**Schools Forum Agenda**

Wednesday 11th January 2023, **Microsoft Teams Meeting**

8.20am for an **8.30am start**; finish by **10.15am**.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Author | Voting / Relevance | Page |
| 1 | Apologies for Absence (and substitute notices) | Chair |  | 2 |

**Decision Papers**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2 | Falling Rolls Fund | Yannick Stupples-Whyley | All schools | 3 |
| 3 | DSG Budget 2023/24 | Yannick Stupples-Whyley | All schools | 9 |

**Forum Business**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 4 | Any other business, feedback from schools through Associations and from Schools Forum representatives on other Bodies | Chair | All schools | 28 |
| 5 | Minutes of 30th November 2022 | Chair | All schools | 32 |
| 6 | Minutes Action Log | Chair | All schools | 50 |

**Information Papers for Discussion**

|  |  |  |  |  |
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| 7 | Third Quarter Budget Update 2022/23 | Yannick Stupples-Whyley | All schools | 51 |
| 8 | Forward Plan | Yannick Stupples-Whyley | All schools | 56 |

**Closing Comments**

|  |  |  |  |  |
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| 9 | Closing Comments | Chair |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Schools Forum | **Agenda Item 1** |
| Date: 11 January 2023 |  |

Apologies for Absence

Please remember to mute your microphone when you are not speaking.

Anyone attending Schools Forum as an observer must stay silent throughout the meeting.

The professional headteacher representatives for EPHA, ASHE or ESSET are observers unless they are substituting for a headteacher or governor who cannot attend. Whilst observing they can only ask a question via a Forum member.

To ask a question or to comment on a paper please use the raise hand function. If you cannot use this function, please use the meeting chat.

The meeting chat will also be used for voting purposes. Please type:

* + Yes, if you agree the recommendation,
  + No, if you do not agree the recommendation
  + Abstain, if you do not wish to vote

The agenda and papers will not be shared on screen.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Schools Forum | **Agenda Item 2** |
| Date: 11 January 2023 |  |

**REPORT TITLE: FALLING ROLLS FUND**

Report by Yannick Stupples-Whyley

Contact details: Telephone (03330 138464); e-mail: yannick.stupples-whyley@essex.gov.uk

**1. Purpose of report**

1.1 To propose to Schools Forum to change the criteria within the Falling Rolls Fund and to establish a falling rolls fund budget for primary schools for 2023/24.

**2. Recommendations**

2.1 To agree the recommendation of the Finance Review Group to amend the falling rolls criteria at 4.8.

2.2 To agree an additional criteria is added to exclude schools with a bulge class qualifying for the falling rolls fund when the bulge year exits the school at 4.9

2.3 To agree the variation to the growth criteria to reflect the primary sector at 4.10.

2.4 To agree the proposed changes to the funding methodology to fund the difference between the published admission number and the number on roll for reception, year 3 and year 7 at 4.11.

2.5 To agree to set a falling rolls budget for primary schools of **£466,000** for 2023/24 at 5.3.

###### 3. Relevant Schools Forum Power and Responsibility

3.1 **Table 1** is an extract from the Schools Forum Operational and Good Practice Guide (September 2018), which sets out the role of the Authority, Schools Forum and the Secretary of State in setting the Schools Budget.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Function | Local authority | Schools forum | DfE role |
| Central spend on and the criteria for allocating funding from:   * funding for good or outstanding schools with [falling rolls](#_Falling_rolls_fund) where growth in pupil numbers is expected within three years | Proposes | Decides | Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal |

###### 4. Background

4.1 The current criteria that schools need to meet to be eligible for the falling rolls fund are:

* The school must have been judged as good or outstanding by OFSTED (mandatory)
* The school must have had a falling roll for a minimum of 2 years based on the October Census;
* The number on roll (NOR) must have fallen by 10% in both previous years;
* The forecast pupil data must show the school is expected to have an increase in pupil numbers by the end of 3 years and should continue to grow in years 4 and 5.
* Pupil numbers will be compared with the Authority’s pupil forecast

4.2 Although the DfE has consulted on removing the first criteria, it remains mandatory until they announce the results of the consultation.

4.3 To date only two secondary schools have met the eligibility criteria. Four primary schools have met the third criteria but did not apply for funding.

4.4 In reviewing our falling rolls criteria against other local authorities, the third criteria of the number on roll must have fallen by 10% for two consecutive years is higher than the criteria of other local authorities.

4.5 Twenty three local authorities operate a falling rolls fund and Table 2 shows the details that can be found on the following local authority websites.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Authority | Criteria |
| Birmingham | Surplus capacity exceeds 15% and NOR is 5% or more lower than the previous October. School must not have a surplus balance of greater than 5%. |
| London Borough of Bromley | Surplus capacity exceeds 20%. |
| Calderdale | Fewer than 420 pupils, 10% or more over 2 years. Balances must be lower than £60,000 and schools that have a bulge class exiting the NOR will not be eligible |
| Hampshire | 5% or more over 2 consecutive years. |
| London Borough of Havering | NOR is less than 85% of PAN for the first two year groups. |
| London Borough of Islington | Vacant capacity is a minimum 15% of PAN and the NOR is at least 5% lower than the previous October. |
| London Borough of Kensington & Chelsea | NOR is at least 5% lower than the previous October |
| Kent | Primary <420 pupils and average class size <25  Secondary <550 pupils for schools that usually have more than 550 pupils |
| North Yorkshire | Primary >5% or >5 pupils  Secondary >5%  At least 60% of pupils are from the catchment area |
| London Borough of Redbridge | NOR < 80% of PAN |
| Sheffield | Schools <3FE at least 10% lower than previous October  Schools <1.5FE at least 5% lower. |
| City of Westminster | At least 5% reduction from previous October. Paid at 80% basic entitlement. |
| Wirral | NOR is <80% of PAN. Schools fund the first 6.5% reduction. |

4.6 It can be seen that only Hampshire has a requirement of two consecutive reductions but at 5% or greater. Where 10% is used by Calderdale it is over two years rather than our two consecutive years requirement. Essex therefore has the highest percentage reduction criteria.

4.7 There are a number of primary schools, particularly those with 210 pupils or less, who have temporary falling rolls that do not meet the consecutive 10% reductions. For these schools any reduction in pupils is significant and the only action these schools can take is to reduce staffing which will impact on standards. The purpose of the falling rolls fund is to help schools retain the staffing structure for when the roll increases. This prevents schools from needing to make redundancies.

4.8 The Authority therefore proposes to amend the criteria for measuring falling rolls. It is proposed to change the criteria that the number on roll must have fallen by 10% in both previous years to:

* The NOR must have fallen by 4% in both previous years for primary schools with 210 or fewer pupils; or
* The NOR must have fallen by 7% in both previous years for primary schools with greater than 211 pupils up to 420 pupils; or
* The NOR must have fallen by 10% in both previous years for primary schools with more than 420 pupils and secondary schools.

4.9 It is also proposed to introduce a further criteria that schools that have a bulge class do not qualify for falling rolls funding when the bulge year leaves the school.

4.10 The increase criteria that the NOR must increase in year 3 and continue to increase in years 4 and 5 was agreed when the first school applying for the fund was a secondary school and needs to be adapted for the primary sector as follows:

* For infant schools the NOR must be forecast to increase in the third year;
* For junior schools the NOR must be forecast to increase in the third and fourth year
* For primary and secondary schools, the NOR must be forecast to increase in the third, fourth and fifth years.

4.11 To minimise the cost of the falling rolls fund in the current financial climate it is proposed to change the funding methodology. Instead of funding all vacant places across all year groups, it is proposed to align funding with the falling roll. The criteria require schools to have two consecutive years of falling rolls and therefore it is proposed to fund primary and secondary schools as follows:

* Primary schools will be funded for the difference between their reception published admission number (PAN) and the NOR admitted into reception for the current and previous October census.
* Secondary schools will be funded for the difference between their Year 7 PAN and the NOR admitted into Year 7 for the current and previous October census.

4.12 Table 3 shows an example of how this would work for a primary school with a PAN of 40 for reception.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | October 2022 | October 2021 | Total Pupils Funded |
| Reception PAN | 40 | 40 | - |
| Reception NOR | 25 | 27 | - |
| Pupils Funded | 15 | 13 | 28 |

4.13 For Junior schools the funding will be based on Year 3 and for secondary schools will be based on Year 7.

4.14 For each year a school is within the funding rolls fund a further year group will be added and schools will be funded the difference between PAN and NOR for the relevant year group. Table 4 shows an example based on table 3.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Oct 21 | Oct 22 | Oct 23 | Oct 24 | Oct 25 | Oct 26 | Total Pupils Funded |
| 2023/24 | 15 | 13 | - | - | - | - | 28 |
| 2024/25 | 15 | 13 | 10 | - | - | - | 38 |
| 2025/26 | 15 | 13 | 10 | 11 | - | - | 49 |
| 2026/27 | 15 | 13 | 10 | 11 | 11 | - | 60 |
| 2027/28 | 15 | 13 | 10 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 70 |

4.15 The maximum number of years a school can be in the falling rolls fund is as follows:

* Infant – 3 years
* Junior – 4 years
* Secondary – 5 years
* Primary – 7 years

**5. Financial Implications**

5.1 There are 17 primary schools that meet the proposed criteria at 4.8, but of these schools there are 3 that do not meet the Ofsted requirement and 1 that is reducing its PAN from September 2023. Therefore 13 schools are eligible for funding, based on the falling rolls and Ofsted criteria. To be fully eligible for funding schools must meet the requirement for the roll to increase in the third and consecutive years.

5.2 No secondary schools currently meet the falling rolls criteria.

5.3 The estimated cost of the falling rolls fund is **£932,000** however it is not expected that all schools will meet the criteria that the NOR increases. The Finance Review Group recommends to set a budget of **£466,000**, noting that if there is a shortfall in funding in 2023/24 there will be a retrospect top-slice in 2024/25.

5.4 It is proposed to fund the **£466,000** from the growth fund allocation as it will be seen in Agenda Item 3 there is sufficient funding and this will therefore not require a top-slice from primary schools.

**6. Other Resource Implications**

**7. Consultation with stakeholders**

**8. Background / Supporting papers.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Schools Forum | **Agenda Item 3** |
| Date: 11 January 2023 |  |

**REPORT TITLE: DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT BUDGET 2023/24**

Report by Yannick Stupples-Whyley

Contact details: Telephone (03330138464); e-mail: yannick.stupples-whyley@essex.gov.uk

**1. Purpose of report**

1.1 To update Schools Forum of the updated School Funding Settlement.

1.2 To update Schools Forum of the assumptions built into the budget.

1.3 To seek School’s Forum agreement of the relevant elements of the Dedicated Schools Grant budget for 2023/24.

**2. Recommendations**

2.1 To note the School Funding Settlement for 2023/24, including the allocation for each DSG Block at 4.5;

2.2 To note the funding for the PFI Affordability Gap at 8.1;

2.3 To note the total delegation for primary and secondary schools at 9.3;

2.4 To note the proposed allocation of the High Needs Block at 12.1;

2.5 To note the risks and opportunities at 13.1;

2.6 To agree the funding for the Growth Fund at 5.9;

2.7 To agree the funding for the Falling Rolls Fund at 7.3;

2.8 To agree the funding rates for early years providers at 9.8; and

2.9 To agree the central expenditure for the Central School Services Block and Early Years Block at 11.1.

###### 3. Relevant Schools Forum Power and Responsibility

3.1 **Table 1** is an extract from the Schools Forum Operational and Good Practice Guide (September 2018), which sets out the role of the Authority, Schools Forum and the Secretary of State in setting the Schools Budget.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Function | Local authority | Schools forum | DfE role |
| Formula change (including redistributions) | Proposes and decides | Must be consulted | Checks for compliance with regulations |
| Movement of up to 0.5% from the schools block to other blocks | Proposes | Decides | Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal |
| Minimum funding guarantee (MFG) | Proposes any exclusions from MFG for application to DfE | Gives a view | Approval to application for exclusions |
| De-delegation for mainstream maintained schools for:   * contingencies * administration of free school meals * insurance * licences/subscriptions * staff costs – supply cover * support for minority ethnic * pupils/underachieving groups * behaviour support services * library and museum services * School improvement | Proposes | Maintained primary and secondary school member representatives will decide for their phase. Middle schools are treated according to their deemed status | Will adjudicate where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal |
| General Duties for maintained schools   * Contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for maintained schools | Proposes | Would be decided by the relevant maintained school members (primary, secondary, special and PRU). | Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal |
| Central spend on and the criteria for allocating funding from:   * funding for significant pre-16 [pupil growth](#_Growth_Fund), including new schools set up to meet basic need, whether maintained or academy * funding for good or outstanding schools with [falling rolls](#_Falling_rolls_fund) where growth in pupil numbers is expected within three years | Proposes | Decides | Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal |
| Central spend on:   * early years block provision funding to enable all schools to meet the infant class size requirement * admissions * servicing of schools forum * Contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for all schools | Proposes | Decides | Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal |
| Central spend on:   * 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 | Proposes up to the value committed in the previous financial year and where expenditure has already been committed. | Decides for each line | Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal |
| Central spend on:   * high needs block provision * central licences negotiated by the Secretary of State | Decides | None, but good practice to inform forum | None |

###### 4. School Funding Settlement 2023/24

4.1 The School Funding Settlement was announced on 16 December 2022.

4.2 The total increase in funding is **£3.5 billion** incorporating **£1.5 billion** from the 2021 Spending Review and **£2 billion** from the Autumn Statement.

4.3 The **£1.5 billion** is allocated between the Schools Block **£930 million** and the High Needs Block **£570 million**. Both allocations are allocated to local authorities through the Schools NFF and High Needs NFF.

4.4 The **£2 billion** from the Autumn Statement is allocated between mainstream schools **£1.6 billion** and the High Needs Block **£400 million**. The funding for mainstream schools will be paid through a separate Mainstream Schools Additional Grant.

4.5 Table 2 shows the funding settlement for each block. It can be seen the increase in the settlement from 2022/23 is an increase of **£100.2 million (**7.3%).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Schools Block  £m | Central School Services Block  £m | High Needs Block  £m | Early Years Block  £m | Total  £m |
| 2022/23 | 1,026.0 | 11.3 | 203.3 | 92.3 | 1,332.9 |
| Supplementary Grant | 30.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 30.3 |
| Rebased 2022/23 | **1,056.4** | **11.3** | **203.3** | **92.3** | **1,363.3** |
| *Provisional 2023/24* | *1,077.2* | *11.3* | *215.7* | *92.3* | *1,396.6* |
| December Settlement | **1,090.6** | **11.4** | **226.7** | **97.5** | **1,426.3** |
| Increase from 2022/23 | 34.2 | 0.2 | 23.4 | 5.2 | 63.1 |
| % Increase from 2022/23 | 3.2% | 1.5% | 11.5% | 5.6% | 4.6% |
| Mainstream Schools Additional Grant (MSAG) | 37.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 37.1 |
| Total DSG & MSAG | **1,127.8** | **11.4** | **226.7** | **97.5** | **1,463.5** |
| Total Increase | 71.4 | 0.2 | 23.4 | 5.2 | 100.2 |
| Total % increase | 6.8% | 1.5% | 11.5% | 5.6% | 7.3% |

4.6 The DSG allocation remains provisional as the Early Years Block is funded 5/12ths on the January 2023 Census and 7/12ths on the January 2024 Census. The High Needs Block allocation is also provisional as it is subject to any changes to the Import / Export adjustment which is based on the January 2023 Census.

**Schools Block**

4.7 Figure 1 shows how the Schools Block allocation is calculated

4.8 The primary unit of funding (PUF) and secondary unit of funding (SUF) are set in July and announced in the provisional settlement. The rates for 2023/24 are **£4,719.90** and **£6,115.81** respectively. These are then multiplied by the respective pupil numbers from the October 2022 Census.

4.9 Premises funding is provided at the level of funding delegated to schools in 2022/23, with the exception of PFI funding which is inflated using RPIX (retail price index for all items excluding mortgage interest).

4.10 The growth fund is calculated at the middle layer super output area (MSOA). For each school the October 2021 census is deducted from the October 2022 census. A total is calculated for each MSOA for primary and secondary and where the total is positive growth funding is allocated.

4.11 The **£34.2 million** increase from 2022/23 is due to:

* Increase in funding **£20.8 million**
* Increase in pupil numbers from 199,370 to 201,691 **£13.1 million**
* Increase in the growth fund **£0.3 million**

**Central School Services Block**

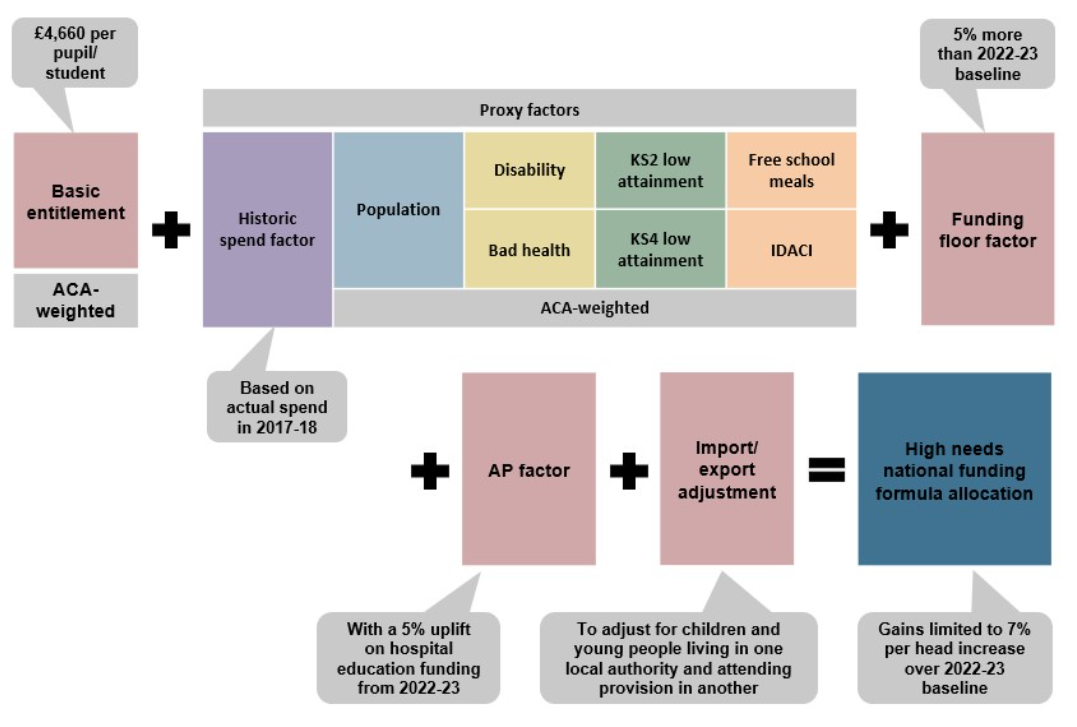
4.10 Figure 2 shows how the Central School Services Block (CSSB) is calculated.

4.11 The ongoing responsibilities element of CSSB is funded on a per pupil amount and includes the central services for all schools element of the former Education Services Grant. Funding increases by **£164,000** due to the increase in pupil numbers.

4.12 The historic commitments element is the annual £3.8 million contribution for the SEND & PRU capital project. The DfE are trying to wind down historic commitments and reduced our allocation by **£761,000**. The Authority has applied for the **£3.8 million** to be protected in 2023/24 and this has been approved.

**High Needs Block**

4.13 Figure 3 shows how the High Needs Block is calculated.



4.14 The High Needs Block has increased by **£23.4 million** due to the following:

* Increase from national **£570 million** increase **£12.6 million**
* Increase of 344.5 places funded **£1.6 million**
* Share of Autumn Statement funding **£9.2 million**

4.15 A condition of the additional funding from the Autumn Statement is that special schools and alternative provision must receive a 3.4% increase on place funding and top-up funding.

**Early Years Block**

4.16 Figure 4 shows how the Early Years Block is calculated

* With the exception of the Disability Access Fund, all elements are funded by multiplying the total part-time equivalent (PTE) by 15 hours by 38 weeks by the hourly rate. A child attending 15 hours per week is 1 PTE.
* Disability Access Fund is paid at £800 per each 3 or 4 year old in receipt of disability living allowance.

4.17 The provisional increase is **£5.2 million** due to:

* £0.27 increase in the hourly rate for 3 and 4 year olds to £5.05
* £0.16 increase in the hourly rate for disadvantaged 2 year olds to £5.51
* £1.75 increase in the hourly rate for the maintained nursery supplement to £3.80.

**Mainstream Schools Additional Grant**

4.18 The DfE announced on 6th December that the additional **£2 billion** announced in the Autumn Statement would be split **£1.6 billion** to mainstream schools and **£400 million** to the High Needs Block.

4.19 As the national funding formula had been run for 2023/24 the additional funding will be paid through a mainstream schools additional grant.

4.20 The funding per school will be calculated as follows:

* £119 per pupil, including reception, in primary schools
* £168 per key stage 3 pupil
* £190 per key stage 4 pupil
* A lump sum of £4,510
* £104 FSM6 per pupil rate for eligible primary pupils
* £152 FSM6 per pupil rate for eligible secondary pupils

**Pupil Premium**

4.21 The pupil premium funding rates for 2023/24 have increased by 5%. Table 3 shows the rates for eligible pupils.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2022/23  £ | 2023/24  £ | Increase  £ |
| Primary FSM6 | 1,385 | 1,455 | 70 |
| Secondary FSM6 | 985 | 1,035 | 50 |
| Looked after Children | 2,410 | 2,530 | 120 |
| Children who have ceased to be looked after. | 2,410 | 2,530 | 120 |
| Service Pupil Premium | 320 | 335 | 15 |

**5. Growth Fund**

5.1 The Authority has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places.

5.2 The Growth Fund is known as explicit growth and provides funding for basic need growth where schools are expanding. It also provides funding for bulge classes where temporary growth is required, for furniture and equipment for new and expanding schools, for the infant class size contingency and funding for schools where growth is required due to Afghan or asylum seeking children.

5.3 The funding rates for 2023/24 have increased with primary growth being funded **£1,520** per pupil, an increase of **£35** per pupil and secondary growth is funded at **£2,275** per pupil, an increase of **£75** per pupil. For any new schools that appear for the first time on the October 2021 census, local authorities receive an allocation of **£74,700**, an increase of **£3,900** per new school. An area cost adjustment is applied.

5.4 For each local authority schools are allocated into middle super output areas (MSOAs). For each school the October 2021 census is deducted from the October 2022 census. A total is calculated for each MSOA for primary and secondary and where the total is positive growth funding is allocated. Table 4 shows an example of how this works at MSOA level.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| MSOA | School | Oct 22 | Oct 21 | Primary Growth | Secondary Growth |
| Basildon 1 | Buttsbury I | 364 | 367 | -3 | 0 |
|  | Buttsbury J | 509 | 509 | 0 | 0 |
|  | Mayflower High | 1,339 | 1,342 | 0 | -3 |
|  |  |  |  | **-3** | **-3** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Basildon 13 | Briscoe P | 301 | 304 | -3 | 0 |
|  | Northlands P | 620 | 591 | 29 | 0 |
|  | Basildon Upper | 580 | 523 | 0 | 57 |
|  |  |  |  | **26** | **57** |

5.5 The allocation for Essex for 2023/24 is **£7.3 million**, which is an increase of **£368,000** from 2022/23.

5.6 The growth funding arrangements provide certainty for schools that are expanding at the request of the Authority and enable the Authority and schools to collaboratively provide enough school places to accommodate local need.  Without the growth fund in place there is increased risk of insufficient additional places being commissioned, increased home to school transport costs, increased incidence of pupils having to travel long distances to get to school, increased number of school admission appeals with costs implications for schools, increased use of the fair access protocol and increased class sizes.

5.7 A prime example of this would be where an area requires an additional 10 Reception places, enough additional demand to warrant an additional class to avoid infant class size limits being breached, or Reception age pupils transported a long distance to access a school place (with the associated cost).  Without growth funding to run the additional class while it works its way through the school, the school would have to take on an operational deficit for that class, which would be unfair on that school, and most schools would be unwilling or unable to agree to this, and so would not agree to admit additional children.

5.8 Table 5 shows the growth fund requirement for 2023/24.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2022/23  £m | 2023/24  £m | Increase / (Decrease)  £m |
| Planned Growth | 4.5 | 4.7 | 0.2 |
| Furniture & Equipment | 0.7 | 0.5 | (0.2) |
| KS1 Class Size | 0.8 | 0.8 | 0 |
| Contingency | 1.0 | 0.8 | (0.2) |
| Total | **7.0** | **6.8** | **(0.2)** |

5.9 The growth fund request for 2023/24 is **£6.8 million**, including setting a contingency of **£0.8** million for any unexpected in-year growth or against a future shortfall in funding. As discussed in Agenda Item 2 it is proposed to use the remaining **£466,000** to fund the Falling Rolls Fund.

**6. Varying Pupil Numbers**

6.1 Varying pupil numbers is known as implicit growth and is an alternative method of funding significant change in pupil numbers.

6.2 Table 6 show the number of growth places funded by varying pupil numbers.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2022/23  Places | 2023/24  Places | Difference |
| Primary | 837 | 692 | (145) |
| Secondary | 476 | 488 | 12 |
| All Through | 210 | 210 | 0 |
| Total | **1,523** | **1,390** | **(133)** |

6.3 The number of places funded on estimated numbers decreases due to 9 schools reaching the end of their growth period.

**7. Falling Rolls Fund**

7.1 The Falling Rolls Fund provides funding for schools that have a temporary reduction in pupil numbers. Schools must be rated as Good or Outstanding by Ofsted and must meet the falling roll requirement discussed in Agenda Item 2.

7.2 Agenda Item 2 shows there are 13 primary schools that meet the proposed criteria.

7.3 It is proposed to set a budget of **£466,000** for 2023/24 to be funded from the surplus growth funding as shown in 5.9.

**8. PFI Affordability Gap**

8.1 Indicative school contributions for facilities management costs for 2023/24 are shown in Table 7.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Scheme | 2022/23  £’000 | 2023/24  £’000 | Difference  £’000 |
| BSF PFI | 2,814 | 3,125 | 311 |
| Clacton PFI | 2,464 | 2,636 | 172 |
| Debden PFI | 664 | 723 | 59 |
| Total | **5,942** | **6,484** | **542** |

8.2 The affordability gap is the amount left to fund once grant income and school contributions have been deducted. Under the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations the affordability gap is delegated to the relevant schools through the funding formula. It is excluded from the calculation of the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) to ensure that no school gains or is financially disadvantaged by any change in the affordability gap from one year to the next. Table 8 shows the affordability gap for each scheme.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Scheme | 2022/23  £’000 | 2023/24  £’000 | Difference  £’000 |
| BSF PFI | 1,178 | 1,474 | 296 |
| Clacton PFI | 1,104 | 1,348 | 244 |
| Debden PFI | 1,217 | 1,313 | 96 |
| Total | **3,499** | **4,135** | **636** |

**9 Delegated Budgets**

**Schools Block**

9.1 The Authority is required to submit the Authority Proforma Tool which sets out how schools will be funded in 2023/24 to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) by Friday 20thJanuary 2023. Once it has been submitted it can only be changed at the request of the ESFA. There is a small risk that the figures in Table 11 could change but overall delegation will remain the same.

9.2 In 2023/24 the Essex Formula has fully transitioned to the Schools National Funding Formula and Essex will now be classed as ‘mirroring’ NFF. Essex is not fully on NFF as the basic entitlement values for primary, key stage 3 and key stage 4 differ, as do the primary / secondary funding differential and the basic entitlement weighting between key stage 3 and key stage 4.

9.3 Table 9 shows the funding to be delegated to primary and secondary schools in 2023/24.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Primary  £ | Secondary  £ | Total  £ |
| Schools Block 2023/24 | 572,933,968 | 517,703,342 | 1,090,637,309 |
| Growth Fund | (2,866,642) | (4,457,535) | (7,326,177) |
| Premature Retirement Costs (1) | (398,399) | (812,262) | (1,210,661) |
| Funding Differential (2) | (1,460,025) | 1,460,025 | 0 |
| DfE Copyright Licences (3) | (74,214) | (51,633) | (125,847) |
| Total Delegation 2023/24 | **568,132,687** | **513,841,937** | **1,081,974,624** |

1. – Agreed by Schools Forum 30 November 2022
2. - Adjustment to keep the primary / secondary funding differential at 1:1.30
3. - DfE Copyright Licences – the DfE purchase national licences for all schools for the following:

* CLA - Copyright Licencing Agency
* SPML – School Printed Music Licence
* NLA – Newspaper Licencing Agency
* ERA – Education Recording Agency
* PVSL – Public Video Screening Licence
* MPLC – Motion Picture Licencing Company
* PPL – Phonographic Performance Limited
* PRS – Performing Rights Society
* MCPS – Mechanical Copyright Protection Society
* CCLI – Christian Copyright Licencing International

9.4 Delegation increases from **£1.017 billion** in 2022/23 to **£1.082 billion** in 2023/24, an increase of **£64.8 million** (6.4%).

9.5 In addition primary and secondary schools will receive **£37.1 million** through the mainstream schools additional grant.  
  
**Early Years Block**

9.6 As announced at the 2021 Spending Review, funding increases by **£180 million** in 2023/24. In addition to reflect the recently announced National Living Wage increases an additional **£20 million** has been invested into the early years entitlements.

9.7 Paragraph 4.17 shows the increase in the funding rates for 2023/24 that the Authority will receive.

9.8 Table 10 shows the proposed hourly rates that will be funded in 2023/24.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2022/23  £ | 2023/24  £ | Difference  £ |
| 2-year-olds | 5.53 | 5.89 | 0.36 |
| 3- & 4-year-olds | 4.53 | 4.77 | 0.24 |
| Maintained Nursery School Supplement | 1.97 | 3.80 | 1.83 |
| Early Years Pupil Premium | 0.60 | 0.60 | 0.00 |
| Disability Access Fund | 800.00 | 800.00 | 0.00 |

9.9 The indicative two year old funding is funded on 1,708,763 hours. The Authority is forecasting to fund 1,720,990 hours so the initial rate of £5.89 will result in a forecast overspend of **£37,800**.

9.10 The indicative allocation for 3- and 4-year-olds is funded on 16,982,358 hours. The Authority is expecting to fund 16,264,356 hours which at the proposed rate of £4.77 will result in a **£3.4 million** underspend. The hourly rate funded cannot be increased as it is expected that the DfE will clawback **£3.4 million** based on the expected take-up of 3 and 4 year old provision.

9.11 The Authority is required by legislation to fund the Early Years Pupil Premium at 60 pence per hour. Funding is based on 949,210 hours but the Authority is forecasting to fund 1,206,500 hours. This will result in an overspend of **£154,000**. It is expected that the increasing number of children entitled for the early years pupil premium will be reflected in the January Census.

9.12 The Maintained Nursery Supplement is funded on 126,540 hours however the Authority expects to fund 129,321 hours which results in a forecast overspend of **£9,500**.

9.13 The Disability Access Fund is funded on 770 children. The Authority expects to fund 345 children which would result in an underspend of **£340,000**. To date the DfE has not adjusted the funding for DAF and therefore assuming this continues the underspend is sufficient to offset the forecast overspend on 2 year old funding, the early years pupil premium and the maintained nursery supplement.

9.14 The Early Years Block provisional allocation is based on the January 2022 census. Actual funding is calculated on the January 2023 census (5/12ths) and January 2024 census (7/12ths). It may be necessary to adjust the rates in Table 10 once the January 2023 census is published in July.

**10. Essex Formula for Funding Schools**

10.1 Table 11 shows how the funding is distributed across each factor using the NFF 2023/24 values inflated by the non-fringe area cost adjustment.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Primary 2022/23 | Primary 2023/24 | Primary Difference | Secondary 2022/23 | Secondary 2023/24 | Secondary Difference |
| Deprivation - FSM | 10,399,224 | 11,272,023 | 872,799 | 6,272,863 | 7,231,825 | 958,962 |
| Deprivation - FSM6 | 14,591,643 | 17,885,410 | 3,293,767 | 15,409,946 | 19,056,058 | 3,646,112 |
| Deprivation - IDACI | 13,596,423 | 14,160,120 | 563,697 | 13,600,291 | 14,479,690 | 879,399 |
| Prior Attainment | 33,618,893 | 36,202,347 | 2,583,454 | 28,881,685 | 30,356,777 | 1,475,092 |
| Mobility | 980,426 | 1,093,638 | 113,212 | 50,204 | 58,262 | 8,058 |
| EAL | 3,593,856 | 4,286,920 | 693,064 | 1,203,060 | 1,659,236 | 456,176 |
| Lump Sum | 57,695,443 | 57,216,000 | (479,443) | 9,825,300 | 10,368,000 | 542,700 |
| Sparsity | 1,855,367 | 1,883,503 | 28,136 | 34,364 | 35,900 | 1,535 |
| Split Site | 221,260 | 223,990 | 2,730 | 700,741 | 705,063 | 4,322 |
| Rates | 5,620,683 | 5,408,394 | (212,289) | 2,621,495 | 2,619,991 | (1,504) |
| PFI | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3,498,961 | 4,134,714 | 635,753 |
| Exceptional Premises – Tendring PPP Buyout | 2,912,640 | 2,912,640 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Exceptional Premises – Amalgamating Schools Lump Sum | 0 | 179,200 | 179,200 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Exceptional Premises – Joint Use | 0 | 0 | 0 | 101,250 | 60,000 | (41,250) |
| London Weighting | 2,781,650 | 2,990,385 | 208,735 | 2,506,319 | 2,682,904 | 176,585 |
| Minimum per Pupil | 14,403,444 | 8,066,104 | (6,337,340) | 3,012,860 | 1,629,047 | (1,383,813) |
| MFG | 342,882 | 276,827 | (66,055) | 32,639 | 4,319 | (28,320) |
| Basic Entitlement | 374,600,005 | 404,074,920 | 29,474,915 | 392,320,183 | 418,760,259 | 26,440,076 |
| Total | **537,213,839** | **568,132,420** | **30,918,581** | **480,072,161** | **513,842,044** | **33,769,883** |

10.2 It can be seen in Table 11 that now the Essex Formula has transitioned to NFF the largest funding increase is within the basic entitlement. Table 12 shows the increase schools will receive per pupil in 2023/24.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Basic Entitlement | 2022/23  £ | 2023/24  £ | Increase  £ | Increase  % |
| Primary | 3,158.10 | 3,385.41 | 227.31 | 6.71 |
| KS3 | 4,427.25 | 4,683.47 | 256.22 | 5.47 |
| KS4 | 5,391.64 | 5,573.32 | 181.68 | 3.26 |

10.3 To achieve the DfE’s minimum / maximum requirements introduced for 2023/24 the KS3 / KS4 basic entitlement weighting has reduced from 1.218 to 1.19. This was approved by Forum at November’s meeting.

**Minimum Funding Guarantee**

10.4 The minimum funding guarantee remains at 0.5% which is the maximum allowed for 2023/24.

10.5 Table 13 shows the number of schools requiring protection in 2023/24.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | Difference |
| Primary | 48 | 61 | 13 |
| Secondary | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| Total | **49** | **64** | **15** |

10.6 Whilst the number of schools requiring protection from MFG has increased, it can be seen in Table 11 that the cost of MFG has decreased as these schools are moving closer to being funded by the Formula.

**Minimum Per Pupil Level**

10.7 The minimum per pupil levels of **£4,405** for primary and **£5,715** for secondary have been fully implemented.

10.8 Table 14 shows the number of schools in 2023/24 that require additional funding through the minimum per pupil level.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | Difference |
| Primary | 173 | 116 | (57) |
| Secondary | 18 | 9 | (9) |
| Total | **191** | **125** | **(66)** |

**11 Central Expenditure**

11.1 Table 15 shows the proposed central expenditure for the Early Years Block and the Central School Services Block for 2023/24.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2022/23  £’000 | 2023/24  £’000 | Difference  £’000 |
| Central Expenditure Under 5s | 3,167 | 3,213 | 46 |
| Former ESG Retained Duties | 3,080 | 3,080 | 0 |
| Admissions | 1,449 | 1,449 | 0 |
| Schools Forum | 24 | 24 | 0 |
| Combined Budgets | 2,909 | 3,073 | 164 |
| Prudential Borrowing | 3,804 | 3,804 | 0 |
| Total | **14,433** | **14,643** | **210** |

11.2 The increase in the central expenditure within the Early Years Block represents pay inflation, and the increase in the central school services block represents the increase in funding for 2023/24.

**12 High Needs Block**

12.1 Table 16 shows the proposed allocation of the High Needs Block (HNB) for 2023/24.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2022/23  £’000 | 2023/24  £’000 | Difference  £’000 |
| Place Funding:  - Special Schools  - Enhanced Provisions  - PRUs | 35,184  2,027  5,790  **43,001** | 36,403  2,414  6,594  **45,411** | 1,219  387  804  **2,410** |
| Top-up Funding:  - Mainstream  - Special Schools  - PRUs  - Post 16 FE  - Independent Schools  - Enhanced Provisions  - Essex Pupils OLA Schools | 21,158  33,888  7,037  9,713  28,034  6,145  5,896  **111,871** | 24,988  38,792  8,468  10,768  31,324  6,722  6,416  **127,748** | 3,830  4,904  1,431  1,055  3,290  577  520  **15,607** |
| SEN Support Services | 15,374 | 17,246 | 1,872 |
| Other Alternative Provision | 7,100 | 7,474 | 374 |
| Support for Inclusion | 3,898 | 5,527 | 1,629 |
| PFI Costs | 65 | 83 | 18 |
| Therapies & Other Health | 2,223 | 2,703 | 480 |
| Corporate Recharges | 4,735 | 4,735 | 0 |
| HNB Contingent Costs | 14,586 | 16,062 | 1,476 |
| Total | **202,853** | **226,719** | **23,866** |

12.2 Significant variations between 2022/23 and 2023/24, above **£500,000**, are explained below.

12.3 Place funding increases **£2.4 million** due to the following:

* An additional 146 special school places
* An additional 20 places in enhanced provisions
* An additional 82 PRU places, due to an increase of 40 places in Moundwood, 35 medical places and 7 places in North East.

12.4 Top-up funding increases **£15.6 million** due to:

* Forecast increase of 260 EHCPs in mainstream schools.
* Impact of the increase of 146 places in special schools.
* Increased places in PRUs plus the full year effect of the new funding arrangements that were implemented in September 2022.
* Forecast increase of 77 Post 16 FE places
* There is a forecast increase of an additional 55 independent school places from April 2023.
* Increase of 20 places in enhanced provisions.
* The number of pupils in other local authority schools is forecast to increase by 61 pupils

12.5 SEN Support Services increases **£1.9 million** due to an additional **£1 million** one-off contribution to SEND transport, transferring the Early Years Inclusion Fund to the High Needs Block **£600,000**, a new early years high needs intervention strategy **£251,000** and an increase in equipment costs **£140,000**.

12.6 Support for Inclusion increases **£1.6 million** due to **£1 million** allocated to the Inclusion Framework and an increase in non-statutory education psychology costs **£500,000**.

12.7 The High Needs Contingent budget increases **£1.5 million** due to the increase in funding being higher than the increased demand. The Authority is required to ensure that special schools and PRUs receive a 3.4% increase in funding for 2023/24. The estimated increase in funding is **£2.6 million** for special schools and **£0.5 million** for PRUs. The additional funding for special schools will be different as it will incorporate the new funding rates from September 2023. The figures in Table 16 do not reflect this so the increase will be funded by the high needs contingent budget. The Authority will continue to develop early intervention strategies but will also retain a contingency to offset future demand.

**13. Risks**

13.1 The budget is built on known assumptions and pressures identified so far. There are risks from the continuing effect of Covid, complexity, volatility and energy are all unquantified pressures that will be monitored throughout the year and reported back on a quarterly basis. Inflation is currently 10.7% and is forecast by the Bank of England to start to fall from the middle of 2023.

**14. Notification of School Budget Shares**

14.1 The Authority must inform maintained schools of their 2023/24 Schools Block allocation by 28th February 2023. High Needs funding allocations must be notified by 31st March 2023. The ESFA will inform academies of their GAG allocations by 31st March 2023.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Schools Forum | **Agenda Item 4** |
| Date: 11 January 2023 |  |

Any Other Business and Feedback from Associations and Other Forum Members

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Schools Forum | **Agenda Item 4a** |
| Date: 11 January 2023 |  |

**School Forum Early Years Sub-group**

**MINUTES**

**Thursday 8th November 2022**

**7.00pm to 8.30pm**

**Via TEAMS**

**Attended**

Carolyn Terry, Yannick Stupples-Whyley & Sandie Leader – ECC

Rod Lane –Schools Forum Chair

13 attendees – see list below

**Apologies**

* Chanel Lassman - Safari
* Jennie Gregory – Jesters
* Claire Owers – Bright Stars Preschool
* Rhiannon Dyson & Terri Ewer – Treetops Preschool
* Zoe Orr - Harwich Connexions Noahs Nursery
* Helen Hill - Oakey Dokeys Preschool
* Claire Chapman – Suffolk CMA
* Ferliene Willis – Woodcroft Nursery
* Sam Cottrill - The Colourwheel Montessori
* Maggie Catmull – Richmond Preschool

Meeting chaired by Helen in Chanel’s absence. Helen was pleased to announce the safe arrival of Chanel’s baby girl last week.

**Review of minutes and action log**

Minutes agreed as accurate, actions completed

**Schools Forum meeting feedback**

Proposal for Early Years Intervention post – agreed fixed term for 2 years option with evidence extend for 1 year.

Supported and took on board providers financial pressures

**Early Years items discussed**

1. DfE: Funding to parents, & consultation on ratios <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kENNctdSokM> To listen to listen to debate held in parliament. Comparison of ratios in other countries and differences in requirements.

2. Minimum wage increase compared to FEEE per hour increase. Settings sustainability

Pressures are growing and funding gap between costs and FEEE is increasing. Do providers look to increase private fees? Non funded places concern over higher charges. If setting mainly funded place, not sustainable. FEEE funding increase 53% compared to minimum wage increase 258% not considering other rising costs. Small setting in local communities is struggling the most, need to increase costs in April with minimum wage rise, but having to put cost up from January due to food price increase. Childminders are also having sustainability issues, due to ratios and funded hourly rate. Majority of providers have financial pressures dependent upon their business model or sector type.

ECC are feeding back to DfE, increase in funding this year largest for a while but not reducing the funding gap.

Business Management Consultants are running meetings to support providers

**Business Management Consultants email is** [**BMC@essex.gov.uk**](mailto:BMC@essex.gov.uk) **and not the email in the chat at the meeting**.

**Action** – Add spring dates to minutes and send out in next comms

3. DSL On-line course – cost & provider (Juniper)

Juniper is ECC preferred provider and do not have to use. DSL must be done every 2 years. Why are costs so high when course is still online. Need to be mindful that any other provider should have knowledge of Essex SET

**Action** – Carolyn to discuss with Safeguarding lead re cost of Juniper course and alternative training providers

4. FEEE funding contract

Reviewing contract for 2023-24. Receiving challenges from parents regarding consumable charges, do not want to pay, not appropriate items listed as child does not use.

DfE guidance is not clear, parents can be expected to pay, must be voluntary, providers should have policy on how they would deal with this.

What are providers thoughts: Transition meetings from toddler room to when FEEE accessed, discuss invoice and how charges are made. Several providers explained that they consumable charges are voluntary. Guidance states consumable/food charges must be voluntary and not should be. Parents do not understand that may be entitled to FEEE2, when parents are eligible. FEEE2 letter shown.

Deposits – What is a reasonable time to return.

Deposits are not taken for children if starting and when FEEE hours are being claimed. Only charge as babies etc and return when they leave the setting.

Can admin fees be charged and returned to parents when child starts? Handbook has detailed chart of when charges can be applied. This will be reviewed for 2023/4 to be in line with DfE guidance.

Ombudsman case share link Notts, Kiddi Caru

**Action** – Look to produce leaflet to support providers with how FEEE can be accessed, voluntary charges etc.

**Early Years Updates**

1. New Early Years and Childcare Strategy – Circulated with minutes and not discussed
2. Budget update – DfE have not released new funding rates for 2023/24 as soon as we have them will let providers know. See presentation

**Items to take to the Essex Schools Forum 11th January 2023**

Nothing specific raised to take to meeting

**AOB**

Are these meetings helpful, are we providing useful discussion points? Feedback attendees feel the meetings are useful, raises awareness of issues from both providers and ECC.

Support for childminders – less now than it was years ago. Feel as supported as other providers do. Childminders can access support through Early Years Education Advisers.

**Date of next meeting – TBA**

**Future dates – TBA**

**Attendees**

Claire Macklin Christ Church Preschool

Dawn Saunders Wivenhoe Park Day Nursery

Helen Taylor - VC Tiddlywinks Preschool

Catherine Hamilton Little Sunbeams Epping

Annalei Smith Roydon Preschool

Lisa Rozee Roydon Preschool

Linda Reynolds Home from Home Childcarers

Gaynor Baker Buzzee Beez preschool

Kelly Stallwood Buzzee Beez preschool

Angie Owen Tolleshunt D'Arcy Pre-school

Jo Gridley Childminder

Tina Carnegie-Dielhenn Whipper-snappers Daycare Nursery

Michelle Wisbey Westwood Montessori

**Action Log**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Action | Action for | Date to be completed | Action completed |
| Add BMC spring dates to minutes and send out in next comms | Sandie | By 16th December |  |
| Discuss with Safeguarding lead cost of Juniper course and alternative training providers | Carolyn | By next meeting |  |
| Consider producing leaflet to support providers with how FEEE can be accessed, voluntary charges etc. | FEEE Team | By 31st March 2023 |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Schools Forum | **Agenda Item 5** |
| Date: 11 January 2023 |  |

**Schools Forum Meeting Minutes of 30th November 2022**

**held at the Hamptons Sports & Leisure, Tydemans, Beehive Lane, Great Baddow, Chelmsford CM2 9FH**

**08:30 – 11:08**

*(subject to forum approval)*

In Attendance

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Rod Lane (RL) – Chair | Jo Barak (JB) | Jinnie Nichols (JN) |
| Jeff Fair (JF) | Carole Herman (CH) | Marilyn Smith (MS) |
| Sean Moriarty (SM) | Philomena Cozens (PC) | Chanel Lassman (CL) |
| John Hunter (JH) | Sue Bardetti (SB) | Stuart Roberts (SR) |
| Claire Styles (CS) | Harriet Phelps-Knights (HP-K) | Robin Taverner (RT) |
| Nigel Hill (NH) | Pam Langmead (PL) | Lyn Wright (LW) |
| Simon Wall (SW) | Richard Green (RG) | Ruth Sturdy (RS) |
| Ruth Bird (RB) | Jo Santinelli (JS) | James Saunders (JSa) |
| Jody Gee (JG) | Ferliene Willis (FW) | Gareth Rott |
|  |  |  |
| **LA Officers** |  |  |
| Yannick Stupples-Whyley (YSW) | Andrew Page (AP) | Clare Kershaw (CK) |
| Cllr Tony Ball (TB) | Carolyn Terry (CT) | Ralph Holloway (RH) |
| Val Cleare (VC) – Minutes | Alice Tickner (AT) |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Observer** |  |  |
| Patrick Grant, Local Authority Funding Policy Team, DfE |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1.** | **Apologies for Absence and substitute notices**  There were three new secondary headteacher representatives who joined Schools Forum today. The Chair gave a welcome to Sarah Speller (Tabor Academy), James Saunders (Honywood School) and Jody Gee (Anglo European School). However, the third headteacher, Sarah Speller was unable to attend today’s meeting.  The Chair also welcomed Patrick Grant from the Local Authority Funding Policy Team at the DfE. Patrick observed today’s meeting.  Apologies had been received from Debs Watson, Luke Bulpett, Emily Welton, Sarah Speller, Suthan Santhaguru.  Ferliene Willis substituted for Debs Watson and Pam Langmead substituted for Luke Bulpett.  Clare Kershaw and Cllr Ball had to attend another meeting at 9.45am and were expected to return at 10.30am. To accommodate this change the agenda was therefore re-arranged as follows:  Item 2a and 2b, then decision items 7-9 followed by Forum business (items 11-13). If by this time Clare and Cllr Ball have returned to the meeting, we will go back to item 3, if not items 14-15. |
| **2a** | **Early Years Funding – Alice Tickner, Graduate Finance Trainee**  Alice gave a presentation which explained to Schools Forum how Early Years funding is calculated and the reasons for the underspend in 2021/22. There was a focus on historical data at the beginning. AT shared the finance timelines of 2021/22 based on previous synopsis. AT explained the data is collected in the Spring Term thus capturing the number of children enrolling in Early Years.  **Recommendation:**  The Forum noted the presentation. |
| 2b | **Early Years Update – Carolyn Terry**  CT updated Forum with the report on the forecast budget requirement for 2022/23 and updated Forum on proposals to allocate a further £550,000 of the Early Years Block surplus balance.  Section 4 was information which was shared in the September meeting. Will update in the New Year. Section 5, Table 2 showed the latest forecast outturn for 2022/23 as at Period 7 (October 2022). The **£1.2 million** forecast underspend is due to the Authority’s forecast of children taking up the free Early Years entitlement being lower than the DfE’s forecast. The underspend has been moved to a contingency as it is likely to be clawed back by the DfE.  5.2 Table 3 showed the Early Years Block underspend total is currently **£3.1 million**, this paper sets out a proposal to allocate **£550,000** of this total, with options for the remaining balance to brought to the May 2023 meeting. If approved the remaining surplus balance will be **£2.6 million**. The proposal is to use the **£550,000** for Early Years intervention posts. We are seeing more and more children emerging with SEND needs. When analysing it is a more transient delay where children have missed out on opportunities and general life learning experiences. We want to identify those children early and the majority of children will be able to catch up.  Other parts of the system – we are working with Early Years settings and thinking about intervention put in for these children which will be different from before. 5.3.3 drew attention to increased confidence with parents as an Early Years system we are working with them. 5.3.4, Table 4 sets out the budget for the posts for 2 years. We have allowed for costs including any potential redundancy costs. We have taken the proposal to the Early Years Reference Group, and it has been endorsed to be brought here for approval.  Section 6. Public Sector feeling and pressures are the same as before and still remain. Recruitment and retention issues also remain, and we are starting to see some care providers taking the decision to close. Another pressure is the increase to the minimum wage on the Early Years Sector which has a big impact and another cost pressure to keep an eye on for the sector.  **Questions**  PC was looking at the chart for uptake in areas like Basildon, Harlow and Epping. With the closure of centres/providers, does that reflect there is not enough provision in those areas and parents are not accessing it? Are those children not accessing it, then identify educational needs?  CT indicated generally those areas historically have been lower. We work with the Essex Child and Wellbeing Service, and we work with the provider. One reason parents are not taking up is due to accessing benefits. Some will take up 3-year old funding. We are starting to see two areas where there is a shortfall of funded places, Harlow in particular. We are working really hard to keep those provisions going. CT also pointed out although sitting at 70%, it is higher than the national average which is 62%. We still need to support them to do this.  JF asked for clarification about the 24 months period from appointment. There is the start date of the person in post plus 24 months. It is a judgement whether it is useful. People are in temporary posts and looking for other posts before they look for another job. We would be wiser to give 36 months to enable providers who are struggling with support.  CT responded we will be happy to extend this to 36 months and adjust if everyone agrees.  CK said if it has the support of Schools Forum, then happy for this. We will need to bring back updates of the impact on these posts. You will see the benefits across the Early Years system and reducing identification of children with SEND needs. Responding to Covid delay and transient, CK was happy to endorse this if agreed by the Forum.  SM enquired is there a risk if extended to 3 years – no longer required as a one off spend? One of the points in Alice’s presentation must be a one-off cost.  CT indicated it is the intention to ringfence whether it is 24 or 36 months.  SM responded if so looking at how ECC is using the underspend is it possible to record it is no longer a one off?  AP said we can check this. This is one off funding. We can set specific period of time for that. If increase it to 36 months, £990k. We need to be mindful of that. Perhaps look at a variation for year 1 and extend but to be discussed. It is a finite amount of money but can check the conditions for grant funding.  HPK asked why is there redundancy costs if it is a contract that has an end date to it? You are not making that job redundant because it is a fixed period. Why redundancy?  CT felt it was a certain amount of employment and therefore they are treated as an employee. Even though they know it is a fixed contract.  CK expressed regardless of the contract, it is the length of time they are with you for.  CS asked why would it not be as effective to give funding directly to respond to needs of the children? They need the money now and not over the next 2 years.  CT replied we are already including the money for them but that creates more 1:1 staffing in settings to people who are seeing it as emerging SEND and because of pressures in the sector they need additional resources to help them understand what they are seeing.  CL said it is generally because of staffing rather than enhanced support. It is more of a long-term help. The idea of the posts and having someone come in we have lost that as a sector. A lot of it is done more remotely. The sector is asking for someone to be supported.  RL asked JF if he was prepared to accept the motion as it stands with a review at the end of it?  JF was happy with this. It is important because it is a one-off funding, but it has 2 years, and suggested to review it at mid-point with the potential for funding for 3 years.  Question in the Chat – Is there an opportunity to increase capacity in settings as supported by the new Advisors, to support the longevity?  CK answered if Early Years Advisors are picking up themes with Early Years, how do we then think about a model of improvement in terms of impact and legacy of the work? Part of the review where it is training, there is the impact of the legacy once they cease to be with us. FW was happy to discuss further in the Sub Group.  It was recommended that a review is done halfway through with the thought of a possible extension.  JF agreed and there was a majority agreement.  CT said the 2-year posts we would allocate a 3rd year. Allocate within the budget for provision of a 3rd year but this would be subject to the review halfway through.  **Recommendations**:  The Forum noted the forecast outturn for 2022/23 at 5.1;  The Forum approved the recommendation of the Early Years Sub Group to agrees the proposal to allocate £550,000 of the Early Years Block surplus balance at 5.3  **Voting (2b) 2.2: Agreed – 19, Abstained - 6** |
| **3.** | **SEMH Provisions Funding – Ralph Holloway**  RH had discussed this at Schools Forum on a number of occasions.  The Essex enhanced SEMH provisions as a valuable and integral part of  the Essex school landscape to support inclusion. This proposal seeks to:   * Ensure that all the provisions can operate with the appropriate and purposeful staffing structure to meet the needs of the children and young people; * Provide greater stability of funding for CEOs, head teachers and the Trusts hosting the provisions negating the need to generate income from schools to supplement the core funding; * Reduce ECC pressure to place pupils through the Individual Packages of Education Support (IPES) framework;   The current funding being paid to schools was set in 2011 and has not been  adjusted for the last 10 years. It is currently set at £19,952 for primary and  £19,800 for secondary. The increase suggested will be to £25,000 per  place.  **Questions**  YSW had a question from a governor who had left the meeting relating to  Table 3 that St Mary’s Witham is not on the list.  RH agreed it is not on the list. This is brought to the Schools Forum for  agreement.  RL stated our costs are lower than going to an independent provider. Is  there anyway we can access otherwise the effectiveness of these units?  RH suggested it could be measured by pupil outcome success. They return  to the school they were referred from. Do not escalate to EHCP. We would  see what happens as they progress through education.  RL asked what value does it bring to the system?  RH felt we could bring an annual overview of the financial difference. For  example, how many people commissioned independent school places for.  Potential model at a minimum. We can measure investment against the  cost we would have had if to an independent school.  PC said one of the issues that has been said most of these children do not  have an EHCP and do not progress towards one. Without one they would  not go to independent schools. PC liked the idea of opportunities for  those young people to interface with other children within the setting of that  school. Want to move to a model where children have a shorter period of  intervention as a quick success indicator.  RH stated SENCO provides advice and support in schools that enables  schools to look at practice and support and work differently with children.  PC spoke about data for outreach support. It is where we have got the  funding and are able to do something like this. What is the cost against  putting children in PRU’s and reduced numbers so that more children can  be in mainstream schools? Also, there is the cost of living. More and more  people will find it difficult to feed children and heating homes, and we need  to be prepared. We need to be reactive how supporting this.  **Recommendation:**  To approve the increase in the top-up funding paid to SEMH Enhanced  Provisions at 5.1.  **Voting (2) 2.1: Agreed – 18, Abstained - 5** |
| **4.** | **SEN Shortfall Funding – Ralph Holloway**  YSW sought approval from the Forum for an uplift in funding for schools eligible for SEN Shortfall Funding.  The SEN Provision Team pay Shortfall Funding to mainstream schools where there is insufficient value in the school’s Notional SEN Fund to meet the first **£6,000** of support for pupils in receipt of Top-Up (EHCP or IPRA).  We know this has not been changed since 2013. The **£105** value is based on the amount ECC funded schools for Top-Up in 2013/14; **£420** for one hour of support per year. 25% was then applied to this as this was roughly the % pupils on SEN Support at the time.  Over the years the value of shortfall funding has significantly reduced. For the majority of schools this is not a problem. However, for a small number of primary and secondary schools there is an issue where they will not have significant capacity. They are asking for an increase of **£105** to **£150** per pupil. This is not a significant impact on the HNB. Need to be supportive to smaller schools because of the gap.  HPK asked are those schools being identified because they raised an issue or did the Local Authority identify them?  RH responded one raised it and we looked to be certain that we captured the numbers.  JF observed it is a long time this funding has been set at this level.  **Recommendation**:  That Schools Forum approve the proposal to increase the value per pupil of the SEN Shortfall funding at 4.12.  **Voting (4) 2.1: Agreed – 18, Abstained - 5** |
| **5.** | **De-Delegation and Education Functions 2023/24** - **Yannick Stupples-Whyley**  YSW presented the Schools Forum with the Authority’s proposals for de-delegation and education functions for 2023/24.  The recommendations showed who could vote other than 2.4 when everyone can vote. Table 1 showed the powers and responsibilities of the Local Authority, Schools Forum and the DfE for all these decisions.  De-Delegation – we only have one item we do delegate which is for public duties **£1** per pupil for the relevant years. Table 2 showed de-delegation for maintained primary schools basic entitlement for 2023/24 and **£1** per pupil which is estimated **£55k**. Table 3 showed the same for secondary schools. We have basic entitlements for KS3 of **£4,684**, for KS4 of **£5,623** and for the full maintained sectors **£3,805**.  **SEMH Provisions**  YSW reported funding from the High Needs Block there is an extra **£554k** delegated to primary schools. Premature retirement costs are based on the funding for 2022.23. There is a slight reduction for 2023/24.  **Central Services Functions**  We have education functions funded by the Education Services Grant and funding into the Central Services Block. Following the termination of the Education Services Grant (ESG), the DfE transferred **£3.1m** directly into the Central School Services Block (CSSB) to fund the statutory responsibilities that the authority has for all schools. The Authority has maintained the amount at **£3.1m** since 2017/18, thus containing inflation. We need to review on an annual basis. Table 5 showed the Authority’s proposals for 2023/24 with totals of £3.08m.  **Central Services for Maintained Schools**  The DfE brought in regulations whereby if the Local Authority cannot afford these functions, they can ask for funding from the maintained schools. Table 6 showed the Authority’s proposals for Central Services for Maintained Schools. These are different responsibilities such as general landlord duties, Health & Safety and management of asbestos in community schools, maintaining computer systems, planning sufficient school places and school improvement function. We are maintaining the cost of **£48.10** per pupil.  Page 25, Table 8 showed the allocation of Provisional Funding for 2023/24. The NFF has been used in our local funding formula. Now we have a transition to the NFF which is effectively the increase in funding comes back to going through basic entitlement. Some of the factors are still from free school meals  **Questions**  SM – With regards to 5.4 SM was happy to agree to the proposal of £48.10. However, regarding the community and area of asset management and risk of asbestos, SM did not recognise any support from the Local Authority from those areas for the vast majority of the schools in this sector. Three of these are voluntary aided schools and the responsibility is with the diocesan school. The difference to the **£4.77** per pupil will be very small. Those services are not the majority of those four schools in any way.  YSW stated it is one of our duties as to how much goes into the **£4.77**; it would be a very small proportion of that.  JF was impressed that CK had kept this figure for so long. Additional costs will come up. JF highlighted the concern that only one amount is to be spent. More concerned having maintained funding since 2018.  CK informed we sought to keep the amount the same because we recognised the financial pressures.  CK referred to SM’s earlier comments above and will follow up what this does mean for the four maintained schools.  **Recommendations:**  Maintained primary school members agreed the recommendation of the Finance Review Group (FRG) to approve the proposal for de-delegation for public duties at 4.4;  **Voting: (5) 2.1 All 5 agreed.**  The maintained secondary member agreed the recommendation of FRG to approve the proposal for de-delegation for public duties at 4.5;  **Voting: (5) 2.2 Agreed.**  School members agreed the recommendation of FRG to top-slice **£1.3m** for premature retirement costs at 4.8;  **Voting: (5) 2.3 - 17 agreed; 5 abstained.**  Members agreed the recommendation of FRG to approve the education functions funded by the ongoing responsibilities element of the Central School Services Block at 5.3; and  **Voting: (5) 2.4 - 19 agreed; 6 abstained.**  That all maintained members agreed the recommendation of FRG to approve the education functions to be funded by maintained schools at 5.4.  **Voting: (5) 8 agreed.** |
| **6.** | **Funding for Schools Admitting an Exceptional Number of Afghan Refugee Children or Asylum Children – Yannick Stupples-Whyley/Clare Kershaw**  The Chair declared an interest because his school has been asked to take 5 pupils. The Chair passed this item over to Jeff Fair to chair.  CK introduced this item and stated the normal policy and practice is to take papers to the relevant Sub Committees for discussion and debate and then to Schools Forum for recommendation. We have not had the opportunity in this respect. Everyone is seeing this for the first time. However, CK expected RL and JF to have seen in their capacity as Chair and Vice Chair.  There is an increase in demand of Essex. Hotels are potentially receiving a high number of refugees. In fact a high number are arriving at one host co-location. Imagine 20 families arriving at the same time and one school place. In the past we have managed this, and schools have taken a responded magnificently to the situation amazingly well. Now we have the situation where schools have asked to take larger volumes of children at the same time which provides immediate cost pressures on the schools. Host hotels in various parts of the county are now receiving requests for support from schools taken more than 20 places at one.  CK indicated this is a complicated situation. The refugee families arriving in Homes for Ukraine Scheme where households agree to put families up. There is funding to cover that. At the start of the Afghans arriving there is a significant scheme now. In the first instance we did get additional funding but no longer able to get that and it is the Afghans where there is an issue in terms of hotels being sought and large volumes of families arriving. Funding is £20 per pupil per day and is a term behind from the Government. Funding is lagged significantly. General asylum refugees have no funding whatsoever. Originally Afghans but asylum-seeking families only going to stay in the county for a short time. There is escalation and going through two schemes. They are now staying in the places where housed, for a significant time.  We have come to Schools Forum with the proposal about funding for the Afghan children and asylum seeking children into school at a significant volume. It is complicated and do not want to double fund. There is a different proposal for the asylum seekers. Whereas the refugees this is lagged. We want to stop funding once children had triggered funding coming through. There is considerable double funding from the Home Office funding. For example, primary schools in Essex are taking over 25 children at one point in time. In reality on the Census funding it would not go through until 2024.  YSW reported about the funding. Table 2 showed the proposal. In one instance consider what able to do a few years ago. The trigger would fund where the trigger reached a certain number. Proposing primary schools will be triggered when more than 6 pupils from a postcode and 11 or more from one postcode. Afghan children payment by one terms AWPU until Home Office funding in following term. In terms of the funding when had the paper in January the Growth Fund allocation for the first time was set aside  £1 million contingency to protect if allocation would be lower than required. We asked to use this contingency by funding as set out in Table 2.  **Questions**  PL wanted to check why limiting it to six from one postcode? Is there a chance a school will admit from two settings at the same time and their costs might be more rather than less?  CK said it is where the actual hotels are. We might have to adjust it. The Chair noted there were hotels at Marks Tey, Chelmsford, Harlow, Rochford and Stansted.  SM raised a technical point about the proposal around AWPU. He thought we are moving away from AWPU to basic entitlement.  YSW said SM was correct. We should be using basic entitlement.  HPK spoke about mitigation for the double funding. It comes from the Local Authority and you send it out or is it direct from the Home Office.  CK confirmed it comes to us the funding from the Home Office and we pass on to schools and that is lagged. It is only recently we have got this within the last 2-3 months. That has been keeping us going until now. However now high volumes are coming in and it is lagged.  RL commented he had declared an interest. His school has agreed to take 5 pupils at the moment and would not receive the funding. It is an emerging school; being a new school it is gradually opening year groups. Therefore, percentage of pupils agreed to take in comparison to some other schools is fairly high. Therefore, a scheme of pupils up to a certain percentage,  i.e., 2-3% of population, or this is whichever is the smaller would seem to be fairer. RL understood Headteachers in the Colchester area, one closed as had a meeting and their consortium has agreed to set up a Sub Group of Headteachers of schools in the Colchester area to form a Sub Group to share good practice and assist each other in keeping with what might be a difficult situation.  CK felt that was great news about a Sub Group and will bring schools with expertise and how to take that situation because schools would be receiving funding. We do not want to double fund this and will check this offline. This is for schools who do not receive funding and taking high volumes of children.  CS asked is there any monitoring of how many schools find themselves in what RL explained being asked to take up to 5-10 extra pupils and not receiving funding, and anything to keep those numbers below the threshold?  CK stated we have no control over this. There is no control where hotels are and how many families are placed there. It was noted there is 24-hour’s notice for hotels and so many school-aged children arriving. It is an existing scheme we used to have and how it can apply to this situation. We would expect schools to take 2-3 children but when the numbers come up we need to appoint staff from day one and additional costs.  JF stated we need to keep an eye on these extra costs.  CK will keep this under review. This has gone out in the last two weeks’ and we have done our best to keep this going. We will bring a more substantial approach if this is not working.  JF thought as a first step, this is brilliant.  **Recommendation:**  To approve the Authority’s proposal at paragraph 4.6  **Voting: (6) – Agreed - 16, Abstained 7** |
| **7.** | **School Funding 2023/24 – Yannick Stupples-Whyley**  YSW updated the Schools Forum of the outcome of the school funding consultation and the Autumn statement. At the last meeting the Forum approved for the consultation to go out to schools. There were two proposals to consult on adjusting KS3 and KS4 entitlement to meet the minimum funding requirement. Secondly, to use the formula funding to uplift the consultation of 30th September 2022 and 31st October 2022. There were 26 responses; one respondent did not specify name or school. There should only be one response per school as we were not able to verify the school which was disallowed. Out of the responses three were in favour and one against. From the second consultation – to be funded – 19 in favour, 1 against and 5 not sure. Changes to KS3 and KS4 we know will be abysmal but we require to consult on this. We will continue with the proposal that we increase the funding NFF for 2023/24 value and non-fringe area cost adjustment. YSW added consultation discussed at FRG and they endorsed this. The DfE are moving to the direct NFF and rate for ???  The Exceptional Premises Factor supporting facilities was agreed a long time ago. However, we have to reapply. Only one school £60k. Already submitted to the DfE and it was noted there is a meeting today to ratify the request.  **Autumn Statement – 17th November 2022**  The Chancellor allocated a further **£2.3 billion** for 2023/24 and 2024/25.  This funding is in addition to the previously announced Comprehensive  Spending Review 2021. Table 5 showed the increase in funding with a total  of **£3.8 billion**. It is unclear how the additional funding will be allocated,  firstly, how it will be split between the Schools Block and High Needs Block  and secondly whether it will be allocated through NFF or paid as a  supplementary grant.  We do know the Energy scheme ends on 31st March 2023. Any further  extension to the scheme will not be applicable to organisations and it was  also announced at the Education Sub Committee in Parliament effectively  that additional funding will need to cover energy costs in schools.  It is unclear how the additional funding will be allocated, firstly how it will be split between the Schools Block and High Needs Block and secondly whether it will be allocated through NFF or paid as a supplementary grant.  We are expecting a statement in week commencing 12th December 2022. Will bring to the January Forum the funding rates that will be applicable for 2023/24.  **Questions**  SM said regarding new money it is being confirmed on the Government website that it is going to be an extra £2 billion and the Social Care level is being withdrawn. Schools will not be paying it.  JF asked about the decision making process on the KS3 and KS4 split, do you have any indication when this decision will be made for schools on the basic entitlement?  YSW indicated once we have got the financial settlement, we will run the Essex Formula for Funding Schools and then compare the values against the DfE minimum / maximum requirements. We should know by Christmas whether we need to make the change or not.  **Recommendations:**  Forum noted the outcome of the school funding consultation;  Forum agreed the recommendation of the Finance Review Group (FRG) that School members approved that the Authority adjusts the KS3/KS4 basic entitlement weighting as necessary to meet the DfE’s minimum / maximum funding requirement, at 4.6; and  Forum agreed the recommendation of FRG that school members approved that the Essex Local Formula should use the 2023/24 NFF values increased by the non-fringe area cost adjustment at 4.7.  Forum agreed the Authority continues to use the Exceptional Premises Factor for Joint Use arrangements at 4.11; and  Forum noted the additional funding announced in the Autumn Statement for 2023/24 and 2024/25.  **Voting:**  **(7) 2.2 – Agreed – 15, Abstained – 7**  **(7) 2.3 – Agreed – 15, Abstained – 7**  **(7) 2.4 – Agreed – 15, Abstained – 7** |
| **8.** | **Scheme for Financing Schools 2023/24 – Yannick Stupples-Whyley**  YSW updated Forum with the result of the consultation with maintained schools and presents the Authority’s final proposals.  YSW reported this was brought to the September meeting, the proposed consultation and changes to the finances in schools. There were two proposed changes, one around section 3.6 borrowing by schools to be removed. The second change was around funding for redundancy costs in line with the previous year, premature retirement costs. On the first question there was an overall majority of Yes – 19 and No – 17. The question relating to aligning of funding for premature retirement costs. The response was Yes – 11. We are proposing to still go ahead with both changes as consulted upon. We took this to the FRG, and they recommend the Schools Forum make the required changes. YSW stated this is maintained schools only.  **Recommendations:**  The Forum noted the outcome of the consultation;  The Forum agreed the recommendation of FRG to approve the proposed change to section 3.6 Borrowing by Schools at 4.6; and  The Forum agreed the recommendation of FRG to approve the proposed change to Annex C Responsibility for Redundancy Costs at 4.8.  **Voting:**  **(8) 2.2 – Agreed – 7, Abstained – 1**  **(8) 2.3 – Agreed – 7, Abstained - 1** |
| **9.** | **Schools Forum Terms of Reference – Yannick Stupples-Whyley**  YSW updated the Forum on the Authority’s proposed changes to the Terms of Reference in light of the recent change to the structure of Schools Forum and updated DfE guidance for online meetings.  Annex A showed the changes proposing and an additional attachment with tracked changes.  Section 1.1 the regulations are updated to include The School and Early  Years Finance (England) Regulations 2021 that amended The Schools  Forums (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020.  Section 2.1 the membership table is updated to reflect the addition of a second diocese member that Schools Forum approved in December 2020.  Section 5.2 is updated with the Authority’s proposal to amend the term of  office for the Chair and Vice-Chair to two years from April 2023. This will  allow continuity for two years and allows time for a new Chair to establish  their role.  Section 5.3 proposed to move the election from the January meeting to the  autumn term as this allows a handover period if a new Chair or Vice-Chair is  elected. The Chair and Vice-Chair may stand for re-election in further  successive periods.  Section 7.5 showed the agreed mix of in-person and remote meetings which  were approved by Schools Forum in May 2021. It was noted that the  January meeting may have to be held virtually and move the in-person  meeting to May.  **Recommendation:**    Forum agreed the revised Terms of Reference.  **Voting: (9) 2.3 – Agreed – 19, Abstained 6** |
| **10.** | **Election of Chair and Vice Chair – Yannick Stupples-Whyley**  YSW stated as members are aware Rod Lane will be standing down as Chair at the end of the January 2023 meeting. We are now looking for a new Chair. Is anyone willing to stand as Chair?  Ruth Bird said she would step in but as her term of office ends in January, she wondered as would still need to be re-elected by the Schools Forum.  **Action**: YSW will need to check appointment of governors to Schools Forum in the regulations and will report back in January.  It was agreed in principle subject to Ruth Bird getting re-elected. She can attend the Chair’s briefing and be involved in any discussions between now and January.  Agreement was sought to Ruth Bird being Chair subject to be re-elected to Schools Forum after her term ends on 31/1/23.  All were in agreement.  **Vice Chair**  Jeff Fair is willing to stand. Is anyone else wishing to be considered as Vice Chair?  RL thanked JF for being Vice Chair over the years. It has worked well. JF has a wealth of experience and has been chairing the various Sub Groups.  **Voting:**  **(10) Chair – Agreed – 13, Abstained – 9**  **(10) Vice Chair – Agreed – 18, Abstained - 4** |
| **11.** | **Any other business, feedback from schools through Associations and from Schools Forum representatives on other Bodies.**  **ASHE**  CH reported major concerns about energy costs. There was help for schools coming in from the Autumn statement, but it is unclear how that will support schools going forward and we are aware of the implications of that. There has been a lot of discussion about early help for young people who are at risk of needing a place in our PRU’s across the county and there is discussion with Ralph Holloway and other colleagues about how to ensure there is a fast track through to needing a PRU place because there is no funding for outreach.  **EPHA**  HPK reported energy and increase in salaries have caused a huge impact financially for schools as well as the level of pupil needs. Also added costs before any issues are made and changes in behaviour which is quite challenging at times and the impact of supporting those children. The retention from a salary point of view is an issue. There are a lot of support staff and they are leaving and it is difficult to recruit to those places because of the added difficulties the children they are supporting. Working with Essex for an outreach proposal and continue with ESSBT on this.  RL enquired is the bad behaviour going back to Covid? HPK said, yes, but you cannot blame Covid. Nevertheless, we are seeing the impact of it.  **ESSET**  No report as Emily Welton had sent her apologies.  **PRUs**  JB .  We are in discussion about an outreach model and funding to start it. In our area it is staff absence and impact of Covid falling more with staff and levels of resilience and recruitment. Some of the posts in the main do not offer homeworking element and we are in competition with jobs that are better paid. There is a strain on recruitment, but staff absence is the biggest pressure.  PC agreed with Ashe and EPHA and Jo. We are becoming not a PRU but a destination provision. That cannot carry on. There is no aptitude taking children back. Further work is required. We support in primary schools. Work done has reduced permanent exclusions from primary schools. It is more expensive to keep children in. We in Essex have larger PRU’s than anywhere else. Lots of areas are finding it the same. It is getting difficult to move children.    **Early Years – Nurseries**  CL commented it is the cost of living and families taking more of a decision to look at cost of childcare and reducing hours. They are questioning attending if payment to go with that. Again, staffing and recruitment still proves to be an issue. Energy prices as well. The minimum wage and sustainability for settings and voice for potentially closing is getting louder. There is an increased number of children with SEND and support and monitor issue on staff as well in the sector.  **ESGA**  RB reported they had a very successful coffee and chat on two occasions which were recently well-attended, and debates were quite lively which was very encouraging. It is the cost of living which is on the minds of governors about maintaining budget and attention of children.  **Unions**  JF reported concerns about energy costs, staff salary costs and impact on budget. The whole situation is impacting on pupils and staff. JF reiterated the overall concern is lack of Government funding. He said £2 billion does not bring funding up to comparable in real terms. The pressure people are put under in terms of providing support is considerable. There is less resilience because members are worn ragged, and the expectations placed on them. There is concern that headteachers are feeling ragged too and education is struggling overall. Magic money tree can exist but this does not feel like it this time around. Funding is part of the reason there is industrial action from the teaching staff.  **Unison**  MS commented on the impact on recruiting, retention and funding of support staff in schools. There is an impact on them if teachers are not being retained. Noted things said by the other unions and other organisations. We need more Government support for rises in salaries.  **Church Rep**  Jo Santinelli stated there was nothing to report. There was nothing to raise by the Diocese but simply to be here and listen to the discussions.  Sean Moriarty referred to schools in earlier discussion. Will report to the Director of the Diocese of Brentwood, Robert Simpson.  **High Needs Review Sub-Group** -  The Group has met and minutes were attached. Any comments about the minutes? No. All were happy to note the minutes.  **Finance Review Group** – the FRG had met. Any comments? No. All were happy to note the minutes.  **Early Years Sub-Group** – Early Years has met and minutes were noted. |
| **12** | **Minutes of Schools Forum meeting held on 28/9/22 – Chair**  There were no corrections. These minutes were unanimously accepted as a true record of the discussions held. |
| **13** | **Actions – Action Log – Yannick Stupples-Whyley**  **Early Years Block surplus balance**  YSW this under Item 2. Now have allocated **£2 million** plus **£550k** which may extend to a 3rd year. It will be **£2.6 million** if it is only 2 years, or slightly lower figure to **£2.3 million** if it is extended for a 3rd year and further papers will be brought out on how to spend the remaining balance.  (This may be brought forward to the May meeting for discussion.) |
| **14** | **Constitution and Membership of Schools Forum – Yannick Stupples-**  **Whyley**  YSW presented the current membership of the Schools Forum in the light of the continuing transfer of maintained schools to the Academy sector and the change in pupil numbers. YSW read out what was agreed at the May 2021 meeting. Table 1 showed 28 members in total. Looking at the May 2022 Census and the ratio between primary school and secondary pupils which is  1.47:1. There is no change to 10 members for primary schools, 7 for  secondary schools. The above primary pupil split in Table 3 between  maintained schools and academies still requires 5 maintained members and  5 academy members.  A full list of members was shown in Annex A. It can be seen that there are  two vacancies, one for a primary academy governor and the other for a  secondary academy governor. The Authority is struggling to fill both  vacancies but has recently advertised the vacancies again in Education  Essex. Should the vacancies remain vacant at the end of the current  election process, options will be brought to July’s meeting to ensure the  vacancies are filled. Table 4 showed the members who are coming to the  end of their 4 year terms.  Annex A – Mark Farmer is not re-standing. There are 3 new secondary  Headteachers.  Annex B – showed breakdowns of attendance at the different meetings.  Schools Forum attendance – need to revisit Post 16 representative and the  inclusion church representative. Other than that membership is good.  **Questions**  JN mentioned her school name will change in January from St Giles and St  Andrews to the Chorus School’s Federation.  **Action**: YSW to amend.  RL stated his intention to stand down as Chairman of the Schools Forum.  It is RB’s intention to stand again for Schools Forum.  **Recommendations:**  The Forum noted the arrangements for how meetings will be held at 3.1.  The Forum noted that no changes are required to the constitution of Schools Forum at 3.5 and 3.7.  The Forum noted Membership at Annex A and Attendance at Annex B. |
| **15** | **Forward Plan – Yannick Stupples-Whyley**  YSW read this out and confirmed the dates of future meetings.  The next meeting is scheduled for 11th January 2023 as an in-person meeting.  POST MEETING NOTE: It was agreed to hold the January meeting via Teams and the May meeting will be an in-person meeting.  January meeting – potential decision paper on Falling Rolls Fund. FRG have reviewed the changes but once we have the October Census, we can do the check. Discuss on 7/12/22 or if not, a communication will be via email.  RL returned to Item 14 – Church of England representative. RL asked if YSW will be writing to the Diocese to ask about this.  Action: YSW.  Post 16 representative. YSW to go to Post 16 representative and ask for Clare White to seek a representative.  **Recommendations:**  The Forum noted the dates of future meetings and that additional items as proposed by Schools Forum are included in the Forward Plan. |
| **16** | **Any Other Business**  Patrick Grant, DfE, had observed today’s meeting and he was asked to say a few words.  He said thank you for having me at today’s meeting. It was very interesting to hear and a lot of the subjects you talked about are also talked about elsewhere in the country. I was here as an observer. I note it is a tough time. I do make a note of your concerns which are in parallel with other Local Authorities across the country. I go to quite a few of these meetings. Thank you for having me and thank you for all the work you are doing. |
| **17** | **Chair’s Closing Comments (Rod Lane)**  RL thanked everyone for their forbearance in the changes in the year of the meetings. RL thanked everyone for attending and for their contributions.  RL wished everyone a Happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year and looked forward to meeting everyone online in January.  **Date of next meeting – Wednesday, 11th January 2023 at 8.30 a.m.**  **Via Teams.**  **Post Meeting Note** – it was decided to change the January meeting to be virtual via Teams. However, the next in-person meeting will be held for the May meeting. |

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| Schools Forum | **Agenda Item 6** |
| Date: 11 January 2023 |  |

**REPORT TITLE: Minute Action Log**

Report by Yannick Stupples-Whyley

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| Date of Meeting | Report | Action Owner | Action | Response | Status |
| 18 May 2022 | Agenda Item 9 – Early Years Update | Carolyn Terry | To bring proposals for allocating £1.5 million of the surplus balance to the July / September meeting. | Schools Forum has agreed proposals totalling £2.6m of the surplus balance to be allocated. Further proposals for allocating the remaining £2.6m will be brought to a future meeting. | In progress |

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| Schools Forum | **Agenda Item 7** |
| Date: 11 January 2023 |  |

**REPORT TITLE: SCHOOLS BUDGET THIRD QUARTER MONITORING REPORT 2022/23**

Report by Yannick Stupples-Whyley

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**1. Purpose of report**

1.1 To update Schools Forum on the outturn position for the year-ended 31st March 2023 for both the Schools Budget and Education Functions.

**2. Recommendations**

2.1 That Forum notes the forecast outturn position for the year ended 31st March 2023.

###### 3. Relevant Schools Forum Power and Responsibility

3.1 Table 1 shows the relevant responsibilities that Forum has in relation to the Schools Budget, which are taken from the Education and Skills Funding Agency’s **Schools forum powers and responsibilities** published in September 2018.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Local Authority | Schools Forum | DfE |
| De-delegation – proposes | Decides | Adjudicates where Forum disagrees with the Authority’s proposals |
| General Duties for maintained schools – proposes | Decides | Adjudicates where Forum disagrees with the Authority’s proposals |
| Growth Fund and Falling Rolls Fund – proposes | Decides | Adjudicates where Forum disagrees with the Authority’s proposals |
| Central Spend on Early Years and Central School Services – proposes | Decides | Adjudicates where Forum disagrees with the Authority’s proposals |
| Central Spend on High Needs – Decides | None, but good practice to consult. | None |

###### 4. Background

4.1 The forecast outturn for 2022/23 at Quarter 3 (November 2022) is set out at Annex A.

4.2 The total forecast DSG grant allocation for 2022/23 after academy recoupment is **£557.1 million**.

4.3 At Quarter 3 (November 2022) the Schools Budget is forecast to underspend by **£8.5 million**, an adverse movement of **£1.3 million** from the Half-Year outturn forecast. The significant variations (above £100,000) contributing to the 2022/23 forecast outturn position are described below.

**Central School Services Block - £163,000 overspend**

4.4 Forum will recall the Central School Services Block is under pressure due to the inability to reduce expenditure in line with academy conversions.

**High Needs Block - £7.6 million underspend**

4.5 Top-up funding for maintained schools and academies are forecasting an overspend (**£1.1 million**) due to the continued increase in the number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) (**£656,000**) and an increase in the number of Post 16 learners (**£407,000**).

4.6 Independent special schools are forecast to overspend (**£1.6 million**) due to an increase in numbers and an increase in the complexity of pupils.

4.7 SEN Services is forecasting an underspend (**£11.2 million**). Forum will recall the Authority is holding a High Needs Contingent budget due to the increased funding for 2022/23. This is earmarked to fund the continued increase demand for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and early intervention projects. At the third quarter point this is showing an underspend of **£11.8 million**. This is primarily offset by a **£919,000** overspend on Individual Pupil Resourcing Agreements due to increased medical needs (£241,000 overspend), an increase in volume (£95,000 overspend) and inclusion framework projects (£583,000 overspend).

4.8 Other alternative provision services are forecasting a **£443,000** overspend due to an increase of 46 pupils above the budgeted pupil forecast.

4.9 Support for inclusion is forecasting a **£169,000** underspend due to staffing vacancies.

4.10 Therapies and other health related services is forecasting an overspend **£633,000** due to three new contracts exceeding the price of the old contract due to increased demand and complexities of pupils.

**Early Years Block - £1.2 million underspend**

4.11 The underspend is due to the authority’s forecast take up of the free entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds is lower than the number of hours the DfE are using to calculate the funding. This will be held as a contingency as it is likely to be clawed back in July 2023.

**Risks and Opportunities**

4.12 Table 2 shows a number of risks and opportunities that are not included in the outturn forecast. There is insufficient certainty to quantify the risks.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Opportunities  £’000 | Risks  £’000 |
| HNB – The forecast for top up funding in special schools is based on schools filling all of their places. If schools continue to take on more pupils than they are funded for, the forecast for top up funding will increase.  . |  | Tbc |
| HNB – The number of pupils accessing Individual Packages of Education Support (IPES) is increasing |  | Tbc |
| HNB – The methodology for calculating the special equipment recharge has now changed for 22/23. Early indications are that this change will increase the outturn. |  | Tbc |
| Total | **0** | **0** |

**Forecast DSG Balance**

4.13 Table 3 shows the forecast DSG position on 31st March 2023.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Schools  Block  £m | Central  Schools  Block  £m | High  Needs  Block  £m | Early  Years  Block  £m | Total  £m |
| Opening Balance 2022/23 | 0.0 | (1.2) | (3.1) | (2.5) | (6.7) |
| 2022/23 Forecast Outturn | 0.1 | 0.2 | (7.6) | (1.2) | (8.5) |
| Closing Balance 2022/23 | **0.1** | **(1.0)** | **(10.7)** | **(3.7)** | **(15.3)** |

4.14 Plans on spending the contingent budget within the high needs block are being drawn up, however given the continued increase in demand it will be prudent to maintain a balance within the contingent budget.

**Education Functions**

4.15 At the meeting of 6th October 2021 Schools Forum approved the authority’s proposals for services provided to all schools, as shown in Table 4.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Education Functions 2022/23 – All Schools | £’000 |
| Education Welfare | 1,170 |
| Strategic Management | 1,577 |
| Asset Management | 333 |
|  | **3,080** |

4.16 Also at the meeting of 6th October 2021, maintained members of Schools Forum agreed to de-delegate from maintained school £40.67.

4.17 The Secretary of State approved further de-delegation for School Improvement following the 50% reduction to the School Improvement, Monitoring and Brokering Grant for 2022/23. Table 5 shows the total funding de-delegated from maintained schools in 2022/23.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Education Functions 2022/23 – Maintained Schools | £’000 |
| Asset Management | 281 |
| Statutory & Regulatory Duties | 2,115 |
| School Improvement | 440 |
|  | **2,835** |

4.18 The budgets in Table 5 are subject to recoupment each time a school converts to an academy. To date there have been three academy conversions which are reflected in Table 6.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Asset Management  £ | Statutory & Regulatory  £ | School Improvement  £ |
| Original Budget | 280,968 | 2,114,621 | 439,669 |
| Recoupment | (1,756) | (13,217) | (2,408) |
| Revised Budget | **279,212** | **2,101,404** | **437,261** |

4.19 Table 7 shows the forecast outturn at Period 8 (November 2022) which is a **£44,000** overspend.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Education Functions 2022/23 | Budget  £’000 | Forecast  Outturn  £’000 | Variance  £’000 |
| Education Welfare | 1,170 | 1,155 | (15) |
| Strategic Management | 1,577 | 1,637 | 60 |
| Asset Management – all schools | 333 | 333 | 0 |
| Asset Management – maintained schools | 279 | 281 | 0 |
| Statutory & Regulatory Duties | 2,101 | 2,020 | (81) |
| School Improvement | 437 | 516 | 79 |
| Total | **5,898** | **5,942** | **44** |

4.20 The significant variations, above £75,000 are described below.

4.21 Statutory & Regulatory Duties is forecasting an underspend (**£81,000**) due to staffing costs being lower than forecasted.

4.22 School Improvement is forecasting an overspend (**£79,000**) due to agency costs

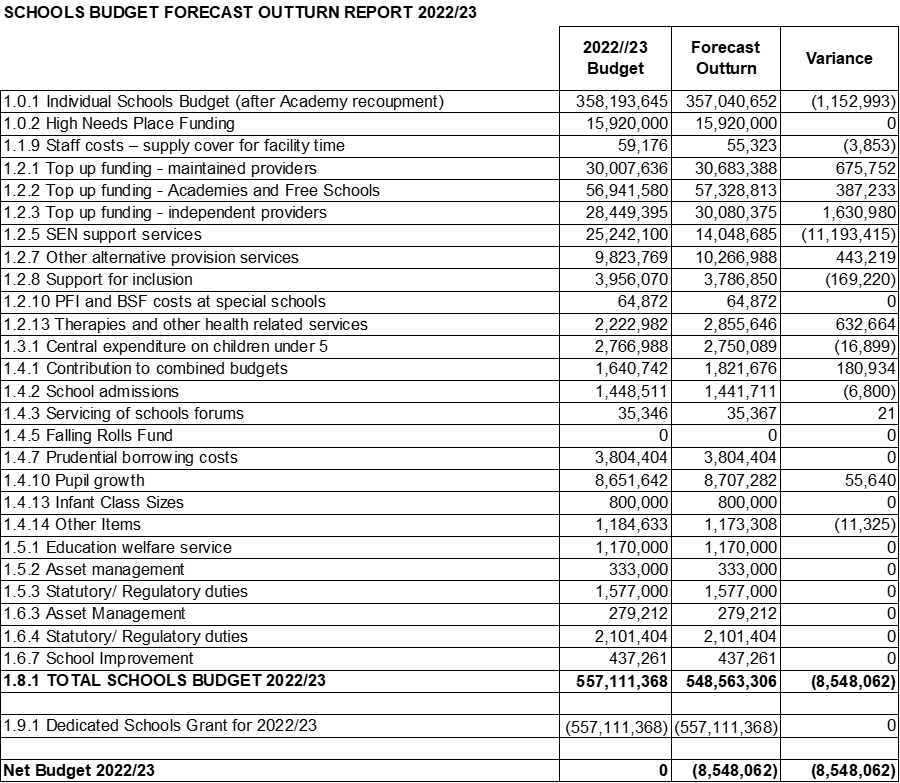
**5. Other Resource Implications**

**6. Consultation with stakeholders**

**7. Background / Supporting papers.**

7.1 Annex A – Schools Budget Forecast Outturn 2022/23

**Agenda Item 7 – Annex A**



|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Schools Forum | **Agenda Item 8** |
| Date: 11 January 2023 |  |

**REPORT TITLE: Forward Plan**

Report by Yannick Stupples-Whyley

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**1. Purpose of report**

1.1 To bring the Schools Forum Forward Plan and confirm the dates of future meetings.

**2. Recommendations**

2.1That the Forum notes the dates of future meetings.

2.2 That additional items as proposed by Schools Forum are included in the Forward Plan

###### 3. Background

3.1Following a review of School Forum Agendas a Forward Plan has been created. The items included are as follows:

|  |
| --- |
| **Regular and Administrative items** |
| Apologies |
| Any other business and feedback from schools through Associations |
| Feedback from Schools Forum representatives on other bodies |
| Minutes from previous meetings |
| Forward Plan and dates of next meetings |
| Sub Group updates (HNRG, Early Years, FRG) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date of Schools Forum** | **Agenda Items** |
| Wednesday 17th May 2023 | Falling Rolls Fund (D/I) |
| In Person | Schools Budget & Education Functions Draft Outturn Report 2022/23 (I) |
|  | High Needs Funding Review (D/I) |
|  | SEND and PRU Capital Investment Project (D / I) |
|  | Constitution and Membership of Schools Forum (D /I) |
|  | Early Years and Childcare Update (I) |
|  | Review of School Balances (I) |
|  |  |
| Wednesday 12th July 2023 | School and Academy Balances (I) |
| Virtual | Schools Budget and Education Functions Q1 Update 2023/24 (I) |
|  | High Needs Funding Review (D/I) |
|  | SEND and PRU Capital Investment Project (D / I) |
|  |  |
| Wednesday 27th September 2023 | Half Year Budget & Education Functions Update 2023/24 (I) |
| In Person | Scheme for Financing Schools (D) |
|  | High Needs Funding 2024/25 (D/I) |
|  | School Funding 2024/25 (D) |
|  | High Needs Funding Review (I) |
|  | De-Delegation 2024/25 (D) |
|  |  |
| Wednesday 29th November 2023 | Early Years and Childcare Update (I) |
| Virtual | School Funding Consultation Final Proposal (D) |
|  | Scheme for Financing Schools (D/I) |
|  | High Needs Funding Review (D/I) |
|  | SEND and PRU Capital Investment Project (D/I) |
|  | Constitution and Membership of Schools Forum (D / I) |
|  |  |
| Wednesday 10th January 2024 | DSG Budget 2024/25 (D) |
| Virtual | Third Quarter Budget Update 2023/24 (I) |
|  | High Needs Funding Review (D/I) |