

Notice of Meeting

Schools Forum

Monday, 6th June, 2016 at 5.00 pm
in Shaw House Church Road Newbury
RG14 2DR

Date of despatch of Agenda: Friday 27 May 2016

For further information about this Agenda, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact Jo Reeves on (01635) 519486
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Agenda - Schools Forum to be held on Monday, 6 June 2016 (continued)

Forum Members:	Reverend Mark Bennet, Patricia Brims, Ben Broyd, Catie Colston, Chris Davies, Paul Dick, Anthony Gallagher, Keith Harvey, Reverend Mary Harwood, Angela Hay, Jon Hewitt, Peter Hudson, Stacey Hunter, Brian Jenkins, Sheilagh Peacock, Derek Peaple, Chris Prosser, David Ramsden, Clive Rothwell, Graham Spellman, Bruce Steiner (Vice-Chairman), Suzanne Taylor, Keith Watts and Charlotte Wilson
Councillors:	Dominic Boeck, Anthony Chadley and Mollie Lock
Officers:	Caroline Corcoran, Ian Pearson, Jo Reeves, Claire White and Annette Yellen

Agenda

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7	Exclusion of the Press and Public RECOMMENDATION: That members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item as it is likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information of the description contained in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 specified in brackets in the heading of each item. Rule 8.10.4 of the Constitution also refers.	

Part II

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Part I: Continuation of meeting at 5.45pm

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Andy Day
Head of Strategic Support

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Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

SCHOOLS FORUM

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY, 14 MARCH 2016**

Forum members Present: Reverend Mark Bennet, Patricia Brims, Ben Broyd, Chris Davies, Reverend Mary Harwood, Jon Hewitt, Peter Hudson, Stacey Hunter, Brian Jenkins, Sheilagh Peacock, Chris Prosser, Graham Spellman, Bruce Steiner, Suzanne Taylor, John Tyzack, Keith Watts and Charlotte Wilson

Also Present: Avril Allenby (Early Years Service Manager), Cathy Burnham (Principal Education Psychologist), Ian Pearson (Head of Education Service), Jane Seymour (Service Manager, SEN & Disabled Children's Team) and Claire White (Finance Manager (Schools)) and Councillor Dominic Boeck (Executive Portfolio: Education), Councillor Roger Croft (Executive Portfolio: Leader of Council, Strategy & Performance, Finance), Councillor Mollie Lock (Shadow Executive Portfolio: Education and Young People, Adult Social Care) and Jo Reeves (Policy Officer)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Paul Dick, Anthony Gallagher, Keith Harvey, Angela Hay, Derek People, David Ramsden and Clive Rothwell

PART I

1 Minutes of previous meeting dated 25 January 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th January 2016 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2 Actions arising from previous meetings

Action 1 had been completed and could be removed from the list of actions arising from previous meetings.

Jane Seymour provided a verbal update regarding action 2:

Actions undertaken by other Local Authorities to reduce their spending on High Needs: Jane Seymour advised that she had spoken to two other authorities, each predicting a £2m overspend in their High Needs Blocks. Their overspends were for similar reasons to West Berkshire, including increased use of Thames Valley Free School and increasing placements in special schools. They were looking at reducing their spending on special schools and resourced units. One authority had made a 1.5% reduction to schools funding and transferred the headroom from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. The other local authority had also moved its underspend in the Schools Block to support the High Needs Block.

Peter Hudson enquired whether there was any national or regional body of High Needs providers which could be pressurised to reduce their charges. Jane Seymour confirmed that there was a National Association of non Maintained Special Schools.

John Tyzack asked how many other local authorities had been approached; Jane responded that five had been contacted and two responded.

Reverend Mark Bennett questioned what options there were for joint working with these other local authorities to reduce the costs of out of area placements in the medium term. Jane Seymour advised that a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment would be undertaken

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with the other authorities to examine opportunities to work together, in particular looking at post 19 provision. She further explained that there was a pan-Berkshire commissioning group which might be able to look at achieving economies of scale with therapy services.

Buy in rate for CALT service: Jane Seymour advised that 59 schools buy the full 'Plus' service and six schools used a 'pay as you go' option. This was 71% of schools in West Berkshire.

Breakdown of entry points at which placements into special schools is most prevalent: Jane advised that the pressure points in order of prevalence were as follows:

- Top primary/ low secondary
- Foundation stages 1 and 2 (children who never went into mainstream provision)
- Year 9 (usually due to emotional and behavioural difficulties)

Potential financial impacts of risks associated with savings options: Jane advised that the report for agenda item 8 included this information.

Options to reduce savings on non West Berkshire Special Schools: Jane reported that she was pleased to announce that reduced fees had been negotiated.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

4 Membership

Jo Reeves presented the latest information on the membership of the Schools Forum.

This was John Tyzack's last meeting of the Schools Forum, having announced his resignation as a Primary Governor representative at the previous meeting. John Tyzack had been the Chairman of the Schools Forum since it was established in 2002 and had been a Governor at various Primary Schools in the District for some 29 years. He planned to accept the role as the Foundation Governor at Enborne Primary School. Jo Reeves, speaking on behalf of all the Schools Forum members, thanked John Tyzack for his eminent service to the Schools Forum and the community.

It was noted that Peter Hudson had come to the end of his term as a Primary School Governor representative on the Schools Forum. John Tyzack thanked him for his service and noted that he had stood again in the recent election for Primary governors.

Chris Davis, Headteacher at Francis Baily Primary School, had replaced Kate House as a Primary Headteacher representative. Ben Broyd, Learner Services Manager at Newbury College had replaced Fadia Clarke as the Non School Post 16 Provider representative. Both were welcomed to the Schools Forum.

The election for two Primary School governor representatives had closed and the successful candidates would be announced on Friday 18th March 2016.

RESOLVED that the changes to the membership of the Schools Forum were noted.

5 DSG Budget Monitoring 2015/16 Month 10

The Schools Forum considered a report (Agenda Item 6) which set out the current position of the services funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant, highlighting any under or overspends forecasted at month 10 of the 2015/16 financial year.

At the end of January 2016 the total DSG overspend position forecast for year end was £602k, compared to the month 9 forecast of £495k overspend, all in the high needs block.

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The Schools Block was expected to be largely on-line. Any under spends in the growth and falling rolls fund (contingency) budget, primary schools in financial difficulty budget, and other de-delegated services would be ring fenced and carried forward to 2016/17 and would not impact on the overall position of the DSG.

Although Month 10 monitoring was showing no variance on the early years block, the latest forecast using data from the January census was that there would be a large under spend as the actual number of hours of provision being funded had not seen a significant increase in year as expected. Furthermore, the number of children the Council was to receive funding for in year (an average of the two January censuses) was greater than the actual number of children accessing early years provision.

The High Needs Block anticipated overspend had increased since month 9, mainly due to reaching agreement with the two special schools on additional place funding where they have admitted pupils over their allocated places. The pressure of new placements in non West Berkshire Special schools, mainly Thames Valley Free School, and top ups at the PRUs remained.

In addition to the £604k overspend on the high needs expenditure budget, the budget for this block was set £127k over the actual grant available. This means that £731k would need to be met from the 2016/17 allocation of DSG.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

6 DSG Budget 2016/17

The Forum considered a report (Agenda Item 7) which provided an update on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding for 2016/17 and an overview of the total current budget position. Other reports on the agenda went into further detail on the high needs and early years' blocks. The 2016/17 budgets for these blocks would need to be agreed at this meeting.

The Department for Education (DfE) announced the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) settlement for 2016/17 on 17th December 2015. DSG funding is split into 3 funding blocks – schools, early years and high needs, each calculated in a different way. There was no increase to the funding rates for the schools block and early years block, but there was a small increase to the high needs block allocation.

The 2016/17 budget estimates had been revised since the last meeting based on the most up to date information. The current overall position was shown in Table 2, with a more detailed breakdown by cost centre shown in Appendix B to the report.

TABLE 2

2016/17 Estimate	DSG Funding £'000	Budget Estimate £'000	Headroom/ (Shortfall) £'000
Schools Block	95,870	95,870	0
Early Years Block	7,337	7,134	203
High Needs Block	20,206	21,584	(1,378)
Total	123,413	124,588	(1,175)

Schools Block

In order to meet DfE deadlines, this block was decided at the last meeting of the Schools' Forum and was now balanced and set for 2016/17. Headroom available in this block was

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transferred to the high needs block (total transfer of funding £848k). No further changes could be made.

Early Years Block

Early years funding for 2016/17 would be based 5/12 on the January 2016 census and 7/12 on the January 2017 census. For the purpose of setting the budget for 2016/17 the figures from the January 2016 census only had been used. This assumed that the numbers of children accessing the free entitlement would not be significantly different next January.

The funding figures included an estimated net carry forward from 2015/16 of £577k. The actual should not differ significantly from this as most payments for the year had been made.

The budget estimate for 2016/17 assumed the same level of take up as in 2015/16, and maintaining the same hourly rates. On this basis part of the under spend from 2015/16 would be required, but this still would leave £203k available as one-off funding. The proposals for this block were set out in another report on this agenda.

High Needs Block

The significant shortfall in funding in the high needs block for 2016/17 (£2.2m reduced to £1.4m after transfer from the schools block), was due mainly to the following factors:

- A significant over spend of £731k in the current year high needs block which will need to be met from next year's DSG.
- Carry forward of under spend from previous years in the high needs block have been used up in the current year (£345k in 2015/16).
- Pupil numbers and needs in the high needs block continue to rise without a corresponding increase in funding.
- Only a minor increase (£284k) to our funding allocation to go towards increasing numbers and demands.

Another report on the agenda set out the proposals for balancing the high needs block over a two year period.

Although the over spend in the current year's high needs block required a one off saving (being met from the schools block in 2016/17), there was still a significant ongoing shortfall of £1.5m in the high needs block which needed to be addressed and which could only be met by a reduction in funding rates, reduction in services, and by increases in charges to schools.

Reverend Mark Bennett questioned whether the forecasting assumptions regarding the number of places in the Early Years Block meant that there was no ambition to increase take-up of early years places, particularly among hard-to-reach families. Avril Allenby advised that the number of places was usually consistent with the new settings opening as others closed. Take up of places for two year olds had increased but not to the level that had been hoped .

Councillor Dominic Boeck asked what risk there would be to carry forward a deficit in the High Needs Block into 2016/17. Claire White advised that the risk would be minimal as there was a proposal to balance the budget over two years. Councillor Boeck referred to the deficit at John O'Gaunt school and enquired whether there would be similar risks to the local authority if a deficit budget was set in the High Needs Block (HNB). Claire White confirmed that the only risk of setting a deficit HNB budget would be to the DSG and not to the Council.

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Bruce Steiner commented that there was always a risk in setting a budget where one did not know what the available funding would be. Claire White agreed that this was the case for the Early Years budget. The HNB budget was the more unpredictable budget.

Peter Hudson posited that there was a risk in moving funding from the Schools Block to the HNB because individual schools might find it difficult to set a balanced budget or to keep to their budget, and that the local authority might become liable for their deficits. Claire White explained that schools were responsible for their own budgets and any resultant deficit. There was a Schools in Financial Difficulty Fund but there was a long period of intervention and support between the local authority and the school before they became eligible to apply for that fund. John Tyzack commented that the Schools Forum no longer dealt with as many applications for the Schools in Financial Difficulty Fund as it once had.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

7 High Needs Budget 2016/17

The Forum considered a report (Agenda Item 8) which presented saving options for balancing the high needs budget for 2016/17. The previous two rounds of meetings of the Heads Funding Group (HFG) and Schools' Forum (SF) had received reports setting out the funding position of the high needs budget for 2016/17. These reports had detailed the services making up the high needs budget, and possible savings options in order to close a £1.9m estimated funding gap. The reasons for this gap were as summarised again below:

- A significant over spend in the current year high needs block which will need to be met from next year's DSG.
- The carry forward of previous years' under spend has supported the budget up to now, but this was one off funding which has now all been used up.
- Pupil numbers and needs in the high needs block continue to rise without a corresponding increase in funding.
- The DfE has provided only a small increase to our funding allocation which falls significantly short of our increasing numbers and level of support of pupils being funded from this budget.

At the meeting of the Schools Forum on 25th January 2016, the members acknowledged all the options and did not rule any out. As part of setting the schools block budget for 2016/17, it was agreed that £848k of funding would be transferred from the schools' block funding to the high needs budget as a contribution towards the savings required.

In the meantime Officers had revised the estimates for the current year forecasts and the budgets for next year, using the latest pupil placement and other relevant data.

The overall position for 2016/17 was now a shortfall of £1,378k compared to £1,915k as reported in January 2016. The reasons for the £537k change were:

- Transfer of funding from the Schools Block: shortfall reduced by £848k
- Increase in 2015/16 overspend: shortfall increased by £106k
- Increase in 2016/17 estimate for top ups: shortfall increased by £205k

Ian Pearson drew the Forum's attention to the amendment report which had been circulated at the meeting and the briefing note provided under Item 12 - Any Other Business. The previous week, the government had launched consultations on schools funding. The consultations had been launched after the publication of the agenda and report for this meeting of the Schools Forum. The amendment had been recommended

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by officers to ensure that the Forum's financial planning was compatible with the proposals outlined in the consultation.

The consultation that had been launched regarding mainstream schools funding proposed a national funding formula. The decision at the previous meeting of the Schools Forum to move the forecasted headroom in the Schools Block to the High Needs Block would have no impact on mainstream schools funding from 2017/18 because it would be based on a national formula and not historical funding levels.

Regarding the consultation on the High Needs Block (HNB), the government view was that an entire overhaul was necessary on how the HNB was funded. Commitments had been made to look at the way local authorities received funding and it was thought that the HNB funding should reflect the increase in places and the higher levels of needs being supported. It was proposed that proxy measures be used to determine the extent of the funding.

It was proposed that in the future, schools would be funded directly by the Schools Funding Agency, whereas High Needs funding would continue to be received and then distributed by local authorities.

It had been suggested that High Needs funding in 2017/18 would be at a similar level to expenditure in 2016/17. Ian Pearson advised that the Schools Forum needed to be careful not to reduce the budget so far in 2016/17 that the funding in 2017/18 was disadvantaged. Ian Pearson pressed the need however to balance the High Needs budget.

Table 1 of the amendment report summarised the savings (totalling £647k) that were now being proposed. It was still proposed that a two year approach was adopted in balancing the budget.

TABLE 1	2016/17 £	2017/18 £
Total Saving Required:	1,378,170	888,610
1. Resourced unit place funding – reduction in places	29,170	
2. FE College Top Up – reduce fees by 10%	94,330	
3. PRU Top Ups – reduce daily rate		76,950
Alternative Curriculum from 1/9/16 – reduce by £20.25 per day	107,730	
Reintegration Service from 1/9/16 – reduce by £10.25 per day	41,120	29,370
4. PRU top ups – increase contribution from schools		
Alternative Curriculum from 1/9/16 – increase by £750 p Pupil per year	24,000	12,000
Reintegration Service from 1/9/16 – increase by £10 per day	13,420	9,580
5. PRU top ups Reintegration service – increase by 6 th no. of weeks paid for by schools from 1/9/16	41,390	29,570
10. Efficiency savings in Language and Literacy Units	18,400	
13. Pre School Teacher Counselling – Council cut, won't be funded by DSG	85,000	
14. Learning Independence for Travel – Council cut, will be partly funded by DSG	35,000	
Savings Proposed	-489,560	-157,470
Shortfall Remaining after Proposed Savings	888,610	731,140
Additional resources available in 2017/18		-731,140

The savings above were colour coded according to their likelihood of being achieved:

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- **Green**: certain it could be achieved as within the Local Authority's control.
- **Yellow**: the reduction to rates/places would be made but as the budget was demand driven the saving level was uncertain (the figure is based on current demand).
- **Grey**: the reduction to budget was subject to negotiation with external organisations.

The savings that had now been removed totalled £402,350 and were as follows:

- The reduction in sensory impairment (£23,880)
- The reduction in places at Engaging Potential (£154,360)
- The reduction in the equipment budget (£10,000)
- The reduction in therapy services (£32,440)
- The removal of PRU outreach service (£117,000)
- CALT team – the increase in charges to schools (£20,000)
- Learning Independence for Travel (£40,000)
- FE College Top Ups (£4,670)

Ian Pearson explained that the services that were no longer proposed to be reduced were preventative and early intervention services which had the potential to reduce the pressure on the HNB further down the line. The savings as proposed above was proposed as the best way to safeguard essential services. The revised table would still mean that £489k of savings were required in 2016/17 and £157k was required in 2017/18.

Chris Davis enquired how likely the savings shown in grey were to be achieved. Jane Seymour responded that there was always a risk when savings were based on negotiations which had not yet been finalised, however there had been an underspend on Further Education college top ups which had enabled the budget to be reduced.

Chris Davis further asked what assurances could be offered that the savings would be successful in balancing the HNB and mitigating the trend of increased pressure. Ian Pearson advised that the number of children with Statements and EHC Plans could not be predicted, however underspends in some areas had been used to offset overspends in others. Services, in their forecasting for 2016/17 has assumed an increase demand on provision and this had been accounted for.

Chris Davis raised the point that there had been an anticipated £2m shortfall in the HNB for 2016/17 which was now £500k. He further asked for information on how the spend in that block could be controlled. Ian Pearson advised that budget setting had been more realistic and had taken into account the increased pressure.

Jane Seymour confirmed that the 2015/16 overspend had been calculated into the service budgets for 2016/17 and officers were looking at a strategic approach to reducing the overspend. For example, a new Autism Spectrum Disorder resource had recently been opened and another was planned to open in the next academic year.

Cathy Burnham contributed that research had been completed to establish the reasons for increased placements in specialist settings and why mainstream schools were less able to support children with high needs.

Ian Pearson advised that Language and Literacy Centres were no longer proposed to be removed because their early intervention prevented higher demand on other services.

Cathy Burnham advised that the Vulnerable Children's Grant of £60k was no longer considered for a budget reduction because it had a beneficial impact, despite being a small budget.

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Bruce Steiner acknowledged that a briefing note on the consultations for Item 12 – Any Other Business, at paragraph 4.8 stated that no transfers between funding blocks would be permitted. He enquired what the result would be if there was a surplus in one of the blocks. Ian Pearson advised that if the Forum members were minded to approve the High needs budget as laid out in the original report, it would not be possible to transfer the expected surplus of circa £400k back to the Schools Block in 2017/18. Therefore the amended savings proposals put forward a plan to balance the budget. Peter Hudson confirmed that this would mean any future overspend in one block could not be mitigated by an underspend in another block.

Peter Hudson opined that there was a disincentive to reduce the overspend in the HNB due to the likely implications of the consultation's proposals. Ian Pearson agreed that the High Needs budget 2016/17 would in part determine the 2017/18 budget. Peter Hudson suggested that if no savings were proposed then more funding would be received in 2017/18. Ian Pearson pressed the need to balance the budget.

Claire White pointed out that the main issue to consider was that the original proposals had been to create a surplus balance in 2017/18 which could be used to pay back the Schools Block, however this was likely to be impossible if the proposals in the consultation came to fruition. The aim should still be to balance the budget over two years.

Keith Watts congratulated Ian Pearson and the other officers for responding quickly to the consultation and keeping the Forum informed.

Councillor Roger Croft stated that he was not a voting member but would offer his opinion on the matter. He advised that he had considerable experience in trying to estimate government funding formulas and they had proved very hard to predict. It was always difficult to make savings but deferred savings were more difficult to achieve. Like an individual's debt was at risk of being passed on to their children, any deficit budget would be passed on to the next generation of Schools Forum members and officers to resolve. Councillor Croft warned against setting a deficit budget.

Graham Spellman asked for further information on savings 13 and 14 in the table on the amendment report. He questioned these as savings as they had not been funded by the HNB historically. Ian Pearson advised that saving 13, the Pre-School Teacher Counselling Service (PSTCS) was not and would continue not to be funded by the DSG, however the Heads Funding Group had considered the PSTCS to be of value to early years providers and therefore some of the underspend in the early years block would be used to support this service. Saving 14, Learning Independence for Travel (LIFT), had not been funded by the DSG but qualified for funding and it was proposed that £40k be used to fund a replacement of that service and an invest-to-save strategy.

Peter Hudson proposed that the Forum agree the High Needs Budget 2016/17 as laid out in report and as amended by the amendment report. Graham Spellman seconded the proposal. The Chairman invited the Committee to vote on the proposal; at the vote the proposal was carried.

RESOLVED that the High Needs Block Budget 2016/17 be approved as laid out in the report and as amended by the amendment report.

8 Early Years Budget 2016/17

(Councillor Dominic Boeck left the meeting at 6.20pm)

The Forum considered a report (Agenda Item 9) to set out for the Early Years Block the likely financial position and under spend to be carried forward for 2015/16, and detail the proposals for setting a balanced budget for this block in 2016/17.

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As at February 2016, 116 early year's providers were funded from the Early Years block.

In setting the 2015/16 early years block budget, it was assumed that the in year growth in numbers experienced in the previous few years would be repeated, and so the same percentage increase was included in the estimate. On this basis there was a shortfall in three and four year old funding, but the under spend in 2014/15 (mainly from two year old funding) was carried forward to support this budget without the need to adjust downwards the funding rates paid to providers. It was recognised that this would only be a solution for one year *if* all the carry forward was used in 2015/16.

Indicative figures from the January 2016 census were now available to estimate the funding for the year, and Spring term payments to providers had been estimated to be able to forecast total expenditure for the year. Table 2 sets out the current forecast on each budget line within the early years block.

Table 2

Early Years Block Budget	Budget 2015/16	Current Forecast	Variance
3 & 4 year old PVI Providers	4,673,650	4,281,550	-392,100
3 & 4 year old Nursery classes in schools	1,080,100	1,070,220	-9,880
3 & 4 year old Maintained nursery	808,730	749,730	-59,000
2 Year Old Funding – all settings	810,000	617,800	-192,200
Central Expenditure on Children under 5	79,820	86,470	6,650
Pupil Premium Grant and Deprivation Supplement	209,590	51,410	-158,180
Total Expenditure	7,661,890	6,857,180	-804,710
DSG Early Years Block funding	-7,004,800	-6,776,830	227,970
SEN Pre School Children (transfer funding to high needs block)	10,000	10,000	0
In Year Net Position (i.e. shortfall)	667,090	90,350	-576,740
DSG carry forward from 2014/15	-667,090	-667,090	0
Net Position Overall	0	-576,740	-576,740

The current figures indicated an overall under spend of £577k. The increase in numbers of 2, 3 & 4 year olds accessing the free entitlement had not materialised as forecasted and as in previous years, and this stability in numbers appeared to be a national trend.

The overall in year position was an over spend of £90k compared to the original estimate of £667k. Had the carry forward from 2014/15 not been available and the rates paid to providers had been reduced, this would therefore have resulted in an under spend but at a significant detriment to providers. This illustrated the volatility of this budget, and the need to have back up funding available.

The overall in year overspend of £90k would be met from the 2014/15 carry forward of £667k, leaving £577k available as one off funding in 2016/17. These figures were forecasts and the final figure for the year could vary by as much as £100k.

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The estimate for 2016/17 is set out in Table 3 (alongside the 2015/16 forecast), based on the following assumptions:

- The same number of hours of provision as per the 2015/16 actual for existing providers (adjusted for the actual number of weeks in the financial year for the maintained sector). No in year growth in hours of provision is assumed.
- Quality bands have been adjusted for each provider as appropriate according to the employee data in the January 2016 returns.
- The same funding rates as 2015/16 have been applied.
- An increase in PPG take up has been assumed.
- An increase in the centrally retained budget due to staffing costs in respect of the additional work involved in PPG and two year old assessments.
- The January 2016 census pupil numbers only have been used to predict the DSG funding for the full year. This assumes numbers will remain stable.
- The PPG grant matching the actual hours of take up.

Table 3

Early Years Block Budget	Forecast 2015/16	Estimate 2016/17
3 & 4 year old PVI Providers	4,281,550	4,382,000
3 & 4 year old Nursery classes in schools	1,070,220	1,133,080
3 & 4 year old Maintained nursery	749,730	779,380
2 Year Old Funding – all settings	617,800	611,440
Central Expenditure on Children under 5	86,470	128,100
Pupil Premium Grant and Deprivation Supplement	51,410	100,000
Total Expenditure	6,857,180	7,134,000
DSG Early Years Block	-6,776,830	-6,770,310
SEN Pre School Children (transfer funding to high needs block)	10,000	10,000
In Year Net Position (i.e. shortfall)	90,350	373,690
DSG EY Block carry forward from previous year	-667,090	-576,740
Net Position Overall	-576,740	-203,050

In order to balance the budget in 2016/17, part of the under spend from 2015/16 (£374k) would be required; leaving £203k. Rather than adjust funding rates downwards (which would be a significant negative impact on this sector), it was proposed to maintain the current rates, as set out in appendix B of the report, for a further year by utilising the carry forward. This included maintaining the deprivation rate of £0.47 per hour which is added to the pupil premium. From 2017 increased funding rates and a new national formula were then due to be implemented.

Like with the other aspects of schools funding, the Government had stated its intention to have a national early year's formula from 2017 but further details were unclear.

The Heads Funding Group supported the proposals set out in this report but in addition requested that part of the 2015/16 under spend be used to retain part of the pre-school teacher counselling service (the high needs budget proposal was to cut this budget by £85,000) at a cost of £45,000 in 2016/17.

Bruce Steiner proposed that the Early Years Budget 2016/17 be approved as laid out in the report including the recommendation from the Heads Funding Group. Brian Jenkins seconded the proposal. The Chairman invited the Forum members to vote on the proposal, which at the vote was carried.

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RESOLVED that the Early Years Block Budget 2016/17 be agreed as laid out in section 5 of the report and including the recommendation from the Heads Funding Group that part of the 2015/16 under spend be used to retain part of the pre-school teacher counselling service at a cost of £45,000 in 2016/17.

9 Work Programme 2016/17 including Forward Plan

The Forum considered the proposed Work Programme 2016/17 and Forward Plan (Agenda Item 10). The work programme largely followed the pattern from the previous year.

Jo Reeves reported that the incorrect heading would be corrected. There had also been an error in the dates for the meeting during term 1 (October 2016).

Graham Spellman proposed that the work programme 2016/17 be agreed, subject to the corrections being made. The proposal was seconded by Reverend Mary Harwood and at the vote was carried.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme 2016/17 and Forward Plan be agreed.

10 Home Education Review 2014/15

The Forum considered a report (Agenda Item 11) which presented the Home Education Review 2014/15.

Cathy Burnham explained that this report had been provided in answer to a query from Paul Dick on the cost per hour of home education provision. The home education budget was £300k and used by 37 pupils. The average cost was £8k per pupil, however calculating cost per hour of provision was difficult.

For example, for a pupil who used the service for the full academic year (38 weeks) at full capacity (25 hours per week), it would cost £213/week or £8.50/ hour. However if a child was able to attend at that capacity, one might wonder why they required the home education service.

A pupil who was ill for one term (12 weeks) and used the service for 10 hours/ week would cost £675/week or £67.50/hour.

Cathy Burnham advised that somewhere between £8.50/ hour and £67.50/ hour was the correct figure. To be more accurate it would be necessary to calculate the fixed costs and divide by the 37 pupils first, then look at each pupil individually.

Bruce Steiner thanked Cathy Burnham and Stacey Hunter for providing the report and advised that it in a time when Forum members wanted to control the budget, it provided reassurance.

RESOLVED that the Forum noted the report.

11 Any Other Business

(Reverend Mary Harwood left the meeting at 6.30pm)

Claire White drew the Forum's attention to the briefing note which had been circulated electronically immediately prior to the meeting and were also available in paper copy. This briefing had been prepared to inform Schools Forum members about two "stage one" consultations that had been published by the DfE following the publication of the agenda for the meeting in respect of the schools national funding formula and the high needs funding reform.

Both consultations were stage one – setting down the principles, and what to include in the formula. This stage would close on 17th April 2016. Second stage consultations

SCHOOLS FORUM - 14 MARCH 2016 - MINUTES

would follow, probably in the Summer Term, which would attach values to formula factors and provide indicative impacts on local authorities and individual schools. At this stage it was unknown whether West Berkshire will be at an advantage or not from these proposals. It was hoped that West Berkshire would benefit because schools were funded below the national average level.

The local school formula for 2017/18 would need to be agreed by the Council's Executive in October 2016, so it was likely that the decision making and consultation with schools would need to take place in a very short timescale.

Claire White described the elements of the schools block consultation, particularly drawing attention to a sparsity element which was not currently used by West Berkshire because the two mile cut off was deemed to be unfair. An exceptional growth fund however would be beneficial to west Berkshire Schools as it would support rapidly expanding and new schools.

(Suzanne Taylor left the meeting at 6.42pm)

Keith Watts asked for officers' comment on the government statement that schools would not just be funded on a historical basis. Claire White confirmed that the government had suggested that the funding would be based on need including proxy measures however it was dependent on the total amount of funding available.

Keith Watts advised that following the calculations of the f40 campaign group, West Berkshire would stand to have its budget increased by 4% by 2019. Claire White commented that some members of the group had advised the government in preparing the consultation.

(Chris Davis left the meeting at 6.45pm)

Claire White went on to outline the proposals contained within the High Needs funding consultation, in particular noting that funding would not be linked to the number of EHC plans issued as this would be a perverse incentive and there would be capital funding made available for expansion of specialist high needs provision.

Peter Hudson commented that the devil would be in the detail and would await the figures. He asked for the timescales; Claire White advised that the government had not provided a timetable for the consultation and implementation of proposals at this stage.

Keith Watts asked whether Forum members should respond to the consultation. Claire White advised that the council would be responding but urged members to respond on those points that they particularly held strong views on. Keith Watts commented that the National Union of Teachers had asked what weight would be applied to the responses of various consultees and were told that the government would 'take notice of its partners'.

Peter Hudson stated that this might be his last meeting of the Schools Forum, depending on the outcome of the recent election, and expressed that he had thoroughly enjoyed his time as a member.

Keith Watts stated that he had been a member of the Schools Forum for about the same time as John Tyzack and thanked him for his masterful chairing.

12 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting would take place on Monday 6th of June 2016, 5pm at Shaw House.

(The meeting commenced at 5.05pm and closed at 6.52pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature

Agenda Item 4

ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS SCHOOLS' FORUM MEETINGS 2015/16

Shaded rows are completed actions.

Ref No.	Date – Item No.	Action	Officer	Comment / Update
1.	25/01/16 – 8	<p>High Needs Block Budget 2016/17 – further data requested on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions undertaken by other Local Authorities to reduce their spending on High Needs • Buy in rates for CALT service • Breakdown of entry points at which placements into special schools is most prevalent • Potential financial impacts of risks associated with savings options • Options to reduce spending on non-WB special schools 	J. Seymour	A verbal update was provided at the meeting on 14 th March 2016
2.	14/03/16 - 5	<p>Membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SF to appoint a new Chair following John Tyzack's resignation • Two new primary governors to be announced following election 	<p>Schools Forum</p> <p>Jo Reeves</p>	<p>On the agenda for the meeting</p> <p>Catie Colston and Peter Hudson announced on Friday 18th March 2016 as primary governor reps</p>
3.	14/03/16 – 10	The corrected Work Programme to be circulated to all members	Jo Reeves	Circulated on Tuesday 22 nd March 2016
4.	14/03/16 – 12	<p>Any Other Business – Schools Funding consultations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All to read and respond • Claire White and Ian Pearson to submit a response on behalf of the Council. 	Schools Forum/ Claire White and Ian Pearson	Council response submitted.

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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DSG Outturn 2015/16 and Carry Forward to 2016/17

Report being considered by: Schools Forum
On: 6th June 2016
Report Author: Claire White
Item for: Decision **By:** All Forum Members

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To set out the actual deployment of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in 2015/16, explaining the main variances and amounts to be carried forward to 2016/17

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1 To approve the utilisation of the DSG funds being carried forward from 2015/16 to 2016/17 as set out in section 8 of the report.

<b style="color: #008080;">Will the recommendation require the matter to be referred to the Council or the Executive for final determination?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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3. Introduction

3.1 The main source of funding for schools is the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). It is a ring fenced specific grant and can only be used on school/pupil activity. It is split between three funding blocks – schools, early years and high needs.

3.2 The majority of funding is delegated to schools, using national formula factors but applying local rates. The remainder is retained and spent centrally mainly on early years and specialist high needs provision, but also on some services for the benefit of all schools.

3.3 Centrally Retained Overspends, unless funded from outside the DSG, are carried forward and top sliced from the following year's DSG allocation. Underspends must be carried forward to support the school's budget in future years.

3.4 The Authority and Schools' Forum are responsible for ensuring that the DSG is deployed correctly, and monitoring of spend against the DSG needs to take place regularly to enable decision making on overspends/underspends and to inform future year budget requirements.

3.5 The Schools' Forum has received monitoring reports at each meeting held in the autumn and spring term during 2015/16.

4. Year End Position - Summary

4.1 Table 1 summarises the overall year end position for each DSG block, also comparing to the month 10 forecast which was used when setting the budget for 2016/17. The final position is an underspend of £253k. The breakdown for each cost centre within each block is detailed in Appendix A.

TABLE 1	Final Budget £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Actual Variance £'000	Month 10 Forecast Variance £'000
Schools Block	65,464	65,091	-373	-3
Early Years Block	7,630	6,868	-762	-805
High Needs Block	16,141	16,650	509	604
Support Service Recharges	721	721	0	0
Total DSG Expenditure	89,956	89,330	-626	-204
DSG Grant	-89,956	-89,583	373	228
Net Position	0	-253	-253	24

4.2 Note that the DSG grant variance is made up of £127k planned overspend in the high needs block, and £246k in relation to the early years block. This block cannot be accurately estimated until towards the end of the financial year because it is partly based on the in-year January census, unlike the other two blocks which are confirmed prior to the start of the financial year.

5. Schools Block

5.1 A breakdown of the variances in the schools block are shown in Table 2. No carry forward was assumed when setting the 2016/17 budget, so the total underspend of £373k is available for allocation in 2016/17.

TABLE 2	Final Budget £	Actual Spend £	Actual Variance £
Primary schools in financial difficulty	233,960	18,677	-215,283
Other de-delegated services	457,630	443,831	-13,799
Growth fund/falling rolls fund	322,160	158,563	-163,597
Maintained primary & Secondary school delegations	64,108,250	64,136,131	+27,881
Other centrally retained services	342,140	333,941	-8,199
Total Expenditure	65,464,140	65,091,143	-372,997

- 5.2 During 2015/16 there was only one school receiving funding from the schools in financial difficulty de-delegated fund. It is highly likely that there will be several bids for funding during 2016/17, and it is proposed to add the carry forward to the funding available in 2016/17 – this would provide a total budget of £332,600 for 2016/17.
- 5.3 For this and all other de-delegated services, the only other option is to hold the carry forward in the current year’s budget for each specific service, and use to reduce the cost of that de-delegated service to schools in the following year (in other words, to benefit only those schools that have pooled their budgets). This is the proposal for the other de-delegated services – the virtual school service £3k, and behaviour support service £11k.
- 5.4 The overspend on maintained school delegations is due to actual business rates being higher than originally budgeted for in the school formula. For maintained schools the adjustment is carried out in year, whereas for Academies the DSG is adjusted in the following year.
- 5.5 There were several schools benefitting from growth funding in 2015/16. No schools qualified for falling rolls funding. It is proposed that the underspend (net of the overspend on business rate delegations and underspend on the other centrally retained services) is added to the 2016/17 budget – this would provide a total budget of £433,920. In the Government’s consultation on 2017/18 school funding it is being proposed that growth funding will become part of the school formula, but until this is confirmed and the details are known it would be prudent to hold these funds for future growth, including the new primary school due to open in Newbury in September 2017.

6. Early Years Block

- 6.1 Table 3 summarises the outturn of the early years block.

TABLE 3	Final Budget £	Actual Spend £	Actual Variance £
3 & 4 year old funding	6,562,480	6,314,532	-247,948
2 year old funding	810,000	479,971	-330,029
PPG & deprivation funding	209,590	22,781	-186,809
Early years support team	47,680	50,579	2,899
Total Expenditure	7,629,750	6,867,863	-761,887
DSG Grant			246,260
Net Total			-515,627

- 6.2 The actual numbers of hours of provision for 2, 3, and 4 year olds remained much the same in 2015/16 as in 2014/15 and did not see the level of increase that had

been experienced in previous years and had been budgeted for. It had also been predicted that the DSG would be uplifted based on this increase being recorded in the January 2016 census. Only a minimal increase to the DSG for early years in relation to 2015/16 is expected (in June 2016), and the budget for this will be adjusted accordingly when the amount is notified.

- 6.3 The uptake of pupil premium grant has also been extremely low, and the DfE is not clawing back any funding given for this.
- 6.4 Month 10 forecast was for a net underspend of £577k, and this figure was assumed as funding available in setting the 2016/17 early years block budget. The actual is £516k, which is £61k lower. It is proposed to reduce the available funding in the early years block budget accordingly (i.e. to reduce the assumed carry forward of DSG underspend at the end of 2016/17 from £148k to £87k).

7. High Needs Block

- 7.1 Table 4 summarises the outturn of the high needs block.

TABLE 4	Final Budget £	Actual Spend £	Actual Variance £
Place Funding	4,200,000	4,200,000	0
Top Up funding – WBC schools	4,203,120	4,322,678	119,558
Top up funding – non WBC schools	3,314,420	3,551,287	236,867
Top up funding – Further Education	990,040	937,842	-52,198
Top up funding - PRUs	1,061,000	1,267,764	206,764
Home Tuition	300,000	338,487	38,487
Engaging Potential	540,260	495,274	-44,986
Hospital Tuition	0	19,363	19,363
Sensory Impairment	227,440	244,083	16,643
Applied behaviour analysis	110,730	75,193	-35,537
Other centrally retained high needs budgets	1,194,000	1,197,836	3,836
Total Expenditure	16,141,010	16,649,806	508,797
DSG Grant			127,000
Net Total			635,797

- 7.2 The main overspends in the high needs budget are in relation to top ups, mainly for placements in specialist settings. This has been documented in reports throughout 2015/16, the main variances being placements in non WBC schools (particularly Thames Valley Free School) and PRUs.
- 7.3 The month 10 forecast was for a net overspend of £731k, and this figure was assumed as needing to be met from the 2016/17 high needs block budget. The actual is £635k, which is £96k lower. As the 2016/17 high needs budget has been set with a £889k overspend, it is proposed to reduce this budgeted overspend accordingly (i.e. to reduce the assumed DSG carry forward of overspend at the end of 2016/17 to £793k).
- 7.4 In addition to the main accounts, the local authority operates a holding account which receives funding deducted from schools for pupils they exclude, and pays this funding out to schools receiving the excluded pupils or towards the cost of placements in PRUs for these pupils. There is a balance in this account of £40k, mainly due to pupils moving out of the authority and the other authority claims a lower sum or does not claim the funding at all. For some authorities we have a reciprocal agreement not to do so. It is proposed that these funds are added to the vulnerable children fund and used to help prevent exclusions from our schools.

8. Summary of the Carry Forward Proposals

- 8.1 Table 5 summarises the 2016/17 budget virements required to reflect the use of unspent 2015/16 DSG carried forward to 2016/17 – an amount of £252k, but an increase of £407k compared to that assumed when setting the 2016/17 budget.

TABLE 5	Original Budget 2016/17 £	Virement £	Revised Budget 2016/17 £
Primary schools in financial difficulty (90230)	117,320	215,280	332,600
Virtual Schools Service (90255)	229,130	3,150	232,280
Behaviour Support (90349)	203,890	10,640	214,530
Growth fund/falling rolls fund (90235)	290,000	143,920	433,920
Sub Total Schools Block		372,990	
DSG b/f grant (L990W)	154,380	-407,200	-252,820
DSG assumed 16/17 year end c/f grant (L999W early years block)	148,290	-61,130	87,160
DSG assumed 16/17 year end c/f grant (L999W high	-888,600	95,340	-793,260

needs block)			
DSG to be received in year	-89,870,720	0	-89,870,720
Sub Total DSG grant	-90,456,650	-372,990	-90,829,640

8.2 The effect on the DSG budget is an increase of £373k in various schools block budgets, and an overall reduction of £34k in the budgeted overspend of grant at the end of 2016/17.

8.3 In addition it is proposed that £40,000 is moved from the exclusions holding account to the vulnerable children fund.

9. Conclusion

9.1 The 2015/16 year end carry forward is significantly lower than in previous years, a reflection that there is no contingency in the early years and high needs blocks and that expenditure/numbers of specialist places is increasing year on year.

9.2 The forecasting has improved, with a much lower difference between the month 9 and 10 forecasts to the actual outturn, giving more confidence when it comes to setting the following year's budget.

10. Appendices

Appendix A – Dedicated Schools Grant 2015-16 Final Outturn

11. Heads Funding Group Recommendation

That the proposals as set out in section 8 of the report be agreed.

Appendix A

Dedicated School's Grant (DSG) 2015-16 FINAL OUTTURN									
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	
Budget manager	Cost Centre	Description	Final Budget	Month 10 Forecast	Agresso Actual Spend	SSRs	Published Outturn (E + F)	Actual Variance (E - C)	Comments on Variance
Ian Pearson	90019	DSG Servicing of Schools' Forum	36,840	36,840	31,209	18,464	49,673	-5,631	Members Expenses Underspend
Ian Pearson	90020	Primary Schools	47,457,760	47,457,760	47,481,192		47,481,192	23,432	Actual rates bills
Caroline Corcoran	90022	Universal Infant FSM Grant	0	0	0		0	0	
Ian Pearson	90024	EFA 6thform Grant	0	0	0		0	0	
Ian Pearson	90025	Secondary Schools	16,650,490	16,650,490	16,654,939		16,654,939	4,449	Actual rates bills
Ian Pearson	90027	Additional Grant for Schools	0	0	0		0	0	
Maxine Slade	90035	LAC Pupil Premium	0	0	0		0	0	
Ian Pearson	90038	Pupil Premium Grant	0	0	0		0	0	
Ian Pearson	90112	Special Costs Primary	29,080	29,080	28,546	9,904	38,450	-534	
Ian Pearson	90117	Special Costs Secondary	14,000	14,000	14,520	4,714	19,234	520	
Ian Pearson	90230	Schools in Financial Difficulty	233,960	233,960	18,677		18,677	-215,283	One approval in year - to carry forward balance
Ian Pearson	90235	School Delegated Contingency (Growth fund)	322,160	322,160	158,563		158,563	-163,597	Growth fund as per SF Jan '16. To carry forward balance
Ian Pearson	90236	Managed Moves/Exclusions Contingency	0	0	0		0	0	
Maxine Slade	90255	Virtual School Service	222,010	222,010	218,862	82,117	300,979	-3,148	Buy back income from non mainstream schools
Cathy Burnham	90349	Behaviour Support	192,540	192,540	181,903	75,196	257,099	-10,637	Buy back income from non mainstream schools
Caroline Corcoran	90583	CLA/MPA Licences	122,410	122,410	122,409		122,409	-1	
Caroline Corcoran	90743	Admissions	182,890	180,190	180,323	81,871	262,194	-2,567	Supplies and Services underspend
Schools Block Total			65,464,140	65,461,440	65,091,143	272,266	65,363,409	-372,997	
Ian Pearson	90010	Nursery Schools	808,730	749,730	751,200		751,200	-57,530	Actual hours of provision less than budget
Avril Allenby	90017	Early Years Support Team	47,680	54,330	50,579	35,535	86,114	2,899	
Avril Allenby	90018	Expenditure on 2 year olds	810,000	617,800	479,971		479,971	-330,029	Actual hours of provision less than budget
Avril Allenby	90036	Early Years Funding for PVI	4,673,650	4,281,550	4,491,803		4,491,803	-181,847	Actual hours of provision less than budget
Ian Pearson	90037	Early Yrs Funding Maintained Sector	1,080,100	1,070,220	1,071,529		1,071,529	-8,571	
Avril Allenby	90052	Early Years PFG & Deprivation Funding	209,590	51,410	22,781		22,781	-186,809	Minimal take up of premium
Early Years Block Total			7,629,750	6,825,040	6,867,863	35,535	6,903,398	-761,887	
Nicola Ponton	90026	Academy Schools RU Top Ups	419,730	419,730	418,346		418,346	-1,384	Demand led
Nicola Ponton	90539	Special Schools - Top Up Funding	2,730,940	2,865,940	2,815,857		2,815,857	84,917	Demand led plus increase in number of places funded.
Nicola Ponton	90548	Non WBC Special Schools - Top Up Funding	735,240	1,085,240	1,067,954		1,067,954	332,714	Placements in Thames Vallet Free School - less cost than NMS/ISP
Nicola Ponton	90575	Non LEA Special School (OofA)	905,320	827,100	829,669		829,669	-75,651	In year placement adjustments
Nicola Ponton	90579	Independent Special School Place & Top Up	1,583,850	1,550,100	1,527,967		1,527,967	-55,883	In year placement adjustments
Nicola Ponton	90580	Further Education Colleges Top Up	990,040	949,050	937,842		937,842	-52,198	Achieved through negotiations with Colleges by the SEN Team
Nicola Ponton	90617	Resourced Units top up Funding maintained	329,230	339,230	341,228		341,228	11,998	Demand led
Nicola Ponton	90618	Non WBC Resourced Units - Top Up Funding	27,860	44,240	36,768		36,768	8,908	Demand led
Nicola Ponton	90621	Mainstream - Top Up Funding maintained	459,980	481,980	477,633		477,633	17,653	Demand led
Nicola Ponton	90622	Mainstream - Top Up Funding Academies	213,240	183,240	181,648		181,648	-31,592	Demand led
Nicola Ponton	90624	Non WBC Mainstream - Top Up Funding	62,150	68,160	77,129		77,129	14,979	Demand led
Cathy Burnham	90625	Pupil Referral Units - Top Up Funding	1,061,000	1,261,000	1,267,764		1,267,764	206,764	Increase in number of Pupils funded by LA
Cathy Burnham	90626	Non WBC PRU - top up funding			11,800		11,800	11,800	Placement at Phenix College
Nicola Ponton	90627	Disproportionate No. of HN Pupils NEW	50,000	88,000	87,966		87,966	37,966	Demand led.
High Needs Block: Top Up Funding Total			9,568,580	10,163,010	10,079,571	0	10,079,571	510,991	
Cathy Burnham	90320	Pupil Referral Units	840,000	840,000	840,000		840,000	0	
Ian Pearson	90540	Special Schools	2,860,000	2,860,000	2,860,000		2,860,000	0	
Nicola Ponton	90584	Resourced Units - Place Funding (70)	500,000	500,000	500,000		500,000	0	
High Needs Block: Place Funding Total			4,200,000	4,200,000	4,200,000	0	4,200,000	0	
Rhian Ireland	90238	Sen Pre School Childrn	50,210	60,210	55,888	19,923	75,811	5,678	High number of complex children attending for more hours
Nicola Ponton	90240	Applied Behaviour Analysis	110,730	79,730	75,193		75,193	-35,537	In year placement adjustments
Rhian Ireland	90280	Spec Needs Spprt Team	261,950	258,950	259,246	145,128	404,374	-2,704	
Jane Seymour	90290	Sensory Impairment	227,440	244,060	244,083		244,083	16,643	Demand for visits from RBWM Sensory Consortium Service
Jane Seymour	90295	Therapy Services	315,430	324,430	324,932		324,932	9,502	Additional support for some children at Castle School.
Cathy Burnham	90315	Home Tuition	300,000	328,000	338,487		338,487	38,487	Increased number of students being supported .
Rhian Ireland	90555	LAL Funding	134,600	134,600	134,600		134,600	0	
Nicola Ponton	90565	Equipment For SEN Pupils	20,000	25,000	20,535		20,535	535	
Jane Seymour	90577	SEN Commissioned Provision (engaging Potential)	540,260	502,830	495,274	182,175	677,449	-44,986	Recharge to Other LA re one placement.
Cathy Burnham	90582	PRU Outreach	117,000	117,000	117,000		117,000	0	
Jane Seymour	90585	HN Outreach Special Schools	70,000	70,000	70,000		70,000	0	
Nicola Ponton	90610	Hospital Tuition	0	19,360	19,363		19,363	19,363	Specialist Hospital Tuition for WBC pupils
Rhian Ireland	90830	ASD Teachers	135,490	133,490	133,035	52,731	185,766	-2,455	
Rhian Ireland	90957	Early Intervention	0	0	0		0	0	
Cathy Burnham	90961	Vulnerable Children	60,000	60,000	58,836		58,836	-1,164	
Rhian Ireland	90965	SEN Inclusion Programme	29,320	24,820	23,764	13,132	36,896	-5,556	
High Needs Block: Central Funding Total			2,372,430	2,382,480	2,370,236	413,089	2,783,325	-2,194	
High Needs Block Total			16,141,010	16,745,490	16,649,806	413,089	17,062,895	508,796	
Total Expenditure All Funding Blocks			89,234,900	89,031,970	88,608,812	720,890	89,329,702	-626,088	
Support Service Recharges			720,890	720,890	720,890	-720,890	0	0	
TOTAL DSG EXPENDITURE			89,955,790	89,752,860	89,329,702	0	89,329,702	-626,088	
Ian Pearson	90030	DSG Grant Account	-89,955,790	-89,955,790	-89,582,526		-89,582,526	373,264	EY block actual lower than budgeted, plus planned overspend on HN block
NET DSG EXPENDITURE			0	-202,930	-252,824	0	-252,824	-252,824	

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School Funding Arrangements for 2017/18

Report being considered by: Schools Forum
On: 6/06/2016
Report Author: Claire White
Item for: Discussion **By:** All Forum Members

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To brief Members on the latest information from the Department for Education (DfE) regarding the consultations and arrangements for school funding in 2017/18.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1 To note the latest information and decision making timescale.

Will the recommendation require the matter to be referred to the Council or the Executive for final determination?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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3. Introduction

- 3.1 The first stage consultations on the school national funding formula and the high needs funding reform were published on 7th March, with a closing date of 17th April.
- 3.2 These consultations set down the principles, and what to include in the formula. At the time of preparing this report, the second stage consultations have not yet been published, and no timeline has been given by the DfE.
- 3.3 The second stage will attach values to formula factors and provide indicative impacts on local authorities and individual schools. We currently do not know whether West Berkshire will receive more funding or not as a result of these proposals. This will be a key determinant on whether any changes will need to be made to the existing West Berkshire school formula.
- 3.4 The same timetable as in previous year's will apply for setting the local school formula for 2017/18 (i.e. submission to the DfE by 31st October), so it is likely that the decision making and consultation with schools will need to take place in a very short timescale.

4. Schools national funding formula – summary of West Berkshire's response to the consultation

4.1 Rather than move to a "hard" national formula from 2019/20, the local authority and Schools' Forum should still play a role in determining a small proportion of the national funding allocation (i.e. the element outside the basic per pupil rate and lump sum) in order to respond more accurately to local need.

- 4.2 There should be a rationale for the weighting of funding between primary and the secondary key stages rather than just taking what is the current average distribution.
- 4.3 IDACI data should be updated more regularly, and a comprehensive system for identifying all children eligible for free school meals should be put in place in order to accurately target funding for deprivation.
- 4.4 The lump sum should be set as the amount that the smallest primary and secondary schools need in order to be viable.
- 4.5 If the lump sum does not resolve the funding viability issue of small schools and a sparsity factor is used, then this should be tapered downwards from the 2 mile indicator in order to avoid a funding “cliff edge” for those schools that are close to the 2 mile average..
- 4.6 Business rates should be set according to actual cost, as it is now. It does not fit a formula allocation.
- 4.7 There should be a national definition of a split site and how funding is allocated.
- 4.8 There should be a national agreement on how exceptional premises costs are funded.
- 4.9 Business rates, split sites, PFI and exceptional premises costs should not be funded based on “one off” historic spend (or a formula), but on current spend. It would be acceptable to use data from the previous year in setting the next year’s formula allocation as this is what currently happens with funding based on pupil numbers.
- 4.10 Historic spend is not a true indicator of growth fund requirements. This needs to be based on actual need for the coming year on an annual review basis.
- 4.11 There is concern over losing flexibility to transfer funding between blocks given the inter relationship between the schools and high needs block.
- 4.12 There is concern over moving Education Support Grant funded services into the DSG and then significantly cutting this funding – particularly as currently there is no correlation between this grant and actual spend on these services. Furthermore, a flat rate ESG disadvantages smaller authorities and should be a lump sum plus per pupil amount.
- 4.13 The Schools’ Forum should not be the decision maker on whether to fund statutory services.

5. High Needs Funding Formula – summary of West Berkshire’s response to the consultation

- 5.1 Agree that high needs funding should continue to be distributed to local authorities rather than directly to schools via their formula.
- 5.2 Agree that the use of proxy measures is the best solution for high incidence/lower cost high needs, but this does not necessarily work for low incidence/high cost needs such as autism, where assessed needs should be used instead of proxy measures.

- 5.3 There should be basic entitlement funding for high needs places based on the actual numbers recorded in the census, to reflect changes in the numbers of pupils being funded from the high needs budget. Currently there is no increase to our funding to reflect increases in numbers, which is contributing to the pressure in this budget.
- 5.4 Do not agree with making inter authority adjustments to funding. Local authorities should receive basic entitlement funding for high needs places in institutions within their location rather than for where pupils are resident. Other proxy factors will focus on residency which will drive funding towards top up payments.
- 5.5 To ensure a smooth transition, the proportion of funding based on 2016/17 should start high (say 80%) and gradually decrease (say 20% per year) over the 5 years.
- 5.6 Disagree with independent special schools receiving place funding. It has caused confusion, higher costs and inefficiency in the system with its introduction for non maintained special schools.

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School Balances 2015/16

Report being considered by: Schools Forum
On: 6th June 2016
Report Author: Claire White
Item for: Discussion **By:** All Maintained Schools Representatives

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report sets out for information purposes the year end balances for all maintained schools, highlighting those schools with a deficit or significant surplus.
- 1.2 This information can be used to identify if there are any schools whose financial management may be a cause for concern and require some support.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To note the report and determine whether any further information needs to be requested from specific schools.

Will the recommendation require the matter to be referred to the Council or the Executive for final determination?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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3. Introduction

- 3.1 The Scheme for Financing Schools was amended in 2015 in relation to school balances. The claw back of excess surplus balances was removed and has been replaced with a light touch review of all balances.
- 3.2 The scheme states: “In order to control surplus balances, the authority will report the balances held by each school at the end of the financial year to the Schools’ Forum (during the Summer term), alongside the actual and planned balance for the previous three years and any other data deemed to be of relevance. The Schools’ Forum may request individual schools to provide further information and/or attend a meeting of the Heads Funding Group if the data reported raises any concerns regarding their financial management in respect of their balances”.
- 3.3 This report provides an overview of school balances as at the end of 2015/16 and highlights those schools with a deficit or significant surplus.

4. Overview of School Balances as at 31st March 2016

- 4.1 The schools accounts for 2015/16 have now been closed and the closing balances for each school determined.
- 4.2 Table 1 summarises the overall revenue closing balances of West Berkshire Maintained schools compared to the previous year. A detailed breakdown per school is shown in Appendix A.

TABLE 1	As at 31 st	As at 31 st	Increase/(Decrease)	
	March 2015 £'000	March 2016 £'000	£'000	%
Nursery Schools	74	79	5	+6.8
Primary Schools	2,775	2,189	(586)	-21.1
Secondary Schools	(191)	(329)	(138)	-72.3
Special Schools	635	676	41	+6.5
Pupil Referral Units	729	616	(113)	-15.5
Total	4,022	3,231	(791)	-19.7

4.3 As would be expected, school revenue balances have decreased over the last year. This is by £791k or 20%, the greatest reductions being in primary and secondary schools. The overall level of balances does however remain high in special schools and PRUs.

4.4 A breakdown of the 2015/16 year end balances by type of fund is set out in Table 2.

TABLE 2	Main School Budget £'000	Pupil Premium £'000	Sports Fund £'000	After School Clubs £'000	Capital £'000	Total £'000
Nursery Schools	79	1		12	101	193
Primary Schools	1,684	339	166	148	471	2,808
Secondary Schools	-489	159			362	32
Special Schools	608	65	3	9	151	836
Pupil Referral Units	592	24			50	666
Total Balance	2,474	588	169	169	1,135	4,535

4.5 In addition to £3.2m being held in revenue balances, £169k is held in before and after school club funds and over £1.1m in capital balances. Of the revenue balances, £588k is unspent pupil premium grant.

5. Schools Closing in Deficit

5.1 Table 3 shows the financial position of schools opening and/or closing the year in deficit or who set a deficit budget for the year but closed in surplus (main school

revenue budget only – most schools account for their resource units, pupil premium grant and sports fund separately).

TABLE 3	Closing Balance 2014/15	Budget 2015/16	Closing Balance 2015/16	Movement in Balance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
John O'Gaunt	-605	-967	-1,018	-413
Birch copse	-5	4	4	9
Burghfield St Marys	-6	13	7	13
John Rankin Infants	-10	1	-44	-34
John Rankin Junior	-19	4	-126	-107
Mortimer St Johns	-21	0	-3	18
Mrs Blands	-7	1	5	12
St John the Evangelist	-18	2	29	47
Welford and Wickham	-3	1	4	7
Spurcroft	16	12	-102	-118
Sulhamstead & Ufton Nerve	34	17	-6	-40
Westwood Farm Infants	26	7	-11	-37
Westwood Farm Juniors	21	9	-30	-51
Kintbury	27	-3	53	26
Long Lane	20	-16	10	-10
Purley	9	-24	25	16

5.2 The 8 Schools closing the year in deficit have been asked to provide an explanation and what actions they are taking, and the responses received are provided in Appendix B. Although the number of schools closing the year in deficit has decreased (from 9 to 8), for 2 schools with unexpected deficits at year end the amounts are significant and are of concern. Most of the schools with an unexpected deficit had set a budget with little or no contingency.

5.3 Other than John O Gaunt, the schools that actually set a deficit budget in 2015/16 all closed in surplus, reflecting the hard work by all involved to achieve this.

- 5.4 There are a few schools that closed 2014/15 in deficit, set a balanced budget for 2015/16, but closed the year in deficit again. The scheme for financing schools has now been amended to require all schools closing in deficit to be subject to the same scrutiny as schools setting a deficit budget, even if they have set a balanced budget.

6. Schools with Significant Surpluses

- 6.1 Although the Schools' Forum has agreed to remove the claw back scheme for schools with excess surplus balances, it was agreed that information on high surplus balances would still be looked at. Appendix A also shows each school's revenue balance as a percentage of actual funding received in the year. Table 4 shows those schools with a surplus of greater than 10% of their funding.

TABLE 4	2015/16 Budget Surplus £	2015/16 P9 Forecast £	2015/16 Actual Surplus £	Percentage of Funding %	Balance in Excess of 10%
Victoria Park Nursery	0	38,356	63,047	13.28%	15,589
Bradfield	35,130	35,130	73,115	11.47%	9,354
Garland	50,940		132,349	14.91%	43,572
Lambourn	49,280	94,723	97,167	10.41%	1,341
Purley	-24,060	10,097	53,046	11.26%	5,924
Streatley	27,610	82,940	62,691	12.94%	14,259
The Castle	72,910	320,164	445,542	12.69%	94,393
Alternative Curriculum	50,170	35,205	425,361	29.70%	282,118
Reintegration Service	147,080	127,374	190,322	18.46%	87,242

- 6.2 Appendix A shows information on balances for the last three years, and other than the PRUs, none of the schools listed above have held excess surpluses for more than 2 years. The Schools' Forum will continue to monitor the position on an annual basis.
- 6.3 The PRUs have had delegated budgets for three years now, and it has been a learning process for all involved, in trying to balance the volatile nature of their funding (top up funding following the pupil) with setting a realistic top up rate. Their high balances have been taken into account by setting a lower top up rate in 2016/17.

- 6.4 Likewise, the special schools have similar funding arrangements albeit that their pupil numbers are less volatile. The Castle school held on to high balances rather than spend them, in preparation for the original proposals for the 2016/17 high needs budget which were that special schools would have a reduction in their top up funding rates of between 5 and 10%. This proposal was retracted at the March meeting of the Schools' Forum.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 Overall, balances are reducing, though there are still some schools with significant surpluses and a few schools have closed the year with unexpected deficits. A further report on school budgets for 2016/17 will be brought to Schools Forum in July.
- 7.2 It should be noted that Schools' Forum may request information from any school whose balance is of concern and does not have an adequate explanation.

8. Appendices

Appendix A – School Balances 2013 to 2016

Appendix B – Explanations from Schools in Deficit

Explanations from Schools in Deficit

John O' Gaunt

Deficit of £1,018,410

JOG school was in deficit at the end for the financial year due to the following:

- a large historical deficit
- falling NOR resulting in reduced income
- 6th form funding clawback
- Redundancy costs from Teaching and Support staff restructures.

The following steps have been taken this year to reduce this deficit

- Teaching staff restructure resulting in 2 FTE voluntary redundancies in August 15
- Support staff restructure resulting in redundancies and early retirement March 16
- Spending freeze on all but essential items from September 15
- Natural wastage of teaching and support staff not replaced where possible, resulting in 1 FTE teacher and 1FTE support staff saving.
- Re-design of the curriculum model and options offer to enable a more efficient timetable
- Increase in teaching loads and staff teaching second subjects
- Benchmarking against LA and Academy schools to inform areas for potential savings, which were then investigated and actioned
- Rigorous monthly budget monitoring
- Robust analysis of the 15/16 budget to inform budget for 16/17 and areas for cost savings

Looking ahead JOG has embarked upon a new transition programme with years 4 & 5 in the local primary schools to help improve pupil recruitment. JOG is also in the final stages of negotiation to join the Excalibur MAT.

John Rankin Schools

Deficit of £169,720 (federated school budget)

Due to increasingly poor financial management and controls over a 2-3 year period, costs have risen ahead of budgeted income to put the school into a negative position.

The schools are looking to reduce spending and are currently restructuring staff in order to repay the deficit within 5 years.

Mortimer St Johns

Deficit of £2,560

Reasons:

- A high teacher costs due to long term sick and sickness category not covered by insurance
- Small numbers in year band (leaving July 2016)

Action:

- Actively marketing the school
- Reducing costs by renegotiating contracts where possible and reducing staffing budget through natural wastage

Future:

- Balanced a zero budget 2016/17
- Surplus!!!!!!!

Spurcroft

Deficit of £102,460

- **Why the school was in deficit at the end of the financial year.**

The school was in deficit because the budget presented by the previous SBM was inaccurate from the start and corrections made through virements took too long to process. Budget monitoring was therefore inaccurate and information presented to the Headteacher and governors inconsistent and misleading. Monitoring of timesheets therefore did also not pick up on the additional cost this was generating. Further issues included additional costs to associated building work/expansion (£14,877).

- **What actions have been/are being taken to bring the school back into surplus.**

Further expansion of the school will bring more pupils into school and with it further funding. Therefore we have kept the same staff structure and not recruited additional staff. This will mean bigger classes in Y5/6 (35). We have also reduced some administration and support hours including not replacing our IT Manager and replacing only limited amount of TA hours.

- **When you expect the school to be back in a surplus position.**

We have budgeted to be back in a surplus position within 3 years. Required investment in resources for the new build of approx 30K and less than anticipated numbers coming through Key Stage 1 limits the speed at which the deficit can be clawed back

Sulhamstead & Ufton Nervet

Deficit of £6,145

A series of errors were made when setting the budget which, together with short sighted forecast planning, resulted in a weak budget being set for 2015-16. In year expenditure was then not well controlled. Preparations for the September 2015 staffing structure resulted in both an in year and forecast deficit for current and future years.

Since the above, a new Headteacher and School Business Manager have been appointed. The following actions have been taken to bring the school back into surplus.

- SLT provision has been reviewed and will reduce from 1.0 to 0.8 FTE from Sept 16
- Headteacher will job share (0.2 equivalent) in KS2
- LSAs will provide some PPA cover

Sulhamstead and Ufton Nervet School anticipates a return to surplus for the 2017-18 budget and beyond.

Westwood Farm Schools

Deficit of £40,270 (federated school budget)

The main reasons for the deficit were unplanned for compromise agreements paid out to two senior leaders at the school.

The Acting Executive Head and newly appointed Executive Head from September 2016 have been involved in the budget setting for 2016/17 and beyond, conscious of the requirement to quickly improve standards as well as bringing the school back into a surplus position. The main actions being taken are:

- Stopping fixed term contracts
- Teaching vacancies – new appointments on lower salary
- No team leader replacements
- From September 2016 to employ HLTA for supply cover

There will also be a review of both the administrative staff and SLT.

The deficit recovery is planned over 5 years.

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Union Work supported by 'Facilities Time' Sept 2015 – May 2016

Report to West Berkshire Schools Forum May 2016

What union officers do

Union officers use 'facilities time' to work with members experiencing professional difficulties (casework) and to support groups of members either in individual schools or through negotiation and consultation with the local authority acting on behalf of its schools (collective work).

The casework dealt with by union officers falls into two broad categories: individual issues and collective issues.

Individual issues

The union officers spend most of the facilities time dealing with member teachers. Teachers in West Berkshire schools are able to contact their union representative directly by email or telephone. Issues raised by members in this way are known as casework. Casework can be divided into capability; disciplinary; grievance; and contracts, pay and conditions

Advice is often given on how the teacher can seek to resolve the matter for themselves. This is often successful, as local officers know individual schools well and are often able to advise teacher members how they can deal with a problem informally. However, there are a number of cases where the union officer has to make contact with school management, human resources provider or an LA officer directly. This may involve a face-to-face meeting. School policies confer a right for employees to be accompanied at most meetings by a union officer.

Capability, in its broader sense, now includes support through performance management as well as the formal capability procedure. The capability procedure may be invoked when the employer deems that an employee's performance is below that expected. An employee is entitled to be accompanied by a union representative at all stages.

Questions of capability also include incapability through illness. When an employee is referred for a consultation with the occupational health service medical professional an advice report is produced. The report is then discussed with the employee, who is entitled to be accompanied by his/her union representative.

Disciplinary, includes investigations of complaints and allegations as well as any formal hearings. An employee is entitled to be accompanied by a union officer at an investigative interview and at any hearing.

Grievance is where the employee lodges a grievance against their employer. Formal grievances are quite rare, but very time consuming for all concerned). Problems that might lead to a grievance are usually resolved through informal discussion between school management and the member, supported by their union officer either in person (or, more frequently, through prior discussion between the member and the union officer). An employee is entitled to be accompanied at meetings. Grievances can also be collective, but formal collective grievances are rare.

Contracts, Pay and Conditions issues such as pay determination appeals and questions of what teachers can be directed to do are becoming increasingly common.

Collective Issues

These include consultation on changes to working conditions such as pay policies, sickness absence policies, codes of conduct restructuring and redundancy.

This school year has seen an increase in the number of school restructurings accompanied by the risk of redundancy, as school budgets come under increasing pressure. The redundancy procedure is complex and often involves multiple meetings. The threat of redundancy can quickly undermine morale in a school and often the role of union officers is to reassure and support employees as well as ensuring that correct procedures are followed.

LA Issues

In addition to the above, time has been spent on consultation on policy and guidance documentation that the LA intends to issue to schools, research, planning, inter-union and internal union consultation.

Activity

Number of contacts made to/by union officers

Casework	Email	Phone	In person	Meeting
Capability Issues ¹	26	12	11	6
Pay & Conditions	19	7	4	3
Contracts	4	3	0	1
Disciplinary Issues	5	5	3	2
Grievance	4	6	1	1
Redundancy**				20
Restructuring**				8

Collective	In Person
LA Meetings ²	27**
Del Train	9
Personal	
Receive Train	14
Research	Not recorded
Union Briefing	15

¹ Includes formal support through appraisal

² Such as Joint Consultative Panel and Education Liaison meetings.

** Number of attendances. Officers of several unions are normally present at each meeting

Notes

This is hierarchical, i.e. an email that leads to a meeting is not recorded.

Email: number of members supported by an exchange of emails

Phone: number of members supported through at least one phone call.

In person: number of members with whom a officer has met at least once

Meeting: number of members supported at a meeting with management.

Hearing: number of members supported at a hearing

Officers also spend time on internal union organisation such as attending, committee and general meetings. These activities are not undertaken in 'facilities time' Each union has a support infrastructure for its officers that includes reference resources as well as briefings and training courses included above.

Facilities payments to schools for 2015-16

Payments are made to the schools that employ each union's principal officer. The payments accord to a formula, which takes into account membership and also reflects a basic level of activity that every union needs to undertake.

Union	Total 2015/16	Officer
NASUWT	£15,944	Gary Upton
NUT	£15,208	Keith Watts
ATL	£12,645	Richard Hand
NAHT	£3,332	Richard Blofeld
ASCL	£2,393	Peter Fry
Total	£49,520	

Schools Forum Forward Plan

	Item	HFG Deadline	Heads Funding Group	SF Deadline	Schools Forum	Comments	Author
Term 6	School Formula 2017/18 Proposal	22/06/16	29/06/2016 (4pm start)	01/07/16	11/07/16	Decision	Claire White
	De-delegations and Buy Back arrangements for 2016/18	22/06/16	29/06/2016 (4pm start)	01/07/16	11/07/16	Decision	Claire White
	School Budgets 2016/17 & Schools in Financial Difficulty	22/06/16	29/06/2016 (4pm start)	01/07/16	11/07/16	Discussion	Claire White
	DSG Monitoring Month 3			01/07/16	11/07/16	Discussion	Ian Pearson
	Schools' Forum Membership & Constitution from September 2016			01/07/16	11/07/16	Decision	Jo Reeves
Term 1	Schools Funding Formula 2017/18	21/09/16	28/09/16	03/10/16	10/10/16	Decision	Claire White
	Additional Funding Criteria 2017/18	21/09/16	28/09/16	03/10/16	10/10/16	Decision	Claire White
	De-delegations 2017/18	21/09/16	28/09/16	03/10/16	10/10/16	Decision	Claire White
	High Needs Places and Arrangements 2017/18	21/09/16	28/09/16	03/10/16	10/10/16	Discussion	Jane Seymour
	PRU Strategic Review Update			03/10/16	10/10/16	Discussion	Caroline Corcoran
	Election of Chair and Vice-Chair			03/10/16	10/10/16	Decision	Ian Pearson
	DSG Monitoring 2016/17 Month 5			03/10/16	10/10/16	Information	Ian Pearson

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