be consistent with the recommendation on the mainstream MFG it is proposed to set the special school MFG at 0.5%.
14. Appendix 3 shows the MFG calculation for each special school based on the proposed top up values for 2024/25. Proposed increases for each school are compliant with the MFG requirements. Note that the figures in the appendix are for modelling purposes only as the MFG calculation is based on 2023/24 pupil numbers and banding.

## **DSG Deficit Reserve & Management Plan**

15. The current forecast overspend on the School Funding reserve is £56.247m. This is currently being cash flowed by the local authority and presents a significant financial risk to the Council once the statutory override on DSG deficits is lifted at the end of the 2025/26 financial year.
16. The Council has submitted a draft Safety Valve plan to the DfE which includes proposals to bring the in year deficit to a balance position by the end of the 2028/29 financial year. The proposed high needs budget reflects year 1 of that plan and includes both investment and savings linked to the delivery of the High Needs Sustainability Plan that underpins the Safety Valve submission.

## **Proposals**

17. Schools Forum is asked to note the pressures on the high needs block for 2024/25 and the mitigating actions which reflect year 1 of the Safety Valve plan. This will form part of the decision-making matrix on the agenda for today's meeting.

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## Appendix 1

### High Needs Block - Summary of Demand and Pressures 2024/25

	£m	£m
<b>High Needs Budget 2023/24 (including drawdown from deficit reserve)</b>		<b>91.546</b>
<i>Pressures:</i>		
Existing Commitments	5.988	
Estimated further demand (unmitigated)	4.950	
Inflation on top-up values (1.4%)	0.691	
Pay and contract inflation	0.825	
<b>Total pressures</b>		<b>12.453</b>
<b>Unmitigated Forecast costs 2024/25</b>		<b><u>103.999</u></b>
HNB Allocation		<b>-73.465</b>
Schools Block Transfer		<b>-2.000</b>
<b>Total Income</b>		<b><u>-75.465</u></b>
<b>Unmitigated Gap 2024/25</b>		<b>28.535</b>

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**Appendix 2**  
**High Needs Block Budget Proposal 2024-25**

Service Area	Budget 2023/24 £m	Proposed Budget 2024/25 £m
Special School Place Funding	9.108	11.903
Resource Base (RB) Funding	2.480	2.993
Enhanced Learning Provision (ELP) Funding	1.769	2.361
<b>High Needs Block (all schools)</b>	<b>13.356</b>	<b>17.256</b>
Named Pupil Allowances (NPA)	8.215	9.859
Special School Top-Up	12.337	16.594
Resourced Base (RB) Top-Up	3.816	4.268
Enhanced Learning Provision (ELP) Top-Up	3.221	2.760
Estimate of Transitional Support (TSP) payments	1.253	1.152
Secondary Alternative Provision Funding	3.011	3.053
Non Wiltshire Pupils in Wiltshire Schools	0.000	0.000
<b>Devolved to Maintained &amp; Top Up Total</b>	<b>31.852</b>	<b>37.686</b>
Wiltshire College Places	2.318	2.618
Wiltshire Pupils in Non Wiltshire Schools	3.428	3.985
Post-16 Top-Up	7.613	8.782
Independent & Non-Maintained Special Schools	17.428	19.765
SEN Alternative Provision, Direct Payments & Elective Home Education	6.634	6.679
Education Other than at School (EOTAS)	0.519	0.519
<b>Funding for Places outside Schools</b>	<b>37.940</b>	<b>42.348</b>
High Needs in Early Years Provision	0.768	0.948
Speech & Language	0.764	0.560
AP & SEND Support Services	0.389	0.405
0-25 Inclusion & SEND Teams	3.069	3.191
Specialist Teacher Advisory Service	1.687	1.755
Other Special Education	1.721	0.325
Additional SV Proposals*	0.000	-0.836
<b>Commissioned &amp; SEN Support Services</b>	<b>8.398</b>	<b>6.348</b>
	<b>91.546</b>	<b>103.638</b>
<b>Funding</b>		
HNB	-70.852	-73.465
Block Transfer	-1.797	-2.000
Deficit Drawdown	-18.898	-28.173
	<b>-91.546</b>	<b>-103.638</b>

\* Additional investment and mitigations to be allocated across budget lines as workstream details finalised

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## Appendix 3 - Special Schools Minimum Funding Guarantee & 24/25 Rates

This working paper follows the DfE Model guidance and shows the increase between 2023-24 actual costs and the 2024-25 forecast costs which indicates whether the proposed increase to top up rates for 2024/25 is compliant with the Special School MFG which can be set in the range 0.0% to +0.5%

Table 1: MFG calculation – 23/24 to 24/25 ensuring greater than a 0.5% increase across place & top up funding

Special schools funding: 23/24 pupil numbers  
24/25 proposed rates at 23/24 pupil numbers

		Total		Total		Special School Funding Bands					
						L1	U1	L2	U2	3	4
Silverwood	Number of places	460	460								
	Number of pupils	448	448								
	Place funding @ £10,000 per pupil	£4,600,000	£4,600,000								
	Top-up funding	£4,486,232	£4,665,681	22-23 Top Up Rates	£2,502	£5,088	£6,964	£9,349	£13,727	£20,140	
	Total funding	£9,086,232	£9,265,681	23-24 Top Up Rates	£2,565	£5,215	£7,138	£9,583	£15,336	£22,502	
	MFG % difference from 2023 to 2024		2.0%	24-25 Top Up Rates	£2,668	£5,424	£7,424	£9,966	£15,950	£23,402	
Downland (excl The Hub)	Number of places	90	90								
	Number of pupils	86	86								
	Place funding	£900,000	£900,000								
	Top-up funding	£1,214,322	£1,262,895	22-23 Top Up Rates	£2,336	£4,672	£6,396	£8,528	£12,432	£18,157	
	Total funding	£2,114,322	£2,162,895	23-24 Top Up Rates	£2,538	£5,076	£6,950	£9,266	£13,507	£19,727	
	MFG % difference from 2023 to 2024		2.3%	24-25 Top Up Rates	£2,640	£5,279	£7,228	£9,637	£14,047	£20,516	
Exeter House	Number of places	177	177								
	Number of pupils	161	161								
	Place funding	£1,770,000	£1,770,000								
	Top-up funding	£2,244,039	£2,333,800	22-23 Top Up Rates	£2,301	£4,603	£6,302	£8,403	£12,249	£17,890	
	Total funding	£4,014,039	£4,103,800	23-24 Top Up Rates	£2,565	£5,215	£7,138	£9,583	£15,336	£22,502	
	MFG % difference from 2023 to 2024		2.2%	24-25 Top Up Rates	£2,668	£5,424	£7,424	£9,966	£15,950	£23,402	
Springfield	Number of places	210	210								
	Number of pupils	197	197								
	Place funding	£2,100,000	£2,100,000								
	Top-up funding	£2,252,355	£2,342,449	22-23 Top Up Rates	£2,400	£4,800	£6,850	£9,100	£12,850	£18,650	
	Total funding	£4,352,355	£4,442,449	23-24 Top Up Rates	£2,608	£5,215	£7,443	£9,887	£13,962	£20,263	
	MFG % difference from 2023 to 2024		2.1%	24-25 Top Up Rates	£2,712	£5,424	£7,741	£10,282	£14,520	£21,074	
SAIL	Number of places	75	75								
	Number of pupils	69	69								
	Place funding	£750,000	£750,000								
	Top-up funding	£767,635	£798,340	22-23 Top Up Rates	£2,400	£4,800	£6,850	£9,100	£12,850	£18,650	
	Total funding	£1,517,635	£1,548,340	23-24 Top Up Rates	£2,538	£5,076	£6,950	£9,266	£13,507	£19,727	
	MFG % difference from 2023 to 2024		2.0%	24-25 Top Up Rates	£2,640	£5,279	£7,228	£9,637	£14,047	£20,516	

Note: SAIL calculation based on full year at September 2023 place/pupil numbers. This is for the purposes of the MFG calculation

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Wiltshire Council

Schools Funding & SEN Working Group  
8 January 2024

Early Years Reference Group  
8 January 2024

Schools Forum  
18 January 2024

**DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT –EARLY YEARS BLOCK UPDATE 2024-25**  
**(INDICATIVE ALLOCATIONS)**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To update the working groups and schools forum on issues related to the early years block for 2024-25 and the decisions that will need to be made as part of the budget setting process for 2024-25.
2. The operational guidance for the early years block confirms that schools forums must be consulted on changes to local early years funding formulae, including agreeing central spend, although the final decision rests with the local authority. This is done though the Early Years reference group and the Schools Funding & SEN Working Group in addition to Schools Forum.

**Main Considerations**

3. In his 2021 Spending Review, the Chancellor announced a number of national increases to increase early years entitlements including £170 million in 2024-25.
4. Subsequently to this, the Spring budget of 2023, a largescale Childcare Expansion was launched, as detailed in the October 2023 Schools Forum report including increased funding rates and extensions to the age entitlements for parents of eligible children - national increases of £1.740m for 2024/25 financial year.
5. The provisional early years block settlement for Wiltshire for 2024-25 is £52.886 million and is comprised of the following elements:

FUNDING	PTE (unless*)	<i>2023-24 Funded Rate</i>	<b>2024-25 Funded Rate/Hr (unless *)</b>	£ million
3 & 4-year-old Universal 15 hrs & Working Parents 15 hrs	10,722	£4.87	<b>£5.47</b>	33.431
2-year-old funding - disadvantaged	727	£5.75	<b>£7.48</b>	3.101
2-year-old funding	2,171	N/A	<b>£7.48</b>	9.256
Under 2-year-old funding	1,100	N/A	<b>£10.14</b>	6.357
Disability Access Fund * ( <i>per child per annum</i> )	360	£828	<b>£910</b>	0.328
Early Years Pupil Premium * ( <i>per child per hour</i> )	1,066	£0.062	<b>£0.68</b>	0.413
<b>Total “Initial” or provisional allocation for 2024-25</b>				<b>52.886</b>

6. The allocations for the free entitlement for 3- and 4-year olds, and for 2-year olds are based on the January 2023 census and will be updated during the 2024-25 financial year for the January 2024 census. In order to follow the accounting concept of prudence, the budget must be set within initial allocations.
7. The *Early years entitlements: local authority funding operational guide 2024-25* was published in November 2023. The **key points** on local authority funding of providers remain as previous years with the following changes:

The main changes to the guidance are:

- introduction of a new national funding formula (NFF) covering both the existing 2-year-old entitlement for disadvantaged children and new working parent entitlements to be introduced in 2024 to 2025 for 2-year-olds and children aged 9 months to 2 years
- new methodology for funding allocations for the new working parent entitlements for 2-year-old children and children aged 9 months to 2 years old for 2024 to 2025
- extending the 95% pass-through requirement to the disadvantaged 2-year-old entitlement and the new working parent entitlements
- extending local funding rules to the disadvantaged 2-year-old entitlement and the new working parent entitlements
- a requirement for local authorities to have a disadvantaged 2-year-old rate that is at least equal to their rate for 2-year-old children of working parents
- new deprivation supplement arrangements for the disadvantaged 2-year-old entitlement and the new working parent entitlements
- confirming the expectation that local authorities have special educational needs inclusion funds (SENIFs) for all children with special educational needs (SEN) eligible for or taking up the new and existing entitlements, regardless of the number of hours taken
- extending eligibility for EYPP and DAF to eligible children aged 2 years old and under accessing the entitlements from 2024 to 2025, and increases to the value of both funding streams
- extending the facility to apply for a disapplication from the 95% pass through rule to the disadvantaged 2-year-old entitlement and the new working parent entitlements, and changes to the criteria against which a disapplication will be considered.

The following criteria are in place for setting a local formula

- Should consult with the early years providers and Schools Forum on the formula
- Should set a local funding rate for 2 year old entitlements – the disadvantaged rate should be at least equivalent to the working parent entitlements
- Should set a local funding rate for children aged 9 months to 2 years
- Should set a single funding rate (including the same base rate and supplements) for both entitlements for 3- and 4-year olds (that is, both the universal 15 hours, and the additional 15 hours for working parents)
- must plan to pass on at least 95% of their 9 month, 2 years and 3 and 4-year-old funding directly to providers to deliver the entitlements.
- The remaining 5% must be spent on:
  - Centrally retained funding (for central services including SEN services)
  - Transfer of funding to any of the other early years entitlements
  - Any extra hours in addition to the governments' entitlement
  - Any funding movement out of early years block
- may request that the 95% requirement be disapplied in specific, exceptional circumstances
- must now use a universal base rate for all types of provider in their local 3 and 4-year-old formula, including for Maintained Nursery Schools



- may continue to use ‘lump sums’ to distribute additional funding to Maintained Nursery Schools
  - must use a deprivation supplement in their local 3 and 4-year-old formula, and any other supplements used must fall within one of the allowable categories
  - must not channel more than 10% of their funding for 3 and 4 olds through funding supplements
  - must provide a Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF) for 3- and 4-year olds, this can also include 2-year olds.
  - must pass on Disability Access Fund (DAF) funding in full to providers for eligible 3- and 4-year olds which should be used for example, to support providers in making reasonable adjustments to their settings or helping with building capacity.
  - must pass on Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) in full to providers for eligible 3- and 4-year olds and is only payable in the universal 15 hours entitlement.
8. The DfE will monitor compliance with these requirements. Wiltshire is already compliant with the requirements of the formula, and the SEN Inclusion Fund, and there are no current circumstances where a disapplication of the 95% requirement is being recommended.
9. Local authorities are encouraged to fund providers for the entitlement for disadvantaged 2-year-olds at least equivalent to flat hourly rate for all 2 year olds. Wiltshire is compliant with this approach and proposes to pass through 100% of the 2-year-old disadvantaged funding to providers.

### **Funding Rates for Wiltshire**

10. The early years reference group (EYRG) met on 8 January 2024 and considered a number of funding options attached as Appendix 1a and b. The consensus of the group was to support the local authority recommendation (option 13.)
- passport in full the 2-year-old disadvantaged rate of £7.48 per entitled hour an increase of £1.73 on the previous year (excluding the one off, now nationally baselined supplementary grant of £1.86) and
  - to set the 2 year old working parent rate at £7.17, this is a new entitlement for 2024/25 and
  - to set the 9 months to 2 years working parent rate at £9.63, - this is a new entitlement for 2024/25.
  - to set the 3 and 4 year old rate at £5.21 per entitled hour, an increase of 53p per hour on the previous year (excluding the one off, now nationally baselined supplementary grant of £0.33
  - This provides a £0.041m contingency to absorb any increases in children throughout 2024-25 financial year. In this way, the funding increases are maximised to affordability, recognising the challenging business environment settings are operating in of increased wages, energy costs and recruitment and retention challenges.
11. Rurality and deprivation have been changed slightly in line with forecast spend for 2023-24 financial year although actual allocations for both deprivation and rurality will be unknown until March when the IDACI report is available.

<b>Wiltshire Provider Rates</b>	<b>PTE (where applicable)</b>	<b>2023-24 Wiltshire Rate</b>	<b>Proposed 2024-25 Wiltshire Rate</b>	<b>£ million</b>
3 & 4-year-old Universal 15 hrs & Working Parents 15 hrs *	10,722	£4.68 + £0.33 supplementary grant	£5.21	31.883
2-year-old funding - disadvantaged	727	£5.75 + £1.86 supplementary grant	£7.48	3.101
2-year-old funding	2,171	N/A	£7.17	8.872
Under 2-year-old funding	1,100	N/A	£9.63	6.038
Deprivation, rurality				0.250
Central EY functions				0.859
EY Inclusion Support Fund				1.143
Disability Access Fund (per child)	360	£828	£910	0.328
Early Years Pupil Premium (per hour)	1,066	£0.62	£0.68	0.413
<b>Total proposed budget for 2024-25</b>				<b>52.886</b>

### **Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF)**

12. The wider age range of children means that the investment in SENIF needs to increase. Demand for support from SENIF has increased during the 2023/24 financial year and these factors are both taken into account when preparing the 2024/25 estimate for SENIF support for children with additional needs. Within this, £0.200m is earmarked to create a preventative service to support inclusivity in the early years and primary phase.
13. As part of the preventative inclusive agenda and as part of the recovery actions for the high needs block budget, an additional sum of £0.180 million is ringfenced from the high needs block to support children with an EHCP in the early years sector.
14. The DfE guidance is clear that local authorities should target SEN Inclusion Funds at children with lower level or emerging SEN. Children with more complex needs and those in receipt of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) continue to be eligible to receive funding via the high needs block of the DSG. With a dual funded approach, applications for all children can be assessed under one ISF system.

### **Disability Access Fund**

15. This fund is extended to under 2 year olds, 2 year olds and the existing 3- and 4-year olds will remain eligible for the fund if they meet the following criteria:
- The child is in receipt of child disability living allowance and;
  - The child receives universal 15 hours entitlement
16. 4-year olds in primary school reception classes are not eligible for disability access fund (DAF) funding.
17. Settings of eligible children for the DAF will be entitled to receive a one-off payment of £910 per year. Children do not have to take up the full 570 hours of early education they are entitled to in order to receive DAF.
18. Early years providers are ultimately responsible for identifying eligible children and local authorities must check that DAF eligibility requirements are met.

19. The DAF 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.

### **Early Years Pupil Premium**

20. The premium is extended to eligible under 2 year olds, 2 years olds as well as 3 and 4 year olds. Ringfenced Funding continues to be allocated through the early years block for the early years pupil premium (EYPP). The EYPP allocation is set at £0.413 million for 2024-25 and it is proposed to set the budget in line with the funding level.

### **Compliance**

21. Please refer to Appendix 2 for the calculations of compliance with the % pass through. The recommended scenario is compliant.
22. DfE guidance showing guidance for the % pass through calculation can be found in the link to the DfE guidance below.

### **Proposals**

23. Schools Forum is asked to note the update on the early years block and provide views on the proposals in relation to the early years single funding formula and percentage pass through to providers:
- Local Authority preferred proposal:
    - i. to set the following provider rates for entitled children;
      - a. Under 2 years £9.63
      - b. 2 years £7.17
      - c. 2 years disadvantaged £7.48
      - d. 3 and 4 years (universal and working parents) £5.21
    - ii. that the central team budget be set at £0.859m
    - iii. that the SENIF budget be set at £1.142m (from the early years block)
    - iv. Deprivation and rurality increased to reflect current spending levels at £250,000
  - All other funding factors remain at current 2023-24 levels or, funded levels.
  - To note that the early years block is to fund the Early Years Inclusion Fund at the current level and the high needs block to allocate £0.180 million to increase support available in line with the SEN strategy around prevention.

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### **Documents relied upon in this report:**

[Early years entitlements: local authority funding operational guide 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115442/Early_years_entitlements_local_authority_funding_operational_guide_2024_to_2025_-_GOV.UK.pdf)

[2024 to 2025 early years national funding formulae: technical note - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115442/2024_to_2025_early_years_national_funding_formulae_technical_note_-_GOV.UK.pdf)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/656638f3750074000d1ded9a/20231127\\_Early\\_Years\\_Funding\\_Rates\\_and\\_Step-by-step\\_Calculations\\_2024\\_to\\_2025\\_Funding\\_Output\\_Tables\\_-\\_FINAL.xlsx](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/656638f3750074000d1ded9a/20231127_Early_Years_Funding_Rates_and_Step-by-step_Calculations_2024_to_2025_Funding_Output_Tables_-_FINAL.xlsx)

[Easy explainer: early years funding rates - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115442/Easy_explainer_early_years_funding_rates_-_GOV.UK.pdf)

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Wiltshire Consultation - EYRG  
Options : Wiltshire Provider Rates

Wiltshire Funded Rates	Under 2 year olds entitlement funding	2 year olds entitlement funding	2 year old disadvantaged funding	Universal & Working Parents 3&4 year old funding
	10.14	7.48	7.48	5.47

	Under 2 year olds entitlement funding	2 year olds entitlement funding	2 year old disadvantaged funding	Universal & Working Parents 3&4 year old funding	Contingency
PTE	<b>1,099.92</b>	<b>2,170.94</b>	<b>727.35</b>	<b>10,722</b>	
1	£ 9.75	£ 7.25	£ 7.48	£ 5.20	- 72,315
2	£ 9.74	£ 7.25	£ 7.48	£ 5.20	- 66,045
3	£ 9.73	£ 7.25	£ 7.48	£ 5.20	- 59,776
4	£ 9.72	£ 7.25	£ 7.48	£ 5.20	- 53,506
5	£ 9.71	£ 7.25	£ 7.48	£ 5.20	- 47,237
6	£ 9.70	£ 7.24	£ 7.48	£ 5.20	- 28,593
7	£ 9.69	£ 7.23	£ 7.48	£ 5.20	- 9,949
8	£ 9.68	£ 7.22	£ 7.48	£ 5.20	8,695
9	£ 9.67	£ 7.21	£ 7.48	£ 5.20	27,339
10	£ 9.66	£ 7.20	£ 7.48	£ 5.20	45,983
11	£ 9.65	£ 7.19	£ 7.48	£ 5.20	64,627
12	£ 9.64	£ 7.18	£ 7.48	£ 5.20	83,271
13	£ 9.63	£ 7.17	£ 7.48	£ 5.21	40,798

	Under 2 year olds	2 year olds	2 year old disadvantaged	Universal & Working Parents 3&4 year old
1	96.2%	96.9%	100.0%	95.1%
2	96.1%	96.9%	100.0%	95.1%
3	96.0%	96.9%	100.0%	95.1%
4	95.9%	96.9%	100.0%	95.1%
5	95.8%	96.9%	100.0%	95.1%
6	95.7%	96.8%	100.0%	95.1%
7	95.6%	96.7%	100.0%	95.1%
8	95.5%	96.5%	100.0%	95.1%
9	95.4%	96.4%	100.0%	95.1%
10	95.3%	96.3%	100.0%	95.1%
11	95.2%	96.1%	100.0%	95.1%
12	95.1%	96.0%	100.0%	95.1%
13	95.0%	95.9%	100.0%	95.2%

Under 2 year olds entitlement funding	2 year olds entitlement funding	2 year old disadvantaged funding	Universal & Working Parents 3&4 year old funding	Deprivation	Rurality	Early Years Commissioning, Finance Entitlement & Quality team	Inclusion Support Fund (ISF)	EY Pupil Premium	Disability Access	Contingency	DfE Allocation
6,112,805	8,971,410	3,101,129	31,780,393	200,000	50,000	858,700	1,142,737	413,046	327,600	- 72,315	52,885,506
6,106,536	8,971,410	3,101,129	31,780,393	200,000	50,000	858,700	1,142,737	413,046	327,600	- 66,045	52,885,506
6,100,266	8,971,410	3,101,129	31,780,393	200,000	50,000	858,700	1,142,737	413,046	327,600	- 59,776	52,885,506
6,093,997	8,971,410	3,101,129	31,780,393	200,000	50,000	858,700	1,142,737	413,046	327,600	- 53,506	52,885,506
6,087,727	8,971,410	3,101,129	31,780,393	200,000	50,000	858,700	1,142,737	413,046	327,600	- 47,237	52,885,506
6,081,458	8,959,035	3,101,129	31,780,393	200,000	50,000	858,700	1,142,737	413,046	327,600	- 28,593	52,885,506
6,075,188	8,946,661	3,101,129	31,780,393	200,000	50,000	858,700	1,142,737	413,046	327,600	- 9,949	52,885,506
6,068,919	8,934,286	3,101,129	31,780,393	200,000	50,000	858,700	1,142,737	413,046	327,600	8,695	52,885,506
6,062,649	8,921,912	3,101,129	31,780,393	200,000	50,000	858,700	1,142,737	413,046	327,600	27,339	52,885,506
6,056,380	8,909,538	3,101,129	31,780,393	200,000	50,000	858,700	1,142,737	413,046	327,600	45,983	52,885,506
6,050,110	8,897,163	3,101,129	31,780,393	200,000	50,000	858,700	1,142,737	413,046	327,600	64,627	52,885,506
6,043,840	8,884,789	3,101,129	31,780,393	200,000	50,000	858,700	1,142,737	413,046	327,600	83,271	52,885,506
6,037,571	8,872,415	3,101,129	31,841,509	200,000	50,000	858,700	1,142,737	413,046	327,600	40,798	52,885,506

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Dedicated schools grant: Indicative 2024 to 2025 Early years block allocation consultation EYRG

Hours per week	Weeks in Term
15	38

Appendix 1b

WILTSHIRE - FUNDING RECEIVED	Under 2 year olds entitlement funding			2 year olds entitlement funding			2 year old disadvantaged funding			Universal & Working Parents 3&4 year old funding			Total Under 2s 2, 3&4Year Old Funding
	Funded Rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Funded Rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Funded Rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Funded Rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	
23-24 LOCAL RATES	£10.14	1,099.92	6,357,318	£7.48	2,170.94	9,256,020	£7.48	727.35	3,101,129	£5.47	7,167	22,347,049	
		1,100	6,357,318		2,171	9,256,020		727	3,101,129		10,722	33,430,529	£52,144,996
23/24 rates							£5.75			£4.87			
Supplementary Grant (one off 2023/24)							£1.86			£0.33			
Est increase							-£0.13			£0.27			
% Increase							-1.71%			5.19%			
EY Pupil Premium	0.68		18.43			368.61				£678.61			£413,046
Disability Access	£910		16			74				£270.00			£327,600
<b>TOTAL OVERALL FUNDING FOR WILTSHIRE</b>													<b>£52,885,642</b>

Option 10 for consultation - Early Years Reference Group

Ambition : to mirror the funded rate for disadvantaged 2 year olds

WILTSHIRE - FUNDING for PROVIDERS	Under 2 year olds entitlement funding			2 year olds entitlement funding			2 year old disadvantaged funding			Universal & Working Parents 3&4 year old funding			Total 2, 3&4Year Old Funding
	Funded Rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Funded Rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Local Hourly rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Local Hourly rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	
23-24 RECOMMENDED LOCAL RATES	£9.66	1,099.92	6,056,380	£7.20	2,170.94	8,909,538	£7.48	727.35	3,101,129	£5.20	7,167	21,243,996	
		1,100	6,056,380		2,171	8,909,538		727	3,101,129		10,722.13	31,780,393	£49,847,440
23/24 rates							£5.75			£4.68			
Supplementary Grant (one off 2023/24)			626,954				£1.86			£0.33			
Est increase							-£0.13			£0.19			
% Increase							-1.71%			3.79%			
Contingency													£45,983
Deprivation													£200,000
Rurality													£50,000
Early Years Commissioning, Finance Entitlement & Quality team													£858,700
Inclusion Support Fund (ISF)													£1,142,737
EY Pupil Premium													£413,046
Disability Access													£327,600
<b>TOTAL OVERALL FUNDING FOR WILTSHIRE</b>													<b>£52,885,506</b>

plus £180k HNB top up

£52,885,506  
-£0

Option 11 for consultation - Early Years Reference Group

Ambition : to mirror the funded rate for disadvantaged 2 year olds

WILTSHIRE - FUNDING for PROVIDERS	Under 2 year olds entitlement			2 year olds entitlement funding			2 year old disadvantaged funding			Universal & Working Parents 3&4 year			Total 2, 3&4Year Old Funding
	Funded Rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Funded Rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Local Hourly rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Local Hourly rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	
23-24 RECOMMENDED LOCAL RATES	£9.65	1,099.92	6,050,110	£7.19	2,170.94	8,897,163	£7.48	727.35	3,101,129	£5.20	7,167.34	21,243,996	
		1,100	6,050,110		2,171	8,897,163		727	3,101,129		3,554.79	10,536,398	£49,828,796
23/24 rates							£5.75			£4.68			
Supplementary Grant (one off 2023/24)							£1.86			£0.33			
Est increase							-£0.13			£0.19			
% Increase							-1.71%			3.79%			
Contingency													£64,627
Deprivation													£200,000
Rurality													£50,000
Early Years Commissioning, Finance Entitlement & Quality team													£858,700
Inclusion Support Fund (ISF)													£1,142,737
EY Pupil Premium													£413,046
Disability Access													£327,600
<b>TOTAL OVERALL FUNDING FOR WILTSHIRE</b>													<b>£52,885,506</b>

plus £180k HNB top up

£52,885,506  
-£0

Option 12 for consultation - Early Years Reference Group

Ambition : to mirror the funded rate for disadvantaged 2 year olds

WILTSHIRE - FUNDING for PROVIDERS	Under 2 year olds entitlement			2 year olds entitlement funding			2 year old disadvantaged funding			Universal & Working Parents 3&4 year			Total 2, 3&4Year Old Funding
	Funded Rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Funded Rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Local Hourly rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Local Hourly rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	
23-24 RECOMMENDED LOCAL RATES	£9.64	1,099.92	6,043,840	£7.18	2,170.94	8,884,789	£7.48	727.35	3,101,129	£5.20	7,167.34	21,243,996	
		1,100	6,043,840		2,171	8,884,789		727	3,101,129		3,554.79	10,536,398	£49,810,152
23/24 rates							£5.75			£4.68			
Supplementary Grant (one off 2023/24)							£1.86			£0.33			
Est increase							-£0.13			£0.19			
% Increase							-1.71%			3.79%			
Contingency													£83,271
Deprivation													£200,000
Rurality													£50,000
Early Years Commissioning, Finance Entitlement & Quality team													£858,700
Inclusion Support Fund (ISF)													£1,142,737
EY Pupil Premium													£413,046
Disability Access													£327,600
<b>TOTAL OVERALL FUNDING FOR WILTSHIRE</b>													<b>£52,885,506</b>

plus £180k HNB top up

£52,885,506  
-£0

Option 13 for consultation - Early Years Reference Group

Ambition : to mirror the funded rate for disadvantaged 2 year olds

WILTSHIRE - FUNDING for PROVIDERS	Under 2 year olds entitlement			2 year olds entitlement funding			2 year old disadvantaged funding			Universal & Working Parents 3&4 year			Total 2, 3&4Year Old Funding
	Funded Rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Funded Rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Local Hourly rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Local Hourly rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	
23-24 RECOMMENDED LOCAL RATES	£9.63	1,099.92	6,037,571	£7.17	2,170.94	8,872,415	£7.48	727.35	3,101,129	£5.21	7,167.34	21,284,850	£49,852,624
		1,100	6,037,571		2,171	8,872,415		727	3,101,129		3,554.79	10,556,660	
23/24 rates							£5.75			£4.68			
Supplementary Grant (one off 2023/24)							£1.86			£0.33			
Est increase							-£0.13			£0.20			
% Increase							-1.71%			3.99%			
Contingency													£40,798
Deprivation													£200,000
Rurality													£50,000
Early Years Commissioning, Finance Entitlement & Quality team													£858,700
Inclusion Support Fund (ISF)													£1,142,737
EY Pupil Premium													£413,046
Disability Access													£327,600
<b>TOTAL OVERALL FUNDING FOR WILTSHIRE</b>													<b>£52,885,506</b>

plus £180k HNB top up

£52,885,506  
£1

Option 14 for consultation - Early Years Reference Group

Ambition : to mirror the funded rate for disadvantaged 2 year olds

WILTSHIRE - FUNDING for PROVIDERS	Under 2 year olds entitlement			2 year olds entitlement funding			2 year old disadvantaged funding			Universal & Working Parents 3&4 year			Total 2, 3&4Year Old Funding
	Funded Rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Funded Rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Local Hourly rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	Local Hourly rate	PTE	Indicative funding allocation	
23-24 RECOMMENDED LOCAL RATES		1,099.92	0		2,170.94	0		727.35	0		7,167.34	0	£0
		1,100	0		2,171	0		727	0		3,554.79	0	
23/24 rates							£5.75			£4.68			
Supplementary Grant (one off 2023/24)							£1.86			£0.33			
Est increase							-£7.61			-£5.01			
% Increase							-100.00%			-100.00%			
Contingency													£200,000
Deprivation													£50,000
Rurality													£858,700
Early Years Commissioning, Finance Entitlement & Quality team													£858,700
Inclusion Support Fund (ISF)													£1,142,737
EY Pupil Premium													£413,046
Disability Access													£327,600
<b>TOTAL OVERALL FUNDING FOR WILTSHIRE</b>													<b>£2,992,083</b>

plus £180k HNB top up

£52,885,506  
£49,893,422

Appendix 1b: Worked example of calculating the pass-through rate for the affordable scenarios 10-13 + one LIVE model for the EYRG

			5.47	10.14	7.48	7.48	
			6,111,614	626,954	1,237,436	414,590	
			3&4 Year Olds Universal & Working	Under 2s Working Parents	2 Years Working Parents	Disadvantaged 2 Year Olds	
Option 10	A	1	Anticipated budget for base rate (including funding to MNS) for relevant age group	£31,780,393	£6,056,380	£8,909,538	£3,101,129
		2	Anticipated budget for MNS lump sums for relevant age group	£0			
		3	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Deprivation (including funding to MNS)	£200,000			
		4	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Quality (including funding to MNS)	£0			
		5	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Flexibility (including funding to MNS)	£0			
		6	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Rurality (including funding to MNS)	£50,000			
		7	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: EAL (including funding to MNS)	£0			
		8	Anticipated budget for relevant age group SEN inclusion fund (top up grant element)	£400,000	£467,737	£75,000	
		9	Anticipated budget for relevant age group contingency	£45,983			£0
			Subtotal =	£32,476,376	£6,524,117	£8,984,538	£3,101,129
	B	10	DFE initial quantum allocation to local authority of MNS supplementary funding	0	0	0	0
	C	11	Planned total base rate hours for universal 15 and additional 15 hours for 3 and 4 year olds	6,245,457	675,374	1,247,853	414,589
	D	12	Equivalent average rate to providers for entitlement hours for 3 and 4 year olds = (A-B) / C = (lines 1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8+9 - 10) / (line 11)	£5.20	£9.66	£7.20	£7.48
	E	13	LA EYNFF hourly rate for 3 and 4 year olds (published alongside this document, or in DSG tables in future)	£5.47	£10.14	£7.48	£7.48
F	14	Test of meeting requirement F = (D / E) * 100 = ((line 12) / (line 13))*100	95.1%	95.3%	96.3%	100.0%	
Option 11	A	1	Anticipated budget for base rate (including funding to MNS) for relevant age group	£31,780,393	£6,050,110	£8,897,163	£3,101,129
		2	Anticipated budget for MNS lump sums for relevant age group	£0			
		3	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Deprivation (including funding to MNS)	£200,000			
		4	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Quality (including funding to MNS)	£0			
		5	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Flexibility (including funding to MNS)	£0			
		6	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Rurality (including funding to MNS)	£50,000			
		7	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: EAL (including funding to MNS)	£0			
		8	Anticipated budget for relevant age group SEN inclusion fund (top up grant element)	£450,000	£417,737	£75,000	
		9	Anticipated budget for relevant age group contingency	£64,627			£0
			Subtotal =	£32,545,020	£6,467,847	£8,972,163	£3,101,129
	B	10	DFE initial quantum allocation to local authority of MNS supplementary funding	0	0	0	0
	C	11	Planned total base rate hours for universal 15 and additional 15 hours for 3 and 4 year olds	6,258,658	670,243	1,247,867	414,589
	D	12	Equivalent average rate to providers for entitlement hours for 3 and 4 year olds = (A-B) / C = (lines 1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8+9 - 10) / (line 11)	£5.20	£9.65	£7.19	£7.48
	E	13	LA EYNFF hourly rate for 3 and 4 year olds (published alongside this document, or in DSG tables in future)	£5.47	£10.14	£7.48	£7.48
F	14	Test of meeting requirement F = (D / E) * 100 = ((line 12) / (line 13))*100	95.1%	95.2%	96.1%	100.0%	
Option 12	A	1	Anticipated budget for base rate (including funding to MNS) for relevant age group	£31,780,393	£6,043,840	£8,884,789	£3,101,129
		2	Anticipated budget for MNS lump sums for relevant age group	£0			
		3	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Deprivation (including funding to MNS)	£200,000			
		4	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Quality (including funding to MNS)	£0			
		5	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Flexibility (including funding to MNS)	£0			
		6	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Rurality (including funding to MNS)	£50,000			
		7	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: EAL (including funding to MNS)	£0			
		8	Anticipated budget for relevant age group SEN inclusion fund (top up grant element)	£450,000	£417,737	£75,000	
		9	Anticipated budget for relevant age group contingency	£83,271			£0
			Subtotal =	£32,563,664	£6,461,577	£8,959,789	£3,101,129
	B	10	DFE initial quantum allocation to local authority of MNS supplementary funding	0	0	0	0
	C	11	Planned total base rate hours for universal 15 and additional 15 hours for 3 and 4 year olds	6,262,243	670,288	1,247,881	414,589
	D	12	Equivalent average rate to providers for entitlement hours for 3 and 4 year olds = (A-B) / C = (lines 1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8+9 - 10) / (line 11)	£5.20	£9.64	£7.18	£7.48
	E	13	LA EYNFF hourly rate for 3 and 4 year olds (published alongside this document, or in DSG tables in future)	£5.47	£10.14	£7.48	£7.48
F	14	Test of meeting requirement F = (D / E) * 100 = ((line 12) / (line 13))*100	95.1%	95.1%	96.0%	100.0%	
Option 13	A	1	Anticipated budget for base rate (including funding to MNS) for relevant age group	£31,841,509	£6,037,571	£8,872,415	£3,101,129
		2	Anticipated budget for MNS lump sums for relevant age group	£0			
		3	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Deprivation (including funding to MNS)	£200,000			
		4	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Quality (including funding to MNS)	£0			
		5	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Flexibility (including funding to MNS)	£0			
		6	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Rurality (including funding to MNS)	£50,000			
		7	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: EAL (including funding to MNS)	£0			
		8	Anticipated budget for relevant age group SEN inclusion fund (top up grant element)	£450,000	£417,737	£75,000	
		9	Anticipated budget for relevant age group contingency	£40,798			£0
			Subtotal =	£32,582,307	£6,455,308	£8,947,415	£3,101,129
	B	10	DFE initial quantum allocation to local authority of MNS supplementary funding	0	0	0	0
	C	11	Planned total base rate hours for universal 15 and additional 15 hours for 3 and 4 year olds	6,253,802	670,333	1,247,896	414,589
	D	12	Equivalent average rate to providers for entitlement hours for 3 and 4 year olds = (A-B) / C = (lines 1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8+9 - 10) / (line 11)	£5.21	£9.63	£7.17	£7.48
	E	13	LA EYNFF hourly rate for 3 and 4 year olds (published alongside this document, or in DSG tables in future)	£5.47	£10.14	£7.48	£7.48
F	14	Test of meeting requirement F = (D / E) * 100 = ((line 12) / (line 13))*100	95.2%	95.0%	95.9%	100.0%	

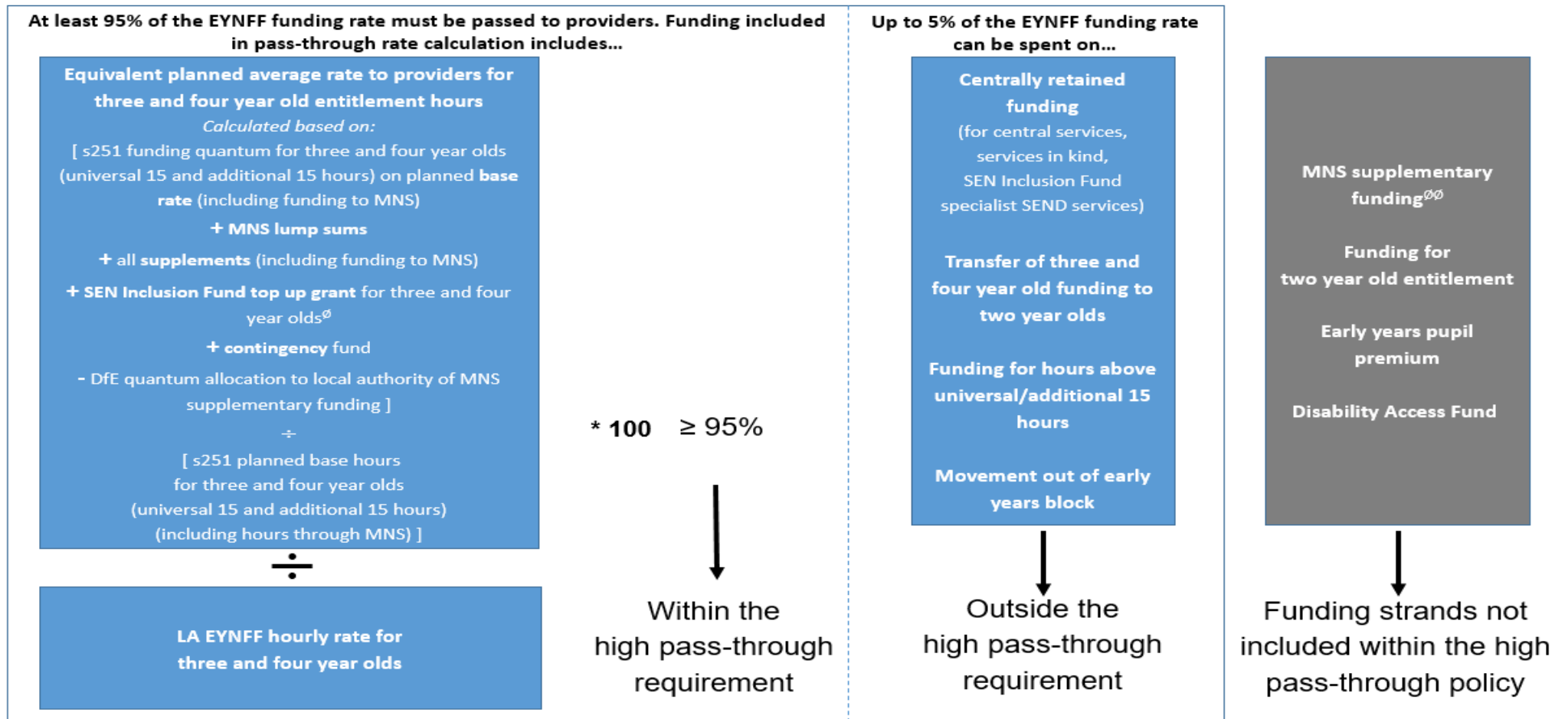
Option LIVE	A	1	Anticipated budget for base rate (including funding to MNS) for relevant age group						
		2	Anticipated budget for MNS lump sums for relevant age group	£0					
		3	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Deprivation (including funding to MNS)	£200,000					
		4	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Quality (including funding to MNS)	£0					
		5	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Flexibility (including funding to MNS)	£0					
		6	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: Rurality (including funding to MNS)	£50,000					
		7	Anticipated budget for supplements for relevant age groups: EAL (including funding to MNS)	£0					
		8	Anticipated budget for relevant age group SEN inclusion fund (top up grant element)	£450,000	£417,737	£75,000			
		9	Anticipated budget for relevant age group contingency				£0		
			Subtotal =			<b>£700,000</b>	<b>£417,737</b>	<b>£75,000</b>	<b>£0</b>
	B	10	DfE initial quantum allocation to local authority of MNS supplementary funding	0	0	0	0		
	C	11	Planned total base rate hours for universal 15 and additional 15 hours for 3 and 4 year olds	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!		
	D	12	Equivalent average rate to providers for entitlement hours for 3 and 4 year olds = (A-B) / C = (lines 1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8+9 - 10) / (line 11)						
	E	13	LA EYNFF hourly rate for 3 and 4 year olds (published alongside this document, or in DSG tables in future)	£5.47	£10.14	£7.48	£7.48		
F	14	Test of meeting requirement $F = (D / E) * 100 = ((\text{line } 12) / (\text{line } 13)) * 100$	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>			

The pass-through rate needs to be calculated for each of the funding streams and be compliant in each.

The local authority is passing on over 95% of the EYNFF hourly rate they received from central government for Under 2, 2 year olds and 3 and 4 year olds to providers, the local authority will meet the policy requirement.

**Appendix 3**

**Extract from DfE guidance: Passporting Compliance**



<sup>∅</sup> SEN Inclusion Fund must be established by combining an amount from either one or both of their early years block and high needs block.

<sup>∅∅</sup> DfE allocated MNS supplementary funding quantum to local authority. Only the MNS funding from the EYNFF allocation is considered within the pass-through rate calculation.

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## Wiltshire Council

### Schools Funding Working Group & SEN Working Group 8 January 2023

### Schools Forum 18 January 2023

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## **DEDICATED SCHOOLS BUDGET – CENTRAL SCHOOLS SERVICES BLOCK UPDATE 2023-24**

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To update schools forum on issues relating to the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) budget for 2024-25 financial year and the decisions that will need to be made as part of the budget setting process.
2. Schools Forum will recall the budget proposal was approved in principle at the December 2023 meeting and the only change since this is the actual charge for copyright licences has been received from the DfE.

### **Main Considerations**

3. As outlined in the funding settlement paper the DfE has allocated a CSSB allocation of £2.643 million for Wiltshire. This has been calculated using the national funding formula for the CSSB which applies a unit value of £38.32 to the pupil numbers from the October 2023 census. Funding for agreed historic commitments for 2024-25 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 £0.188m for historic commitments based on those commitments agreed as eligible in 2023-24 reduced by 20% of £0.047m. The DfE apply a maximum per pupil reduction in funding for ongoing responsibilities of -2.5%. Permitted gains are capped at 5.51% for 2024-25.

### **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.
7. Additional pension funding that local authorities have claimed for centrally employed teachers are now rolled into the ongoing responsibilities element of the CSSB. This funding has been added as a per-pupil amount to the relevant local authority's per-pupil rate.
8. The decisions that schools forum is 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 base and the proposed 2024-25 budget.
10. 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.
11. 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.
  - 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.
12. 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.
13. 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.
14. Assuming the proposed budget is accepted by schools forum, an amount of £0.025m unallocated CSSB is estimated to transfer to fund high needs pressures.

	23-24 Adjustments		24-25	
	Budget Estimate	& Inflation 2023/24 &	Budget Estimate	
Central Licences	457,200	53,500	510,700	DfE still in negotiations with the copyright licencing agency*
Central Provision (Former ESG)	1,297,900	115,600	1,413,500	Statutory / regulatory duties
Admissions	473,500	28,900	502,400	
Servicing of Schools Forums	3,400	300	3,700	
<b>Central Provision within Schools Budget</b>	<b>2,232,000</b>	<b>198,301</b>	<b>2,430,300</b>	
Education Services to CLA	103,000	-	103,000	No increases permitted
Child Protection in Schools & Early Years	56,200	-	56,200	No increases permitted
Prudential Borrowing	75,900	- 47,011	28,889	Elect to reduce in line with DfE reduction
<b>Historic Commitments</b>	<b>235,100</b>	<b>- 47,011</b>	<b>188,089</b>	20% year on year DfE reduction
<b>Central School Services</b>	<b>2,467,100</b>	<b>151,290</b>	<b>2,618,389</b>	
Transfer HNB	133,076	- 107,792	25,284	Balancing figure reduces in line with pressure / inflation
Reconcile to DfE Allocation	2,600,176	43,497	2,643,673	

## Proposals

1. Schools Forum is asked to note the changes in the table above and the consider the required decisions in relation to the central schools block budget for 2024-25 itemised in Appendix 2.
  - i. Section A – central copyright licences - consult only (although the DfE have confirmed they are still negotiating rates with the copyright licencing agency.)
  - ii. Section B – central functions - approve on a line-by-line basis



- iii. Section C – historic commitments - approve on a line-by-line basis
    - Including the transfer of surplus CSSB grant to support the high needs block
- 

Documents relied upon for this report

[DSG: technical note 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Central school services block national funding formula, 2024 to 2025: technical note \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://publishing.service.gov.uk)

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163.3. We have included references to the relevant schedules in the 2018 (No. 2) Regulations.

### Statutory and regulatory duties

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of children’s services and personal staff for director (Sch 2, 15a)</li> <li>• Planning for the education service as a whole (Sch 2, 15b)</li> <li>• Revenue budget preparation, preparation of information on income and expenditure relating to education, and external audit relating to education (Sch 2, 22)</li> <li>• Authorisation and monitoring of expenditure not met from schools’ budget shares (Sch 2, 15c)</li> <li>• Formulation and review of local authority schools funding formula (Sch 2, 15d)</li> <li>• Internal audit and other tasks related to the authority’s chief finance officer’s responsibilities under Section 151 of LGA 1972 except duties specifically related to maintained schools (Sch 2, 15e)</li> <li>• Consultation costs relating to non-staffing issues (Sch 2, 19)</li> <li>• Plans involving collaboration with other LA services or public or voluntary bodies (Sch 2, 15f)</li> <li>• Standing Advisory Committees for Religious Education (SACREs) (Sch 2, 17)</li> <li>• Provision of information to or at the request of the Crown other than relating specifically to maintained schools (Sch 2, 21)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Functions of LA related to best value and provision of advice to governing bodies in procuring goods and services (Sch 2, 57)</li> <li>• Budgeting and accounting functions relating to maintained schools (Sch 2, 74)</li> <li>• Authorisation and monitoring of expenditure in respect of schools which do not have delegated budgets, and related financial administration (Sch 2, 58)</li> <li>• Monitoring of compliance with requirements in relation to the scheme for financing schools and the provision of community facilities by governing bodies (Sch 2, 59)</li> <li>• Internal audit and other tasks related to the authority’s chief finance officer’s responsibilities under Section 151 of LGA 1972 for maintained schools (Sch 2, 60)</li> <li>• Functions made under Section 44 of the 2002 Act (Consistent Financial Reporting) (Sch 2, 61)</li> <li>• Investigations of employees or potential employees, with or without remuneration to work at or for schools under the direct management of the headteacher or governing body (Sch 2, 62)</li> <li>• Functions related to local government pensions and administration of teachers’ pensions in relation to staff working at maintained schools under the</li> </ul>

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
	<p>direct management of the headteacher or governing body (Sch 2, 63)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retrospective membership of pension schemes where it would not be appropriate to expect a school to meet the cost (Sch 2, 76)</li> <li>• HR duties, including: advice to schools on the management of staff, pay alterations, conditions of service and composition or organisation of staff (Sch 2, 64); determination of conditions of service for non-teaching staff (Sch 2, 65); appointment or dismissal of employee functions (Sch 2, 66)</li> <li>• Consultation costs relating to staffing (Sch 2, 67)</li> <li>• Compliance with duties under Health and Safety at Work Act (Sch 2, 68)</li> <li>• Provision of information to or at the request of the Crown relating to schools (Sch 2, 69)</li> <li>• School companies (Sch 2, 70)</li> <li>• Functions under the Equality Act 2010 (Sch 2, 71)</li> <li>• Establish and maintaining computer systems, including data storage (Sch 2, 72)</li> <li>• Appointment of governors and payment of governor expenses (Sch 2, 73)</li> </ul>

**Table 9a: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (statutory and regulatory duties)**

## Education welfare

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Functions in relation to the exclusion of pupils from schools, excluding any provision of education to excluded pupils (Sch 2, 20)</li> <li>• School attendance (Sch 2, 16)</li> <li>• Responsibilities regarding the employment of children (Sch 2, 18)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspection of attendance registers (Sch 2, 79)</li> </ul>

**Table 9b: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (education welfare)**

## Asset management

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of the LA's capital programme including preparation and review of an asset management plan, and negotiation and management of private finance transactions (Sch 2, 14a)</li> <li>• General landlord duties for all buildings owned by the local authority, including those leased to academies (Sch 2, 14b)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General landlord duties for all maintained schools (Sch 2, 77a &amp; b (section 542(2)) Education Act 1996; School Premises Regulations 2012) to ensure that school buildings have:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appropriate facilities for pupils and staff (including medical and accommodation)</li> <li>• the ability to sustain appropriate loads</li> <li>• reasonable weather resistance</li> <li>• safe escape routes</li> <li>• appropriate acoustic levels</li> <li>• lighting, heating and ventilation which meets the required standards</li> <li>• adequate water supplies and drainage</li> <li>• playing fields of the appropriate standards</li> </ul> </li> <li>• General health and safety duty as an employer for employees and</li> </ul>

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
	<p>others who may be affected (Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of the risk from asbestos in community school buildings (Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012)</li> </ul>

Table 9c: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (asset management)

### Central support services

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No functions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clothing grants (Sch 2, 53)</li> <li>• Provision of tuition in music, or on other music-related activities (Sch 2, 54)</li> <li>• Visual, creative and performing arts (Sch 2, 55)</li> <li>• Outdoor education centres (but not centres mainly for the provision of organised games, swimming or athletics) (Sch 2, 56)</li> </ul>

Table 9d: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (central support services)

### Premature retirement and redundancy

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No functions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dismissal or premature retirement when costs cannot be charged to maintained schools (Sch 2, 78)</li> </ul>

Table 9e: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (premature retirement and redundancy)

## Monitoring national curriculum assessment

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No functions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring of National Curriculum assessments (Sch 2, 75)</li> </ul>

Table 9f: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (monitoring national curriculum assessment)

## Therapies

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No functions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is now covered in the high needs section of the regulations and does not require schools forum approval</li> </ul>

Table 9g: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (therapies)

## Other ongoing duties

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Licences negotiated centrally by the Secretary of State for all publicly funded schools (Sch 2, 8); this does not require schools forum approval</li> <li>Admissions (Sch 2, 9)</li> <li>Places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils (Sch 2, 10)</li> <li>Remission of boarding fees at maintained schools and academies (Sch 2, 11)</li> <li>Servicing of schools forums (Sch 2, 12)</li> <li>Back-pay for equal pay claims (Sch 2, 13)</li> <li>Writing to parents of year 9 pupils about schools with an atypical age of admission, such as UTCs and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No functions</li> </ul>

<b>Responsibilities held for all schools</b>	<b>Responsibilities held for maintained schools only</b>
studio schools, within a reasonable travelling distance <sup>10</sup> (Sch 2, 23)	

**Table 9h: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (other ongoing duties)**

### **Historic commitments**

<b>Responsibilities held for all schools</b>	<b>Responsibilities held for maintained schools only</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital expenditure funded from revenue (Sch 2, 1)</li> <li>• Prudential borrowing costs (Sch 2, 2(a))</li> <li>• Termination of employment costs (Sch 2, 2(b))</li> <li>• Contribution to combined budgets (Sch 2, 2(c))</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No functions</li> </ul>

**Table 9i: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (historic commitments)**

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<sup>10</sup>Funding for this duty was previously delivered to local authorities via a s.31 grant. Additional funding was added to the CSSB baseline for this from 2018 to 2019.



Approval required & legislative narrative	Services covered	2023-24 Budget £M	Wiltshire Budget Proposal 2024-25 £M
<b>Section A</b> • Schools forum approval is <b>not</b> required (although they should be consulted)	• Central Copyright Licences for 2023-24 for Wiltshire as set by the DfE.*	£0.457	£0.511
<b>Section B</b> Schools forum approval is required on a <b>line-by-line</b> basis • 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	The limitation on increases to centrally held spend has been removed from the budgets for admissions Services previously funded by the retained rate of the ESG**: • Education Welfare Service	£0.221	£0.241
	• Asset Management	£0.206	£0.225
	• Statutory / Regulatory Duties	£0.743	£0.810
	• Admissions	£0.474	£0.502
	• Servicing of Schools Forum	£0.003	£0.003

\*the actual amount for copyright licences is calculated by the DfE a 12% increase on 23/24 is included as an estimate as negotiations are on going

\*\* Pay inflation for 2024/25 has been added at 4.50% and the 2023/24 base increased by 4.4% to reflect the £1,925 pay award agreed in November 2023.

Centrally Retained Teachers additional pension costs	£M	£M
Introduced in 2021-22 financial year	£0.127	£0.138

### Section C – Historic Commitments

1. 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:

- **Minutes from the schools forum prior to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013** – schools forum should have agreed the commitment prior to 2013
- **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.
- **Where budgets relate to non-staffing costs, there must be a contractual commitment** (such as a PFI agreement or lease agreement) which extends into the relevant financial year.
- **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.

2. 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 2024-25 are as per the table overleaf. The reduction has been taken from the contribution to CERA in order that vulnerable pupils funding is prioritised. It should be noted that this will no longer be possible in future years due to the 20% year on year reduction in the historic commitments allocation

3. The overall total is within the £0.188m allocated for historic commitments.

4. 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	2023-24 Budget £M	Wiltshire Budget Proposal 2023-24 £M
<b>Section C</b> <b>Historic Commitments:</b> Schools forum approval is required on a <b>line-by-line</b> basis. The budget cannot exceed the value agreed in the previous funding period and no new commitments can be entered into  • 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	<b>Funding for LAC Personal Education Plans</b> - 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 and so this funding was reduced to £103,000 in 2018/19 – no change is requested by the Virtual School.	£0.103	£0.103 <i>meets definition and evidence is available</i>
	<b>Child Protection in Schools Adviser</b> - 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.	£0.056	£0.056 <i>Meets definition and evidence is available</i>
	<b>Prudential Borrowing</b> Schools forum decision to support approx. £3m capital financing for 13-year period	£0.133	£0.029 <i>meets definition and evidence is available</i>
<b>Total</b>		<b>£0.292</b>	<b>£0.188</b>
Balance unallocated and available to transfer to the HNB		£0.133	£0.025

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Schools Forum**

**18 January 2024**

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## **Safety Valve Agreement Update**

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### **Executive Summary**

Safety Valve is a Department for Education (DfE) programme that supports Councils who have a very high deficit in the High Need Block (HNB) of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). In Wiltshire the cumulative deficit has grown from £2.1m in 2018/19 to £35.2m in 2022/23 and it is forecast to continue growing.

This deficit has been held in a negative reserve on the council's balance sheet while a statutory override is in place to shield the rest of the Council's general fund from this deficit. However, the statutory override is due to end in 2026.

Safety Valve offers councils additional funds from the DfE to help with their historic deficits, so long as the Department is satisfied that the council can return their DSG to a balanced position over the period of the deal.

In addition, there is the opportunity to bring additional capital investment into the county to address some of the capacity issues that have historically been present.

In December 2023, Cabinet agreed a strategic approach to DSG sustainability that could form the basis of negotiation with the Department for Education (DfE). This paper was presented with endorsement from Wiltshire Schools Forum, who considered the plan on 5 December, Children's Select Committee and a representational board including members from B&NES Swindon and Wiltshire (BSW) Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (WPCC).

Cabinet agreed to submit a draft version of the plan to government and, following comment and challenge from the DfE, for the plan to be amended and resubmitted on 12 January 2024.

Feedback from the DfE on the draft submission was positive with the strategic approach and strong commitment to co-design were singled out for praise, especially given the short timeline.

While the plan is substantively the same, some changes have been made to reflect comments received and new information:

- The unmitigated pupil number forecast has been updated to include the children and young people currently awaiting assessment.

- The financial forecast has been updated to reflect the settlement and updated 23/24 position. These changes have been rippled through the future years.
- Milestones have been added to give more assurance that the plan is deliverable and then, following advice from the DfE, some of these milestones have been brought forward so the impact is felt more quickly.
- The narrative has undergone minor amendments to reflect comments received during the drafting process and to clarify terminology where needed.

It should also be noted that since the draft submission in December, a Disapplication request has been submitted to the Secretary of State for a block transfer above 0.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. This is for 0.55% in 2024/25, and is considered by Schools Forum elsewhere on this agenda.

The capital request to support this plan was also submitted on 5 January 2024. This bid to expand special schools places in the south of the county and will directly contribute towards delivery of Workstream 2.

The plan was submitted in its final form on 12 January and will now go forward to the Secretary of State for approval. It is expected that, given the positive feedback from the DfE advisors, approval will be given and the government will send a deal for review and signature before April 2024.

Given the ambitious approach that the plan requires, the Programme Team will begin delivery of the plan immediately to ensure key conversations are already happening before April 2024.

### **Proposal(s)**

That Schools Forum note:

1. The updates to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Management Plan and the SEND Sustainability plan.
2. The submission of these documents to the Department for Education (DfE) on 12 January 2024.
3. The continued progress to reduce and remove the financial risk that the deficit in the High Needs Block (HNB) represents.

### **Reason for Proposal(s)**

This update ensures that Schools Forum are kept apprised of the changes to the plan.

## **Safety Valve Agreement Update**

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### **Purpose of Report**

1. To update on the draft Safety Valve plan and highlight the changes that were made, in response to Department for Education feedback, in advance of 12 January submission. This version will now go forward for Secretary of State approval and to form the basis of a Safety Valve Deal for Wiltshire.

### **Background**

2. Since 2018/19 the High Needs Block has been under increasing pressure. This growth in expenditure has been seen in every council in England, and Wiltshire is no exception. Nationally the cumulative local authority High Needs budget deficit is estimated to be around £2.3bn and is increasing daily. The latest estimates conclude that the cumulative local authority High Needs budget deficit across England will be around £3.6bn by March 2025 (*Source f40 campaign, summer 2023*).
3. In Wiltshire from 2018/19 to 2022/23, this equated to a 51% growth in the number of children supported by an EHCP, and a 46% growth in the amount of money being spent from the High Needs Block. Over the same period, the money received into the High Needs Block from government grew by 36%.
4. While High Needs Block income has not kept pace with the growth in demand, there are also changes that councils can make to respond to the changing strategic context.
5. This problem has received some attention over recent years, and this is reflected in the introduction by government of a statutory override. This override allows councils to hold their DSG deficit as a negative reserve on their balance sheet, walled off from the rest of the council's finances. This statutory override, however, is due to expire 31 March 2026 and at that point, councils will be expected to hold sufficient reserves to cover the remaining deficit.
6. The Wiltshire Council DSG deficit forecast suggests that, by April 2026, the cumulative unmitigated deficit could be £117.0m while the current forecast total general fund and earmarked reserves are £90m.
7. The invitation to join Safety Valve was received in August 2023 and an initial meeting with the Department for Education was held in early October 2023. The plan was submitted in draft form on 15 December 2023, it was then amended and resubmitted on 12 January 2024. If a deal can be successfully negotiated, and receives Secretary of State approval, the implementation phase begins in April 2024.

## Main Considerations

8. Since the submission of the draft High Needs Block Sustainability Plan, it has been amended in the light of comments from the Department for Education (DfE) and from other stakeholders.
9. The pupil number forecast has been updated to include the children and young people currently awaiting assessment. Built into this is the assumption that the assessment backlog can be cleared within two years. This update does not change the end position, which was based on the percentage of school cohort expected to have an EHCP, but it does bring through a bulge of pupils in the 2024/25 and 2025/26 years.
10. The financial forecast has been updated to reflect the settlement and the updated 23/24 position. This means that the financial forecast better reflects the starting point of the plan, and the Q3 monitoring. These changes have been rippled through the future years to provide a better financial forecast.
11. Milestones have been added to the plan to give more assurance that it is deliverable. These milestones have been developed and now form the basis of the delivery plan. Following advice from the DfE, some of these milestones have been brought forward so the benefit is realised more quickly, this is especially important for some of the early help projects.
12. The narrative within the plan has undergone minor amendments to reflect comments received during the drafting process and to clarify terminology where needed.
13. A request to the Secretary of State has been submitted for a block transfer above 0.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. For 2024/25 this figure is 0.55% and detail is included in the Schools Block Update paper elsewhere on this agenda.
14. It should be noted that the High Needs Block sustainability plan requires a 1% block transfer beyond 2024/25 and this has not been yet agreed by Schools Forum. This decision will be subject to a vote by Schools Forum for each financial year, and a further request to the Secretary of State.
15. The capital request to support this plan was also submitted on 5 January 2024. This bid is for funding to expand special schools places in the south of the county and will directly contribute towards delivery of Workstream 2.
16. The DfE did raise concerns about the resource required to clear the backlog of children and young people awaiting assessment. This work is undertaken by the Statutory SEND team, which is not funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant. Additional resource has been identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), however monitoring needs to be in place to ensure this is sufficient.
17. Similarly, the DfE sought assurance that, given how ambitious and front loaded the HNB Sustainability Plan is, the Council had sufficient resource allocated to programme delivery. Funding has been identified through the Transformation Reserve to support the first year of this plan but Council will need to consider if further resource is required.

18. Finally, the final deficit figure has risen in this latest version of the plan. The contribution from the DfE has not yet been agreed but it is a fixed figure so this rise increases the Local Authority contribution to paying off the deficit. The previously reported range of £70-90m still reflects the expected position.

### **Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken**

19. If the decision to enter a Safety Valve agreement is not taken then the full financial risk of the DSG deficit remains on the balance sheet of the council. There is a risk that, if the statutory override ends as anticipated in April 2026, the entire deficit becomes the councils to manage. The unmitigated deficit is forecast to be £117.0m by that point. It is not thought that the council could effectively manage this risk without the support of a Safety Valve Deal.

### **Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks**

20. If the decision is taken to enter into a Safety Valve Deal, the council will be responsible for delivering that deal. There is a risk that if the council falls behind on the deal that further work will have to be undertaken to bring the plan back in line, this may include further investments to ensure delivery. To mitigate this risk, there is a robust process of monitoring in place, with clear measures regularly reported on.

21. There is a risk that the council will see an increase in legal challenge and tribunals arising from the SEND decision making process. This risk is being mitigated through the plan, by ensuring the council is confident in the support being provided to children with SEND, by ensuring that the council has efficient and well defined processes in place. Additionally, the plan is being co-designed with parent carers, schools, early years settings and colleges to create shared ownership and buy-in.

### **Financial Implications**

22. The proposed plan has been updated to reflect the DSG funding settlement announced in December, the current DSG forecast for 2023/24 and the changes required to reflect the children and young people currently awaiting assessment.

23. The updated plan includes mitigations of £83.0m to be delivered over 5 years across the 5 workstreams. This is the net impact after the required investment to deliver increases in support and early intervention, and to cover the revenue costs of additional specialist places across Wiltshire schools.

24. The plan includes capital investment in the delivery of new special school and resource bases across Wiltshire. This includes current plans funded by High Needs Places Capital Allocation (HNPCA) grant and council contributions and incorporates funding already agreed by the DfE to support the development of a new 130 place special free school for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.

25. In order to deliver the required place sufficiency across the period of the plan a bid to the additional HNPCA grant made available to councils on the Safety Valve programme has been made in order to accelerate the delivery of additional special school capacity.

26. The profile of the mitigated deficit is summarised as follows:

Provision Type	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000
Plan Year	1	2	3	4	5	
Mainstream Provision	22,875	24,019	25,254	20,379	16,112	11,896
Resourced Provision	4,249	5,353	6,295	6,390	6,169	6,325
Special Schools	27,026	32,364	34,952	37,110	38,325	40,229
Independent and Non-maintained Special School Provision	20,207	19,705	19,024	15,110	6,100	4,143
Post 16 Provision	10,881	11,491	11,958	12,107	12,044	12,506
Alternative Provision	10,198	9,464	8,912	8,808	8,623	9,708
Therapies	560	560	773	782	792	801
Other High Needs Block expenditure	1,103	786	810	834	859	885
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>97,098</b>	<b>103,744</b>	<b>107,977</b>	<b>101,520</b>	<b>89,024</b>	<b>86,494</b>
High Needs Block	-70,798	-73,465	-75,669	-77,939	-80,277	-82,685
Block Transfers	-1,797	-2,000	-3,754	-3,867	-3,983	-4,102
<b>In Year Surplus (-)/Deficit(+)</b>	<b>24,504</b>	<b>28,280</b>	<b>28,555</b>	<b>19,715</b>	<b>4,765</b>	<b>-293</b>
Surplus/Deficit from other DSG Blocks	-3,470	0				
Surplus/Deficit Brought Forward from Previous years	35,214	56,247	84,527	113,081	132,796	137,561
<b>Total Deficit Balance</b>	<b>56,247</b>	<b>84,527</b>	<b>113,081</b>	<b>132,796</b>	<b>137,561</b>	<b>137,267</b>

27. The decision to enter the Safety Valve deal will crystallise the requirement of a contribution from the council's resources which will in effect be the balance of the cumulative deficit set out in the plan less any contribution from the DfE.
28. The council will be taking an approach of maximising all opportunities to set money aside in a specific earmarked reserve to fund the contribution required. If sufficient funds are not set aside by the end of the plan period (April 2029) then the council will need to capitalise the residual balance.
- Conclusions**
29. If the council is to continue to deliver on its statutory duty to children and young people with SEND then we must make changes to the way the SEND system in Wiltshire operates.
30. These changes would need to be made anyway to stop the growing deficit, improve outcomes for children and young people, and to reflect the changing strategic context in which the system finds itself. Despite the challenges in delivering this plan, and the increased financial impact of the forecast deficit, this still represents a good way to manage the risk.
31. Safety Valve offers an opportunity to undertake those changes, leveraging additional investment from the Department for Education that will allow such changes to be made more quickly than would otherwise be possible, and to significantly reduce our historic deficit.
32. Schools Forum is asked to note the changes to the draft plan, and to note submission of the amended plan which took place on 12 January. This will now go to the Secretary of State for approval.
33. Further updates will come to future Schools Forum meetings as officers pull together implementation plans and this should be a standing item on the Schools Forum agenda.



**Lead Director:**

**Helean Hughes & Richard Hanks, Director for Education and Skills**

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08/01/2024

**Appendices –**

Appendix 1 – DSG Management Plan summary tables

**Background Papers**

None

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**Unmitigated Position**

Provision Type	Unmitigated Forecast					
	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000
Plan Year	1	2	3	4	5	
Mainstream Provision	23,261	24,093	24,981	24,487	25,059	26,045
Resourced Provision (places)	4,249	5,059	5,408	5,408	5,408	5,408
Special Schools	27,633	29,799	26,071	26,989	27,922	28,918
Independent and Non-maintained Special School Provision	23,929	22,312	25,323	29,228	33,734	38,936
Post 16 Provision	10,881	11,491	12,494	13,180	13,902	14,651
Alternative Provision	10,198	9,831	9,796	10,022	10,240	10,449
Therapies	560	560	569	578	588	597
Other High Needs Block expenditure	786	786	826	867	910	956
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>101,498</b>	<b>103,932</b>	<b>105,468</b>	<b>110,759</b>	<b>117,763</b>	<b>125,960</b>
High Needs Block	-70,798	-73,465	-75,669	-77,939	-80,277	-82,685
Block Transfer	-1,797	-2,000	-1,877	-1,933	-1,991	-2,051
<b>In Year Surplus (-)/Deficit(+)</b>	<b>28,903</b>	<b>28,468</b>	<b>27,923</b>	<b>30,887</b>	<b>35,495</b>	<b>41,224</b>
Surplus/Deficit from other DSG Blocks	-3,470	0				
Surplus/Deficit Brought Forward from Previous years	35,214	60,647	89,114	117,037	147,924	183,419
<b>Total Deficit Balance</b>	<b>60,647</b>	<b>89,114</b>	<b>117,037</b>	<b>147,924</b>	<b>183,419</b>	<b>224,643</b>

**Mitigated Position**

Provision Type	Mitigated Forecast					
	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000
Plan Year	1	2	3	4	5	
Mainstream Provision	22,875	24,019	25,254	20,379	16,112	11,896
Resourced Provision	4,249	5,353	6,295	6,390	6,169	6,325
Special Schools	27,026	32,364	34,952	37,110	38,325	40,229
Independent and Non-maintained Special School Provision	20,207	19,705	19,024	15,110	6,100	4,143
Post 16 Provision	10,881	11,491	11,958	12,107	12,044	12,506
Alternative Provision	10,198	9,464	8,912	8,808	8,623	9,708
Therapies	560	560	773	782	792	801
Other High Needs Block expenditure	1,103	786	810	834	859	885
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>97,098</b>	<b>103,744</b>	<b>107,977</b>	<b>101,520</b>	<b>89,024</b>	<b>86,494</b>
High Needs Block	-70,798	-73,465	-75,669	-77,939	-80,277	-82,685
Block Transfers	-1,797	-2,000	-3,754	-3,867	-3,983	-4,102
<b>In Year Surplus (-)/Deficit(+)</b>	<b>24,504</b>	<b>28,280</b>	<b>28,555</b>	<b>19,715</b>	<b>4,765</b>	<b>-293</b>
Surplus/Deficit from other DSG Blocks	-3,470	0				
Surplus/Deficit Brought Forward from Previous years	35,214	56,247	84,527	113,081	132,796	137,561
<b>Total Deficit Balance</b>	<b>56,247</b>	<b>84,527</b>	<b>113,081</b>	<b>132,796</b>	<b>137,561</b>	<b>137,267</b>
% of DSG	11.9%	17.3%	22.3%	25.1%	24.9%	23.8%

**Mitigations**

Provision Type	Impact					
	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000
Workstream 1 - Improving support pre-EHCP		-770	-757	-4,765	-9,130	-14,108
Workstream 2 - Preventing escalation	-4,399	1,561	5,242	-1,434	-14,943	-19,381
Workstream 3 - improve VFM	0	-979	-1,256	-1,539	-1,807	-2,177
Workstream 4 - Preparation for Adulthood		0	-536	-1,072	-1,859	-2,145
Workstream 5 - Systems and Processes		0	-184	-429	-1,001	-1,655
Schools Block Transfer	0	0	-1,877	-1,933	-1,991	-2,051
<b>Total Saving due to Mitigation</b>	<b>-4,399</b>	<b>-188</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>-11,172</b>	<b>-30,731</b>	<b>-41,517</b>

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
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