

Notice of Meeting

Schools Forum

Monday 6th December 2021 at 5.00pm
On Zoom

This meeting will be streamed live here: www.westberks.gov.uk/schoolsforumlive

Date of despatch of Agenda: Tuesday, 30 November 2021

For further information about this Agenda, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact Jessica Bailiss on (01635) 503124
e-mail: jessica.bailiss@westberks.gov.uk

Further information and Minutes are also available on the Council's website at www.westberks.gov.uk



Agenda - Schools Forum to be held on Monday, 6 December 2021 *(continued)*

Forum Members: Reverend Mark Bennet, Dominic Boeck, Jonathon Chishick, Catie Colston (Vice-Chair), Jacquie Davies, Emily Dawkins, Keith Harvey, Jon Hewitt, Hilary Latimer, Ross Mackinnon, Catherine McLeod, Maria Morgan, Julia Mortimore, Ian Nichol, Gemma Piper, Chris Prosser, David Ramsden, Campbell Smith, Graham Spellman (Chair), Jayne Steele and Charlotte Wilson

Agenda

Part I

		Page No.
1	Apologies	
2	Minutes of previous meeting dated 18th October 2021	1 - 8
3	Actions arising from previous meetings	9 - 10
4	Declarations of Interest	
5	Membership	

Items for Decision

6	School Funding Formula 2022/23 (Melanie Ellis)	11 - 28
7	Budgets for Additional Funds 2022/23 (Melanie Ellis)	29 - 36
8	Draft Central Schools Block Budget 2022/23 (Lisa Potts)	37 - 44

Items for Discussion

9	Draft High Needs Budget 2022/23 (Jane Seymour)	45 - 60
10	High Needs Block - Deficit Recovery Plan (Jane Seymour)	61 - 68

Items for Information

11	Final Scheme for Financing Schools 2021/22 (Melanie Ellis)	69 - 70
12	Forward Plan	71 - 72
13	Date of the next meeting <i>Monday 24th January 2022 at 5pm on Zoom</i>	

Agenda - Schools Forum to be held on Monday, 6 December 2021 *(continued)*

Sarah Clarke
Service Director: Strategy and Governance

If you require this information in a different format or translation, please contact Stephen Chard on telephone (01635) 519462.

This page is intentionally left blank

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

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2021

Present: Reverend Mark Bennet (Church of England Diocese), Jonathon Chishick (Maintained Primary School Governor), Jackie Davies (Pupil Referral Unit Headteacher), Emily Dawkins (Maintained Primary School Headteacher), Michelle Harrison (Maintained Primary Schools), Keith Harvey (Maintained Primary School Headteacher), Jon Hewitt (Maintained Special School Headteacher), Hilary Latimer (Maintained Primary School Headteacher), Catherine McLeod (Early Years Private, Voluntary and Independent Provider Representative), Maria Morgan (Maintained Nursery School Headteacher), Ian Nichol (Maintained Primary School Governor), Janet Patterson (Maintained Primary School Headteacher), Gemma Piper (Academy School Headteacher), David Ramsden (Maintained Secondary School Headteacher) and Graham Spellman (Roman Catholic Diocese)

Also Present: Melanie Ellis (Chief Accountant), Ian Pearson (Head of Education Services) and Jane Seymour (Service Manager, SEN & Disabled Children's Team), Jessica Bailiss (Policy Officer (Executive Support)) and Michelle Sancho (Principal EP & Service Manager)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Avril Allenby, Lisa Potts, Councillor Dominic Boeck, Catie Colston, Richard Hawthorne, Councillor Ross Mackinnon, Julia Mortimore, Chris Prosser, Campbell Smith and Charlotte Wilson

PART I

42 Minutes of previous meeting dated 19th July 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th July 2021 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

43 Actions arising from previous meetings

There was one action from the previous meeting, which had been completed.

44 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

45 Membership

Jessica Bailiss reported that there were still two vacancies on the Forum including for an academy governor representative and a maintained secondary school governor representative. Work would continue to try and fill both vacancies.

46 Schools Funding Formula Consultation 2022/23 (Melanie Ellis)

Melanie Ellis introduced the report (Agenda Item 6), which set out the requirements and changes for setting the primary and secondary school funding formula for 2022/23 and to approve West Berkshire Council's funding proposals to go out to consultation with all schools.

Melanie Ellis drew attention to section 2.1 of the report, which recommended that the consultation be undertaken with all schools on:

- (1) West Berkshire Council's proposed school funding formula for 2022/23

SCHOOLS FORUM - 18 OCTOBER 2021 - MINUTES

- (2) An up to 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block to other funding blocks
- (3) The criteria to be used to allocate additional funds
- (4) The proposed services to be de-delegated.

The largest change in the 2022/23 National Funding Formula (NFF) was changes to the sparsity factor. The sparsity factor distances were now based on road distances, instead of straight-line distances and the sparsity distance taper had been introduced, in addition to the existing year group size taper. In 2021/22 seven West Berkshire schools had been eligible for sparsity and under the new NFF 22 schools would be eligible. The impact of this was detailed under the table in section 5.5 of Appendix A to the report.

Regarding recommendation two, Melanie Ellis reported that 0.5% could be transferred from the Schools' Block if approval was given by the Schools' Forum. If approved, 0.5% would equate to £590k. Melanie Ellis highlighted that there was a £60k shortfall in the Central School Services Block (CSSB) and a deficit recovery plan in place for the Early Years Block (EYB). The forecast deficit for the High Needs Block (HNB) for April 2022 was £3.6m. Proposals for how the money would be used, if a transfer was agreed to the HNB, was set out under sections 7.10 and 7.11 of the to follow pack including a revised version of Appendix A. Melanie Ellis reported that like in previous years a question would be included within the consultation with schools asking for a view on what percentage should be transferred if approved.

Melanie Ellis drew attention to section 6.1 on page 11 of the agenda. West Berkshire Council replicated the NFF as far as possible, however after pupil characteristic changes and any transfers of funding, the formula would need to be altered to remain within the total funding available. A decision would need to be taken locally on how to allocate any surplus or shortfall in the final funding allocation. In previous two years it had been agreed that this should be achieved by amending the AWPU rates and it was proposed that this option be included as part of the consultation as this provided the most even distribution across schools.

Finally Melanie referred to the final two questions within the proposed consultation regarding the criteria for accessing the additional funds set out in section eight of Appendix A and de-delegated services, which was set out under section nine of the Appendix A.

Jon Hewitt proposed that the recommendation under section 2.1 of the report, which proposed that the consultation be undertaken with all schools on the four areas listed above, be approved. This was seconded by David Ramsden. The Chair invited the Forum to vote on the proposal and the motion was approved.

RESOLVED that the Schools Forum approved the recommendation set out in section 2.1 of the report. The consultation with schools would take place for three weeks from 20th October until 10th November 2021.

47 **Draft De-delegations 2022/23 (Lisa Potts)**

Ian Pearson introduced the report (Agenda Item 7), which set out the details, costs and charges to schools of the services on which maintained schools representatives were required to vote (on an annual basis).

Ian Pearson highlighted the range of services for de-delegation were detailed under section 3.2 of the report. The Report would be brought back to the next meeting of the Forum in December 2021 for final decision following the consultation with schools.

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum noted the report.

48 Scheme for Financing Schools 2021/22 (Melanie Ellis)

Melanie Ellis introduced the report (Agenda Item 9), which included the updated Scheme for Financing Schools and proposed that it went out to consultation for three weeks from 20th October to 10th November 2021. There were only minor updates proposed, which were detail within Appendix B to the report.

Keith Harvey proposed that the updated Scheme for Financing Schools went out for consultation and that the updated Scheme was adopted after Schools' Forum approval in December 2021. Ian Nichol seconded the proposal. The Chair invited the Forum to vote on the proposal and at the vote the motion was carried.

RESOLVED that the Schools Forum approved the recommendation under section 2.1 of the report.

49 Benchmarking Data - funding levels for Physical Disabilities (Jane Seymour)

Jane Seymour introduced the report (Agenda Item 10), which provided benchmarking data on funding of resourced provision for children with physical disabilities (PD).

Jane Seymour reported that a decision had been taken by the Forum to increase the value of the PD resourced funding bands in West Berkshire for the current financial year. This was due to increased numbers of complex cases using the provision requiring a higher level of funding. When the decision was taken, the Forum had asked for a further report to be provided on how funding bands in West Berkshire compared with other local authorities and if more use could be made of PD resources to avoid out of area placements. Jane Seymour reported that she had managed to obtain data from three other local authorities in the south east. This information showed that in all cases the bands in West Berkshire were higher than the other authorities however, West Berkshire had very low spend on specialist placements in comparison.

In conclusion Jane Seymour stated that it was felt that West Berkshire was already making very effective use of resourced provision and it was avoiding high costs on specialist external expensive placements. Further to the information in the report Jane Seymour commented that she had recently seen benchmarking data from the south east and when comparing spend per head on external placement West Berkshire was one of the lowest. Jane reported that West Berkshire was already catering for most children in house and the provision did not need to be changed. This would however, be kept under review.

Reverend Mark Bennet asked if West Berkshire could offer any surplus places to other local authorities. Jane Seymour confirmed that there was not currently any surplus places however, children from outside were sometimes accepted if possible. Gemma Piper commented that this could be an income stream overtime for the Local Authority. There were currently no surplus spaces at the Kennet secondary provision but this was something that could be considered going forward.

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum noted the report.

50 Update on HNB Invest to Save Projects (Jane Seymour)

Jane Seymour introduced the report (Agenda Item 11), which aimed to update the HFG and Schools Forum on the invest to save projects agreed in 2020/21 and 2021/22. The first section of the report set out what the invest to save projects were and how much had been spent on each. Some projects had started in 2021 and the Schools' Forum had agreed that these should continue into 2021/22. There was then a second set of projects

SCHOOLS FORUM - 18 OCTOBER 2021 - MINUTES

agreed in 2021/22 however, as these were not agreed until July 2021 they were only in the early stages.

Michelle Sancho drew attention to section four of the report on the Therapeutic Thinking (TT) post and increase in Vulnerable Children Grant (2020-21 and 2021-22). The table under section 4.4 of report presented the estimated savings from core schools (13 schools) that changed their school policies to fully adopt a TT approach. The total estimated savings from these schools was £244k.

Appendix A included information on all other schools and how they had benefitted from funding. Michelle Sancho drew attention to the table on 149 of Appendix A, which detailed the total estimated saving from all other schools was £634k. The total saving when combined with the figure from the core schools was £878k for the current year. This was from the investment of £58k for the TT post and £129k increase in the Vulnerable Children Grant.

Jane Seymour drew attention to section five of the report, which provided detail on the investment to appoint two teaching assistants in the Autism Team (2020-21 and 2021-22) at the cost of £58k. Two TAs had been appointed using the funding and two separate projects set up. One project working with four primary schools and one other project working with two secondary schools and groups of identified children in each. Jane Seymour provided further detail on each of the two projects and reported that all of the pupils worked with at primary level were still in school and none of the children had moved to alternative placements or become emotionally based school avoiders (EBSA).

Jane Seymour continued by providing detail on the secondary project under section 5.9 of the report, which was focused on pupils who were EBSA. Jane Seymour referred to case studies detailed within the report where it could be seen that good outcomes were being achieved.

Jane Seymour reported that she would express the savings for the Autism project in the same way as the TT and VCF projects when the invest to save projects were next reported on in March 2022. Jane Seymour reported that it was felt that three children at least would have needed out of area specialist support had it not been for the projects, providing a saving of around £186k. Savings had also been achieved from at least four children who were at high risk of EBSA and had avoided specialist placement.

Michelle Sancho moved on to comment on the new EBSA Fund and Posts (2021-22) detailed under section six of the report. A panel met once per month to consider requests from schools that had opted in to the project. Each schools was provided with actions in the way of interventions. Michelle Sancho referred to the posts detailed under section 6.1 of the report and reported that schools were very engaged. There was a number of complex cases and therefore the extra resource was being well utilised and appreciated by schools. Michelle Sancho reported that a project was also being trialled including the use of robots to increase engagement. The project had been trialled by other authorities and the feedback had been very positive. The attendance for one child in West Berkshire through the project had increased from 0 to 85 percent.

Finally Jane Seymour referred to section seven of the report, which provided detail on the ASD Funding (2021-22). The annual allocation for this initiative was £52,685. The process for schools to be able to access this funding was now in place and the first panel was held in July 2021 to consider 12 applications. A total of £11,330 was allocated by the panel. Schools were expected to provide detail on what outcomes were achieved as a result of receiving the funding and this would help provide detail on the impact of the project at a later stage.

Keith Harvey raised a question regarding ongoing funding. If through the consultation schools agreed to transfer some funding from the Schools' Block for invest to save

SCHOOLS FORUM - 18 OCTOBER 2021 - MINUTES

purposes he queried what this would be spent on. Jane Seymour stated that in the survey with schools a number of proposals would be highlighted. One proposed area of investment was in the Early Development and Inclusion Team, which was a very small team. Increased referrals were being experienced in this area and there was a long waiting list meaning that children were starting primary school without receiving the right intervention. Investment was also proposed for iCollege places to help avoid permanent exclusions. Finally it was known that the cost of medical home tuition was going to increase significantly in line with EBSA because until children were able to return to school the Local Authority had a duty to ensure provision was in place for these children. All proposals were in keeping with aims around early identification and early intervention to help avoid high cost out of area placements by helping to keep children in mainstream schools.

Michelle Sancho reported that the iCollege review was ongoing and was looking at different ways of funding. Alternatives to permanent exclusions were being looked at through offering short term placements to support schools. Michelle Sancho stated that an increase in challenging behaviours was being experienced as a result of Covid and the proposals as part of the iCollege review would complement the TT approach.

Keith Harvey commented that what had been referred to sounded like new invest to save proposals and he queried if the plan was to continue the current invest to save projects. Ian Pearson referred to earlier explanations regarding the impact of invest to save projects and stated that the conclusion was that there had been a net positive impact on the HNB. These could not be continued as one of invest to save projects however, if agreed it was proposed that funding for these areas was mainstreamed as part of the HNB and would form a significant part of the deficit recovery plan.

Reverend Mark Bennet referred to the projects and noted the short term impacts however, asked if there was a plan to follow up on the projects to assess the long term impact and the progress of individual cases. Michelle Sancho reported that children accessing TT support would be tracked. If pupils remained in school and avoided permanent exclusion then this could be assessed overtime and projected savings could be calculated.

Gemma Piper was aware that the permanent exclusion rate in the area was very high and she queried if individual pupils were being tracked by name. It was acknowledged that it was very early on in the process but it was possible that some cases that were originally assessed as a saving were no longer the case and this needed to be taken into consideration if future investment was being based on current figures. Michelle Sancho suggested that pupils could be tracked by the financial year and this would avoid part year reporting. The issue was that the reporting cycle for the Forum did not match the academic year. Michelle Sancho confirmed that there was access to all data including pupil names, from schools that had agreed to feedback.

Gemma Piper stated that at the Heads Funding Group it had been agreed that a simplistic overview would be provided as part of the report going forward. This overview needed to include all invest to save and likely savings.

RESOLVED that:

- An overview would be added to the next report due to be presented to the Forum in March 2022, which provided a summary of investments and likely savings as a table.
- The Schools' Forum noted the report.

51 Deficit Schools (Melanie Ellis)

Melanie Ellis introduced the report (Agenda Item 12), which provided details of two schools that had submitted deficit budgets for 2021/22 and three which expected to recover their deficit position in 2021/22. There were an additional two schools that ended 2020/21 with unplanned deficits entirely due to the financial impact of Covid-19.

Melanie Ellis reported that the two licensed deficits totally £77k. One of the schools was Inkpen Primary school and Melanie Ellis added that the school had not included an assumption about receiving sparsity funding. If the National Funding Formula sparsity factor was agreed as part of the consultation then this would have a large impact on the school's deficit. Melanie Ellis reported that the same applied to Beenham Primary School.

Melanie Ellis reported that two schools ended 2020/21 with an unlicensed deficit however, neither were forecasting a deficit going forward.

Ian Pearson commended schools for managing budgets in a very effective way.

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum noted the report.

52 DSG Monitoring 2021/22 Month 6 (Ian Pearson)

Ian Pearson introduced the report (Agenda Item 13), which presented the forecast financial position of the services funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), highlighting any under or over spends, and to highlight the cumulative deficit on the DSG.

Ian Pearson reported that the report provided Quarter Two figures and therefore the figures were forecasts and gave an indication of the position at the end of the year. Table One provided the original budget and forecasted figures for Quarter One and Two and therefore gave an indication of how the position was changing overtime.

Ian Pearson referred to Table One, where the position for the High Needs Block (HNB) appeared to be £109k. This needed to be considered in context of the significant deficit that had been set against the block.

Ian Pearson drew attention to Appendix A, which provided the DSG 2020/21 budget monitoring at Month Six. He drew attention to the 'Variance' column and highlighted that the vast majority of variances were related to top ups and managing additional funding for particular children with additional needs. This was a very difficult area to predict.

Reverend Mark Bennet referred to the Early Years Block (EYB) and asked if there was an indication if Covid had impacted on the pattern of take up of places and the additional needs of young children. Ian Pearson reported that Early Years providers had suffered a great deal throughout the pandemic from both the funding mechanism and also from parents deciding to keep children at home. Settings had also had to put a whole range of methods and strategies in place that had not been funded in the same way as schools. Funding for the sector in the current year had not been typical. The sector was also supporting a deficit reduction plan, which meant providers were operating on a reduced hourly rate and this would continue for the period of the deficit recovery plan.

Gemma Piper asked for actual figures for the last two years to be included in the report going forward.

Maria Morgan concurred with the points raised by Ian Pearson. Regarding maintained nursery provision very few settings were currently full and there had been a reduced uptake in the 30 hour places. Regarding children with additional needs, Maria Morgan stated that there were increased levels of children with lower levels of language and higher levels of anxiety. Children were also struggling to get access to the NHS services that they needed. For early years the wait for speech and language support was 72 weeks and the wait for an ASC diagnosis was 18 months longer than it was before the

SCHOOLS FORUM - 18 OCTOBER 2021 - MINUTES

pandemic. This would mean that there would be a lot of children moving on to primary school without the support that they needed or a diagnosis. Maria Morgan was supportive of further funding going in to the Early Development and Inclusion Team (EDIT) if approved by schools.

Keith Harvey noted that Early Years providers could not comment in the consultation on the possible transfer as it was a transfer of funding from the schools block. This included potential investment in EYs through EDIT and support for transition. He commented that investment in Early Years would be of benefit to all schools. Ian Pearson referred to the list of proposals under section 7.10 of Appendix A of agenda item six, which provided details on the funding transfer to the HNB if agreed.

Catherine McLeod commented on the Early Years Sector and how it contributed to the school system. Catherine McLeod reported that the sector was currently looking at the transition phase and if there was to be some invest to save funding for early years then it would be suggested that it be focused on this area to ensure children moving out of the early years phase with SEND have the necessary support in place and to make the transition to school as smooth as possible. This would also be a benefit to schools.

Ian Pearson reported that there was an overlap between what had been referred to by Catherine McLeod and the proposal for EDIT team. It was agreed that any investment could have a significant benefit. It was important to note that it was about preparing children for the next phase of their life and education and therefore needed to be thought through carefully.

RESOLVED that:

- Actual figures for the last two years to be included in the report going forward.

53 Forward Plan

RESOLVED that the forward plan was noted.

54 Date of the next meeting

Due to Covid restrictions and venue limitations it was currently not possible to hold meetings of the Forum in person.

The next meeting of the Schools' Forum would take place on 6th December 2021 on Zoom.

(The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and closed at 6.00 pm)

CHAIR

Date of Signature

This page is intentionally left blank

Actions from previous meeting

Ref No.	Date of meeting(s) raised	Item	Action	Responsible Officer	Comment / Update
Oct21-Ac1	18th October 2021	Update on HNB Invest to Save Projects	An overview would be added to the next report due to be presented to the Forum in March 2022, which provided a summary of investments and likely savings.	Jane Seymour	This will be included in the report brought to the report in March 2022.
Oct21-Ac2	18th October 2021	DSG Monitoring 2021/22 Month 6	Actual figures for the last two years to be included in the report going forward.	Melanie Ellis / Lisa Potts	This will be included in the next DSG Monitoring report in January 2022.

This page is intentionally left blank

Schools Funding Formula 2022/23: Consultation Results

Report being considered by: Schools Forum on 6th December 2021

Report Author: Melanie Ellis

Item for: Decision **By:** All School Members and Early Years PVI Rep / All Forum Members

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To set out the results of the consultation with all schools on the proposed primary and secondary school funding formula for 2022/23 and to make a final decision.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Heads Funding Group recommend the following for setting the school funding formula for 2022/23, for decision at Schools Forum and to go as a recommendation for political ratification:

- (1) To mirror the Department for Education's (DfE) 2022/23 National Funding Formula (NFF) to calculate the funding allocations.
- (2) To use a reduced sparsity factor, set at 80% of the NFF values (Appendix A).
- (3) To address any surplus or shortfall in funding by adjusting the AWPU values.
- (4) To apply a 0.25% top slice to the schools' funding.
- (5) To use the block transfer to support the High Needs Block including support for Early Years development and capacity.
- (6) To adopt the criteria to be used to allocate additional funds.
- (7) To approve the proposed services to be de-delegated.

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"/>
---	-------------------------------	---

3. Introduction

- 3.1 2022/23 is the fifth year of the National Funding Formula (NFF) and, as in previous years, each local authority needs to set a local funding formula in consultation with schools. The government has confirmed its intention to move to a single 'hard' NFF to determine school's budgets directly, and have consulted on proposals for completing reforms to the funding system. There is no fixed target date by which a hard NFF will be fully in place, and it is suggested that this will be a gradual process.

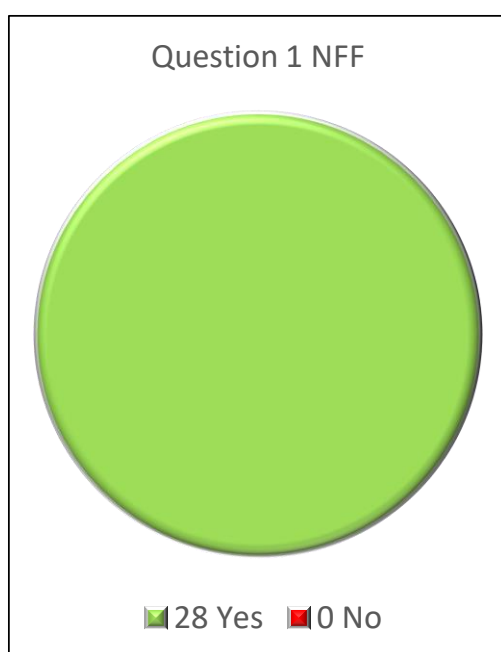
3.2 For 2022/23, each LA will continue to have discretion over their schools funding formulae, in consultation with local schools. The LA is responsible for making the final decisions on the formula. Political ratification must be obtained before the 21 January 2022 deadline.

4. Consultation Responses

4.1 The consultation was open for three weeks from 20 October 2021 to 10 November 2021 and 28 responses were received.

Question 1:

Do you agree that, subject to final affordability, West Berkshire should mirror the DfE's 2022/23 NFF as closely as possible and that this formula should be used to calculate funding allocations? Yes/No



HFG Recommendation:

To mirror the NFF as closely as possible.

Comments:

“More small rural schools would become eligible for sparsity funding to ensure the long term sustainability of these schools with volatile pupil numbers”.

“This is the most sensible and logical path as the Government ultimately plans to implement a 'hard' NFF with a new national formula used to determine all of individual schools' funding”.

“As a school, we will now attract more funding due to the changes in the sparsity factor – measuring by road distance”.

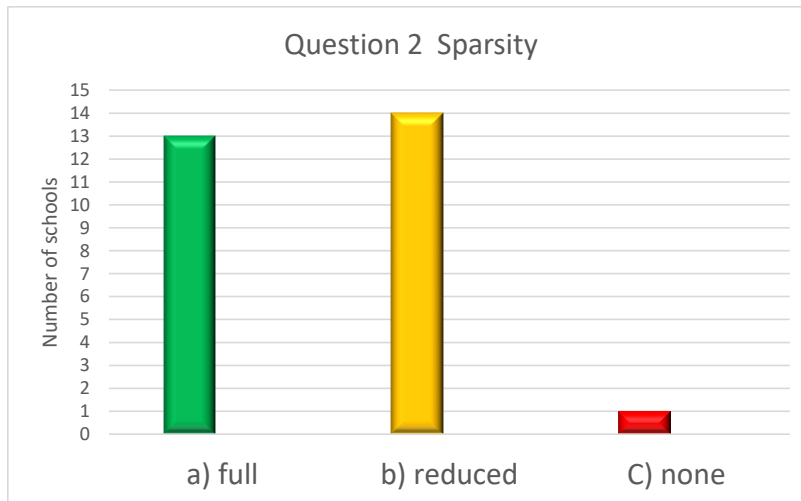
“WBC rates already broadly mirror NFF rates which will increase by 3% in 22/23. Deviating from NFF rates would be counter-productive”.

Question 2:

Do you support using a Sparsity Factor?

A) NFF full sparsity, B) A reduced sparsity factor, C) No sparsity factor.

Note: the Heads Funding Group would recommend which reduced factor to use.



Appendix A contains detail about the reduced sparsity factor options.

HFG Recommendation:

HFG reviewed Appendix A with various reduced sparsity options. The recommendation is to use a reduced NFF allocation at 80% of the full NFF. This ensures an even distribution to all eligible schools, and ensures the NFF is followed albeit at a reduced rate.

Comments:

“I believe that a reduced sparsity factor would provide fairness for all schools, ensuring that the schools that need the benefit the most would receive it while ensuring other schools do not lose out too much”.

“The DfE’s policy aim is ‘to target more funding to a greater number of small, remote schools’ Following the DfE’s consultation on sparsity although the DfE acknowledge the freedom of LAs to determine their own detail in local funding formulae by allowing flexibilities they write that ‘The majority of local authorities that have at least one school eligible for sparsity funding did use the factor in 2021-22 and mirrored the sparsity factor’s values and design; we expect this to continue to be the case and that the majority of local authorities will implement the distance threshold taper, so that more small, remote schools see an increase to their budgets. Going forward, we propose further requirements on local funding formulae to bring them closer to the NFF’. In line with the reasoning behind the answer to Question 1 we support Option A and mirroring the DfE’s sparsity factor design and values completely and adopting it in full”.

“The tapered approach looks the most sensible”.

“Option A: This would support schools in this position to be in a secure financial position like our partners surrounding us. Option B: All of these options will mostly support these schools however due to being border we are penalised by my final paragraph above due to the border, we could not support the future of this school should you continue not to support schools in our position.

Currently we receive no sparsity support from the LA and we have put forward a case before to the team as we feel that being on the border presents many issues around health care and services and a significant reduction in early help services as well as limited funding. Every year we cannot properly forecast our pupil numbers on entry and so a teacher and TA in the early years is always a gamble, yet we cannot have an infant class over 30. This results in the Headteacher role being caretaker, supply and SENDCo amongst others - we have a higher than average EHCp ratio for high needs and so we are hit twice. We have a pan of 15 and due to being on the border with Oxfordshire due to the current blanket approach by West Berkshire who apply the DfE guidelines for sparsity (doesn't recognise borders for schools creating sparsity deficits). However, West Berkshire parents will not be offered Oxfordshire schools if unsuccessful, they'd be offered Berkshire alternatives, which you cannot safely walk to, therefore we meet sparsity if you use the distance before and after. Oxfordshire alternatives are not viable to use as an example of distance from a school, it is oversubscribed, and out of county”.

“If a reduced factor, definitely not the continuous taper. The sparsity factor is there to protect rural schools that struggle financially due to their comparatively low numbers. A reduced factor does not recognise these challenges”.

“This funding would make a significant difference to our school and the quality of teaching and learning which we could provide for the children on roll”.

“The 1.6 mile distance for primary schools by road increases the number of eligible schools. The total amount allocated to schools should not exceed the amount of the funding allocation”.

“Being such a small school we would struggle financially without it. With new measures of road distance, it seems more would now benefit”.

“Using (A) will increase the number of eligible schools from 7 to 22, which is a significant change of approach in one financial year. NFF full sparsity should however be moved towards in future years”.

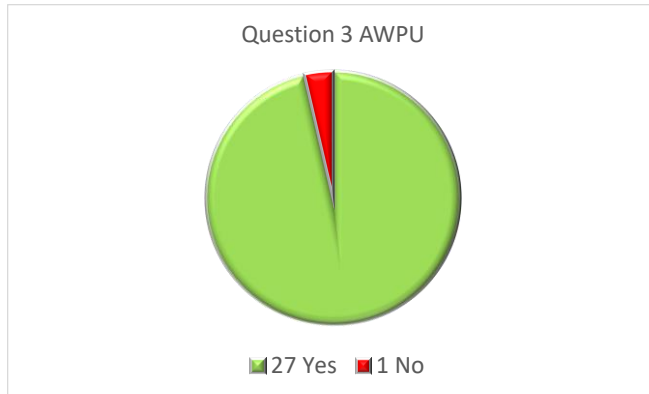
“It is not clear how critical sparsity funding is to the 22 schools that would receive funding in the model, given that only 8 schools received funding in previous years. We do not feel equipped to comment on primaries, but we are not convinced that sparse secondary schools are at any significant disadvantage compared with urban secondaries. One option would be not to use the sparsity factor at all and to allocate the additional funding to all schools. If sparsity funding is needed, then a reduced sparsity factor which takes account of marginal differences in sparsity would seem best ('continuous taper' model)”.

“See no compelling case to change from NFF”.

“Support funds going to the most deprived, although the baseline for some schools in more affluent areas is significantly higher than that for CASM”.

Question 3:

Do you agree that any shortfall or surplus in funding is addressed by adjusting the AWPU values? Yes/No



HFG Recommendation:

To use the AWPU to adjust the formula.

Comments:

“We are absolutely supportive of this option as being the fair and equitable basis for any adjustments due to affordability. It is particularly pleasing to see that the AWPU/Gains Cap combination that has been proposed and applied for the last 2 years has not featured in 2022-23 WB funding formula”.

“It is the fairest approach”.

“We support the recommended option”.

“This seems the fairest option for all”.

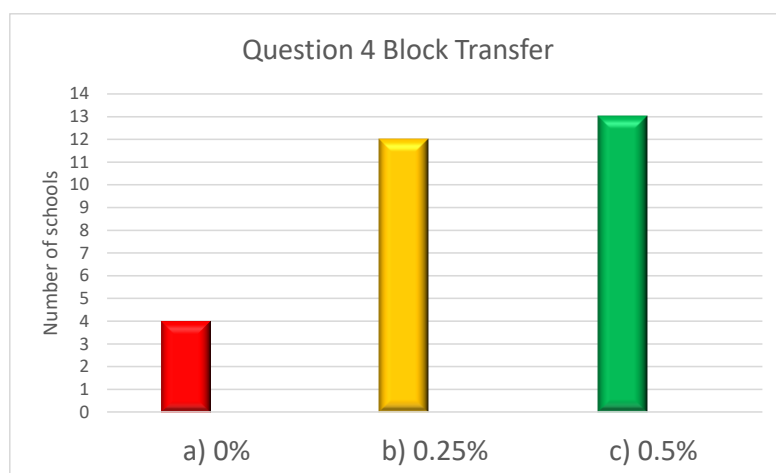
“Modelling shows that reducing the AWPU values for all schools is the fairest method, the same method that has been used in previous years”.

“Provides an even, fair distribution”.

Question 4:

What percentage transfer of funding would you support from the Schools Block to the High Needs block?

A) 0%, B) 0.25%, C) 0.5%.



HFG Recommendation:

HFG recommend a 0.25% transfer. This is to reflect that although 13 schools voted for a 0.5% transfer, 12 schools voted for 0.25% and 4 schools voted for Zero %.

Comments:

“The governors believe that transferring 0.5% will enable a bigger saving to be made in the long term. Governors have discussed the evidence of Invest to Save projects this year and agree that they are having a positive impact on all schools”.

“Sadly, the system of funding of HNB is broken. It is not morally right to take from ‘main stream funding’ to repair the damage done by a broken HNB funding mechanism”.

“I think realistically schools are suffering too much”.

“We can't go on subsidising this locally. Central government must fund this properly”.

“I recognise that many of the areas suggested for funding are very important and needed but as always I would push for plans to be impact driven with clear objectives and planned spend”.

“We remain very concerned about WB High Needs and the continued gap between DSG allocations and expenditure and the setting of in year deficit recovery budgets that seem not to show progress in delivering the savings identified. The DfE are clear in their Schools Revenue Funding 2022-23 Operational Guide that they expect “local authorities to take the significant increase in high needs funding in 2022 to 2023, on top of increases in the previous two years, into consideration when making decisions on block movements, and for these to have been appropriately discussed at schools forum meetings.” Whilst funding is generally mentioned in the para 7.4 no detail is provided of the increased HNB DSG allocation for 2022-23 in particular or the preceding 2 years to be able to set the transfer in context of the increased funding. Without transparency of this information it is difficult to see how considered decisions and discussions will take place about the proposed 0.5% transfer. We acknowledge that pressure on expenditure and growing deficit position has been reported and the October’s School Forum shows that although the in-year HNB deficit recovery for 2021-22 was set at £1.263m and the Quarter 2 forecast shows

the expected recovery to be £109k. It also shows a cumulative DSG deficit brought forward separate to the in-year deficit with the HNB forecast year end deficit in total estimated to be £3.48m at 31.03.2022, an increase in the deficit of 50% during the one year of 2021-22. However, this is only one side of the equation when it comes to balancing a budget. Alongside the transfers made in in 2020-21 and 2021-22 from schools totalling £812k, the block itself saw an increase from 2019/20 funding of £20.07m to £23.703m in 2021-22, it is not possible without transparency about the DSH HNB allocation to know and consider the transfer fully as expected by the DfE. Further whilst we would support some of the proposed areas identified for spending it would not support all and would like to know how the additional funds would be divided between the suggested areas. It would also therefore seem that the right approach might be to allow schools to have the funds and choice to purchase those packages and offerings that they feel will best deliver the support that they want to meet the High Needs for the pupils in their schools”.

“B or C provided the evidence of the need is in place”.

“All plans need to have clear objectives and be impact driven”.

“We understand the need for the High Needs Block to provide adequate funding for pupils with SEND. However, raiding the Schools Block yet again at a time when the effects of the pandemic have resulted in mainstream pupils developing needs that previously could not be imagined is very unfair to mainstream pupils/students. Funding is needed for those pupils just as much as for high needs pupils. Central government has allocated the schools block for mainstream pupils and the high needs block for high needs pupils. We should now stick to this and make it clear to central government that the funding for high needs is inadequate. It should be noted that the LGA is calling for the deficits in high needs blocks to be written off. Should this happen a relatively low deficit would disadvantage West Berkshire schools that have effectively subsidised the high needs block”.

“The plans are still unclear and not sufficiently robust”.

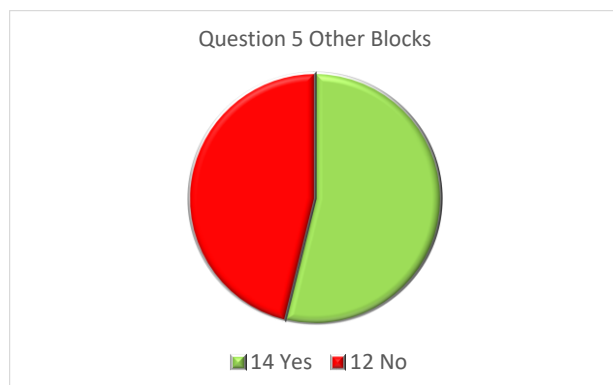
“B should be planned for, but it should be A if an acceptable deficit recovery plan is not submitted to Schools' Forum this autumn, as per item 7.8 of the consultation document”.

“It is difficult to comment on this question without more detail on how the proposals for use of the topslice would directly benefit schools. If, like in 2020/21, some funding is going to be returned to schools late in the year, then it would be better to allocate this funding upfront to schools so they have time to plan how it can be spent”.

“Backlog of issues requiring funding to tackle”.

Question 5:

Would you support any of this transfer supporting any of the other funding blocks?
Yes/No



HFG Recommendation:

To award the transfer to the High Needs Block but to include support for Early Years development and capacity.

Comments:

"If this is necessary, governors would support this, although they would prefer the 0.5% to be used within the High Needs Block".

"There was a planned recovery for EYFS which was hard but it was planned and we need to stick to this. There is a national funding crisis in the High Needs Funding block and there is an ever growing and increasing pressure on this block".

"There are no proposals to consider for doing such a transfer to allow an informed judgement and decision to be reached otherwise".

"Yes, Early Years".

"Early years has a recovery plan so should not need support. Central Schools Services are vitally important and are more often more cost effective than schools each spending valuable time seeking alternative sources. Schools should be involved in quality control of centralised services".

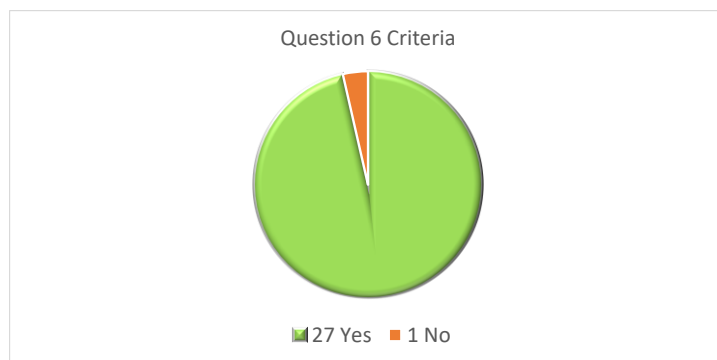
"These are vital services for schools and the needs have only increased through the pandemic".

"The High Needs block is the one most under financial pressure".

"Early years as early intervention then may deliver benefits for all key stages".

Question 6:

Do you agree with the criteria set to access additional funds outside the school formula? Yes/No



HFG Recommendation:

To approve the criteria.

Comments:

“It is disappointing to see this table of additional funding for High Needs. The SEN assessment team (2020) delayed the EHCp finals due to absence or other team or correspondence delays (December and January when completed for two West Berks cases – I corresponded with her about this but an EP report was never confirmed or denied to be missing at panel). We had to request this top up (not shown in appendix 1) as they had a Reading BC not listed (error) and another child down as RBC when really WB. I asked for one to be backdated due to leave or case worker. The census is then incorrect as example of our school as we were waiting for finals but still paying out. Money is so difficult I have to know every problem with it.

The highlighted section below is not statutory and is expected before an EHCp is awarded in our county as otherwise they aren’t considered to have persistent, complex and severe, yet we are still having to recruit and train this support without any top up possible unless an EHCp is awarded. School’s like mine for example when a child moves in-year are crippled by this and we cannot protect or forecast 18k say for our three pupils.

1.1 Local authorities can provide additional targeted support to individual schools (maintained and academies) from its high needs block where it would be unreasonable to expect the first £6,000 of support for that schools high needs pupils to be met by them from its (pre 16) formula funding due to an exceptional number of such pupils on its roll.

Top up is also an issue as it is based on level 1 teaching assistants and no on costs. This needs to be updated to recognise children with severe, complex and persistent needs cannot be met with this level of experience or pay reward, often leading to schools not having any TAs to support children in class unless they have a high need”.

“The threshold for triggering additional funding is set too high. For secondaries, the average % of high needs students is 1.4%. The threshold is set not at 1% above this figure, but at 1 percentage point above this figure, i.e. 2.4%. Consequently , no secondaries trigger this funding, and only three primaries trigger their threshold. The threshold should be reduced to say 0.3 percentage points above the average i.e. 1.7% for secondaries and 1.6% for primaries (subject to full modelling across all schools), so that more schools with high numbers of high needs students benefit from additional funding”.

Question 7:

Do you agree with the proposed De-delegated Services, Education Functions and Health and Safety Service for all maintained schools?

Yes/No



HFG Recommendation:

To approve the dedelegations.

Comments:

“Essential services”.

5. Next Steps

5.1 The results of the consultation will be voted on at Schools Forum.

6. Appendices

Appendix A: Sparsity factor options

Appendix B: Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix A

Sparsity Factor options

7. Background

7.1 In 2021/22 a school attracted sparsity funding if:

- Its average year group size is below:
 - 21.4 for primary schools or
 - 120 for secondary schools; and
- For all pupils for whom it is the nearest compatible school, the average distance from each pupil's home postcode to their second nearest compatible school 'as the crow flies', is greater than 3 miles (secondary) or 2 miles (all other schools).

7.2 Changes to 2022/23 sparsity:

- Sparsity distances now calculated on road journeys.
- Introduction of a distance threshold taper, set at 20% below the main distance thresholds, making it:
 - 2.4 miles for secondary schools and
 - 1.6 miles for primary.

The aim is to ensure that marginal differences in sparsity distances do not result in significant differences to a school's funding.

- Maximum amount of sparsity funding that schools can attract in the NFF has increased to £55,000 for primaries and £80,000 for all other schools.
- No changes to average year group thresholds.

7.3 A school is eligible for sparsity funding in the NFF if:

- Its sparsity distance is equal to or above the main distance threshold, or above the tapered distance threshold, and
- The average year group size is below the relevant size threshold.

7.4 The local authority has options with regard to the optional sparsity factor:

(a) Follow the NFF and adopt in full

(b) Adopt a reduced sparsity factor, such as:

- (i) Reduce the average group size threshold
- (ii) Increase or remove the distance threshold
- (iii) Employ a continuous taper
- (iv) Use a fixed sum and set allocations below the minimum allowed.

(c) Not adopt the sparsity factor.

8. Consultation

8.1 The consultation results were:

- (1) 14 votes reduced sparsity
- (2) 13 votes full sparsity
- (3) 1 vote no sparsity

8.2 The table below shows the impact of various options for 2022/23 compared to 2021/22. This table was in the consultation, although the NFF 80% has been added.

Sparsity							
School Name	2021/22 Sparsity	2022/23					
		NFF Sparsity Total (incl ACA)	Reduction of Av Grp Size	Increase Distance Threshold	Remove Distance Threshold	NFF capped at 80%	Continuous Taper
Aldermaston C.E. Primary School	£0	£5,927		£5,927	£5,927	£4,582	£2,963
Beedon C.E. (Controlled) Primary School	£35,000	£56,911	£56,911	£56,911	£56,911	£44,000	£37,916
Beenham Primary School	£0	£56,911	£56,911	£40,743	£56,911	£44,000	£36,396
Brightwalton C.E. Aided Primary School	£35,000	£35,560	£27,044	£35,560	£35,560	£27,493	£17,780
Brimpton C.E. Primary School	£0	£56,911	£56,911	£52,126	£56,911	£44,000	£34,876
Bucklebury C.E. Primary School	£0	£13,635	£9,391	£1,675		£10,542	£6,818
Chaddleworth St Andrew's C.E. Primary School	£0	£56,911	£56,911	£56,911	£56,911	£44,000	£45,514
Curridge Primary School	£0	£16,887	£13,306	£1,316		£13,056	£8,444
Enborne C.E. Primary School	£0	£56,911	£52,320	£41,778	£56,911	£44,000	£29,177
Hampstead Norreys C.E. Primary School	£0	£46,957	£39,682	£40,661	£46,957	£36,304	£23,479
Inkpen Primary School	£0	£56,911	£56,911	£53,031	£56,911	£44,000	£34,116
Kintbury St Mary's C.E. Primary School	£0	£3,647		£3,647	£3,647	£2,820	£1,824
Shefford C.E. Primary School	£35,000	£56,911	£56,911	£56,911	£56,911	£44,000	£36,776
Stockcross C.E. School	£0	£35,560	£27,044	£35,560	£35,560	£27,493	£17,780
Streatley C.E. Voluntary Controlled School	£0	£14,165	£10,876			£10,951	£7,082
Sulhamstead and Ufton Nerve School	£0	£10,406	£8,132			£8,045	£5,203
The Ilsleys Primary School	£35,000	£56,911	£56,911	£56,911	£56,911	£44,000	£32,977
Welford and Wickham C.E. Primary School	£35,000	£46,957	£39,682	£46,957	£46,957	£36,304	£23,479
Woolhampton C.E. Primary School	£0	£33,281	£24,517	£24,204	£33,281	£25,730	£16,640
Yattendon C.E. Primary School	£35,000	£43,918	£36,312	£43,918	£43,918	£33,955	£21,959
John O'gaunt School	£47,078	£53,807	£41,390	£53,807	£53,807	£37,053	£26,904
Theale Green School	£0	£36,147	£21,768	£36,147	£36,147	£22,681	£18,074
Total	£257,078	£852,145	£749,843	£744,703	£797,052	£649,009	£486,175

8.3 The options impact these 22 schools differently. Under NFF, 80% and continuous taper, all 22 get something, Under the reduction in group or distance options, some schools no longer qualify for funding due to their characteristics.

Each option is worked through below:

(1) NFF

- Maximum of £55,000 for primaries and £80,000 for all other schools, plus area cost adjustment.
- Average year group size of 21.4 (primary) & 120 (secondary)
- Distance threshold taper, set at 20% below the main distance thresholds, so 1.6 miles (primary) & 2.4 miles (secondary)
- Total cost £852k

(2) Reduction in average group size

- NFF sees primaries with an average group size of 10.7 or lower getting 100% of funding.
- Reducing the threshold by say 10% would mean that primaries with an average group size of 9.65 or lower would get 100% of funding. Any group size above this would see a reduction in their funding compared to NFF.
- Total cost £750k.

(3) Change in distance threshold

- NFF is based on a sparsity distance threshold of 2 miles for a primary, 3 for a secondary, with a 20% taper (1.6 and 2.4 miles).
- Increasing the distance by 10% (2.2 and 3.3 miles) and keeping the taper (1.76 and 2.64 miles) would impact those schools with distances less than this.
- Removing the distance taper threshold results in schools below 2 and 3 miles no longer receiving funding.
- Total cost of £745k or £797k.

(4) NFF capped at 80%

- Uses the same distances and group sizes and tapers as the NFF
- Caps the award to 80% of the NFF.
- Total cost £649k.

(5) Continuous taper

- Under the NFF a school with an average year group size of less than half the year group threshold (10.7) will receive 100% of sparsity funding.
- The continuous taper means schools with an average year group size of less than half the year group threshold will not receive 100% of the sparsity funding for their phase. The continuous taper would mean that a school with 10.7 average group size would receive half the maximum sparsity.
- Total cost £486k.

Continuous Taper Examples:

Primary A: Group Size 10.7

NFF = £55,000

CT = $((21.4 - 10.7)/21.4) * £55,000 = £27,500$

Primary B: Group Size 7.13

NFF = £55,000

CT = $((21.4 - 7.13)/21.4) * £55,000 = £36,675$

Appendix B

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which states:

- (1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;*
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; This includes the need to:
 - (i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;*
 - (ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;**
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, with due regard, in particular, to the need to be aware that compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.**
- (2) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.*
- (3) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.*

The following list of questions may help to establish whether the decision is relevant to equality (the relevance of a decision to equality depends not just on the number of those affected, but on the significance of the impact on them):

- Does the decision affect service users, employees or the wider community?
- Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?
- Is it a major policy or a major change to an existing policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?
- Will the decision have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?
- Does the decision relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?
- Does the decision relate to an area with known inequalities?
- Does the decision relate to any equality objectives that have been set by the Council?

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a full Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.

What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Schools' Forum to make:	Approve the school funding formula consultation to go out to all schools.
Name of Service/Directorate:	Finance and Property/Resources
Name of assessor:	Melanie Ellis
Date of assessment:	28.9.21

Is this a ?		Is this policy, strategy, function or service ... ?	
Policy	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	New or proposed	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Strategy	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Function	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Is changing	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Service	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

(1) What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To consult on the school funding formula 2022/23
Objectives:	To comply with Government guidance
Outcomes:	To use the responses to inform the decision
Benefits:	To comply with Government guidance

(2) Which groups might be affected and how? Is it positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this?			
<i>(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation)</i>			
Group Affected	Potential Positive Impacts	Potential Negative Impacts	Evidence
Age	none	none	
Disability	none	none	
Gender Reassignment	none	none	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	none	none	

Pregnancy and Maternity	none	none	
Race	none	none	
Religion or Belief	none	none	
Sex	none	none	
Sexual Orientation	none	none	
Further Comments:			

(3) Result	
Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please provide an explanation for your answer: following government guidance on setting a school formula	
Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please provide an explanation for your answer: the decision will impact school funding but only within certain parameters. The size of the funding will not change, only the distribution method. The consultation aims to consider the impact on all schools.	

If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered 'yes' to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a EqIA 2.

If an EqIA 2 is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the EqIA guidance and template – <http://intranet/index.aspx?articleid=32255>.

(4) Identify next steps as appropriate:	
EqIA Stage 2 required	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Owner of EqIA Stage Two:	
Timescale for EqIA Stage Two:	

Name: Melanie Ellis

Date: 28.9.21

Please now forward this completed form to Pamela Voss, Equality and Diversity Officer (pamela.voss@westberks.gov.uk), for publication on

This page is intentionally left blank

Budgets for Additional Funds 2022/23

Report being considered by: Schools Forum on 6th December 2021

Report Author: Melanie Ellis

Item for: Decision **By:** All Forum Members / Maintained Primary School Members

1. Purpose of the Report

To set out the proposed 2022/23 budgets for the Growth fund, Primary Schools in Financial Difficulty fund (SIFD) and Additional High Needs fund.

2. Recommendations from Heads Funding Group

- 2.1 To distribute the 2022/23 growth to all schools via the school formula. This is estimated to be in the region of £900K.
- 2.2 To top-up the PSIFD fund to £200k.
- 2.3 To set the Additional High Needs fund at £40k.

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"/>
---	-------------------------------	---

3. Introduction

- 3.1 The main formula funding a school receives is retrospective and based on pupil numbers from the previous October census. Growth funding is allocated by the Department for Education (DfE) by formula and forms part of the Schools Block DSG allocation. It is allocated to meet the cost of increases in pre-16 pupil numbers either in new schools or bulge classes set up to meet basic need.
- 3.2 The formula for allocating growth funding to each local authority is based on the observed differences between the primary and secondary number on roll between the October 2020 and October 2021 school censuses. The growth is measured within each 'middle layer super output area' (MSOA). In West Berkshire there are 22 MSOAs. Changes in pupil numbers between the two censuses are identified for each MSOA, and any areas with a reduction in pupil numbers are discounted. Growth factor values are then applied:
 - (1) £1,485 for each primary growth pupil
 - (2) £2,220 for each secondary growth pupil
 - (3) £70,800 for each new school which opened in the previous year.
- 3.3 The SIFD fund is de-delegated and supports maintained primary schools in deficit or close to deficit.

3.4 Funding is set aside annually from the high needs block to fund schools with a disproportionate number of high needs pupils that meet the agreed criteria.

4. West Berkshire Growth Allocation Estimate 2022-23

4.1 The DfE issue a growth calculator to generate illustrative growth allocations for 2022-23. Pupil numbers by school (September 2021) have been provided by the Education Place Planning team based upon school Capita data. These have been checked for reasonableness but there may obviously be some variation to those recorded on the October 2021 census.

4.2 Although there is a decrease in primary pupil numbers within the authority, 8 of the MSOA's have an overall growth with 4 of these being greater than 10 pupils, thereby generating eligible primary growth.

4.3 There is actual growth in secondary school pupil numbers with all schools, bar one, demonstrating an increase in pupil numbers, based upon the Capita data.

4.4 The illustrative growth allocation for 2022-23 is £918K. The actual value will be confirmed in December 2021.

Eligible primary growth (a)	Eligible secondary growth (b)	ACA (c)	Allocation for primary growth (d) (a)*(c) * £1,485	Allocation for secondary growth (e) (b)*(c) *£2,220	No. of new schools (f)	Allocation for new schools (g) (c) * £70,800	Total growth allocation (h)	2021-22 growth allocation	2021-22 schools block	Illustrative total growth allocation 2022-23,	Change to 2022-23 growth funding as % of 2021-22 SB DSG
81	314	1.03475	£123,697	£721,304	1	£73,260	£918,261	£603,831	£114,831,628	£918,261	0.27%
66	225	1.03468	£98,608	£505,223	0	£0	£603,831	2021/22 Growth figures for comparison			

5. Growth Fund

5.1 The Schools Forum must be consulted on the total size of the growth fund and criteria for use. The criteria formed part of the Schools Funding consultation and was supported.

5.2 As it is within the schools block, a movement of funding between the schools formula and the growth fund is not treated as a transfer between blocks. If funding is not required for growth, it can be added into the school formula, but if there is a shortfall, this needs to be met from a top slice of the main schools' block allocation.

5.3 The growth fund balance at 31.03.21 was £1.5m. Support for Highwood Copse will be the main draw on the fund over the next few years, estimated to be over £400k between 2021-23. Additionally, some of the allocated growth fund will need to be used annually to support Highwood Copse as a growing school. This is because the funding allocated by the DfE via the Authority Proforma Tool (APT) is based upon lagged pupil numbers and, as such, as an authority we will need to estimate and fund the increase in pupil numbers each year.

5.4 The table below shows the estimated draw on the growth fund up to 31.3.23. It does not appear at this point that any schools will be eligible for growth funding, other than Highwood and the Calcots, and so a contingency has been built in to cover three cases per year. This gives an estimated balance of £786k prior to adding any 2022-23 growth allocation, estimated at £918k.

	Pre Opening		Diseconomies of Scale	Growth	Balance
	Staff	Equipment			
Balance 31.03.21					-1,500,000
Highwood Copse	14,934				-1,485,067
The Calcots				27,500	-1,457,567
Highwood Copse	65,000	6,300			-1,386,267
Highwood Underwriting			175,000		-1,211,267
The Calcots				38,500	-1,172,767
Contingency				115,500	-1,057,267
Est Balance 31.03.22					-1,057,267
Highwood Underwriting			155,000		-902,267
Contingency				115,500	-786,767
Est Balance 31.03.23					-786,767

5.5 In 2021/22, it was agreed that the projected balance of the growth fund was sufficient and the 2021/22 allocation was added into the school formula and allocated to schools and not used to further increase the growth fund. This was then used to increase the High Needs Block transfer from 0.25% to 0.5%.

5.6 Based upon the projected growth fund balance at 31.03.23, it is proposed to once again add the DSG growth funding allocation for 2022/23 into the school formula and allocate to schools. Some of this estimated £918k allocation will be required to support the increase in pupil numbers at Highwood Copse (Sept 2022- March 2023). This is estimated to be in the region £75-£100K. The remainder would be distributed to all schools.

5.7 A summary table is shown below:

Growth Fund	Top up £	Spend £	Cumulative Balance £
2018/19	280,710	87,500	193,210
2019/20	655,800	183,048	665,962
2020/21	904,945	69,836	1,501,071
2021/22	0	443,804	1,057,267
2022/23	0	270,500	786,767

6. Primary Schools in Financial Difficulty Fund

6.1 The primary schools in financial difficulty fund was topped up by £30k to £200k for 2021/22 budget purposes. No bids have yet been approved, but a decision needs to be made to de-delegate this service in 2022/23, in order to top up the fund to £200k.

Primary Schools in Financial difficulty fund	Top up £	Spend £	Cumulative Balance £
2018/19	379,120	127,073	252,047
2019/20	0	70,880	181,167
2020/21	18,833	30,179	169,821
2021/22	30,179		200,000
2022/23	0		200,000

7. Additional High Needs Funding

7.1 Funding needs to be set aside from the high needs block in order to fund those schools qualifying for additional high needs funding. It is proposed that this remains at £40k.

Additional High Needs Funding	Budget £	Spend £
2018/19	100,000	83,609
2019/20	100,000	68,001
2020/21	100,000	33,550
2021/22	40,000	26,092
2022/23	40,000	

8. Proposals

- To distribute the 2022/23 growth allocation to all schools via the school formula.
- To top-up the PSIFD fund to £200k.
- To set the Additional High Needs fund at £40k.

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix A - EIA

Appendix A

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which states:

- (1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;*
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; This includes the need to:
 - (i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;*
 - (ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;**
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, with due regard, in particular, to the need to be aware that compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.**
- (2) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.*
- (3) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.*

The following list of questions may help to establish whether the decision is relevant to equality (the relevance of a decision to equality depends not just on the number of those affected, but on the significance of the impact on them):

- Does the decision affect service users, employees or the wider community?
- Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?
- Is it a major policy or a major change to an existing policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?
- Will the decision have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?
- Does the decision relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?
- Does the decision relate to an area with known inequalities?
- Does the decision relate to any equality objectives that have been set by the Council?

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a full Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.

What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Schools' Forum to make:	Approve the budgets for additional funds.
Name of Service/Directorate:	Finance and Property/Resources
Name of assessor:	Melanie Ellis
Date of assessment:	28.11.21

Is this a ?		Is this policy, strategy, function or service ... ?	
Policy	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	New or proposed	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Strategy	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Function	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Is changing	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Service	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

(1) What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To approve the budgets for additional funds
Objectives:	To approve the budgets for additional funds
Outcomes:	To approve the budgets for additional funds
Benefits:	To approve the budgets for additional funds

(2) Which groups might be affected and how? Is it positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this?			
<i>(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation)</i>			
Group Affected	Potential Positive Impacts	Potential Negative Impacts	Evidence
Age	none	none	
Disability	none	none	
Gender Reassignment	none	none	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	none	none	

Pregnancy and Maternity	none	none	
Race	none	none	
Religion or Belief	none	none	
Sex	none	none	
Sexual Orientation	none	none	
Further Comments:			

(3) Result	
Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	
Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	

If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered 'yes' to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a EqlA 2.

If an EqlA 2 is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the EqlA guidance and template – <http://intranet/index.aspx?articleid=32255>.

(4) Identify next steps as appropriate:	
EqlA Stage 2 required	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Owner of EqlA Stage Two:	
Timescale for EqlA Stage Two:	

Name: Melanie Ellis

Date: 28.11.21

Please now forward this completed form to Pamela Voss, Equality and Diversity Officer (pamela.voss@westberks.gov.uk), for publication on the WBC website

This page is intentionally left blank

Central Schools' Services Block Budget 2022/23

Report being considered by: Schools' Forum on 6th December 2021

Report Author: Melanie Ellis/Ian Pearson/Lisa Potts

Item for: Decision **By:** All Forum Members

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To set out the budget proposal for services funded from the Central Schools' Services (CSSB) block of the DSG.

2. Recommendation

2.1 To agree to the 2022/23 budget for the Central Schools Services Block.

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"/>
---	-------------------------------	---

3. Introduction

3.1 The CSSB covers funding allocated to Local Authorities (LAs) to carry out central functions on behalf of pupils in state-funded maintained schools and academies in England. All the services funded by this block are statutory and have to be carried out.

3.2 The provisional allocation of funding for the Central Schools Services Block for 2022/23 is £984,055, which is a £25k or 2.5% reduction on the previous year.

4. Budget Requirement for the Central Schools Services Block

4.1 The following table shows the budget requirement for the services that fall within the Central Schools Services Block for 2022/23 compared to 2021/22.

4.2 To balance the block, we reviewed the staff percentages in comparison with the work being carried out and have adjusted the charges accordingly.

Central Schools Services Block (CSSB)		2021/22 Budget	2022/23 Budget Requirement	Increase/Decrease	Change
		£	£	£	%
Budget Requirement:					
1	School Admissions	216,663	215,312	-1,351	-1%
2	National Copyright Licences	150,494	153,504	3,010	2%
3	Servicing of Schools Forum	52,640	53,081	440	1%
4	Education Welfare	203,900	208,098	4,198	2%
5	Statutory & Regulatory Duties:				
a	Provision of Education Data	213,089	190,709	-22,380	-11%
b	Finance Support for the Education Service	81,071	78,902	-2,169	-3%
c	Strategic Planning of the Education Service	99,900	84,450	-15,450	-15%
Total Budget Requirement		1,017,756	984,055	-33,701	-3.3%

4.3 The cost of copyright licence for schools is determined by the relevant national agencies. Details of all the other services included in the Central Schools Services Block (including a breakdown of costs) is given in Appendix A.

4.4 The table below shows how the block has been balanced.

Central Schools Services Block (CSSB)	2021/22 Budget	2022/23 Budget Requirement	Increase/Decrease from 21/22	Change
	£	£	£	%
Total Budget Requirement	1,017,756	984,055	- 33,701	-3.3%
Funding:				
Central Schools Services Block DSG	-1,009,288	-984,055	- 25,233	-2.5%
Underspends from CSSB 20/21	-8,468			
Total Funding	-1,017,756	-0		
Balance	0	0		

5. Appendices

5.1 Appendix A - Details and Costs of Central Schools' Services

5.2 Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment

Details and Costs of Central Schools' Services

	Number of Posts	% Charged to CSSB	2022/23 £
School Admissions			
Description of Statutory Duties covered			
Administration of admissions process for maintained schools and academies			
Staffing Structure			
Admissions and Transport Manager	1.00	80%	
Admissions Officers	2.50	80%	
Breakdown of Costs			
Staff salary costs			135,750
Employee Expenses			18,700
Supplies and Services			1,320
Capita One recharge			23,238
Support Service Recharges			36,303
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR ADMISSIONS			215,312
Number of Posts			
% Charged to CSSB			
2022/23 £			
Servicing the Schools Forum			
Description of Statutory Duties covered			
Setting agendas, minute taking, co-ordination and distribution of papers for Schools Forum and its sub groups			
Staffing Structure			
Head of Education	1.00	10.00%	
Schools Finance Team	2.46	5% to 10%	
Schools Forum Clerk			
Breakdown of Costs			
Staff salary costs			44,870
Room hire, consumables and members expenses			1,610
Support Service Recharges			6,601
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR SERVICING THE SCHOOLS FORUM			53,081

	Number of Posts	% Charged to CSSB	2022/23 £
Education Welfare			
<u>Description of Statutory Duties covered</u>			
Tracking of children who can be legally removed from the school roll.			
Monitoring of elective home education.			
Issuing and monitoring of child work permits and performance licences.			
Attendance at core group meetings for specific pupils			
Advice on keeping registers			
Progress cases to court where appropriate. Maintain up to date knowledge of legal processes and			
<u>Staffing Structure</u>			
Principal Education Welfare and Safeguarding Officer	1.00	40%	
Senior Education Welfare Officer	0.40	90%	
Education Welfare Officers	3.54	35%	
Assistant Education Welfare Officer	1.00	100%	
Administrative Assistant	0.40	100%	
<u>Breakdown of Costs</u>			
Staff salary costs			153,385
Employee expenses/car allowances			6,500
Other non staffing costs			3,030
Income from fines			-11,350
Capita One Recharges			10,329
Support Service Recharges			46,204
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR EDUCATION WELFARE			208,098
Provision of Education Data			
<u>Description of Statutory Duties covered</u>			
Statutory returns to DfE			
Data analysis and reporting e.g. Exam results, performance			
School census administration and reports			
<u>Staffing Structure</u>			
Staffing	2.00	75%	
<u>Breakdown of Costs</u>			
Staff salary costs			70,960
Capita One recharge			106,079
Support Service Recharges			13,201
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR PROVISION OF EDUCATION DATA			190,241

	Number of Posts	% Charged to CSSB	2022/23 £
Finance Support for the Education Service			
<u>Description of Statutory Duties covered</u>			
DSG services budget preparation, monitoring, and year end			
Education services budget preparation, monitoring, and year end			
School funding formula and early years funding formula			
Administration of funding allocations to all schools for early years and high needs			
Statutory returns e.g. APT, S251, CFO deployment of DSG			
<u>Staffing Structure</u>			
Chief Mgt Accountant	1.00	5%	
Education Finance Manager	0.81	15%	
Education Senior Accountant	0.61	50%	
Education Accountant	0.50	65%	
Accountant	1.00	50%	
<u>Breakdown of Costs</u>			
Staff salary costs			59,100
Support Service Recharges			19,802
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR FINANCE SUPPORT			78,902
	Number of Posts	% Charged to CSSB	2022/23 £
Strategic Planning of the Education Service			
<u>Description of Statutory Duties covered</u>			
Strategic planning and management of the Education service as a whole			
<u>Staffing Structure</u>			
Head of Education	1.00	55%	
Other staffing	1.00	42%	
<u>Breakdown of Costs</u>			
Staff salary costs			81,650
Other staff costs			2,800
Support Service Recharges			0
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR PLANNING OF EDUCATION SERVICE			84,450

Appendix B

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which states:

- (1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;*
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; This includes the need to:
 - (i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;*
 - (ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;**
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, with due regard, in particular, to the need to be aware that compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.**
- (2) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.*
- (3) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.*

The following list of questions may help to establish whether the decision is relevant to equality (the relevance of a decision to equality depends not just on the number of those affected, but on the significance of the impact on them):

- Does the decision affect service users, employees or the wider community?
- Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?
- Is it a major policy or a major change to an existing policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?
- Will the decision have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?
- Does the decision relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?
- Does the decision relate to an area with known inequalities?
- Does the decision relate to any equality objectives that have been set by the Council?

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a full Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.

What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Schools' Forum to make:	To agree to the areas for de-delegation as part of the Schools consultation on the funding formula
Name of Service/Directorate:	Dedicated Schools Grant
Name of assessor:	Lisa Potts
Date of assessment:	30/11/2021

Is this a ?		Is this policy, strategy, function or service ... ?	
Policy	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	New or proposed	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Strategy	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Function	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Is changing	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Service	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

(1) What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To agree the budget for the Central School Services Block
Objectives:	To ensure services continue to be funded
Outcomes:	Agreement to fund services as set out in the papers
Benefits:	A deliverable service

(2) Which groups might be affected and how? Is it positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this?			
<i>(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation)</i>			
Group Affected	Potential Positive Impacts	Potential Negative Impacts	Evidence
Age	None	None	
Disability	None	None	
Gender Reassignment	None	None	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	None	None	

Pregnancy and Maternity	None	None	
Race	None	None	
Religion or Belief	None	None	
Sex	None	None	
Sexual Orientation	None	None	
Further Comments:			

(3) Result	
Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	
Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	

If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered 'yes' to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a EqlA 2.
 If an EqlA 2 is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the EqlA guidance and template – <http://intranet/index.aspx?articleid=32255>.

(4) Identify next steps as appropriate:	
EqlA Stage 2 required	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Owner of EqlA Stage Two:	
Timescale for EqlA Stage Two:	

Name: Lisa Potts **Date:** 30/11/2021

Please now forward this completed form to Pamela Voss, Equality and Diversity Officer (pamela.voss@westberks.gov.uk), for publication on the WBC

High Needs Block Budget 2022/23		
Report being considered by:	Schools Forum 6 th December 2021	
Report Author:	Ian Pearson, Jane Seymour, Michelle Sancho, Linda Curtis	
Item for:	Discussion	By: All Forum Members

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report sets out the current financial position of the high needs budget for 2021/22 and the position as far as it can be predicted for 2022/23, including the likely shortfall.

2. Recommendation

2.1 To agree the overall HNB budget for 2022-23. It should be noted that at this stage the figures do not include any transfer from the Schools Block.

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"/>
--	-------------------------------	---

3. Introduction

3.1 Setting a balanced budget for the High Needs Block continues to be a significant challenge. The numbers of high needs pupils and unit costs of provision has continued to rise, place funding has remained static in spite of increasing numbers, and local authorities have taken on responsibility for students up to the age of 25 with SEND in FE colleges without the appropriate funding to cover the actual cost. The number of children with EHCPs is increasing, in spite of the threshold for an EHCP remaining the same and being applied robustly.

3.2 Up until 2016-17, West Berkshire was setting a balanced high needs budget. Since then, the budget has been under pressure on an annual basis. A decision was made to set a deficit budget for the first time in 2016/17.

3.3 The pressure on the high needs block is a national issue, and many local authorities have significant over spends and have also set deficit budgets. South East regional benchmarking data shows that in West Berkshire overspending on the HNB as a % of the total HNB budget is one of the lowest in the region, but nevertheless it is an issue of ongoing concern.

3.4 The Local Authority's statutory duties for children with SEND are effectively open ended in that if a child requires an EHC Plan it must be provided regardless of budgetary constraints. Criteria for initiating an Education, Health and Care assessment are robustly applied by the SEN Panel (which has Headteacher representation on it). However, in

spite of robust management of demand, the number of children with EHCPs continues to rise. The total number of EHCPs has increased by 41% since the Children and Families Act came in in 2014. Most of this increase is in EHCPs in specialist placements rather than mainstream schools, which is primarily what is driving the HNB budget pressure

3.5 The creation of more local provision for children with SEMH and autism, through the SEND Strategy, will alleviate these pressures to some extent, as local maintained provision will be more cost effective than independent and non maintained provision. However, it is also critical that mainstream schools are supported to maintain more children with SEND in mainstream settings if the HNB overspend is to be effectively addressed. This includes in particular children with SEMH and autism. The invest to save projects agreed in 2020-21 and 2021-22 aim to reduce exclusions and demand from schools for children to be placed in alternative specialist placements.

3.6 Tables 2, 3, 4 and 5 in Appendix A show where the predicted 2022-23 costs exceed 2021-22 budgets.

3.7 The net shortfall in the 2022-23 HNB budget, is **£5,835,939**. This includes a predicted 21/22 overspend of £1,361,301 and carried forward overspends of £2,327,100 from previous years. Without the carried forward overspends, the shortfall in 22-23 would be **£2,147,538**.

3.8 Details of the services paid for from the high needs budget and the corresponding budget information are set out in Appendix A, together with an explanation of the reasons for budget increases.

4. Summary Financial Position

4.1 The latest estimate of expenditure in the High Needs Block budget for both 2021/22 and 2022/23 is set out in Table 1. The figures are based on current and anticipated numbers of high needs pupils. They assume no change in top up funding rates for EHCPs in West Berkshire schools.

4.2 Most of the DSG allocation for the high needs block is now confirmed. Part of it is estimated and will be based on the actual number of pupils in special schools in the October 2021 census, and import/export adjustments based on the January 2021 census and February 2021 ILR.

TABLE 1	2021/22 Budget £	2021/22 Forecast £	2022/23 Estimate £
Place Funding	6,141,000	6,196,000	6,172,000
Top Up Funding	14,749,150	14,620,890	16,220,150
PRU Funding (top ups only)	1,393,370	1,441,760	1,597,160
Other Statutory Services	1,621,260	1,700,122	1,824,440
Non Statutory Services	1,385,814	1,387,625	1,321,055
Support Service Recharges	188,790	188,790	191,506
Total Expenditure	25,479,384	25,535,187	27,326,311

HNB DSG Allocation	-23,625,318	-23,625,318	-25,178,773
0.25% Schools Block Transfer Existing Invest to save projects	-274,284	-274,284	
0.25% Schools Block Transfer New Invest to save projects	-274,284	-274,284	
In year overspend	1,305,498	1,361,301	2,147,538
HNB DSG Overspend from previous year	2,780,880	2,327,100	3,688,401
Total cumulative deficit	4,086,306	3,688,401	5,835,939

4.3 There is a forecast shortfall of **£2,147,538** in the 2022/23 HNB.

Appendix A sets out the detail of the budgets included within the High Needs Block, and the reasons for the pressure on the 2022-23 HNB budget.

5. Appendices

Appendix A – High Needs Budget detail

High Needs Budget Detail

1. PLACE FUNDING – STATUTORY

- 1.1 Place funding is agreed by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and has to be passed on to the institution, forming their base budget. Academy and FE places are included in the initial HNB allocation but the agreed place numbers are then deducted and paid to the institution direct (DSG top slice). In 2018/19 pre 16 resource unit place funding was reduced from £10,000 to £6,000 per place, and each pupil within the unit was included in the main school formula funding allocation.
- 1.2 The ESFA will not fund any overall increases to places. If additional places are needed in academies or FE colleges, a request can be made to the ESFA. However, any additional places agreed would be top sliced from West Berkshire's HNB allocation in 2022-23; no additional funding is made available.
- 1.3 In total the allocated planned places in 2020-21 are 734 and for 2022-23 they will be 733. There have been some increases and decreases to place funding which can be changed (academies and FE colleges) with an overall net reduction of 1 place. (see Table 1 below).
- 1.4 As it is not possible to request increased planned place funding for maintained schools, any increase in place funding needed which is over and above the number of places set out below has been allowed for in the relevant top up budgets, creating additional pressure on those budgets.

TABLE 1 - Place Funding Budget	2021/22 Budget			2022/23 Estimated Budget		
	No. of Places	£	Current No. of Pupils	Proposed No. of Places	£	Difference in number
Special Schools pre 16 (90540) –	286	2,860,000	440	286	2,860,000	0
Special Schools post 16 (90546) –	79	790,000		79	790,000	0
Resource Units Maintained pre 16 (90584) –	35	242,000	31	35	226,000	0
Resource Units Academies pre 16 (DSG top slice) –	99	622,000	111	102	638,000	3
Mainstream Maintained post 16 (90551) –	5	38,000	11	6	44,000	1
Mainstream Academies post 16 (DSG top slice) –	31	186,000	35	30	180,000	-1
Further Education	133	798,000		129	774,000	-4
PRU Place Funding (90320)	66	660,000	84	66	660,000	0
TOTAL	734	6,196,000		733	£6,172,000	-1

2. TOP UP FUNDING – STATUTORY

2.1 Top up funding is paid to the institutions where we are placing pupils who live in West Berkshire (we do not pay our institutions top up funding for pupils who live outside West Berkshire). **Table 2** shows the budget and forecast for 2021/22 and the estimate for 2022/23.

TABLE 2 Top Up Budgets	2020/21 Budget		2021/22 Budget			2022/23	Difference 21/22 budget & 22/23 prediction
	Budget £	Outturn £	Budget £	Forecast £ (Month 6)	Over/ (under) £	Estimate £	
Special Schools Maintained (90539)	3,986,360	4,014,247	4,403,120	4,675,990	272,870	4,924,490	+521,370
Non WBC special schools (90548)	1,194,300	862,361	1,324,500	1,174,500	-150,000	919,660	-404,840
Resource Units Maintained (90617)	313,650	285,803	314,000	293,220	-20,780	314,000	0
Resource Units Academies (90026)	948,280	1,016,637	1,113,300	1,005,660	-107,640	1,000,000	-113,300
Resource Units Non WBC (90618)	130,600	191,997	170,540	198,640	28,100	180,640	+10,100
Mainstream Maintained (90621)	779,450	790,047	818,660	911,190	92,530	850,000	+31,340
Mainstream Academies (90622)	389,600	412,090	423,560	498,580	75,020	510,000	+86,440
Mainstream Non WBC (90624)	70,590	138,703	160,510	219,480	58,970	146,810	-13,700
Non Maintained Special Schools (90575)	1,068,200	986,016	1,007,880	936,240	-71,640	1,116,300	+108,420
Independent Special Schools (90579)	2,797,000	2,636,088	3,535,280	3,479,590	-55,690	4,335,930	+800,650
Further Education (90580)	1,087,730	993,861	1,437,800	1,187,800	-250,000	1,104,930	-332,870
Disproportionate HN Pupils (90627)	100,000	33,550	40,000	40,000	0	42,000	+2,000
New SEMH Provision at Theale	-	-	-	-	-	775,390	+775,390
TOTAL	12,865,760	12,361,399	14,749,150	14,620,890	-128,260	16,220,150	+1,471,000

2.2 There have been savings on Non West Berkshire special schools (placements in Free special schools and other Local Authorities' maintained special schools), and also on placements in FE Colleges, amounting to over £700K.

2.3 However, a number of other top up budgets are under pressure resulting in a budget requirement in 2022-23 in excess of this year's budget allocation by circa £1.4M.

2.4 It should be noted that £775,390 of this is accounted for by the new secondary SEMH provision in Theale opening in September 2022 (see para 2.11 below).

2.5 The top up budgets under most pressure are as follows:

- Independent special schools
- Maintained special schools
- Maintained and academy mainstream EHCPs
- Non maintained special schools

2.6 The predictions of cost for 2021-22 take in to account known pupils whose needs can no longer be met in local schools, together with some cases which are due to go to the SEND Tribunal. It is not possible to predict all pupils who may need placements in 2022-23. The figures assume a middle ground between the best case scenario and the worst case scenario (financially) in terms of Tribunal outcomes.

2.7 Independent special schools

This is by far the greatest pressure in the top up budgets. The pressure reflects a number of factors including the fact that some highly complex children have needed to be placed in very expensive placements in 21-22 and so have only incurred part year costs this year, but will incur full year costs in 22-23. In addition there are a number of anticipated new placements for children with a variety of needs including SEMH and Autism, but also some very high cost children whose needs can no longer be met in local or other LA maintained special schools or at home. (Some of these will be joint funded placements with Social Care or Health).

2.8 West Berkshire maintained special schools

This pressure reflects increasing numbers in our special schools, the need to compensate for inadequate planned place funding through the top up budget and some very high needs pupils needing additional support to maintain their placements. As there is no additional planned place funding for special schools, the extra planned place funding has been allowed for in this budget.

2.9 Mainstream top ups (maintained and academies)

This increase reflects an increasing number of EHCPs in mainstream schools. It should be noted that EHCP top up values for mainstream schools (including resourced schools) have not been increased since 2013. The budget proposed for 2022-23 does not allow for any increase in EHCP bandings, but the HFG may wish to consider whether it would like to increase these values.

2.10 Non maintained special schools

The increase is accounted for by children moving in to the area already placed in non maintained special schools and a pending Tribunal case for a specialist placement.

2.11 New Secondary SEMH Provision in Theale

The Forum will be aware from previous reports that planning has been taking place since 2019 for a new 42 place provision for young people with complex emotional needs who may have a diagnosis of autism. This provision will be managed by The Castle School and will be based on the site of the old Theale Primary School. The provision is on target to open in September 2022 with 12 pupils initially. A revenue budget for the provision has been developed by the Local Authority in partnership with The Castle School and based on an agreed staffing model. Unit costs will inevitably be disproportionately high in the early years of opening due to low numbers, but will reduce over time to a level which is significantly lower than the average cost of an equivalent external placement. (approximately £44K compared to £62K). The case for and savings associated with this provision have been set out in previous reports to the Forum. All 12 of the students who will transfer to the new provision in September 2022 are likely otherwise to have been placed in external placements.

3. PUPIL REFERRAL UNITS (PRU) – STATUTORY

3.1 **Table 3** shows the budgets for PRU top ups.

TABLE 3	2020/21 Budget		2021/22 Budget			2022/23	
PRU Budgets	Budget £	Outturn £	Budget £	Forecast £ (Month 6)	Over/ (under) £	Estimate £	Difference 21/22 budget & 22/23 prediction
PRU Top Up Funding (90625)	818,400	807,074	821,920	821,920	0	830,140	+8,220
PRU EHCP SEMH Placements (90628)	557,520	581,965	571,450	619,840	48,390	767,020	+195,570
Non WBC PRU Top Up Funding (90626)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1,375,920	1,389,039	1,393,370	1,441,760	48,390	1,597,160	+203,790

3.2 The current year budget was based on the previous year's forecast. Schools Forum agreed to pilot a 50% contribution from schools for pupils that they placed. Heads have requested that this contribution remains until a review in March 2022. Permanent exclusions and sixth form are funded 100% by the High Needs Block less the average pupil led funding contribution recovered from schools. The estimate for 22/23 PRU Top Up Funding is based on the profile of pupils at I-College in the summer term and shows a slight increase in budget by £8,220.

3.3 The number of pupils with EHCPs being placed in PRUs is increasing as this can be an appropriate and cost effective provision for some young people if they are not able to remain in their mainstream schools. A new provision for pupils with EHCPs was set up in autumn 2019, The Pod, and a further Pod Plus provision was set up in September 2021. These placements are usually more cost effective than independent and non-maintained special school placements. The budget increase includes provision for additional planned places not funded by the ESFA.

4. OTHER STATUTORY SERVICES

4.1 **Table 4** details the budgets for other statutory services.

TABLE 4 Other Statutory Services	2020/21 Budget		2021/22 Budget			2022/23	Difference 21/22 budget & 22/23 prediction
	Budget £	Outturn £	Budget £	Forecast £ (Month 6)	Over/ (under) £	Estimate £	
Applied Behaviour Analysis (90240)	136,580	146,790	150,470	217,350	66,880	150,470	0
Sensory Impairment (90290)	227,590	250,944	247,860	244,750	-3,110	243,900	-3,960
SEN Commissioned Provision (90577)	567,650	558,395	584,480	583,050	-1,430	584,480	0
Equipment for SEN Pupils (90565)	15,000	25,972	15,000	20,000	5,000	15,000	0
Therapy Services (90295)	261,470	259,327	314,500	314,500	0	314,500	0
Elective home Education Monitoring (90288)	28,240	20,291	28,240	28,240	0	29,310	+1,070
Medical Home Tuition (90282)	205,000	138,626	172,730	172,730	0	178,160	+5,430
Hospital Tuition (90610)	39,050	19,850	39,280	62,940	23,660	39,950	+670
SEND Strategy (DSG) (90281)	61,060	40,137	68,700	56,562	-12,138	60,740	-7,960
Education of children with Health Needs	0	0	0	0	0	71,930	+71,930
Medical tuition for Children with Health Needs	0	0	0	0	0	136,000	+136,000
TOTAL	1,541,640	1,460,332	1,621,260	1,700,122	78,862	1,824,440	+203,180

4.2 Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)

4.2.1 This budget supports a small number of children with EHC Plans for whom the Authority has agreed an ABA programme. ABA is an intensive intervention programme for children with autism which aims to modify behaviours which are typical of ASD in order to allow children to function more successfully in school and in society. The budget also covers the cost of children with EHC Plans accessing other bespoke packages where this is the most appropriate and cost effective way of meeting their needs, including SEN Personal Budgets. No increase in cost is anticipated in this budget.

4.3 Sensory Impairment

4.3.1 Support for children with hearing, visual and multi-sensory impairments is purchased from the Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service. This includes support

from qualified teachers of HI and VI, audiology and mobility support. There will be a small reduction in budget needed next year due to a slight drop in numbers.

4.4 Engaging Potential

4.4.1 Engaging Potential is an independent special school commissioned to provide alternative educational packages for 14 young people in Key Stage 4. Students placed at Engaging Potential are those who have EHC Plans for social, emotional and mental health difficulties and whose needs cannot be met in any other provision. This can include young people who have been excluded from specialist SEMH schools. The unit cost of a place represents good value for money compared to other independent schools for SEMH. No increase in cost is anticipated for 2022-23.

4.5 Equipment for SEN Pupils

4.5.1 This budget is used to fund large items of equipment such as specialist chairs and communication aids for pupils with EHC Plans. The budget has been reduced a number of times in previous HNB savings programmes and was removed entirely in 2018-19 on the basis that schools would meet these costs. However, this created a pressure for nurseries as they do not have delegated SEN budgets, and for resourced schools which have a disproportionate number of children with specialist equipment needs. It was agreed in 2018-19 that a budget of £10,000 would be made available to meet these needs. In 2019-20 it was agreed that the budget should be increased again to £15,000 as demand for equipment for children in nurseries and resourced schools was increasing. It is recommended that the budget stays the same for 2022-3, as although this is a budget which does come under pressure, we have successfully negotiated with Health to fund 50% of specialist seating in schools which is starting to reduce pressure on this budget.

4.6 Therapy Services (Contract with Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust)

4.6.1 The therapy services budget covers the costs for children with SEN who have speech and language therapy or occupational therapy in their EHC Plans.

4.6.2 Therapy services are provided by the Authority solely to children who have the need for a service stipulated and quantified in their EHC Plan. It is a statutory duty for the Local Authority to provide these therapies in these circumstances. The service is commissioned from the Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust.

4.7 Elective Home Education (EHE) Monitoring

4.7.1 There is a statutory duty for Local Authorities to monitor arrangements for EHE made by parents. The EHE monitoring sits within the Education Welfare and Safeguarding Service. The Elective Home Education Officer is 0.6fte and was a new post for September 2019. EHE numbers have been growing, both locally and nationally over recent years but since September 2020 there has been a steep rise in numbers due to COVID-19. The number of new EHE pupils continue to be a concern; there were 16 pupils deregistered from schools in September 2021, a fall from the previous September which was 34, but still much higher than pre-pandemic numbers.

4.8 Medical Tuition Service

4.8.1 The Medical Tuition Service (previously Home Tuition Service) is a statutory service providing home tuition to children with medical conditions and illness that prevent them accessing full-time school. This service was moved from i-College to the Local Authority with effect from September 2019. Since transferring from i-college, savings of £67k have been achieved in the service.

4.9 Hospital Tuition

4.9.1 The Local Authority is obliged to pay the educational element of specialist hospital placements, usually for severe mental health issues. These placements are decided by NHS colleagues and we have no influence over the placement or duration of stay. As numbers and costs are impossible to predict, it is proposed that the 2022-23 budget remains the same as 2021-22. There is a small increase due to inflation increases in salaries for the proportion of staff time administering this service

4.10 SEND Strategy Officer

4.10.1 In 2019-20 the Schools Forum agreed to fund a SEND Strategy Officer for three years initially to support implementation of the SEND Strategy 2018-23. Agreement was given by the Schools Forum in October 2020 that this post could be made permanent in order to attract and retain candidates of a suitable calibre. The slight reduction is due to an appointment on a lower scale point than was budgeted for.

4.11 Education of children with health needs

4.11.1 Local Authorities are under a duty to provide full time education for children with certified health needs after 15 days of absence. This service is provided for children with physical health needs where required, but the legislation also applies to children with mental health needs/anxiety who are emotionally based school avoiders. The number of local presenting cases has increased and it is important not to find ourselves in the position of other authorities who have been fined for not meeting this duty. The budget allocated for this includes capacity to oversee and monitor these cases, as well as funding for medical tuition or other appropriate educational support.

5 NON STATUTORY Services

5.10 **Table 5** details the non-statutory service budgets for 2020-21, 2021-22, and estimates for 2022-23.

5.11 The table shows the budget for these services in 2022/23 assuming that the services continue and there are no changes to staffing levels.

5.12 Table 5 also includes ongoing funding for the “invest to save” initiatives agreed in 2020-21 and 2021-22. The continuation of these services is critical to the deficit recovery strategy set out in a separate report.

TABLE 5	2020/21 Budget		2021/22 Budget			2022/23	Difference 21/22 budget & 22/23 prediction
	Budget £	Outturn £	Budget £	Forecast £ (Month 6)	Over/ (under) £	Estimate £	
Non Statutory Services							
Language and Literacy Centres LALs (90555)	116,200	114,900	122,000	122,000	0	135,740	+13,740
Specialist Inclusion Support Service (90585)	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	0	50,000	0

PRU Outreach Service (90582)	61,200	61,200	61,200	61,200	0	61,200	0
Early Years Inclusion Fund (90238) moved to EY Block	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cognition and Learning Team(90280)	308,130	306,671	328,100	328,100	0	334,140	+6,040
ASD Advisory Service (90830)	150,390	129,415	170,430	170,430	0	174,080	+3,650
Vulnerable Children (90961)	50,000	45,804	50,000	50,000	0	50,000	0
Early Development and Inclusion Team (90287)	51,950	48,965	58,375	58,375	0	62,505	+4,130
Dingley's Promise (90581)	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	0	30,000	0
Invest to save projects							
Therapeutic Thinking post (90372)	58,000	51,214	54,300	54,300	0	55,900	+1,600
Additional Vulnerable Children Grant (90961)	129,400	129,400	129,400	129,400	0	129,400	0
ASD Team - Additional High Level TA Support (90830)	58,000	12,320	59,540	59,540	0	61,560	+2,020
ASD Fund - Additional support (90830)	0	0	52,690	52,690	0	52,690	0
Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) – WBC managed	0	0	121,730	121,730	0	123,840	+2,110
Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) – secondary school managed	0	0	99,860	99,860	0	0	-99,860
TOTAL	1,063,270	979,888	1,387,625	1,387,625	0	1,321,055	-66,570

5.13 Language and Literacy Centres (LALs)

5.13.1 The LALs provide 48 places per year for Year 5 students who have persistent difficulties with literacy and need an intensive programme delivered by a teacher qualified in specific literacy difficulties.

5.13.2 The increase proposed to the LAL budgets relates to the budgets not currently meeting costs of the host schools including the salary costs of the teachers.. In previous years this has been covered off by carried forward amounts but these funds have now been exhausted.

5.14 Specialist Inclusion Support Service

5.14.1 This service provides outreach support from West Berkshire's special schools to mainstream schools to support the inclusion of children with learning and complex needs in their local mainstream schools.

5.14.2 This budget has been subject to reductions in the previous financial years with the special schools providing the service absorbing the cost.

5.15 PRU Outreach

5.15.1 The PRU Outreach Service offers consultancy / outreach support mainly to students who have been attending the iCollege and are starting to attend a mainstream school. Schools may request Outreach for any pupil causing concern but it is dependent on capacity.

5.16 Cognition and Learning Team

5.16.1 The Cognition and Learning Team (CALT) provides advice, support and training to mainstream schools to help them to meet the needs of children with SEN. Staff are experienced SENCOs with higher level SEN qualifications.

5.16.2 Many primary schools are reliant on this service to supplement their own SEN provision and expertise, especially schools where the Head has to act as SENCO or where there is an inexperienced SENCO.

5.16.3 This is a partially traded service. All schools receive a small amount of free core service, but the majority of support now has to be purchased by schools.

5.16.4 The additional cost represents teachers' salary increases, pension and NI.

5.17 ASD Advisory Service

5.17.1 The ASD Advisory Service provides advice, support and training for mainstream schools on meeting the needs of children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. The purpose of the service is to enable children with ASD to be successfully included in mainstream schools wherever possible.

5.17.2 The context for this service is vastly increasing numbers of children with ASD diagnoses and mainstream schools having more and more difficulty meeting the needs of these children. The majority of our placements in non-West Berkshire special schools, independent special schools and non-maintained special schools are for children with ASD.

5.17.3 The increase in cost represents teachers' salary increases, pension and NI.

5.18 Vulnerable Children

5.18.1 The Vulnerable Children Fund is a budget used to help schools support their most vulnerable pupils on an emergency, unpredicted or short term basis.

5.18.2 The budget was gradually reduced from £120K over a number of years. This has always been a well used resource that helps schools support vulnerable pupils with complex needs.

5.18.3 It was agreed in 2020-21 that this budget would be increased, as an invest to save initiative, in order to support the roll out of Therapeutic Thinking in West Berkshire schools. This was further extended in 2021-22. The increase of £129,000 is shown separately in Table 5 under Invest to Save initiatives.

5.19 Early Development and Inclusion Team

5.19.1 The service comprises of 1.7 teachers who are specialists in early years and SEND. Children under 5 who are identified by Health professionals as having significant SEND are referred to this service. Staff initially visit children in their homes (if they are not yet in an early years setting) in order to promote their educational development and model strategies and resources for parents to use to support their child's progress.

5.19.2 EDIT teachers also assist with the transition to early years settings and schools, providing support and training for staff to help them to meet the child's needs, and continuing to visit for a period of time to provide ongoing support and advice. They also help to coordinate support which the family is receiving from other professionals.

5.19.3 The service is currently supporting over 100 children. It has been reduced in size in recent years from 3.4 to 1.7 staff. The service has a waiting list due to increased demand and reduced capacity.

5.20 Dingley's Promise

5.20.1 Dingley's Promise is a charitable organisation which provides pre-school provision for children under 5 with SEND in West Berkshire, Reading and Wokingham. It is the only specialist early years SEND setting in the private, voluntary and independent early years sector in West Berkshire. It provides an alternative to mainstream early year's settings, where experience and expertise in SEND can vary greatly. Parents are able to take up their early year's entitlement at Dingley's Promise, rather than at a mainstream early years setting, if they wish. However, Dingley's Promise are only able to claim the standard hourly rate for providing the early years entitlement as mainstream settings, in spite of offering specialist provision, higher ratios and more one to one support.

5.20.2 In 2017-18, the service was running at a loss and there was a risk it would cease to be viable in this area without some Council funding. It was agreed in 2018-19 that a grant of £30,000 would be made to Dingley's Promise in order to maintain the service in this area.

5.21 Invest to Save projects

5.21.1 A report was brought to the HFG on 6th October concerning the Invest to Save projects funded in 2020-21 and 2021-22.

5.21.2 The report outlined the impact of the 2021 Invest to Save projects including savings achieved.

5.21.3 The report gave brief details on the 2021-22 Invest to Save projects which were put in place in September 2021.

5.21.4 Savings from the therapeutic thinking initiative and increased vulnerable children grant, against cost of the initiative, are shown in Tables 6(a), 6(b) and Table 7 below.

Table 6(a)

Savings in core group of 13 primary schools who have fully adopted therapeutic thinking

Strategy	Number avoided	Average cost	Saving
Permanent exclusion	3	£20,000	£60,000
Alternative placement	3	£20,000	£60,000
Specialist SEND placement	2	£62,000	£124,000
Total	8		£244,000

Table 6(b)

Savings in a wider group of schools as a result of “small gardens”

Strategy	Number avoided	Average cost	Saving
Permanent exclusion	4	£20,000	£80,000
Alternative placement	6	£20,000	£120,000
Specialist SEND placement	7	£62,000	£434,000
Total	17		£634,000

Table 7

Total estimated savings compared to invest to save budget for therapeutic thinking and increased VCG.

Invest to Save cost		Saving	Difference
Therapeutic thinking post	£54,300		
Increased VCG	£129,400		
Total	£183,700	£878,000	£695,000

5.21.5 Savings from the Autism TA project are set out in Tables 8 and 9 below.

Table 8

Savings resulting from intensive intervention from Autism HLTAs

Impact of not intervening	Number avoided	Average cost	Saving
Child becoming L4 EBSA	3	£62,000	£186,000
Specialist SEND placement	3	£62,000	£186,000
Total			£372,000

Table 9

Total estimated savings compared to invest to save budget for Autism TAs

Invest to Save cost		Saving	Difference
Autism TAs	£59,540		
Total	£59,540	£372,000	£312,460

5.21.6 It is proposed that the projects initially agreed in 2020-21, ie, therapeutic thinking, increased VCG and Autism TAs are now funded permanently through the HNB given the impact and savings which have been demonstrated.

5.21.7 Invest to save projects agreed in 2021-22 included

- An Autism Fund of £52,690 for allocation to schools to support children at risk of exclusion / requiring alternative placement
- £121,730 to support children who are emotionally based school avoiders in order to avoid specialist placements. This was for primary age children only (and one secondary school which bought in to the scheme). The funding pays for a 0.25 EP, A 0.5 EWO/Coordinator and a 0.5 EHA worker, all appointed in September 2021, in addition to creating a fund of £56,157 for allocation to schools via the EBSA Forum.

5.21.8 It is proposed that the invest to save projects agreed in 2021-22 are funded initially for one further year in 2022-23, pending a full evaluation in summer 2022.

This page is intentionally left blank

HNB Deficit Recovery Strategy 2022/3 – 2028/9			
Report being considered by:	Schools Forum 6 th December 2021		
Report Author:	Jane Seymour, Michelle Sancho, Linda Curtis		
Item for:	Discussion	By:	All Forum Members

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To propose a 6 year HNB deficit recovery strategy for consideration by the Schools Forum.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That the Schools Forum notes this report.

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"/>
---	-------------------------------	---

3. Introduction

3.1 The High Needs Block has been under pressure for several years with deficit budgets being set from 2016/17 onwards.

3.2 The rising costs in the HNB can be primarily attributed to an overall increase in the number of children with EHCPs placed in all settings, including mainstream and specialist, from ages 0 to 25.

3.3 However, there are specific areas of cost increase which have had the most impact on the HNB. These are set out below:

- Increase in age range for EHCPs from age 19 up to age 25, including young people with high needs placed in FE colleges
- Increase in children moving from mainstream to independent, non maintained and free special schools, mainly children with SEMH or autism.
- Increase in children placed in I-College
- Increase in children with very complex SEND requiring placement in local maintained special schools (Castle and Brookfields)
- Increase in children moving from mainstream to local maintained special schools

3.4 West Berkshire Council has robust systems in place to manage demand for EHCPs and ensure that they are only issued where a school cannot meet a child's needs from its own resources. The DfE recently published data which showed that EHCPs increased by 33% on average nationally in the 3 years between 2017 and 2020, but that in that period the increase in West Berkshire was only 14.5%.

3.5 Similarly, placements in independent, non maintained and free special schools are only made when it is clearly evidenced that a child's needs cannot be met in local provision.

3.6 Nevertheless, we have seen an overall increase in EHCPs of 41% since the Children and Families Act came in to force in 2014, which inevitably has a significant impact on the HNB. Similarly, spend on independent, non maintained and free school places has continued to rise.

3.7 HNB allocations have increased in recent years but increases have not kept pace with the rise in demand. The current estimated position for 22-23 is that cumulated overspends up to March 2022 will be £4,008,065 and the 22-23 in year budget will exceed the HNB allocation by **£2,147,537**

3.8 This report attempts to model the changes in placement patterns which would be needed in order to achieve expenditure within budget by 2028-29.

3.9 Whilst increasing costs in local maintained special schools are cited as one of the pressures on the HNB, it is not anticipated that placements in this sector can be reduced given the rising number of children with very complex SEND, over which the LA has no control.

3.10 The focus in the recovery strategy is therefore on reducing expenditure on independent, non maintained and free special school placements and also on I-College placements, as these placements have the potential to be reduced through earlier intervention, including the strategies currently funded as "invest to save" initiatives.

3.11 It should be stressed that it is not the intention to deny specialist placements to children who require them. A reduction in placements would be achieved through earlier intervention and support so that some children do not reach the point of needing a specialist placement and can have their needs effectively met in their mainstream schools.

4. Invest to Save initiatives 2020-2022

4.1 The SEND Strategy 2018-23 seeks to

- Increase capacity of mainstream schools to meet needs of children with SEND through training, guidance and specialist support
- Increase local specialist provision for children with EHCPs to reduce external (more costly) placements
- Improve the post 16 offer for young people with SEND, in particular by increasing supported internships and supporting more young people in to employment
- Improve the transition from children's to adults' Social Care and Health services
- Improve access to Health and other services which will improve health and wellbeing of young people with SEND and their parents / carers.

4.2 The SEND Strategy is monitored by the SEND Strategic Partnership Board which includes representation from all stakeholders including parents, schools and other agencies. The SEND Strategy 2018-23 had no additional funding allocated for its implementation other than capital funding for new provision for SEMH/autism.

4.3 Funding to support the SEND Strategy has been sought through the HFG and Schools Forum since implementation. A number of invest to save initiatives were agreed in 2020-21 and 2021-22, all of which are consistent with the strategy and in particular with the need to strengthen capacity in mainstream schools in order to reduce external placements.

4.4 A report was brought to the Schools Forum on 18th October, evidencing the success which had been achieved in supporting young people and the placement costs which had been avoided as a result of the 2020-21 invest to save initiatives, including the LA wide therapeutic thinking initiative (including an increased level of VCG grant), and the expansion of the Autism Team.

4.5 Further invest to save initiatives were agreed for 2021-22 including an EBSA Fund for allocation to schools, part time EP, EWO and mental health worker posts for EBSA and an Autism fund for allocation to schools. Reporting on impact of these initiatives has not yet been done as they have only been in place since September 2021. However, like the 2020-21 invest to save projects, these initiatives have been designed to enable children to remain in their mainstream schools where appropriate and reduce HNB expenditure on specialist placements.

4.6 These initiatives will be critical to any deficit recovery strategy as exclusions and specialist placements will not reduce without investment in earlier intervention and prevention.

4.7 New secondary provision for students with SEMH and autism is on target to open in September 2022, managed by The Castle School and based in Theale. The new provision will take 12 students in 2022. This will increase to a total of 42 students over approximately 5 years. This provision has been taken in to consideration in the estimate of external placements which can be avoided.

4.8 There are plans in place to open primary SEMH/ Autism provision by 2023 or 2024 and a school has now been identified. These new places have also been taken in to consideration.

5. Reduction in HNB expenditure over 6 year period to 2028-29

5.1 The budgets which are targeted for reductions over the 6 year period to 2028 are budgets for specialist SEND placements (independent, non maintained and free special schools) and I-College.

5.2 The following calculations do not take in to account either inflation of costs or inflationary increases in the HNB budget, as these figures are not yet known and may cancel each other out.

5.3 This plan does not take account of carried forward overspends and seeks only to reach a position whereby in year expenditure matches budget.

5.4 As stated in 3.7 above, HNB expenditure in 2022-23 is expected to exceed budget by £2,147,537.

5.5 The table below shows the 22-23 anticipated expenditure for the cost centres referred to in 5.1 above, and the extent to which they would need to reduce by 2028 (Table 1).

5.6 It should be noted that the figures for the 2022-23 budgets and required reduction in budgets for the following three cost centres have been combined in to one: independent special schools, non maintained special schools and free special schools.

5.7 Places in free special schools are funded from the “Non West Berkshire Special Schools” budget. This budget funds places in free special schools and also places in other Local Authorities’ maintained special schools. The budget required for 2022-23 is estimated to be £919,660. Of this, £331,696 is for free special school placements and the remaining £587,964 is for placements in other LAs’ maintained special schools.

5.8 It is not the intention to reduce placements in other LAs’ maintained special school as this is a very cost effective way of meeting needs of children who cannot remain in mainstream, although it should be noted that gaining access to these placements is becoming more difficult due to increasing demand in all parts of the country. The part of the budget which is targeted for reduction is the portion which funds free special schools. Free special schools are directly funded by Government, and are therefore deemed to be “state” schools, but they can be as expensive as non maintained special school placements.

5.9 Table 1 below shows the savings which would be needed from the combined Independent / Non maintained / Free special school budget and from the I-College budget if savings were taken in line with the proportion of total spend. This approach would mean that 22% of savings required would come from I-College and 78% from the other combined budget.

5.10 However, whilst placements in I-College should reduce over time due to therapeutic thinking approaches, I-College provides more cost effective placements than those in independent, non maintained and free special schools, and therefore the proportion of the total saving to be contributed by I-College has been modelled as 11% of the total saving with 89% coming from other placements. This is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 1

Savings needed by cost centre if apportioned in line with 22-23 estimated spend

Budget / cost centre	2021-22 estimated spend	2022-23 Budget needed	Comb total	% of total spend & of total saving	Reduction required over 6 years	2028-2029 Budget
I-College	1,441,760	1,597,160		22%	472,458	1,124,702
Free special schools	422,820	331,696)))
Ind special	3,479,590	4,335,930)5,783,926	78%)1,675,079) 4,108,847
Non m/t special	936,240	1,116,300)))
TOTAL	6,280,410	7,381,086		100%	£2,147,537	5,233,549

Table 2

Savings needed by cost centre if proportion of saving is changed from 22% PRU / 78% other cost centres to 11% PRU / 89% other cost centres

Budget / cost centre	2021-22 estimated spend	2022-23 Budget needed	Comb total	% of total spend	% of total saving	Reduction required over 6 years	2028-2029 Budget
I-College	1,441,760	1,597,160		22%	11%	236,229	1,360,931
Free special schools	422,820	331,696)))
Ind special	3,479,590	4,335,930)5,783,926	78%	89%)1,911,308)3,872,618
Non m/t special	936,240	1,116,300)))
TOTAL	6,280,410	7,381,086		100%		£2,147,537	5,233,549

6. Savings on independent, non-maintained and free special schools by 2028/9

6.1 The majority of placements made in this sector by WBC are for children with SEMH and ASD.

6.2 The SEND Strategy, including the recent invest to save initiatives, aims to reduce the number of specialist placements through earlier intervention and prevention. Some success has already been demonstrated, as set out in a report to the Schools Forum on 18th October.

6.3 In order to achieve the savings required in this budget, the total number of children placed would need to reduce as shown in Table 3 below. Please note that an average cost per placement of £54,055 has been assumed. A placement costs on average £62,000 per annum for a full year. However, as there will always be some children in each cohort in each financial year whose costs are part year only (ie. September starters or summer leavers) we have taken a lower cost as the average annual cost per child.

Table 3

Financial year	No. of placements	Reduction	Saving	Cost
2022-23	107			5,783,926
2023-24	103	-4	216,220	5,567,706
2024-25	98	-5	270,275	5,297,431
2025-26	92	-6	324,330	4,973,101
2026-27	86	-6	324,330	4,648,771
2027-28	80	-6	324,330	4,324,441
2028-29	75	-5	270,275	4,054,166
	71	-4	216,220	3,837,946
Total		-36	1,945,980	

7. Savings on I-College by 2028/9

7.1 Expenditure on I-College placements has been increasing steadily due to permanent exclusions and to children with EHCPs whose needs can no longer be met in mainstream needing short or long term placements.

7.2 The SEND Strategy including the recent invest to save initiatives aims to reduce the number of exclusions and I-College placements through earlier intervention and prevention. Some success has already been demonstrated, as set out in a report to the Schools Forum on 18th December.

7.3 In order to achieve the savings required in this budget, the total number of children placed would need to reduce as shown in Table 4 below. Please note that an average cost per placement of £19,013 has been assumed (£1,597,160 divided by 84 places).

7.4 It should be noted that the total number of placements shown for 2022-23 includes those specifically created for children and young people with EHCPs.

Table 4

Financial year	No. of placements	Reduction	Saving	Cost
2022-23	84			1,597,160
2023-24	82	-2	38,026	1,559,134
2024-25	80	-2	38,026	1,521,108
2025-26	78	-2	38,026	1,483,082
2026-27	76	-2	38,026	1,445,056
2027-28	74	-2	38,026	1,407,030
2028-29	71	-3	57,039	1,349,991
Total		-13	247,169	

8. Factors for consideration

8.1 This proposed deficit strategy is based on reduced exclusions, reduced provision for excluded pupils and reduced specialist SEND placements. In order for expenditure to come in line with budget by 2028, *it is assumed that costs in other HNB cost centres will not increase other than for inflation*, (which should be covered by HNB increases).

8.2 If other cost centres in the HNB increase in future years by more than inflation, additional savings would be needed to achieve expenditure in line with budget.

8.3 Cost centres in the HNB which are at risk of continuing to increase are, in particular, EHCPs in mainstream schools and EHCPs in maintained special schools. These increases may be offset by other decreases such as in FE placements. However, the effect of Covid may see FE placements for young people with EHCPs start to rise again. This will need to be closely monitored.

8.4 This strategy, as stated above, does not address cumulative in year overspends.

8.5 Factors which are outside of the LA's control include children who move in to the area who attend a non maintained, independent or free school, (for which WBC then becomes financially liable) and decisions of the SEND Tribunal.

8.6 The success of this strategy very much relies on the support and cooperation of schools in making use of support provided by the Local Authority to reduce exclusions and, in particular, to reduce the number of specialist placements for children with EHCPs which are requested via Annual Reviews. A plan for communicating and promoting the need to support more children with EHCPs in mainstream schools will need to be developed.

8.7 Consideration will also need to be given to whether or not the current level of investment in invest to save / preventative initiatives will be sufficient to achieve this level of reduction in external placements.

9. Conclusion

11.1 This report sets out a proposed strategy for bringing HNB expenditure within budget in 6 years. It seeks to avoid specialist placements and I-College placements by supporting schools to provide high quality interventions for children so that they can continue to be educated in a mainstream setting where appropriate.

10. Consultation and Engagement

10.1 Ian Pearson, Michelle Sancho, Linda Curtis, Lisa Potts

This page is intentionally left blank

Scheme for Financing Schools

Report being considered by: Schools Forum on 6th December 2021

Report Author: Melanie Ellis

Item for: Information **By:** All Maintained schools representatives

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To advise of the consultation responses on the updated Scheme for Financing 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"/>
---	-------------------------------	---

2. Introduction

- 2.1 Local authorities are required to publish schemes for financing schools which set out the financial relationship between the local authority and the schools they maintain. The local authority has reviewed the current scheme to ensure that all sections are still appropriate and proposed a number of changes.
- 2.2 In making any changes to the scheme, a local authority must consult all maintained schools in their area and receive the approval of the members of their schools forum representing maintained schools.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 A three week consultation with maintained schools was undertaken between 20 October and 10 November 2021. There were no suggested changes.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The updated Scheme for Financing Schools will be adopted from 1 December 2021.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 12

Schools Forum Work Programme 2021/22

	Item	HFG Deadline	Heads Funding Group	SF Deadline	Schools Forum	Action required	Author
<i>Special HFG taking place on 6th January to consider bids to the Schools in Financial Difficulty Fund.</i>							
Term 3	DSG Funding Settlement Overview 2022/23	05/01/2022	12/01/2022	18/01/2022	24/01/2022	Discussion	Melanie Ellis
	Final School Funding Formula 2022/23	05/01/2022	12/01/2022	18/01/2022	24/01/2022	Decision	Melanie Ellis
	Final De-delegations 2022/23	05/01/2022	12/01/2022	18/01/2022	24/01/2022	Decision	Lisa Potts
	Final Central School Block Budget Proposals 2022/23	05/01/2022	12/01/2022	18/01/2022	24/01/2022	Decision	Melanie Ellis
	iCollege Review	05/01/2022	12/01/2022	18/01/2022	24/01/2022	Decision	Michelle Sancho/Jacquie Davies
	High Needs Block Budget Proposals 2022/23	05/01/2022	12/01/2022	18/01/2022	24/01/2022	Discussion	Jane Seymour
	Growth Fund 2021/22	05/01/2022	12/01/2022	18/01/2022	24/01/2022	Information	Melanie Ellis
	Outline Early Years Forecast 2021/22	05/01/2022	12/01/2022	18/01/2022	24/01/2022	Discussion	Avril Allenby
	Early Years Block Budget - update on Deficit Recovery Plan	05/01/2022	12/01/2022	18/01/2022	24/01/2022	Discussion	Avril Allenby
	Deficit Schools (<i>standing item</i>)	05/01/2022	12/01/2022	18/01/2022	24/01/2022	Information	Melanie Ellis
	DSG Monitoring 2021/22 Month 9			18/01/2022	24/01/2022	Information	Melanie Ellis
	Schools in Financial Difficulty Bids (TBC)	05/01/2022	12/01/2022	18/01/2022	24/01/2022	Decision	Melanie Ellis
	Term 4	Work Programme 2022/23	22/02/2022	01/03/2022	08/03/2022	14/03/2022	Decision
Final DSG Budget 2022/23 - Overview		22/02/2022	02/03/2022	08/03/2022	14/03/2022	Decision	Melanie Ellis
Update on HNB Invest to Save Projects		22/02/2022	04/03/2022	08/03/2022	14/03/2022	Discussion	Jane Seymour
Final High Needs Block Budget 2022/23		22/02/2022	03/03/2022	08/03/2022	14/03/2022	Decision	Jane Seymour
Final Early Years Block Budget 2022/23		22/02/2022	04/03/2022	08/03/2022	14/03/2022	Decision	Avril Allenby
Early Years Block Budget - update on Deficit Recovery Plan		22/02/2022	04/03/2022	08/03/2022	14/03/2022	Discussion	Avril Allenby
Deficit Schools (<i>standing item</i>)		22/02/2022	05/03/2022	08/03/2022	14/03/2022	Information	Melanie Ellis
DSG Monitoring 2021/22 Month 10				08/03/2022	14/03/2022	Information	Melanie Ellis
Schools in Financial Difficulty Bids (TBC)		22/02/2022	01/03/2022	08/03/2022	14/03/2022	Decision	Melanie Ellis

This page is intentionally left blank