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| Schools Forum | **Agenda Item 7** |
| Date: 17 May 2023 |  |

**Schools Forum Meeting Minutes of 11th January 2023**

**held via Microsoft Teams**

**8.30 – 10.22**

**Approved 17 May 2023**

In Attendance

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| Rod Lane (RL) – Chair | Jo Barak (JB) | Luke Bulpett (LB) |
| Jeff Fair (JF) | Carole Herman (CH) | Marilyn Smith (MS) |
| Sean Moriarty (SM) | Debs Watson (DW) | Chanel Lassman (CL) |
| John Hunter (JH) | Sue Bardetti (SB) | Stuart Roberts (SR) |
| Ruth Bird (RB) | Harriet Phelps-Knights (HP-K) | Robin Taverner (RT) |
| Nigel Hill (NH) | Pam Langmead (PL) | Lyn Wright (LW) |
| Nicola Woolf (NW) | Jinnie Nichols (JN) | Jody Gee (JG) |
| Ruth Sturdy (RS) | Philomena Cozens (PC) | Jo Santinelli (JS) |
| Sarah Speller (SS) |  |  |
| **LA Officers** |  |  |
| Yannick Stupples-Whyley (YSW) | Andrew Page (AP) | Clare Kershaw (CK) |
| Cllr Tony Ball (TB) | Cllr Andrew Sheldon (AS) - observer | Val Cleare (VC) - Minutes |

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| **1** | **Apologies for Absence and substitute notices**  Jeff Fair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone as Rod Lane was delayed in attending.  Richard Green has decided after serving the last 8 years on Schools Forum it is time to step back and let another primary colleague to take his place. On behalf of Schools Forum, I would like to thank Richard for his commitment and contribution to Schools Forum and I wish him well for the future.  Apologies had been received from Claire Styles, James Saunders, Emily Welton, Scott Bowak and Clare Kershaw.  Pam Langmead will substitute for the vacant role in primary and Carole Herman will substitute for James Saunders.  Nicola Woolf is attending on behalf of Clare Kershaw.  JF welcomed Cllr Tony Ball. Cllr Ball introduced Cllr Andrew Sheldon as an observer. Cllr Sheldon was welcomed.  Rod Lane arrived at 8.35 am to join the meeting. |
| **2** | **Falling Rolls Fund -Yannick Stupples-Whyley**  YSW brought the report to seek Schools Forum approval to change the criteria within the Falling Rolls Fund and to establish a falling rolls fund budget for primary schools for 2023/24  The current criteria which 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   Table 2 showed Local Authority websites where Falling Rolls Funds are operated. We are finding that we have a number of primary schools with 210 pupils or less where it does not meet the 10% reduction. For smaller schools it is more significant. The purpose is to help schools retain staffing rather than having to go down the redundancy route and maybe recruit in 1-2 years.  The Authority therefore proposed 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.   Table 3 demonstrated how it would work with a Pan of 40 in a primary school using the October census.  For junior schools the funding will be based on Year 3 and for secondary  schools will be based on Year 7.  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.  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   For the October 2022 Census we can calculate which schools meet the criteria. 17 primary schools meet the criteria at 4.8. It was noted no secondary schools currently meet the falling rolls criteria.  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.  **Questions**  RT felt it was outrageous to confine this to good and outstanding schools. There are no criteria on how much money schools have unallocated surplus funds in the budget.  YSW stated if a school applied and had a surplus, we would need to consider that.  JG commented about the Birmingham criteria, should it be published and looked at, and whether or not there is an issue if that school is a Multi Academy Trust. They would have the potential support of the MAT and be less vulnerable if there was a surplus budget in the MAT, rather than the school.  YSW indicated it would be on an individual school basis. Some MATs in Essex do pool their balances, therefore we do not get an individual balance against some of the schools.  CH was referring to JG’s comments and thinking of an example of where money was applied for to the detriment of another school that was already receiving money from the Falling Rolls Fund, and there was a considerable surplus which was a matter of public record, and that did not seem to be taken into account. CH wondered whether YSW had any information about when that consultation will take place? CH was really interested in the criteria and was drawing on her own personal experience.  YSW’s thoughts were that we would have expected the consultation to have been responded to by now. It was noted the White Paper had been dropped. It was the White Paper that was going to introduce the legislation. Therefore, that has not been put through.  CH went back to JG’s comments about public funds, and if a MAT has accrued a significant amount of money and instead applying for the Falling Rolls Fund, there is an inherent unfairness in that. It is an issue in terms of the way that funding is being deployed.  YSW said if Schools Forum is happy, we can add a balances criteria.  JF agreed with everything that had been said. However, he recommended we should be looking to introduce that criteria as soon as we can  LW believed it would be better to step away from looking at balances as it is very complex. YSW had talked about identifying the number of schools this would fall to. Should we not look at which schools they would be and bottom out whether Local Authority schools or MATs? LW stated none of the sigma primary schools would request this because we would use our resources to support those schools as we do now.  JN agreed with the points raised. JN is Chair of the small Headteachers Group in Essex and JN’s concern was that Heads do not know that this is available to support them. JN stated she is Head of three small schools and in the third school staff have already been trimmed back and classes amalgamated. JN believes that balances should be explored, but how headteachers of small schools are able to access and understand this sort of support. JN would like consideration around communication once this is agreed.  YSW stated when we have schools for the first two criteria, we write to them telling them they meet those two criteria, and if they feel they meet the remaining criteria, we ask them to put in an application. One of the four schools we wrote to them 2/3 years ago and they never did make an application.  JN pointed out being in small schools that letters can go adrift. Office staff are not there on a permanent basis. If a school as to make the application, school Heads are often teaching and something like this can easily be overlooked. JN felt the onus is on the Local Authority to be providing that funding rather than be reliant on a small school to be under pressure and make sense of that and someone to put the application together.  YSW said we will take this on board, but the school needs to say that it is expecting an increase in numbers.  JN did not see how that is possible to see in the future like 3 years’ time. In her experience it is about changing the perception locally in the community about that school. It has often been in decline for a period of time. It is about changing the reputation and the image of that school which does take time, particularly in a rural setting. 98% of my pupils are out of the catchment area and it is difficult to get a picture in a rural setting and therefore is quite a complex picture for those small schools.  RL asked if there were any more comments, points to consider.  SM quoted the example given in 4.14 and looking at this, should we expect there to be a rolling growth in the requirement for schools, for the Falling Rolls Fund, if over a period of 3-4 years, if we go with this proposal? Members need to be aware of that issue before making a decision.  YSW responded in the past once a school makes an application, we knew what’s the likely requirement over a number of years the school will be in the fund, but at the moment it is difficult. Potentially, you would expect an increase but as a rule your numbers start coming into reception for primary schools would be higher.  SM commented there is a likelihood it will increase in initial years and then it will plateau.  YSW indicated Yes.  SS is Headteacher at Tabor Academy, and queried it is a two-year criteria that you need to have a falling roll. How does that work for secondary schools? SS added because we had a very low roll initially, and it took quite a long time and obviously we have lagged funding. How are we protecting schools and if they are under budget, staffing may be an issue? Also, how are schools supported then?  SS clarified this is schools that may have met the criteria. SS described the process: you get the funding for that year; the following year you are not going to get the full potential until the following year because of lag funding. You are not going to get your budget until the following year. That will still be low, but you might by then have had your roll go up but for that year there will be a decrease in funding still.  YSW responded this does not quite work on the same lag basis. It could for an Academy, but we are relating it to 2023/24 budgets. If you have an Academy the Falling Rolls Fund is based on the October 2022 Census and it would start to receive funding ahead of September 2023.  Voting was unanimous.  **Recommendations:**   * The Forum agreed the recommendation of the Finance Review Group to amend the falling rolls criteria at 4.8. * The Forum agreed an additional criteria be added to exclude schools with a bulge class qualifying for the falling rolls fund when the bulge year exits the school at 4.9 * The Forum agreed the variation to the growth criteria to reflect the primary sector at 4.10. * The Forum agreed 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. * The Forum agreed to set a falling rolls budget for primary schools of **£466,000** for 2023/24 at 5.3.   **Question**  PL’s point raised, what can we do about change from good and outstanding schools to schools requiring improvement?  YSW stated if the DfE comes back and it is not a mandatory requirement, it can be removed. |
| **3.** | **Dedicated Schools Grant Budget 2023/24 – Yannick Stupples-Whyley**  YSW updated Schools Forum of the updated School Funding Settlement and the assumptions built into the budget. YSW also sought the Forum’s agreement of the relevant elements of the Dedicated Schools Grant budget for 2023/24.  YSW went through Table 1 under 3.1 which showed the formal change. Consultation was held in September. De-delegation was agreed in November.  Table 2 showed 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%).  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.  Figure 1 showed how the Schools Block allocation is calculated.  Figure 2 showed how the Central School Services Block (CSSB) is calculated. There is an ongoing responsibility per pupil, and this includes the Central Schools Services element of the former Education Services Grant. Funding increased by £164,000 due to the increase in pupil numbers.  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.  Figure 3 showed how the High Needs Block is calculated.  Figure 4 showed how the Early Years Block is calculated.  **Mainstream Schools Additional Grant**  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.  As the national funding formula had been run for 2023/24 the additional  funding will be paid through a Mainstream Schools Additional Grant.  Disability Access Fund – **£828**.  **Pupil Premium**  The pupil premium funding rates for 2023/24 have increased by 5%. Table 3  showed the rates for eligible pupils.  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.  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.  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 showed an example of how this works at MSOA level.  The allocation for Essex for 2023/24 is **£7.3 million**, which is an increase of  **£368,000** from 2022/23.  Table 5 showed the planned growth fund requirement for 2023/24.  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.  **Varying Pupil Numbers**  Table 6 showed the number of growth places funded by varying pupil  numbers.  **PFI Affordability Gap**  Indicative school contributions for facilities management costs for 2023/24  are shown in Table 7.  Table 8 showed the affordability gap for each scheme.  **Delegated Budgets**  The Authority must 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.  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 differs, as do the primary / secondary funding differential and the basic entitlement weighting between key stage 3 and key stage 4.  Table 9 showed the funding to be delegated to primary and secondary  schools in 2023/24.  **Essex Formula for Funding Schools**  Table 10 showed the proposed hourly rates that will be funded in 2023/24.  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**.  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.  Table 11 showed how the funding is distributed across each factor using the  NFF 2023/24 values inflated by the non-fringe area cost adjustment.  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.  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  showed the increase schools will receive per pupil in 2023/24.  Table 14 showed the number of schools in 2023/24 that require additional  funding through the minimum per pupil level.  **Central Expenditure**  Table 15 showed the proposed central expenditure for the Early Years Block and the Central School Services Block for 2023/24.  **High Needs Block**  Table 16 showed the proposed allocation of the High Needs Block (HNB) for  2023/24.  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.   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   SEN Support Services increases **£1.9 million** due to an additional  **£1million** 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**.  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**.  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.  **Risks**  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.  **Questions**  RS was disappointed we have got a 3.4% increase in funding. We have yet  to hear what changes might happen in terms of top up funding. RS was not  happy with the funding for special schools.  SM had a question around the allocations of delegation in Table 11. At 9.4  which was just before Table 11, YSW explained the delegation increases  from **£1.017 billion** to **£1.082 billion**. Then there is a further **£37 million**  from the Mainstream Schools Additional Grant. I can see how the totals for  primary and secondary come to the **£1.082 billion** that you referred to.  Then the next Table 12 shows how that works. It is a table which shows the  Basic figures for primary key stage 3 and key stage 4. I am struggling to  see where the **£37 million** comes in from the Mainstream Schools  Additional Grant which was announced in November so that everything has  been run for next year. Can you explain that?  YSW stated that will be paid on top of the figure. The figures shown in  Tables 11 and 12 sit outside of these. We will calculate and go out to  schools and then formulate section A, Part 1 of the statement and the  additional grant will be paid on top of that. For Academies they will be paid  directly by the ESFA and will come via the Local Authority for maintained  schools.  SM spoke about the additional special grant of 3.4% of the delegated  funding of the **£1.082 billion**. SM referred to Table 12 which he felt was the  core of this. That shows increases of anything between 6.71 for primary  and 3.26 for secondary for key stage 4. Are you saying that because of this  that Mainstream Schools Additional Grant, the monies received when  everything is worked through will be slightly higher.  YSW confirmed “Yes”. It will be how it will be allocated. Schools will be  able to take their October census to apply that to give them indicative  allocation to give the additional guide to what they will receive. YSW would  expect the funding would be mainstreamed into DSG for 2425.  JF commented usually it is good news. However, JF felt disappointed it  does not touch the side of the increasing costs that schools are facing for  this year. It is good news, it has gone up, but it is not really sufficient to do  the business. It has been based on a premise that is not really reasonable.  Voting – majority agreed.  **Recommendations:**  The Forum noted the School Funding Settlement for 2023/24, including the allocation for each DSG Block at 4.5;  The Forum noted the funding for the PFI Affordability Gap at 8.1;  The Forum noted the total delegation for primary and secondary schools at 9.3;  The Forum noted the proposed allocation of the High Needs Block at 12.1;  The Forum noted the risks and opportunities at 13.1;  The Forum agreed the funding for the Growth Fund at 5.9;  The Forum agreed the funding for the Falling Rolls Fund at 7.3;  The Forum agreed the funding rates for early years providers at 9.8; and  The Forum agreed the central expenditure for the Central School Services  Block and Early Years Block at 11.1. |
| **4.** | **Any other business, feedback from schools through Associations and from Schools Forum representatives on other Bodies.**  **ASHE**  CH reported concerns for secondary schools. There will be concerns about the budgets going forward. In addition to that the recent announcement for energy support, for 12 months for further support but the level of help will be reduced which is a concern particularly for special schools. There is concern with current industrial unrest with various other professional associations including secondary headteachers which will create turbulence going forward. Also concerned about the announcement from the Prime Minister about Maths going to the age of 18 years. Recruiting decent Maths teachers is a most challenging issue for all schools. There are also a lot of issues aimed at students who do not get a standard pass and required to take their GCSE again between the age of 16 and 18. That is actually a percentage of young people take A level, so it begs so many education, financial and recruitment questions.  There are other ongoing post pandemic concerns for secondary schools such as behaviour growing issues and financial implications. Attendance is still an issue for most schools, and also an increase in elective home education and protocols around that.  JG agreed with CH. SS was also in agreement. SS stated it is a shame with all this funding with combining the pandemic, attendance and mental health and everything else, that there is not an allocated fund that can come from S62 support. In the bigger picture that would support schools greatly and reduce the costs that we have for all those home visits.  **EPHA**  HPK highlighted mainstream financial pressures and particularly energy price increases. In small schools our staff are suffering as well as everyone else. We do not know where we will be with unfunded pay awards and has an impact on schools’ budgets. Also, other cost of living, inflationary pressures, price of food, consumables, transport. In the primary sector recruitment and support staff, better pay and hours elsewhere. There is more pressure in primary schools in particular supporting SEN children, SEMH attendance is putting added pressures. We are keen to see the development and funding of the ESSET outreach proposal. We think that will help capacity and support within primary schools as well as developing provision in mainstream schools.  We are still coping with anxiety of parents and pupils around Covid and what that means. We know it has not gone away and there are lots of people still testing positive. Then we have that pressure that they are not in school ,and we have to cover their duties.  **ESSET**  RS agreed with all of the above and all our special schools are suffering from being small schools. We do not see how budgets will balance in the coming year. There are issues around funding and huge concerns. We are awaiting outcome on banding. We have all done our banding moderation.  RS ended on a positive note about the Hawthorn free school that was first proposed in 2015. Finally, it has opened in temporary accommodation. We have 15 children with another 10 joining soon. The new build is planned to be finished by 2024.  **PRUs**  PC added some good news on our behalf at Colchester. Our new buildings should be open just after half-term. There is an increase in demand with 7 pupils in North-East Essex. Despite the need we are not being funded enough. A group of us are going to be working on outreach support in the short-term.  JB reported in the South there has not been an increase in number. There has been an increase of 2 in places, so schools are not benefitting from any expansion which limits our ability to offer any outreach support.  There has been a high rate of staff absence due to general illness and Covid and various strains, along with mental health issues.  **Early Years – Nurseries**  DW had spoken outside of the meeting with YSW about maintained nursery schools and the supplementary funding has been welcomed. Like everyone else we face the same challenges. DW welcomed that money was put aside for Early Years High Needs intervention strategy.  **ESGA**  JH mentioned wellbeing of staff and there is still a lot of sickness. Attendance has been hit as well. Some children have not settled back into school because they had been isolated so much. There are relationship problems among youngsters. Hoping next year that it will improve, and children will catch up a lot more.  **Unions**  JF had nothing further to say other than mentioned at the last meeting. The position remains the same, budget and financial proposals are not indicative, and Government is not listening to what is going on.  **Unison**  MS had the same comments as last time. The funding from the Government is not coming through for schools to deliver the education that is needed.  **Church Rep**  No report. JS had to leave to teach.  **High Needs Sub-Group** -  This group had not met.  **Finance Review Group**  This group had not met.  **Early Years Sub-Group**  The group had met and the minutes were attached to the agenda.  **Any Other Business**  None. |
| **5.** | **Minutes of 30th November 2022**  Corrections on Page 36 - Robin Taverner had left the meeting. He requested the school referred to should be St Mary’s, Woodham Ferrers, not St. Mary’s, Witham.  With that correction members were happy to accept the minutes as a true record. |
| **6.** | **Minutes Action Log –**  Early Years surplus funding – ongoing.  YSW informed we have now had **£2.6 million** agreed by Schools Forum to be allocated for additional posts agreed at the last Forum. Proposals to be brought to the next Schools Forum in May 2023. |
| **7.** | **Third Quarter Budget Update 2022/23 – Yannick Stupples-Whyley**  YSW updated Schools Forum on the outturn position for the year-ended  31st March 2023 for both the Schools Budget and Education Functions.  Based on the 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.  This is set out in Annex A.  **Central School Services Block - £163,000 overspend**  There is current pressure where expenditure has not reduced in line with  academy conversions. Going forward the pressure has been mitigated that  we are not expecting any pressure in 2023/24.  **High Need Block - £7.6 million underspend**  Forecasting **£1.1 million** overspend for maintained schools and academies.  This is due to an increase in EHCP’s of **£656,000,** and also an increase in  the number of pay 16 learners which is **£407,000**. There is an increase in  the number and complexity of people in independent special schools and  that is forecast at **£1.6 million** overspend. This is currently showing them at  **£11.8 million** underspend. There is also **£919,000** overspent on individual  people resulting in agreements due to medical need to **£141,000** increase in  volume of **£95,000**, and some funding for inclusion framework projects of  **£583,000** of alternative provision is for cut involved and **£43,000** overspend.  This is due to an increase of 46 pupils above the budgeted people forecast.  Both inclusion is for capital **£169,000** underspend under **£50,000** for  therapies and other health services is forecasting an overspend of  **£633,000**.  There are three new contracts. There is also an increased demand and  complexity of people going into therapy related services.  **Early Years Block - £1.2 million underspend**  Early Years underspend forecasting lower take up of 3 and 4-year old  Places and work only being funded for. This is being held as a contingency  as it is likely to be clawed back in July 2023.  **Risk and Opportunities**  Table 2 showed a number of risks and opportunities that are not included in the outturn forecast. There is insufficient certainty to quantify the risks.  HNB – There is a change in methodology in calculating special equipment. This will increase the overall cost and calculated at the year end and do not have a forecast what the increased costs will be.  **Forecast DSG Balance**  Table 3 showed the forecast DSG position on 31st March 2023 and expecting to end 31st March 2023 with a **£15.3 million** surplus.  **Education Functions**  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.  Also, at the meeting of 6th October 2021, maintained members of Schools  Forum agreed to de-delegate from maintained school **£40.67**.  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 showed the total  funding de-delegated from maintained schools in 2022/23.  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.  Table 7 showed the forecast outturn at Period 8 (November 2022) which is a **£44,000** overspend.  **Recommendation:**  That Forum noted the forecast outturn position for the year ended  31st March 2023. |
| **8.** | **Forward Plan – Yannick Stupples-Whyley**  YSW read this out and confirmed the dates of future meetings.  **Recommendation:**  The Forum noted the dates of future meetings and that additional items as proposed by Schools Forum are included in the Forward Plan. |
|  | **Chair’s Closing Comments**  JF informed Forum how long RL has been on the forum.  JF read out a message received from Clare Kershaw for RL.  “I am sorry that I am not here today to deliver this on your last day as Chair of the Schools Forum. Whilst you are remaining on the Forum, I thought it would be good to remind you.  The first meeting was on 14th January 2003 with yourself, CK and JF attending.  At the meeting on 3rd December 2008, you were nominated as Chair and a lot has happened. To date there have been:   * 12 Secretaries of State, your first being Ed Balls. * 6 Prime Ministers * 4 Directors of Education * The introduction of Academies and the DSG has increased to £1.3 billion in 2022/23 from £761.9 million in 2008/09.   As Chair you have overseen:   * The SEND and approved Capital Programme * Countless School Funding consultations, even more Budget Monitoring reports, on-going transition to direct National Funding Formula * Kept Schools Forum going during Covid.   You have also overseen the transition of Schools Forum into an effective decision-making body and effective development of sub groups to become consultative groups, guiding the Forum to making decisions.  On behalf of ECC and the Schools Forum I want to thank you for your commitment to Schools Forum and the Sub Groups over the last 20 years. Also, for your guidance to the Local Authority and Schools Forum, and for both being an effective Chair and also your commitment to developing the Forum.  I know you will still remain a member of the Forum, but we will deeply miss your leadership going forward. You leave it with large shoes to fill and so there is no pressure on Ruth going forward and a legacy that has impacted on the quality of education for children and young people across Essex. You have much to be proud of.” With kindness, Regards, Clare.  JF said “I would like to add my thanks to your as Vice Chair. You have been a real pleasure to serve under and I am looking forward to doing the same for Ruth.”  RL said he was very humbled by the views, and he wanted to thank JF for his support and felt we had worked very well together. RL wanted to thank everyone for attending the meetings and developing a good relationship with the Local Authorities.  RL concluded the meeting and looked forward to seeing everyone on 29th March 2023 virtually.  **Date of next meeting – Exceptional Schools Forum meeting will be held on 29th March 2023 at 8.30 a.m. virtually.** |
|  | **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS:**  **17th May 2023 – in person**  **12th July 2023 – virtual**  **27th September 2023 – in person**  **29th November 2023 - virtual**  **10th January 2024 - virtual** |