

Notice of Meeting

Schools Forum

Monday 15th July 2024 at 5.00pm

Via Zoom

The meeting can be watched live here: www.westberks.gov.uk/schoolsforumlive

Date of despatch of Agenda: Wednesday, 10 July 2024

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
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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, 15 July 2024 (continued)

Forum Members: Reverend Mark Bennet, Nicolle Browning, Heather Codling, Iain Cottingham, Paul Davey, Jacque Davies, Richard Hand, Michelle Harrison, Keith Harvey, Richard Hawthorne, Jon Hewitt, Trevor Keable, Jo Lagares, Julie Lewry, Jo MacArthur, Maria Morgan, Jamie Morton, Gemma Piper, Chris Prosser, David Ramsden, Lesley Roberts, Campbell Smith, Graham Spellman (Chairman), Phil Spray and Charlotte Wilson

Agenda

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<i>Monday 14th October 2024 at 5pm.</i> | |

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.



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

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 17 JUNE 2024

Present: Nicolle Browning (Maintained Secondary School Headteacher), Councillor Heather Codling (Executive Portfolio Holder: Children and Family Services), Jacquie Davies (Pupil Referral Unit Headteacher), Richard Hand (Trade Union), Michelle Harrison (Maintained Primary Schools), Keith Harvey (Maintained Primary School Headteacher), Jon Hewitt (Maintained Special School Headteacher), Jo Lagares (Maintained Primary School Headteacher), Jo MacArthur (Maintained Primary Headteacher), Maria Morgan (Maintained Nursery School Headteacher), Gemma Piper (Academy School Headteacher), Chris Prosser (Maintained Secondary School Headteacher), David Ramsden (Maintained Secondary School Headteacher), Lesley Roberts (Maintained Primary School Headteacher), Campbell Smith (Academy School Governor), Graham Spellman (Roman Catholic Diocese) and Phil Spray (Maintained Primary School Governor)

Also Present: Rose Carberry (Principal Adviser for School Improvement), AnnMarie Dodds (Executive Director - Children and Family Services), Melanie Ellis (Acting Head of Finance and Property), Neil Goddard (Service Director - Education and SEND), Nicola Ponton (SEN Manager), Jessica Bailiss (Democratic Services Officer) and Sadie Owen (Principal Democratic Services Officer)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Reverend Mark Bennet (Church of England Diocese), Councillor Iain Cottingham (Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources), Paul Davey (Maintained Primary Governor), Richard Hawthorne (Academy School Headteacher), Trevor Keable (Academy School Governor), Beth Kelly (Head of Early Years), Julie Lewry (Academy School Headteacher), Jamie Morton (Non School - Post 16 Provider) and Charlotte Wilson (Academy School Headteacher)

PART I

5 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Neil Goddard invited the Schools' Forum to nominate and vote on the position of Chair for the coming year.

RESOLVED that Graham Spellman would continue as Chair of the Schools' Forum for the 2024/25 financial year.

Graham Spellman invited the Schools' Forum to nominate and vote on the position of Vice-Chair for the coming year.

RESOLVED that Keith Harvey would continue as Vice-Chair of the Schools' Forum for the 2024/25 financial year.

The Chair thanked Gemma Piper as she would be standing down from the Forum from July, as she was moving on from West Berkshire at the end of this academic year. Gemma Piper had joined the Forum in 2019 and the Chair thanked her on behalf of the Forum for her commitment and contribution over the years to both the Heads' Funding Group and Schools' Forum.

The Chair welcomed Jo MacArthur to the Forum who was the new maintained primary representative from the Willows Primary School.

6 Minutes of previous meetings held of 11th March and 8th May 2024

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 11th March and 8th May were approved as true and correct records and signed by the Chair.

7 Actions arising from previous meetings

It was noted that all actions were completed or in-hand.

8 Declarations of Interest

Jacquie Davies, Chris Prosser, Jon Hewitt and Maria Morgan declared that they had an interest in agenda item seven due to being from a school with a surplus balance. As their interest was a prejudicial and pecuniary interest they would leave the meeting for the duration of the item and not take part in the vote.

9 Membership

Jess Bailiss provided the following membership updates:

- Jamie Morton, the Finance Director from Newbury College, had joined the Forum as the new post 16 provider representative and would hopefully be able to attend the next meeting in July.
- There were two vacancies on the Forum:
 - The Early Years PVI Rep: nominations had been sought for this position at the Early Years Funding Group however, no nominations had come forward. Effort would continue to try and find a representative.
 - Academy Governor Rep: an election had taken place in April however, no nominations were submitted. The election would be repeated at a later date.

10 Scheme For Financing Schools - Claw Back Mechanism

(Jacquie Davies, Chris Prosser, Jon Hewitt and Maria Morgan left the meeting at 5.14pm)

Melanie Ellis introduced the report (Agenda Item 7) regarding reconsideration of a clawback mechanism from 31st March 2024.

A consultation had been undertaken with all schools in November 2023 and one of the Local Authority's (LA's) recommendations within this consultation was for a claw back mechanism to be placed into the updated version of the Scheme for Financing Schools (SFS). The consultation result had been 68 percent in favour of a claw back mechanism being introduced. The Schools' Forum had voted on the recommendation in December 2023 and had voted to include a claw back mechanism however, only from 31st March 2025. Since this meeting the LA had spoken to the Department for Education (DfE) about an appeal mechanism available when the Schools' Forum voted against a recommendation. This had been discussed at the Heads' Funding Group (HFG) at its last meeting on 5th June, which had been of the view that the original decision should be reviewed by the Schools' Forum before an appeal was progressed in light of school balance information for 31st March 2024.

Melanie Ellis drew attention to the recommendations set out in the report. The HFG had recommended that the decision be reviewed by the Schools' Forum. The LA were recommending the following:

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- 1) The Schools' Forum reconsider the balance information contained within the report, and reconsider implementation of the clawback mechanism on balances as at 31.3.24.
- 2) The maximum amount that could be clawed back each year was the amount of school balance in excess of 10 percent of their budget share. This was subject to leaving the schools with a minimum of £50,000 balance. The actual amount to be clawed back would be recommended by Heads Funding Group after reviewing the commitments on the statement. Schools' Forum would then make the decision.
- 3) Funds should be returned as follows:
 - Special Schools – High Needs Block
 - Secondary Schools – High Needs Block
 - Primary Schools – Maintained Primaries

Melanie Ellis was aware of a possible amendment to one of the recommendations and invited Keith Harvey to present this to the Forum. Keith Harvey reported that he had consulted a number of headteachers from primary, secondary and special schools on the HFG and Schools' Forum. It had been unanimously supported that the matter was brought forward to the Forum for a democratic decision rather than dealt with through an appeal. Having consulted with a number of headteachers it was felt that a counter proposal should be put forward that considered the claw back for 2023/24, only on balances over 15 percent for affected schools. It was felt that this would have a lower impact on budgets that had already been set for the year. It would also mean a lower number of schools would have to justify their excess balances to the Forum. Keith Harvey stated that it was still very important that schools with balances in excess of 15 percent were given the opportunity to justify any commitments over 15 percent.

Melanie Ellis asked the Forum if there were any comments or questions regarding the proposed amendment. Gemma Piper asked if there was broad guidance available regarding the percentages chosen. Neil Goddard reported that the DfE guidance set out clawback thresholds of eight percent for primary schools and special schools and five percent for secondary schools.

Melanie Ellis referred to recommendation three (above), which was based on the previous discussions in November 2023. Melanie Ellis asked if there were any counter views on the recommendation as she was aware from HFG discussions that the view might be that all clawed back funding should go to the HNB. Keith Harvey stated that he was of the view that if there was to be a clawback it would only be fair on secondary and special schools if anything clawed back from primary schools was also directed into the HNB.

Melanie Ellis drew attention to the remaining information in the report, which set out the schools that would be affected and invited any further comments. Gemma Piper raised a query about the form contained in the appendix to the report, which would be used to gather information from schools and asked if there would be merit in capturing the number of vacancies within a school, as it was often identified that surplus balances were often present due to an inability to recruit. Melanie Ellis confirmed that she could build in a question to ensure this information was captured.

Jo MacArthur referred to section 6.2 of the report, which set out that schools' statements should outline commitments for unspent capital, building etc and referenced unspent Sports Funds. Jo MacArthur reported that the Government had indicated that it would be clawing back any unspent Sports Funds and therefore this should not be included in the LA scheme. Melanie Ellis noted the point and this should not form part of any clawed back funds to the LA.

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David Ramsden commented on the logic for the decision returning to the Schools' Forum for consideration rather than an appeal to the DfE. It was felt that to bring it back to the Schools' Forum was more democratic and retained a measure of control. It also demonstrated an element of intent to DBV and the DfE that there was a commitment to reducing the deficit in the HNB. David Ramsden commented that it had been apparent to him and others that managing their own processes was better than going through what would be a long and arduous process with the DfE.

Nicolle Browning commented that it had already been alluded to that when the Forum had previously voted on the matter, it was prior to budgets being set. Budgets had now been set as of 31st March 2024 and Nicolle Browning asked for assurance that committed funds would be safeguarded as some settings would end up in deficit if this did not happen. Melanie Ellis drew attention to the schools' balance statement form in Appendix A, which would be requested from affected schools and subsequently discussed at the HFG. The HFG would then make a recommendation to Schools' Forum. There would be the opportunity to detail the commitments and assurance was given that these commitments would be taken into account when decisions were made.

Keith Harvey commented on the process and noted that the Forum had made a decision in December 2023 not to claw back from 2024. Impacted schools had raised concerns about this however, had not been able to participate in the debate due to having to declare an interest. Keith Harvey felt it was important to share this point and that the main reason the HFG had felt the matter needed to be reconsidered by the Forum was to ensure the process was carried out democratically rather than on an appeal to the DfE.

Gemma Piper queried if the clawback was not supported by the Forum, if the DfE and LA had the power to overrule the decision and if so would they consider the 15 percent or if this would be based on the percentages set out in the report. Neil Goddard reported that based on the decision made at the Forum, the LA would need to take a view on whether it was appropriate to go to the Secretary of State for an exception. Assurance was given that if a decision was approved to clawback based on either ten or 15 percent, both would be deemed acceptable by the LA and the DfE would not be approached for an exception.

Gemma Piper queried the process for reaching a decision. The Chair felt that based on the suggestion of the counter proposal for 15 percent, there could be a vote on this and if it failed the original recommendation within the report would need to be considered. David Ramsden referred to the original recommendation of 10 percent and that members of the Forum were aware that this was generous in comparison to the guidance from the DfE. There were already safeguards in place for the process, in that each school would be reviewed individually and committed money would be considered. He felt that they needed to be careful regarding how remaining schools would feel if the 15 percent was supported. David Ramsden stated that his recommendation was therefore that they continue with the recommendation as set out in the report. If at this stage the 10 percent was not supported then the counter proposal for 15 percent could be considered.

Keith Harvey commented on the difficulty of the matter. He understood there would be the opportunity for affected schools to declare commitments however, felt that 10 percent was a relatively low figure of carry forward for some schools. He felt that 15 percent would be an acknowledgement that whilst a change was being made to what had been agreed in December by the Forum, it would ease the situation for schools that had already set budgets. He stated that he would vote for the resolution put forward as he would rather the Schools' Forum made the decision rather than the DfE however, he would rather the 15 percent be supported.

Gemma Piper believed the landscape had changed considerably since the matter was last considered. There was more clarity and understanding of the collective problem

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being faced. Gemma Piper was of the view that the recommendations should be voted on as set out in the report and if not supported the counter proposal should be considered.

Lesley Roberts voiced that she felt it was a shame the Forum was in the position faced given the time spent discussing the matter. Lesley Roberts commented on the process around safeguards historically and the risk that the trust amongst schools might have been eradicated. It was queried how affective the meetings could be going forward, given the situation and changes. Lesley Roberts however, felt that the 10 percent needed to be supported with the safeguard that affected schools were able to put forward any commitments. Lesley Roberts hoped that if the recommendation was approved, that it did not cause more vacancies in West Berkshire due to there being a feeling of not being able to work with the LA.

Nicolle Browning referred to comments made and that all members were there to work in the best interest of children in West Berkshire attending schools and also to represent colleagues. Nicolle commended the discussions that had taken place and consideration given to the matter, and it was important to show that steps were being taken to make a difference. Nicolle Browning voiced that she would likely support the counter proposal for 15 percent as she felt this would be the quickest way to expedite the process whilst ensuring school budgets and interests were protected.

Councillor Heather Codling queried if the 15 percent was supported if this would revert to 10 percent from March 2025. Melanie Ellis confirmed that this was the case. Councillor Codling felt that this could feel unfair to schools that might be affected the following year. Melanie Ellis believed that the reason for the proposal for 15 percent was due to the timing of the decision.

David Ramsden was concerned that changing the percentage level could seem unfair to certain schools. He recommended trusting the safeguards on committed money. It was an ongoing sensitive and immotive issue and therefore in his view no changes should be made.

The Chair summarised the discussion and commented on the difficulty of the matter as a decision that had already been taken was being revisited. His understanding was that it would be for the HFG to make recommendations to the Schools' Forum based on information received and following review of the individual school statements. The Chair suggested that the Forum vote on recommendations 2.2 (1) and 2.2 (2) together (as set out in the report and above). If the recommendations were not approved then the Chair would invite the Forum to vote on the counter proposal.

The Chair invited to the Forum to vote on recommendations 2.2 (1) and (2) as set out in the report. It was proposed and seconded by maintained school members that the Schools' Forum agree recommendations and at the vote the motion was carried. Two maintained school members voiced that they would prefer the counter proposal of 15 percent however, voted in favour of the recommendation. It was requested that there needed to be strong guidance for the HFG on what was classed as committed money.

The Chair drew attention to recommendation 2.2.(3). Keith Harvey proposed that the recommendation be amended so that funds clawed back from primary schools be returned to the HNB rather than to maintained primaries. The amended recommendation was seconded and at the vote with maintained school members was approved.

RESOLVED that

- It to be ensured that the surplus schools' statement form capture the number of vacancies within a school.
- Guidance be provided to the HFG on what was classed as committed money.

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- The Schools' Forum approved the following:
 - 1) Implementation of the clawback mechanism on balances as at 31.3.24.
 - 2) The maximum amount that could be clawed back each year is the amount of school balance in excess of 10 percent of their budget share. This is subject to leaving the schools with a minimum of £50,000 balance. The actual amount to be clawed back will be recommended by Heads Funding Group after reviewing the commitments on the statement. Schools Forum would then make the decision.
 - 3) Funds should be returned as follows:
 - Special Schools – High Needs Block
 - Secondary Schools – High Needs Block
 - Primary Schools – High Needs Block

11 **Scheme for Financing Schools Consultation 2024/25 (Melanie Ellis)**

(Jacquie Davies, Chris Prosser, Jon Hewitt and Maria Morgan rejoined the meeting at 5.48pm)

Melanie Ellis introduced the report (Agenda Item 8), on the proposed consultation on the updated Scheme for Financing Schools (SFS). Melanie Ellis reported that the version of the SFS included with the report followed version 16 of the Department for Education's (DfE) updated guidance. Appendix B to the report showed the changes that had been made. Section 7.2 would be updated in line with the decision that had been taken regarding the claw back.

Chris Prosser referred to the matter of schools making a direct application for revenue finance and commented that the scheme did not detail the paperwork that had to be completed by schools for this and he felt this was important to ensure the process was transparent. Melanie Ellis suggested that Chris Prosser reply to the consultation with the detail he wanted included and the SFS could then be updated accordingly.

The Chair drew the Forum's attention to the recommendation in section 2.2 that the updated SFS went out to consultation with all schools from 18th to 27th June 2024 and that the updated scheme was adopted after Schools' Forum approval. The recommendation was proposed and seconded by maintained school members and at the vote the motion was carried.

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum approved that the proposed SFS go out to consultation with all schools.

12 **Update on the DfE's Delivering Better Value Programme (Hester Collicut / Susan Tanner)**

Hester Collicut introduced the report (Agenda Item 9), which provided an update on the Delivering Better Value Programme (DBV) and its impact on the SEND system in West Berkshire, improving outcomes for children and young people.

Hester Collicut reported that she was required to report to the DfE quarterly and the Schools' Forum to ensure the programme was on track. The programme was currently going well and various aspects from work streams were being instigated. Hester Collicut went through the report in detail, which outlined the progress of the DBV Programme since confirmation of funding from the Department for Education (DfE) in April 2024.

Gemma Piper asked if the Schools' Forum would see what was submitted to the DfE. Hester Collicut reported that the DfE were very strict about what had to be submitted. This included the deficit management plan and then various questions were answered online regarding progress with the DBV Programme and this also included the submission of certain documents. Hester Collicut reported that it would be possible to

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share these documents with the Forum post submission. Hester Collicut confirmed that they were required to report to the DfE quarterly and this had taken place for the first time and was a learning process.

Gemma Piper referred to the cross agency gap analysis which was underway and asked how the views of those not attending schools or were between schools, were being captured. Hester Collicut reported that it was about looking at the provision on offer currently and then looking at particular types of students to see how they would link in with this. Gemma Piper asked if assurance could be given that those children that had a diagnosis and were not on roll were being listened to as this was a very important voice that could not be accessed by approaching those on roll. Hester Collicut reported that all children had to be accounted for and this would be picked up through the different strands and the Sufficiency Strategy.

Gemma Piper referred to the transition support programme and commented that she was not aware of a school in the area that did not invest heavily in transitions. The approach to education was very different between primary and secondary school and this was due to systems and the two areas being fundamentally different. This was a large gap and there was already a huge amount of resource put into helping smooth transitions at school level and through collaboration work. In terms of the strand of work, it was important to look at the bigger picture through considering the differences and what the triggers were for why children struggled when making the leap to secondary school. Hester Collicut reported that each of the schools was looking at what was working because they needed to pick up on the learning from each school. Year Seven and SENCOs had been invited to inform the programme and as it developed it would be owned by schools rather than the LA.

Gemma Piper asked if the academisation of secondary schools was seen as a concern for place numbers. Hester Collicut reported that this was identified as a risk. When the DBV Programme budget was submitted, additional mitigations had to be provided to help tackle pressures facing the HNB. One of the mitigations identified had been additional placements within a specialist provision, which was looking to become an academy. Negotiated places might or might not come to fruition as a result and therefore alternative placements had to be sought otherwise there could be a significant impact on the High Needs Block (HNB). One of the strands, ensuring sufficiency, was being used to seek mitigations in this area over the next few months. There was risk but there was an ongoing conversation to address the matter.

Jacquie Davies queried what would happen with the programme over the upcoming holiday period. All Headteachers worked periodically through the holidays however, it was asked how it would be ensured that participation continued and all were kept informed over this period of time. Hester Collicut reported that any general updates would happen on the DBV blog. Those involved in work streams would be kept updated regarding any ongoing work. There were no work stream meetings due to take place in August. No significant decisions were expected however, there would be a continuation of the programme identified in April as the programme had a very tight 12 month delivery window.

Nicolle Browning referred to the banding review and asked if the purpose of the review was to ensure that students had been allocated the right level of banding for their EHCP or if it was to ensure that the financial award to each banding was sufficiently meeting need. Nicolle Browning further queried if it was anticipated that there would be a change in the banding. Hester Collicut commented that first of all they needed to ensure there was sufficient funding to meet need and provision identified. Secondly it needed to be looked into whether the banding system and spend aligned with statistical neighbours. Any findings from the banding review would be brought for discussion and exploration in

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September. The aim was to create a sustainable system. A banding review had not taken place in West Berkshire since 2013.

RESOLVED that:

- Hester Collicut would share what had been submitted to the DfE on a quarterly basis with members of the Schools' Forum.
- The Schools' Forum noted the report.

13 School Balances (Melanie Ellis)

Melanie Ellis introduced the report (Agenda Item 10), which set out for information purposes the year end balances for all maintained schools, highlighting those schools with a deficit or significant surplus. The report was brought to the Schools' Forum on an annual basis. Table 4.1 showed that overall school balances had decreased by £352k and now stood at £13.3m. The table under section 4.5 summarised the main school balances. Primary main school balances had decreased and all other groups had increased.

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum noted the report.

14 School insurance buy back for 2025/26 (Leah Rinaldi)

Leah Rinaldi introduced the report (Agenda Item 11) to advise the Schools' Forum of the closure of the School Insurance Buy Back Service and that no insurance buy back would be offered to schools from 1st April 2025. The relevant cost centre would be closed in 2025. There was not currently sufficient buy back into the service by schools and those who still used the service would be advised to make other arrangements.

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum noted the report.

15 DSG Outturn 2023/24 (Lisa Potts)

Lisa Potts introduced the report (Agenda Item 12) to report on the outturn of the services funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), highlighting any under or over spends, and to highlight the cumulative deficit at 31st March 2024.

The deficit against the DSG stood at £4.76m at the end of the 2022/23 year. This had increased to £9.45m and the majority of this was related to the HNB. There was £1m in the Growth Fund that was helping to bring the overspend down.

There had been increase in the deficit Early Years Block however there was a deficit recovery plan in place. There were a lot of new funding streams due in the new year and all rates had been set at the 95 percent pass through rate. The pass through rate had also been reduced for three and four year olds, which had been historically quite high. This would help to reduce the deficit going forward. The deficit at the end of 2023/24 was £1.3m.

There had historically been a small deficit in the Central Schools' Services Block. This was reducing and now stood at only £1k.

Regarding the HNB, Lisa Potts commented on increases in EHCPs and Emotionally Based School Avoiders (EBSA). These areas were being reviewed as part of the DBV Programme.

The table under section nine of the report showed a breakdown of the total reserve balance and cumulative deficit, and this was further detailed within the appendix to the report.

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum noted the report.

16 Trade Union Facilities Time - Annual Report for 2023/24 (Richard Hand)

Richard Hand introduced the report (Agenda Item 13), which aimed to inform members about the activities of the teaching trade unions.

Richard Hand ran through the key points of the report focusing on the issues with recruitment and retention. As detailed in section 3.1 of the report, the recruitment crises sat behind most of the case work handled. Richard Hand highlighted that footnotes were included to show where information had been obtained from.

Richard Hand referred to statistics detailed within his report from the Talis Report undertaken in 2018, which detailed that the average age of teachers in England was 39 compared to other OECD countries where the average age was 44. It was acknowledged that this was likely to have changed and got worse since the report was undertaken in 2018. It was also noted from the Talis Report that only 18 percent of teachers in England were aged 50 and above compared to the OECD average of 34 percent. There was an experience issue and this was being seen in casework. Although it was likely also due to the time of year nearing the end of term, it was highlighted that there were increased levels of inexperienced teachers who were tired and making missteps and this was systematic in terms of where the sector was in terms of workload.

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum noted the report.

17 Vulnerable Children's Fund - Annual Report for 2023/24 (Nicola Ponton/Beth Cartwright)

Nicola Ponton introduced the report (Agenda Item 14), which provided a review of the Vulnerable Children's Fund (VCF) for 2023/24. The VCF was a relatively small grant used to support schools when there was an unexpected pressure such as a vulnerable child moving to a school in-year. It was focused on promoting social inclusion and reducing exclusions.

Nicola Ponton reported that 27 settings had successfully applied for funding over the last year and 54 pupils had been supported. The vast majority of applications had come from primary schools for children in Key Stage One. Most of the children supported had SEMH as their primary need but funding had also supported children with learning difficulties and medical needs. The feedback received from schools reflected that it was a highly valued fund that provided support for schools when there was a crisis. The VCF enabled support to be put in place quickly.

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum noted the report.

18 Forward Plans

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum noted the forward plan and contracts forward plan.

19 Date and format of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Schools' Forum would take place virtually on Monday 15th July 2024 from 5pm.

(The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and closed at 6.30 pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature

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Actions from previous meetings

Ref No.	Date of meeting (s)	Item	Action	Responsible Officer	Update
Mar24-Ac3	11th March 2024	HNB Budget 2024/25	Standing Action: The impact of other LAs in DBV and the SVP to be monitored. This to remain as an ongoing action for Schools' Forum meetings.	Hester Collicut	June Update: Nothing has changed since this information was reported in April/May time. Four Authorities have transferred from DBV to Safety Valve – as previously reported. There is increasing political noise around LAs not meeting their statutory duties in meeting SEND requirements because of the agreement they have signed with DfE on reducing spend.
Jun24-Ac1	17th June 2024	SFS - Claw Back Mechanism	It to be ensured that the surplus schools' statement form capture the number of vacancies within a school.	Melanie Ellis	Included on the form sent to schools.
Jun24-Ac2	17th June 2024	SFS - Claw Back Mechanism	Guidance be provided to the HFG on what was classed as committed money in time for its meeting on 2nd July.	Melanie Ellis	Provided to HFG in advance of meeting on 9th July.
Jun24-Ac3	17th June 2024	DBV Update	Hester Collicut would share what had been submitted to the DfE on a quarterly basis with members of the Schools' Forum (post submission).	Hester Collicut	To be included in DBV update to the Forum on 15th July.

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Schools' Forum Membership and Constitution from September 2024

Report being considered by: Schools' Forum on 15th July 2024

Report Author: Jessica Bailiss

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

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To review and where necessary update the membership and Constitution of the Schools' Forum.

2. Recommendation

2.1 To approve the membership and Constitution of the Schools' Forum from September 2024.

Is the Schools' Forum required to make a decision as part of this report or subsequent versions due to be considered later in the meeting cycle?	
Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>

3. Implications and Impact Assessment

Equalities Impact:	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Commentary
	A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	X		
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		There will be no adverse impact caused upon the lives of people, including employees or service users as a result of the decision.
Data Impact:		X		
Consultation and Engagement:	Graham Spellman (Chair of the Schools' Forum), Neil Goddard (Service Director Education), Rose Carberry (Principal Advisor for School Improvement) and Stephen Chard (Democratic Services Manager)			

4. Introduction/Background

- 4.1 The Schools' Forum is required to review its membership and Constitution annually. The current Constitution complies with The Schools' Forums' (England) Regulations 2012.
- 4.2 There have been no legislative changes over the last year requiring a change to the Forum's current practice. The membership however does need to be reviewed to see if the split based on pupil numbers is still correct or needs to be changed.
- 4.3 The current rules in respect to School Forum membership are as follows:
- (1) The need to have full representation for the various types of school with the number of members representing each being broadly proportionate to the number of pupils in each phase. This is to ensure debate within the Schools' Forum is balanced and representative.
 - (2) There is no minimum or maximum number of members, but non school members must not make up more than one third of the total membership. However, care should be taken to keep the Schools' Forum to a reasonable size to ensure that it does not become too unwieldy.
- 4.4 The current breakdown in pupil numbers between the three main groups is as follows (pupil numbers include Nursery and Sixth Form):

TABLE 1	Pupil Numbers (Jan 23 census)		Pupil Numbers (Jan 24 census)	
	Number	%	Number	%
Primary Schools	(61) 11,837	45%	(61) 11,448	44%
Secondary Schools	(3) 4275	16%	(3) 4329	17%
Academy Schools	(13) 10,125	39%	(13) 10,178	39%
TOTAL	26,237	100%	25,955	100%

(The number of schools in each sector is shown in brackets)

- 4.5 Data shows that overall, the percentage of pupils in each sector has remained almost the same.
- 4.6 No schools in West Berkshire have converted to academy status since the last membership report that was presented to the Schools' Forum in June 2023.
- 4.7 Schools and academies members together must make up at least two-thirds of the total membership of the Schools' Forum. The current membership of the Schools' Forum is organised as follows under Table 2:

TABLE 2					
School Members	Heads	Governors	Other	Total	
	Number	Number	Number	Number	%
Primary	4	3	1	8	44%
Secondary	3	0	0	3	17%
Academies	4	3	0	7	39%
	11	6	1	18	100%
Other School Members					
Nursery Schools	1			1	
Special Schools	1			1	
iCollege (PRU)	1			1	
Non School Members					
RC Diocese			1	1	
C of E Diocese			1	1	
Early Years PVI			1	1	
Trade Union			1	1	
Non School Post 16			1	1	
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP	14	6	6	26	
Proportion of School Members (minimum must be 66.7%)				80.8%	

4.8 It is not proposed that any changes are made to the structure of the membership at this time.

5. Membership and end of Term of Offices

5.1 The term of office for members of the Forum is four years or until the position by virtue of which they are eligible for Forum membership comes to an end, whichever is the sooner.

5.2 The current vacancies on the Schools' Forum are as follows and work is taking place with the relevant groups to fill these positions:

- The Early Years PVI representative
- Academy governor representative (this will increase to two vacancies from September and an election will be held in effort to fill both roles at the beginning of the autumn term)

5.3 Forum members approaching the end of their term of office in 2024/25 can be seen in Appendix B. Forum members are contacted individually as the end of their term approaches and asked to consult with their relevant forums or, alternatively for Governors, an election process will be coordinated.

- 5.4 A list of standing declarations of interest is kept up to date and published on the Schools' Forum webpage (Appendix D).

6. Constitution

- 6.1 No amendments are proposed to the Constitution at this time (Appendix C).
- 6.2 Forum Members are invited to suggest any changes which they deem necessary or desirable.

7. Proposals

- 7.1 There have been no changes to the Regulations or Operational Guidance for the Schools' Forum, so it is not proposed that any changes are made to the Constitution.
- 7.2 As the overall percentage of pupils in each sector has remained largely the same, no changes are proposed to the membership or composition of the Forum.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 The Schools' Forum is invited to approve the membership and the Constitution for the Schools' Forum from September 2024.

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix A: Equalities Impact Assessment
- 9.2 Appendix B: Membership of the Schools Forum – September 2024
- 9.3 Appendix C: Constitution of the Schools Forum
- 9.4 Appendix D: Standing declarations of interest

Appendix A

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) - Stage One

What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Schools' Forum to make:	To approve the membership and Constitution of the Schools' Forum from September 2024.
Name of Service/Directorate:	Legal and Democratic
Name of assessor:	Jessica Bailiss
Date of assessment:	June 2024

(1) What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To review and where necessary update the membership and Constitution of the Schools' Forum.
Objectives:	Review the Constitution for the Forum and ensure it reflects any changes made to the Schools' Forum Regulations 2012. Review the membership composition against pupil numbers to ensure that it is still correct or needs to be changed.
Outcomes:	A reviewed Constitution and membership for 2024/25
Benefits:	Pupils across school phases in the district are fairly represented at the Schools' Forum. A Constitution that is fit for purpose.

(2) Which groups might be affected and how? Is it positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this?		
Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	Pupils across the school phases are fairly represented at the Schools' Forum.	The January schools' census is used to calculate the membership composition for the Forum.
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

(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"/>
<p><u>Only a positive impact identified</u></p> <p>The report aims to review and where necessary update the membership and Constitution of the Schools' Forum. This will help to ensure that pupils are fairly represented at the Schools' Forum. The refreshed Constitution will be published on the Schools' Forum's webpage.</p>	
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"/>
<p>There will be no adverse impact caused upon the lives of people, including employees or service users as a result of the decision.</p>	

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

Name: Jessica Bailiss

Date: June 2024

West Berkshire Council Schools' Forum

Membership from September 2024

Contact e-mail address for all members: schoolsforum@westberks.gov.uk

School Members:				Start	End	Duration
<u>Nursery Schools</u>	Chloe Summerville	Headteacher	Hungerford Nursery School	Sep-24	Sep-28	4 years
<u>Primary Schools</u>	Keith Harvey	Headteacher	St John and St Nicolas Schools Federation	Jan-22	Jan-26	4 years
	Jo Lagares	Headteacher	The Kite Federation	Jun-23	Jun-27	4 years
	Michelle Harrison	School Business Manager	St Finian's Catholic Primary School	Feb-21	Feb-25	4 years
	Paul Davey	Governor	Enborne C of E Primary School	May-22	May-26	4 years
	Phil Spray	Governor	Spurcroft Primary School	Feb-22	Feb-26	4 years
	Lesley Roberts	Headteacher	Streatley C of E Primary School	Sep-23	Sep-27	4 years
	Jay Armstrong	Governor	Hungerford Primary School	Mar-24	Mar-28	4 years
	Jo MacArthur	Headteacher	The Willows Primary School	Jun-24	Jun-28	4 years
<u>Secondary Schools</u>	Chris Prosser	Headteacher	The Downs School	Oct-20	Oct-24	4 years
	David Ramsden	Headteacher	Little Heath School	Sep-22	Sep-26	4 years
	Nicolle Browning	Headteacher	The Willink School	Sep-22	Sep-26	4 years
<u>Special Schools</u>	Jon Hewitt	Headteacher	The Castle School	Sep-22	Sep-26	4 years
<u>Pupil Referral Units</u>	Jacque Davies	Headteacher	The Reintegration Service / iCollege	Oct-21	Oct-25	4 years
<u>Academies</u>	Julie Lewry	Headteacher	Speenhamland School	Apr-24	Apr-28	4 years
	Trevor Keable	Governor	Denefield School	Jul-23	Jul-27	4 years
	Richard Hawthorne	Headteacher	John O'Gaunt School	Oct-20	Oct-24	4 years
	Charlotte Wilson	Headteacher	Trinity School	Oct-21	Oct-25	4 years
	Grace Rigg	Headteacher	Kennet School	Sep-24	Sep-28	4 years
	<i>vacancy</i>	<i>Governor</i>				
	<i>vacancy</i>	<i>Governor</i>				
Non School Members:						
Non School Post 16 Providers	Jamie Morton		Newbury College	Jun-24	Jun-28	4 years
Early Years PVI Providers	<i>Vacancy</i>					
Church of England Diocese	Reverend Mark Bennet		Diocese of Oxford	Dec-21	Dec-25	4 years
Roman Catholic Diocese	Graham Spellman		Diocese of Portsmouth	Jul-20	Jul-24	4 years
Trade Union	Richard Hand		NEU	Jan-22	Jan-26	4 years
Other Attendees:						
Executive Members:						
	Heather Codling	Portfolio Holder for Children and Family Services				
	Iain Cottingham	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources				
LA Officers:						
	Neil Goddard	Service Director - Education and SEND				
	Melanie Ellis	Service Director - Finance, Property and Procurement				
Clerk:						
	Jessica Bailiss	Democratic Services Officer				

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CONSTITUTION OF THE WEST BERKSHIRE SCHOOLS' FORUM

Background

1. The West Berkshire Schools' Forum (hereafter referred to as "the Forum").
2. The requirement to establish a schools forum comes from the Education Act 2002. The main purpose of the Forum is to consider aspects of the relationship between schools and the local authority relating to financial matters.
3. The Forum is a decision making and consultative body in relation to matters concerning schools' budgets as defined in the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2014, the Schools Forum Regulations 2012 and the School Budget Shares (Prescribed Purposes) (England) 2002. The Schools Forum Regulations 2012 govern the composition, constitution and procedures of Schools' Forums.¹

This document is divided into 3 sections:

- A. Terms of Reference of the West Berkshire Schools' Forum
- B. Membership of the West Berkshire Schools' Forum
- C. Operating Conventions of the West Berkshire Schools' Forum

A. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE FORUM

1.1 Status of the Forum

The Forum is established in accordance with Sections 47(1) 47A of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012.

1.2 Annual Consultation on School Funding

The authority must consult the Schools' Forum annually in respect of the authority's functions relating to school funding including:

- Changes to the funding formula.
- The allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), including redistributions between blocks.
- Contracts where the LA is entering into a contract to be funded from the schools budget.
- Funding arrangements for pupils with special educational needs, in particular the places to be commissioned by the LA and schools, and the arrangements for paying top up funding.

¹ These Regulations can be accessed at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/2261/contents>

- Funding arrangements for the use of Pupil Referral Units and the education of children otherwise than at school, in particular the places to be commissioned by the LA and schools, and the arrangements for paying top up funding.
- Central spend on children and young people with high needs.
- Funding arrangements for early years provision.
- Central spend on licences negotiated centrally by the Secretary of State.
- Administrative arrangements for the allocation of central government grants paid to the schools via the authority.
- Changes to the Minimum Funding Guarantee to go to the DfE for approval.
- Any other matter concerning the funding of schools as the Forum sees fit.

1.3 Annual Decisions on School Funding

School Forum Members must decide annually on the following proposals made by the LA:

- The amount of expenditure the local authority can centrally retain from the school budget, including growth fund, falling rolls fund, admissions, servicing of schools forum, central spend on early years.
- The criteria for allocating funding from the growth fund and falling rolls fund.
- The de-delegation for mainstream maintained schools of allowable central budgets by the schools representatives of the relevant phase on behalf of all the schools they represent.
- Carry forward of over/under spend on central expenditure to the next financial year.
- Revisions to the authority's Scheme for Financing Schools.

B. MEMBERSHIP OF THE FORUM

2.1 Composition

Schools' Forums' Regulations 2012 state that the primary schools, secondary schools and academies must be broadly proportionately represented on the Forum having regard to the total number of registered pupils. The proportionality of the membership will be reviewed annually (in June/July) so that elections, if required, can be held by the end of the summer term ready for the new academic year.

The Forum shall in total comprise of 26 members being 21 school members (including Academies) and 5 non school members. The school members shall be Headteachers, Governors or Early Years representatives drawn from the schools / partnerships in the West Berkshire Local Authority area. The Primary and Secondary Headteacher members groups may also include, at the Local Authority's discretion, representatives of Headteachers - senior members of staff, such as School Business Managers.

The Local Authority has the discretion to divide the groups set out below in 2.2, for example the ratio of Headteachers or their Representatives and Governors in each group.

2.2 School Members

The current number of representatives in each phase is as follows:

- a) Primary Headteachers or their Representative and Governors**
8 representatives from primary schools of which at least 4 must be Headteachers or their representative.
- b) Secondary Headteachers or their Representative and Governors**
3 representatives from secondary schools of which at least 2 must be Headteachers or their representative.
- c) Special School Representatives**
1 representative from the special schools.
- d) Nursery School Representatives**
1 representative from the nursery schools.
- e) Academy Proprietor Body Representative, Headteachers/their Representative and Governors**
7 representatives from the Academies, as elected by the proprietors of the Academies, of which at least 4 must be Proprietor Body Representatives/Headteachers or their representative.
- f) Pupil Referral Unit Headteachers or their Representative**
1 representative from the Pupil Referral Units.

2.3 Election of Schools Members

The primary school and secondary school headteacher representatives shall be elected by their respective Heads Forum.

Academy representatives shall be elected by the Academies proprietors.

Governors shall be elected through an election process coordinated by the Clerk to the Schools' Forum.

The special school representative shall be elected by mutual agreement between the two special schools.

The nursery school representative shall be elected by mutual agreement between the two nursery schools.

The pupil referral unit representative shall be elected by mutual consent between the pupil referral units.

Support can be requested by Heads Forums for the Clerk to the Schools' Forum to help manage their election process. The Clerk of the Schools' Forum must make a record of the process by which the constituents of each group elect their nominees to the Forum.

There should be no more than two representatives from one school/academy across the groups that make up the Schools' Forum. This will be assessed as part of the election process.

An election scheme must take into account the following factors:

- The process for collecting names of those wishing to stand for election.
- The timescale for notifying all constituents of the election and those standing.
- The arrangements for dispatching and receiving ballots.
- The arrangements for counting and publicising the results.
- Any arrangements for unusual circumstances, such as only one candidate standing in an election or where there is a tie between two or more candidates.
- Whether existing members can stand for re-election.

If an election does not take place by any date set by the Authority or any such election results in a tie between two or more candidates the Authority will appoint the schools member.

2.4 Non-School Members

In addition to the 21 school members a representative of the following groups will have full voting rights within the Forum except for voting on the funding formulae where only the Early Years PVI Provider representative can vote:

- Roman Catholic Diocese
- Church of England Diocese
- Trade Union
- Early Years PVI Provider
- Non school Post 16

The representative will be elected by their group and the record of the appointment process will be held by the Clerk of the Schools' Forum.

2.5 Substitute Members

Representative groups may nominate permanent substitutes who have sufficient experience and knowledge of schools funding to attend meetings.

and/or

A stand-in substitute who attends as a full voting member if a headteacher or permanent substitute is unavailable. Stand-in substitutes may attend some meetings as an observer to gain an insight into the work of the Forum.

The Clerk must be notified in writing 24 hours before the start of the meeting that a substitution will be required. Substitute members will have full voting rights when taking the place of the substantive member for whom they are the designated substitute.

2.6 Participation of Observers

Observers shall be invited to attend Forum meetings. Observers may participate in the debate but will not have voting rights should any business of the Forum require a vote. The

following groups shall be asked if they would like to nominate an observer (and a named substitute) to the Forum:

- The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)

2.7 Council Officers and Elected Members

The following may attend and speak at Forum meetings in an advisory capacity only and will be invited to attend Forum meetings:

- Executive Director (People) or their representative
- Service Director - Finance, Property and Procurement or their representative
- Children and Young People Portfolio Holder
- Finance Portfolio Holder
- Clerk to the Schools' Forum

2.8 Terms of Office

The term of office for members of the Forum is four years. The same members can be reappointed providing they are re-elected by the group that they represent. This also applies to any permanent substitutes. A Governor representative reaching the end of their term can stand again for re-election through an election process run by the Schools' Forum Clerk.

As well as the term of office coming to an end, a schools member ceases to be a member of the Schools' Forum if he or she resigns from the Forum, giving at least one month's written notice, or no longer occupies the office which he or she was nominated to represent. An election should be held within the outgoing members electing group to nominate a successor. The Clerk will then inform the Forum members of the result of the election within one month.

2.9 Failure to attend meetings

Where a member of the Schools' Forum fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of their last attendance to attend a meeting of the Forum (or to organise for an appropriate substitute to attend on their behalf), then subject to certain exceptions, they will cease to be a member of the Schools' Forum unless the failure was due to some reason approved before the expiry of that period.

C. OPERATING CONVENTIONS OF THE WEST BERKSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM

3.1 Ordinary Meetings

An ordinary meeting of the Forum shall be held, at a minimum, four times a year.

3.2 Administration of Meetings

Meetings of the Forum shall be convened by the Local Authority, who will arrange the clerking and recording of meetings. The cycle of annual meetings are based on the financial year. All the meeting dates for the next financial year are set by the end of March every year.

Items for consideration by the Forum shall be submitted to the Clerk no later than ten working days prior to the meeting. The agenda and working papers should be circulated a

week in advance of the meeting date. Every effort should be made to circulate draft minutes to Forum members within ten working days of the meeting.

3.3 The Chair and Vice Chair

The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be elected from within the membership of the Schools' Forum (but may not be either an elected member or an officer of the local authority).

3.4 Quorum

The Forum shall be quorate if at least 40% of the total membership is present (this excludes observers). If the Forum is not quorate the meeting can proceed and the members present can give advice to the local authority, but the authority is not obliged to take that advice into consideration. Decisions on the schools' budgets may not be taken unless 40% of the school members (Headteachers and Governors) are present.

3.5 Voting

Each member shall only have one vote. Voting shall be by a named vote if the meeting is held virtually or by a show of hands if in person. If there are equal numbers of votes for and against, the Chair will have a second or casting vote. There will be no restriction on how the Chair chooses to exercise a casting vote.

When the vote is on the schools funding formula only the schools' members and the Early Years Representative are eligible to vote.

3.6 Sub-Committees and Working Groups

The Forum may have sub-committees or working groups. The Forum shall receive reports from the sub-committees or working groups to approve formally.

3.7 Declaration of Interest

Any member of the Forum who has an interest in any proposal, beyond the generality of the group that they represent, shall declare the interest at the beginning of the relevant item. Should the member declare a prejudicial interest then they can explain any issues to the meeting and then must leave the meeting until the item has finished. The member cannot vote on that item. Members may remain in the case of a personal interest.

Where it is clear that a decision in which a member has an interest is likely to arise at a particular meeting, the meeting concerned may invite a substitute member (with no interest to declare) in accordance with the Constitution to attend the meeting in their place. Elected members are subject to the governance of the Council's Code of Conduct.

3.8 Status of Reports

All report authors will be responsible for informing the Clerk in advance of the status of reports to be included in the agenda i.e. confidential or non-confidential.

3.9 Expenses

The Local Authority shall maintain a budget for the reimbursement of all reasonable expenses relating to the operation of the Forum and charge these expenses to the Schools' Budget. The Local Authority shall reimburse expenses of members of the Forum when members submit appropriate claims, in connection with attendance at the meetings. Supply cover should only be claimed when it has been necessary to employ a supply cover teacher to enable the Headteacher to attend the Forum.

3.10 Interpretation of the Constitution

The Chair or person presiding at the meeting shall be the final arbiter regarding the interpretation of the Forum's Constitution. The Constitution shall be interpreted in conjunction with the relevant provisions contained in the legislation relating to the Forum's proceedings. The requirements of legislation will prevail in the event of there being any inconsistency between the legislation and the Constitution.

3.11 Amendment of the Constitution

With the exception of matters subject to legislative provision or approval by the authority, the Forum may vary its Constitution by a simple majority vote by the members provided that prior notice of the nature of the proposed variation is made and included on the agenda for the meeting.

3.12 Publicity relating to the Schools Forum

The Schools Forum is a public meeting and the Local Authority is responsible for putting the Schools' Forum papers, minutes and decisions promptly on the West Berkshire Council website and generally draw schools attention to forthcoming Schools' Forum meetings and agendas and the minutes of Forum discussions.

Document last approved by the School's Forum in June 2023

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Schools Forum - Declarations of Interest

All members of the Schools' Forum are required to declare any standing interests for publication.

Name	Key Role on the Forum	School / Organisation	Any other interests
Ant Sizer	Maintained Secondary Headteacher Representative (SUBSTITUTE)	Deputy Headteacher - The Willink School	No other interests to declare.
Charlotte Wilson	Academy Headteacher Representative	Headteacher - Trinity School	Executive Headteacher of Newbury Academy Trust including, Trinity, Speenhamland and Fir Tree Primary Schools. Trinity School/Fir Tree and Speenhamland host SEND Resource Units.
Chris Prosser	Maintained Secondary Headteacher Representative	Headteacher – The Downs School	Executive Headteacher The Downland Federation (incl. The Downs, Basildon, Beedon and Compton Primary Schools.)
David Ramsden	Maintained Secondary Headteacher Representative	Headteacher – Little Heath School	No other interests to declare.
Graham Spellman	Roman Catholic Diocese Representative	Diocese of Portsmouth	No other interests to declare.
Councillor Heather Codling	Executive Portfolio Holder: Children and Family Services	West Berkshire Council	Click on the link below to view Councillor Heather Codling's register of interests
Councillor Iain Cottingham	Executive Portfolio Holder: Finance and Resources	West Berkshire Council	Click on the link below to view Councillor Iain Cottingham's register of interests
Jacque Davies	Pupil Referral Unit Representative	Headteacher – iCollege	Governor of Downland Federation and Safeguarding Governor of Downland Primaries (Basildon, Beedon and Compton). Secretary MD3D Ltd (Sales support and technical consulting in metrology devices for high accuracy data).
James Morton	Post 16 Providers	Newbury College	No other interests to declare.
Jay Armstrong	Maintained Primary Governor Representative	Governor - Hungerford Primary School	PCC and Sunday School Leader at St Lawrence CoE Hungerford

Name	Key Role on the Forum	School / Organisation	Any other interests
Jo Lagares	Maintained Primary Headteacher Representative	Executive Headteacher - The Kite Federation (Stockcross C. of E. Primary School and Welford and Wickham C. of E. Primary School)	No other interests to declare.
Jo MacArthur	Maintained Primary Headteacher Representative	Headteacher - the Willows Primary School	West Berks LA Assessment Lead NPQH Facilitator for TSH Berkshire
Jon Hewitt	Maintained Special School Headteacher Representative	Headteacher - The Castle School	The Castle School is a sponsor of the SEMH provision at Theale.
Julie Lewry	Maintained Primary Headteacher Representative	Academy Headteacher Representative	No other interests to declare.
Keith Harvey	Maintained Primary Headteacher Representative	Executive Headteacher – St Nicolas’ C of E Junior School	Acting Executive Headteacher St Nicolas and St John the Evangelist Schools. Wife is a teacher at the iCollege.
Lesley Roberts	Maintained Primary Headteacher Representative	Headteacher - Streatley CofE Primary School	No other interests to declare.
Libby Bucknell	Maintained Primary Headteacher Representative (SUBSTITUTE)	Headteacher - Robert Sandilands Primary School and Nursery	No other interests to declare.

Name	Key Role on the Forum	School / Organisation	Any other interests
Mark Bennet	Church of England Diocese Representative	Member of Oxford Diocesan Board of Education - Diocese of Oxford	Foundation Governor of Thatcham Park School. Trustee of Thatcham Park Church of England Primary School Trust. Member and Director of Equinox Learning Trust. Member of Kennet School local governing body. Trustee of Westcott House, a Theological College in Cambridge. Trustee of the Thatcham Parochial Charities. Trustee of Culham St Gabriel's Trust Member of the Church of England General Synod Trustee of the theological charity: BIAPT.
Michelle Harrison	Maintained Primary School Representative	School Business Manager at St Finian's Catholic Primary School	Safeguarding Director at Equinox Learning Trust
Nicolle Browning	Maintained Secondary Headteacher Representative	The Willink School	No other interests to declare.
Paul Davey	Maintained Primary Governor Representative	LA Governor at Enborne C of E Primary School	Foundation governor of Theale Primary School
Phil Spray	Maintained Primary Governor Representative	Co-opted Governor at Spurcroft Primary School and Nursery	An employee of Transform UK
Richard Hand	Trade Union Representative	National Education Union Joint Branch and District Secretary, West Berkshire	Teacher at Little Heath School.
Richard Hawthorne	Academy Headteacher Representative	Head of School, John O'Gaunt, Hungerford	John O'Gaunt is part of the Excalibur Academies Trust
Trevor Keable	Academy Governor Representative	Chair of Trustees, Denefield School	No other interests to declare.

Last updated June 2024

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Scheme for Financing Schools

Report being considered by: Schools' Forum on 15th July 2024

Report Author: Melanie Ellis

Item for: Decision **By:** All Maintained School Representatives

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To discuss the responses to the consultation on the updated Scheme for Financing Schools.

2. Recommendation

2.1 To recommend to Schools Forum to approve the suggested amendment and publish and adopt the updated Scheme for Financing Schools by 16th July 2024.

Is the Schools' Forum required to make a decision as part of this report or subsequent versions due to be considered later in the meeting cycle?

Yes:

No:

3. Implications and Impact Assessment

Equalities Impact:				Commentary
	Positive	No Impact	Negative	
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		x		
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		

Data Impact:		x		
Consultation and Engagement:				

4. Introduction/Background

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 The Department for Education (DfE) issues statutory guidance for local authorities on schemes for financing schools. The DfE guidance lists the provisions which a local authority must, should or may include. Local schemes need not follow the exact format used in the DfE guidance, except for the text of directed revisions. The DfE guidance is updated annually.
- 4.3 Issue 16 was published on 28 March 2024 and can be found at:

[Schemes for financing local authority maintained schools 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/schemes-for-financing-local-authority-maintained-schools-2024-to-2025)

- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 The local authority has reviewed the current scheme to ensure that all sections are still appropriate. Following on from this review four updates are proposed and were consulted on.

5. Supporting Information

5.1 Responses were as follows:

- **5.14** – Reference is made to “notifying” the authority about a direct revenue transfer to capital, but it does not express the details requested or that this is a request to transfer that can be refused. The process of completing the spreadsheets, detailing future commitments and expenditure, then waiting for the letter of acceptance should be documented in the process here.

Response: Section added to Scheme as follows:

In any event if the expected capital expenditure from the budget share in any one year will exceed £20,000, the governing body must;

- Complete a Request to Transfer Revenue to Capital form (Schools Accountancy will provide the form), detailing future commitments and expenditure.

- Return the form, signed by Chair of Governors, to Schools Accountancy for checking.
 - Schools Accountancy will then send to Service Director - Finance, Property and Procurement to approve.
 - Service Director will then send to Executive Director - Children and Family Services for approval.
 - Note that the schools should take into account any advice from the Executive Director - Children and Family Services as to the merits of the proposed expenditure and note that the request can be refused.
- **7.2** – The last line “This applies to all revenue funds of the school, but excluding community facilities and external services” has been removed from the version being consulted on, but reference not made to this change, please can we understand why this is?

Response: This paragraph was removed two versions ago, and so is not part of this consultation. The last time this paragraph was included was v14. We are now on v16.

- We believe that clarification is required at 6.9 – other provisions – Leasing Arrangements which says that Schools must seek advice from Accountancy before entering into any lease arrangements ?? Given that there are now certain ‘allowable’ leasing arrangements does this still need to happen? Do schools seek accountancy advice for the leasing of the things we are allowed to lease?

Response: This paragraph has now been removed as no longer required.

- An update is required to Annex C (the last page) as this also refers to ‘Borrowing by schools’ and it is now different to the main body of the document.

Response: Please use the main body for the guidance. The Annex C is verbatim from the Government revisions and acts as an audit trail to what changes they have made in the past.

- At 7.2 - Excessive balance is 10% of school’s budget share or £50K whichever is greater. We are concerned that balances at year end can be impacted by items outside of the school’s control...such as receiving a credit for your electricity of £30K in P12 (which erroneously inflated our own year-end position). We would like confirmation that the documentation provided to schools will enable sufficient information to be provided in explanation of such balances.

Response: The documentation requested from schools will enable sufficient information to be provided.

- Our only question relates to that on Clawback. We are unclear how this works with the capital fund given that it is normal for schools to ‘save up’ for bigger capital schemes that don’t form part of the CMP. If you are saving over several years, is this surplus then at risk of claw back.

Response: With regards to clawback, that will only apply to Main School Budget, so the capital fund is not subject to clawback.

6. Proposals

6.1 A consultation with maintained schools was undertaken between 18th and 27th June 2024.

7. Appendices

7.1 None

Delivering Better Value Programme : Update

Report being considered by: Schools' Forum 15th July 2024
Report Author: Hester Collicutt
Item for: Discussion **By:** All Forum Members

1. Purpose of the Report

This report is provided to Schools' Forum to provide an update on the Delivering Better Value Programme (DBV) and its impact on the SEND system in West Berkshire, improving outcomes for children and young people.

2. Introduction/Background

The quarterly reporting cycle to the DfE is as follows: -

- April to June by 5th July
- July to Sept by 4th October
- October to December by 10th January
- January to March by 4th April

This is the submission to the Department of Education for 5th July 2024.

3. Supporting Information

3.1 Provide a summary of progress to date in relation to the agreed implementation plan

Since April DBV Programme and its governance has become fully aligned and incorporated into the new SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024 to 2029 to ensure the overarching delivery of the "Innovation in SEND" programme in West Berkshire. It has provided the impetus for a transformational piece of work which will have a significant legacy consequence.

The Parent and Carer Forum is engaged at a strategic level, sitting on the SEND Strategic Improvement Board (SSIB) which is chaired by the Executive Director of Children's Services, and whose membership includes the Chief Executive for West Berkshire, the Lead Council Member for Education, Chief Nursing Officer for the ICB and the ICB Director (Berkshire, Oxfordshire, and Buckinghamshire -BOB).

West Berkshire is also working closely with neighbouring authorities. For example, in June 2024 West Berkshire has formally requested to join the Alternative Provision

Framework led by Brighter Futures for Children (Reading) to address sufficiency and quality of Alternative Provision, developing capacity in this area.

DBV working groups meet monthly to scrutinise the delivery of the programme and regular reports are submitted to Schools Forum and Heads Funding Group. A wide Communications plan is being launched in July 2024 to ensure developments in SEND are broadcast to families, schools and wider Local Area Partners through a blog and alternative methods of communication.

Key temporary posts have been filled to manage the delivery of the programme, increasing the capacity of the existing teams whilst system changes are implemented. However, some recruitment has been more difficult and has caused delay e.g. the “Whole School Mental Health Project” where the project has been delayed by 5-6 months. West Berkshire is now formally requesting to extend this programme beyond the end of March 2025 until August 2025, thereby using allocation of the DBV grant in this area, beyond the March 2025 deadline.

The Transitions Support Programme has this term, supported Early Years transition into F2, for September 2024. Impact is currently being evaluated, with a view to extending funding, if impact demonstrates successful early identification and successful support into Foundation mainstream provision.

The Key Stage 2/3 programme is being co-produced with schools (Primary and Secondary SENCOs and Year 7 teachers).

Work on SEND Data Management is informing the development of a Sufficiency Plan, data dashboards and a clearer financial overview of placements in Independent non-maintained special schools (INMSS). This is bringing together teams from within the Council to align their work and is informing sufficiency, financial scrutiny, and commissioning developments.

The first three months of the DBV Programme has been focused on ensuring systems are in place to drive sustainable, evidenced based improvements in supporting children and young people with SEND, delivering cost effective solutions that meet SEND locally but that are co-produced with local partners and families. Promoting parent /carer engagement remains a priority and therefore the Local Authority has used DBV funding to engage the Coram Programme which supports parental champions who will build parental confidence in the SEND system

3.2 Grant expenditure summary

3.21 The actual spend on the DBV Programme to 28th June 2024 is £113,506. The actual spend is lower than predicted due to several factors:

- Delay in appointing to Service Director - Delivering Better Value (Strategic Commissioner)
- Delay in appointing to Commissioning Consultant Lead (Commissioning Officer)

The costs for these roles will be apportioned across the rest of the programme, as appropriate.

3.22 Delay in commencement of the Whole School Mental Health Project. Initially this should have commenced in April with the appointment of Educational Psychologists to deliver the project. Issues in management changes in the Educational Psychology Service and delays in recruitment have delayed the project by 5/6 months. Plans are in place to appoint to these posts by September 2024 and they will be for a year's term (until August 2025) with agreement of the DfE.

3.23 There has also been a delay in recruitment of a project co-ordinator (administrative & communication support), It is intended that this post will be filled by the end of July 2024.

3.24 The SEND Placement Officer post is held, whilst awaiting the sufficiency plan to be finalised (August 2024). This will then dictate what support will be required from this role.

3.25 Work around the increase in capacity of support services and the development of a transition support programme have started, but these plans are evolving and more clarity on the nature of the spend attached to these programmes will be available by the second quarter.

3.26 N.B. There are additional costs in relation to finance support as the DBV work is being carried out over and above current hours.

3.27 The DBV team reviewed the clawback request presented to the Schools Forum in December 2023 and made a recommendation that this be re-considered by the Schools Forum meeting in June 2024.

Balances over 10% have been agreed to be clawed back from schools, subject to a review on current commitments. The value of this is currently unknown but will be added to the deficit management template once confirmed. The amount is likely to be confirmed by the end of July 2024.

4. Workstream: Clear communications with families and wider local area partners to support access to services and the SEND system.

4.1 Summary

This workstream is focusing on a cross-agency gap analysis in relation to the Universal and Targeted Offer in West Berkshire in conjunction with health and social care colleagues – e.g. review of the support available around Autism, pre and post diagnosis i.e. needs rather than diagnosis led access to provision. This is being undertaken through a "Balance System" framework approach which in turn may lead to opportunities for joint commissioning where gaps in service are identified. Mapping pathways to access services is being undertaken during this analysis. There is significant appetite for this work across the Local Area although the scope of it, and the variety of service providers involved, has meant that the work will not be completed until July/August 2024 (1/2 month/s delay).

The Parent/Carer Forum (PCF) does have representation on the SEND Strategic Improvement Board, however due to the current very low numbers in the Forum (fewer than 15 members at present), the opportunity for co-production remains extremely limited and there are not enough members to participate in Task Groups. West Berkshire is working with “Genuine Partnerships” (developed out of Rotherham PCF) on co-production activities with new PCF members. The PCF Forum is attending Hub activities throughout the summer to engage with families and drive membership development. This is being supported by staff from West Berkshire. The PCF is hosted by “Swings and Smiles”, a charity providing support, friendship and play for children with special needs and their families in West Berkshire.

A data dashboard is being developed to inform the SEND Strategic Improvement Board in September 2024.

4.2 Workstream delivery confidence RAG rating: AMBER/GREEN

4.3 Evidence and progress

West Berkshire has formerly requested to join Brighter Futures for Children (Reading) Alternative Provision Framework, which will be published on the Local Offer in August/September 2024.

To further support communication with parents and carers, West Berkshire has used DBV funding to invest in the Coram Parent Champion Programme. The Parent Champion Programme will extend our ability to engage with parents and carers during the remaining months of the DBV programme supporting the Gap Analysis /SEND Local Offer and the Inclusive Practice task groups.

Beyond the lifetime of the DBV Programme, setting up a Parent Champion Programme in West Berkshire will create a network of parent carers volunteers that can be used to share and receive information and increase participation around multiple relevant service developments. For example, increasing take up of childcare entitlements for disadvantaged 2-year-olds, increasing access to early intervention services at Family Hubs for vulnerable families, increasing access and awareness of public health issues such as childhood immunisations.

West Berkshire has developed a Communication Plan to launch DBV activity and the new SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024- 2029 under the headline “Innovation in SEND”. The SEND Blog is launched in July and will provide updates for parents and the wider community and opportunities to participate in specific projects e.g. The development of the Local Offer.

4.4 Measuring impact

It is too early in the programme to measure impact in this area.

4.5 Has there been any slippage in delivery plans?

Delay in PCF engagement in task groups, due to capacity and limited numbers in PCF currently.

Mitigation - Joining Coram Programme, supporting PCF engagement with family Hubs, Support of Participation and Engagement Lead, development of SEND Blog to highlight key information for PCF.

The Local Offer in West Berkshire is changing platforms, and this may slightly delay the improvement and updating schedule of the Local Offer. Work is still going on to improve the content of the Local Offer and it is hoping that any technical delay will be negligible.

5 Workstream: Enabling settings, schools and colleges to meet the diverse needs of their communities locally.

Workstream summary

This workstream has three focus areas:

5.1 Ensuring Sufficiency

This task group is ensuring data used to inform the SEND Sufficiency Plan is accurate. The First draft of the SEND Sufficiency Plan is due in July 2024 and will provide the evidence and inform the business case for the development of further SEND provision in West Berkshire.

This group is also reviewing the commissioning frameworks for Independent Non - Maintained placements and Alternative provision. An outcome of this work is that in June 2024 West Berkshire has formally requested to join the Alternative Provision Framework led by Brighter Futures for Children (Reading) to address sufficiency and quality of Alternative Provision, developing capacity in this area.

Mitigations identified in Annex 1 of the Deficit Management Plan (DMP) regarding SEND placement development is specialist provision is currently on the risk register as this expansion plan may no longer be available, following the anticipated academisation of a local special school. The group is identifying further options for developing SEND provision in local mainstream schools and an options paper will be available for consideration in August/September 2024.

5.2 Financial Sustainability

This Task group is undertaking the Statutory Decision-Making Review in July and August. It is reviewing all Terms of Reference and documentation for all statutory decision-making panels and relevant supporting data and external information e.g. previous internal audits. Decision making around INMSS placements will also be under review whilst considering appropriate Commissioning Frameworks.

Phase One of the Banding Review will be completed by 31 August 2024 and will include mapping current activity, benchmarking across other LAs, analysing data and information, reviewing other models, and agreeing recommendations to take forward.

5.3 Supporting Inclusive Practice

This task group is focusing in two key areas of development, the Transitions Support Programme and the whole school Mental Health Project.

The Transitions Support Programme from Early Years to F2 has piloted additional enhanced support since May 2024 using DBV Funding.

The Transitions Support Programme for Key stage 2/3 is being co-produced with schools and is in development, for piloting in the Autumn Term, leading to a best practice protocol/programme to support transition. The work will focus specifically with Year 6 (September 2024) cohort transitioning into secondary in September 2025.

Support Service evaluations are underway as is an audit of training needs requested by schools. Heads' Funding Group has requested a longitudinal study of the impact of support services on children's outcomes. This collective information will confirm how support services in West Berkshire evolve and any additional funding for innovation or development will be submitted to the DBV Task Group.

The Whole School Mental Health Project was initially intended for delivery from April 2024 but due to significant challenges with Educational Psychologists' retention, changes in the management structure of the Educational Psychology Service and pressures on recruitment, this has been delayed until September 2024. The Local Authority is endeavouring to secure staffing for this project so that it can commence in September 2024 but there remains a risk in achieving this in time for September and the project itself will extend beyond March 2025.

5.4 Workstream delivery confidence RAG rating: AMBER/GREEN

5.5 Evidence and Progress

Additional DBV funding has allowed the Early Development and Inclusion Team (EDIT) extra 3 days a week specifically for transition support, i.e. the organisation of transition meetings to ensure that they happen with the right level of detail for all children, input into or attending the meetings for all 63 children.

With this extra input, the one-page pupil profiles (pupil passports) are being promoted and are being used successfully and a much greater level of detail being shared about children with schools and actions are agreed and followed up. The initial findings are the impact on transition preparations is considerable, and following further evaluation, the intention would be to continue to support the children in school in the Autumn and Spring Terms.

The DBV funding has allowed for training for 43 FS1 and FS2 staff on Attachment and how that can affect children's smooth transition into school and how to provide an environment that supports the needs of the children who are coming in. Further training this term will include "Heavy Work" and "Planning for Positive Behaviour". Targeted support work and the parent liaison continues to pick up on children who are heading towards school who might 'fall through the net' and not make that good

transition which may result in requests for EHC assessments and subsequent specialist provision.

5.6 Measuring impact

The Early Years Transitions Programme support has some quantitative and qualitative data. However, for other areas it is too early in the programme to measure impact.

5.7 Has there been any slippage in delivery plans?

Slippage in the start of the programme in April 2024 was due to the delay in appointment of some key roles: DBV Data Analyst and DBV Commissioning Lead. These staff are now in place and level of experience and expertise is ensuring that the programme is delivering on time.

Delay in instigating the Mental Health Project due to recruitment and restructuring issues will delay its commencement by 5/6 months, and therefore an extension beyond the end of March 2025 has been requested for the delivery of this element.

The limitations of the current capacity of the PCF are impacting on co-production activities but the Engagement and Communication Lead is working in partnership with the PCF committee to support and build capacity e.g. publishing PCF activities and staging combined event with families to promote PCF in the community.

The capacity of our health partners has delayed the delivery of the GAP analysis but we are supporting work in this area with regular meetings to ensure there is an agreed schedule of delivery that aligns with competing priorities in health.

The capacity of permanent local authority staff has caused pressure over competing priorities as the council is expecting a local Area Inspection imminently. However, work priorities have become aligned, as the integration of the DBV Programme has become incorporated into the new SEND and Inclusion Strategy, creating an overarching delivery plan.

6. Overall progress on total opportunities including, implementation plan and DSG management plan

The revised DSG plan (July 2024) indicates that there are two key updates since February:

- 1) 23-24 outturn figures confirmed
- 2) 24-25 budget confirmed

The DBV team reviewed the clawback request presented to the Schools Forum in December 2023 and recommended that this be re-considered by the Schools Forum meeting in June 2024. Balances over 10% have been agreed to be clawed back from schools, subject to a review on current commitments. The value of this is currently unknown but will be added to the deficit management template once confirmed.

However, the estimated mitigated deficit by the end of 27-28 has increased by £4.5m.

7.0 Conclusion

As the DBV Programme has only been delivered for 3 months only very limited progress has been made but the systems are now in place to realise the opportunities available. Importantly, schools and Local Area Partners are very aware of the pressures that remain and are committed to addressing these to create a sustainable financial model moving forward.

8.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Deficit Management Plan Slides

Deficit Management Plan



Update July 2024

Deficit Management Plan Update

- ❑ 2 key updates since February:
 - 23-24 outturn figures confirmed
 - 24-25 budget confirmed
- ❑ Clawback 23-24 has not yet been incorporated into the figures as this value has not yet been confirmed
- ❑ The estimated mitigated deficit by the end of 27-28 has changed from £61.4m to £65.9m

Q1 submission

	Total projected mitigated expenditure (forecast with savings and invest to save measures)				Total projected unmitigated expenditure (forecast based on current trends without mitigating actions)			
	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Total forecast spend	£37,500,786	£44,106,546	£47,288,853	£52,227,483	£41,022,143	£47,976,904	£52,720,172	£58,098,509
Estimated grant income (including School Block trf)	-£29,488,313	-£30,718,061	-£31,639,603	-£32,588,791	-£29,153,266	-£30,027,864	-£30,928,700	-£31,856,561
shortfall in year	£8,012,473	£13,388,485	£15,649,250	£19,638,693	£11,868,877	£17,949,040	£21,791,472	£26,241,949
cumulative deficit	£17,284,508	£30,672,994	£46,322,244	£65,960,937	£20,805,865	£38,064,708	£59,145,278	£84,654,997
Note: Excludes any clawback arrangements								

Annex 1

Existing Mitigations

		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Castle @ Theale	additional specialist places SEMH/Autism - alternative is for pupils to go to Independent Specialist Provision 6 new placements from Sept 2023 onwards	-£490,770	-£741,657	-£1,579,608	-£2,017,339	-£1,760,445
Kennet Valley	additional specialist places SEMH/Autism - alternative is for pupils to go to Independent Specialist Provision (for example New Barn) opening Autumn 2024		-£46,705	-£487,268	-£501,552	-£515,900
Westwood Farm	additional specialist places SEMH/Autism - alternative is for pupils to go to Independent Specialist Provision	-£145,225	-£300,090	-£312,203	-£324,921	-£338,275
Special School Places	20 additional places for Castle School - additional specialist places for children with learning difficulties - alternative is for pupils to go to Independent Specialist Provision. July 24 – risk identified that 20 of these places may not go ahead at one of the provisions – figures amended			-£11,790	-£30,990	-£51,150
Pod+ expansion	One-off additional 6 spaces at the Alternative provision (i-college pod plus) from Sep 2023	-£276,000	-£301,200	-£327,660	-£355,443	-£384,615
Total		-£911,995	-£1,389,652	-£2,718,529	-£3,230,245	-£3,050,385

Annex 1

DBV Diagnostic Initiatives

		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
GAP analysis to inform Local Provision /Need	Supporting the goals and aspirations of the child can be achieved without the need for an EHCP			-£72,000	-£123,000	-£123,000
Ensuring Sufficiency	Supporting the goals and aspirations of the child in INMSS at a more effective average unit cost			-£54,000	-£93,000	-£93,000
	Supporting the goals and aspirations of the child through Alternative Provision rather than INMSS			-£21,000	-£37,000	-£37,000
Financial Sustainability	Supporting the goals and aspirations of the child in MSS at a more effective average unit cost			-£311,000	-£533,000	-£533,000
Supporting Inclusive Practice	Supporting the goals and aspirations of the child in a Mainstream setting rather than MSS			-£214,000	-£367,000	-£367,000
	Supporting the goals and aspirations of the child in a Mainstream setting rather than INMSS			-£292,000	-£500,000	-£500,000
Total		0	0	-£964,000	-£1,653,000	-£1,653,000

Annex 1

Further opportunities

		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
MLD-SLD Primary (West)	additional specialist places MLD/SLD in the West of the authority- alternative is for pupils to go to Independent Specialist Provision				-£197,058	-£345,166
MLD-SLD Secondary (West)	additional specialist places MLD/SLD in the west of the authority - alternative is for pupils to go to Independent Specialist Provision				-£150,295	-£247,620
SEMH Autism Primary (West)	additional specialist primary places for SEMH/Autism - alternative is for pupils to go to Independent Specialist Provision					-£661,799
EBSA health related	Review the local authority policy on the education of children who do not attend school for health or related reasons and create an Alternative Provision Coordinator post to create personalised packages of educational support. The alternative is a placement at an Independent Provision		-£14,550	-187,830	-£201,722	-£216,308
Total		0	-£14,550	-£187,830	-£549,074	-£1,167,640

Schools: Deficit Recovery

Report being considered by: Schools Forum on 15th July 2024

Report Author: Melanie Ellis

Item for: Information **By:** All Maintained Schools Representatives

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To report on the outturn position of the nine schools (Beenham, Brimpton, Kennet Valley, Long Lane, Pangbourne, Spurcroft, St Finians, St John & St Nicolas Federation and St Josephs) that set a deficit budget in 2023/24.
- 1.2 To report on four schools (Enborne, Hermitage, Theale and Woolhampton) closing 2023/24 with an unlicensed deficit.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the report be noted.

3. Introduction

- 3.1 Schools are permitted to set a deficit budget if they meet certain conditions. This is termed a licensed deficit. The conditions of a licensed deficit are set out in the Scheme for Financing Schools (the legal contract the Council has with schools) and include the following statement, "The recommended length over which schools may repay the deficit, i.e. reach at least a zero balance, with appropriate mechanism to ensure that the deficit is not simply extended indefinitely, is three years. The maximum length of repayment is five years."
- 3.2 If the conditions are not met by the school, the Council has the power to issue a Notice of Concern, which ultimately could mean removal of a school's delegation.
- 3.3 This report provides details of nine schools which set a deficit budget for 2023/24. There are an additional four schools that ended 2023/24 with unlicensed deficits.
- 3.4 Nine schools set a licensed deficit budget for 2023/24 totalling £455k deficit.

4. West Berkshire Strategy for Schools in Deficit

- 4.1 The Council has adopted a strategy aimed to minimise the number and size of deficits. It is in two parts:
 - (1) Procedures to support schools to reduce/eliminate or avoid a deficit.
 - (2) Intervention for schools not meeting their deficit recovery plan.
- 4.2 Approval of a licensed deficit requires the school to do the following:
 - (1) Submit monthly budget monitoring reports (M3 and then M6 to M11 inclusive), and supporting documents.

- (2) Submit a copy of draft and final governor meeting minutes (including Part 2) where the budget is discussed.
- (3) To attend meetings with the local authority when requested to address any budget concerns
- (4) Submit deficit recovery progress reports when requested.
- (5) Submit five year detailed deficit recovery plan.
- (6) Take part in:
 - a) any review the Local Authority commissions on the school's budget deficit position and recovery plan, including a Schools Resource Management Advisor deployment and,
 - b) the introduction and use of any additional analysis and data tools deemed appropriate including Integrated curriculum and financial planning (ICFP).

4.3 The Council's Schools Finance team includes a dedicated resource to work with the schools that are operating in a deficit and to offer support to those who are likely to enter a deficit position.

5. 2023/24 Outturn Position - Licensed Deficit Schools

5.1 Nine schools had a Main School Budget (MSB) licensed deficit in 2023/24, totalling £546k deficit. The final outturn position for these schools was a closing position of £620k deficit. A summary is shown below:

SCHOOLS/FEDERATIONS WITH LICENSED DEFICITS IN 2023/24 Surplus / (Deficit)	Budget (Main School Budget)	P9 Forecast	Closing balance	Variance Original MSB to Closing Balance	Variance P9 Forecast to P13 Closing Balance
	1	2	3	3-1	3-2
1 Beenham Primary School	(£3,090)	(£18,890)	(£9,894)	(£6,804)	£8,996
2 Brimpton Primary School	(£19,650)	(£6,800)	(£14,162)	£5,488	(£7,362)
3 Kennet Valley Primary School	(£29,670)	£28,610	£3,875	£33,545	(£24,735)
4 Long Lane Primary School	(£48,390)	(£48,390)	(£29,745)	£18,645	£18,645
5 Pangbourne Primary School	(£47,760)	(£78,190)	(£77,778)	(£30,018)	£412
6 Spurcroft Primary School	(£187,330)	(£200,400)	(£199,639)	(£12,309)	£761
7 St Finian's Primary School	(£85,990)	(£87,120)	(£87,161)	(£1,171)	(£41)
8 St John Infant & St Nicolas Junior Federation	(£54,550)	(£88,550)	(£47,172)	£7,378	£41,378
9 St Joseph's Primary School	(£69,500)	(£134,890)	(£158,621)	(£89,121)	(£23,731)
Total	(£545,930)	(£634,620)	(£620,297)	(£74,367)	£14,323

5.2 The combined position at year end is £74.4k worse than budget. One school ended the year with a surplus rather than a deficit; a difference of £33.5k. Three schools ended the year with a lower deficit than budgeted, a reduction of £31.5k. The remaining five schools ended the year with deficits £139.4k higher than planned.

(1) Beenham

Balance at end of financial year	Main School Budget	
2016/17	(£34,357)	Deficit
2017/18	(£64,783)	Deficit
2018/19	(£40,676)	Deficit
2019/20	(£33,847)	Deficit
2020/21	(£363)	Deficit
2021/22	£20,936	Surplus
2022/23	(£31,015)	Deficit
2023/24	(£9,894)	Deficit

The final outturn position was a £9.9k deficit, which is £6.8k higher than the original budgeted deficit of £3.1k.

SCHOOLS/FEDERATIONS WITH LICENSED DEFICITS IN 2023/24	Budget (Main School Budget)	P9 Forecast	Closing balance	Variance Original MSB to Closing Balance	Variance P9 Forecast to P13 Closing Balance
Surplus / (Deficit)	1	2	3	3-1	3-2
Beenham Primary School	(£3,090)	(£18,890)	(£9,894)	(£6,804)	£8,996

(2) Brimpton

Balance at end of financial year	Main School Budget	
2019/20	£15,396	Surplus
2020/21	£21,845	Surplus
2021/22	£11,308	Surplus
2022/23	(£30,834)	Deficit
2023/24	(£14,162)	Deficit

The final outturn position was a £14.2k deficit, which is £5.5k better than the original budgeted deficit of £19.7k.

SCHOOLS/FEDERATIONS WITH LICENSED DEFICITS IN 2023/24	Budget (Main School Budget)	P9 Forecast	Closing balance	Variance Original MSB to Closing Balance	Variance P9 Forecast to P13 Closing Balance
Surplus / (Deficit)	1	2	3	3-1	3-2
Brimpton Primary School	(£19,650)	(£6,800)	(£14,162)	£5,488	(£7,362)

(3) Kennet Valley

Balance at end of financial year	Main School Budget	
2019/20	£25,522	Surplus
2020/21	£48,726	Surplus
2021/22	£82,901	Surplus
2022/23	£50,592	Surplus
2023/24	£3,875	Surplus

The final outturn position was a £3.9k surplus, which is £33.5k better than the original budgeted deficit of £29.7k deficit.

SCHOOLS/FEDERATIONS WITH LICENSED DEFICITS IN 2023/24	Budget (Main School Budget)	P9 Forecast	Closing balance	Variance Original MSB to Closing Balance	Variance P9 Forecast to P13 Closing Balance
Surplus / (Deficit)	1	2	3	3-1	3-2
Kennet Valley Primary School	(£29,670)	£28,610	£3,875	£33,545	(£24,735)

(4) Long Lane

Balance at end of financial year	Main School Budget	
2019/20	£26,597	Surplus
2020/21	£13,849	Surplus
2021/22	£10,279	Surplus
2022/23	(£76,173)	Deficit
2023/24	(£29,745)	Deficit

The final outturn position was a £29.7k deficit, which is £18.6k better than the original budgeted deficit of £48.4k.

SCHOOLS/FEDERATIONS WITH LICENSED DEFICITS IN 2023/24	Budget (Main School Budget)	P9 Forecast	Closing balance	Variance Original MSB to Closing Balance	Variance P9 Forecast to P13 Closing Balance
Surplus / (Deficit)	1	2	3	3-1	3-2
Long Lane Primary School	(£48,390)	(£48,390)	(£29,745)	£18,645	£18,645

(5) Pangbourne

Balance at end of financial year	Main School Budget	
	2019/20	£19,379
2020/21	£15,341	Surplus
2021/22	£3,804	Surplus
2022/23	£520	Surplus
2023/24	(£77,778)	Deficit

The final outturn position was a £77.8k deficit, which is £30k higher than the original budgeted deficit of £47.8k.

SCHOOLS/FEDERATIONS WITH LICENSED DEFICITS IN 2023/24	Budget (Main School Budget)	P9 Forecast	Closing balance	Variance Original MSB to Closing Balance	Variance P9 Forecast to P13 Closing Balance
Surplus / (Deficit)	1	2	3	3-1	3-2
Pangbourne Primary School	(£47,760)	(£78,190)	(£77,778)	(£30,018)	£412

(6) Spurcroft

Balance at end of financial year	Main School Budget	
	2016/17	(£7,842)
2017/18	£52,785	Surplus
2018/19	£211,676	Surplus
2019/20	£103,681	Surplus
2020/21	(£40,624)	Deficit
2021/22	(£79,302)	Deficit
2022/23	(£138,281)	Deficit
2023/24	(£199,639)	Deficit

The final outturn position was a £199.6k deficit, which is £12.3k higher than the original budgeted deficit of £187.3k.

SCHOOLS/FEDERATIONS WITH LICENSED DEFICITS IN 2023/24	Budget (Main School Budget)	P9 Forecast	Closing balance	Variance Original MSB to Closing Balance	Variance P9 Forecast to P13 Closing Balance
Surplus / (Deficit)	1	2	3	3-1	3-2
Spurcroft Primary School	(£187,330)	(£200,400)	(£199,639)	(£12,309)	£761

(7) St Finians

Balance at end of financial year	Main School Budget	
2016/17	(£7,714)	Deficit
2017/18	(£31,909)	Deficit
2018/19	(£56,722)	Deficit
2019/20	(£40,599)	Deficit
2020/21	(£20,657)	Deficit
2021/22	£0	-
2022/23	(£33,935)	Deficit
2023/24	(£87,161)	Deficit

The final outturn position was a £87.2k deficit, which is £1.2k higher than the original budgeted deficit of £86k.

SCHOOLS/FEDERATIONS WITH LICENSED DEFICITS IN 2023/24 Surplus / (Deficit)	Budget (Main School Budget)	P9 Forecast	Closing balance	Variance Original MSB to Closing Balance	Variance P9 Forecast to P13 Closing Balance
	1	2	3	3-1	3-2
St Finian's Primary School	(£85,990)	(£87,120)	(£87,161)	(£1,171)	(£41)

(8) St John & St Nicolas

Balance at end of financial year	Main School Budget	
2019/20	£46,312	Surplus
2020/21	£66,111	Surplus
2021/22	£74,283	Surplus
2022/23	£11,214	Surplus
2023/24	(£47,172)	Deficit

The final outturn position was a £47.2k deficit, which is £7.4k better than the original budgeted deficit of £54.6k.

SCHOOLS/FEDERATIONS WITH LICENSED DEFICITS IN 2023/24 Surplus / (Deficit)	Budget (Main School Budget)	P9 Forecast	Closing balance	Variance Original MSB to Closing Balance	Variance P9 Forecast to P13 Closing Balance
	1	2	3	3-1	3-2
St John Infant & St Nicolas Junior Federation	(£54,550)	(£88,550)	(£47,172)	£7,378	£41,378

(9) St Josephs

Balance at end of financial year	Main School Budget	
2019/20	£7,606	Surplus
2020/21	£11,678	Surplus
2021/22	(£7,173)	Deficit
2022/23	(£85,585)	Deficit
2023/24	(£158,621)	Deficit

The final outturn position was a £158.6k deficit, which is £89.1k higher than the original budgeted deficit of £69.5k.

SCHOOLS/FEDERATIONS WITH LICENSED DEFICITS IN 2023/24	Budget (Main School Budget)	P9 Forecast	Closing balance	Variance Original MSB to Closing Balance	Variance P9 Forecast to P13 Closing Balance
Surplus / (Deficit)	1	2	3	3-1	3-2
St Joseph's Primary School	(£69,500)	(£134,890)	(£158,621)	(£89,121)	(£23,731)

6. Schools ending 2023/24 with unplanned deficits

6.1 Four schools ended the financial year 2023/24 with an unlicensed deficit.

SCHOOLS/FEDERATIONS WITH LICENSED DEFICITS 2023/24	Budget (Main School Budget)	P9 Forecast	Closing balance	Variance Original MSB to Closing Balance	Variance P9 Forecast to P13 Closing Balance
Surplus / (Deficit)	1	2	3	3-1	3-2
10 Enborne Primary School	£5,330	£3,130	(£32,598)	(£37,928)	(£35,728)
11 Hermitage Primary School	£14,070	(£25,920)	(£13,311)	(£27,381)	£12,609
12 Theale Primary School	£0	(£65,330)	(£39,994)	(£39,994)	£25,336
13 Woolhampton Primary School	£18,540	£2,220	(£133)	(£18,673)	(£2,353)
Total	£37,940	(£85,900)	(£86,036)	(£123,976)	(£136)

(10) Enborne

Balance at end of financial year	Main School Budget	
2019/20	£2,446	Surplus
2020/21	£15,184	Surplus
2021/22	£3,574	Surplus
2022/23	£0	Balanced
2023/24	(£32,598)	Deficit

Schools: Deficit Recovery

The final outturn position was a £32.6k deficit, which is £37.9k worse than the budgeted surplus of £5.3k.

SCHOOLS/FEDERATIONS WITH LICENSED DEFICITS 2023/24	Budget (Main School Budget)	P9 Forecast	Closing balance	Variance Original MSB to Closing Balance	Variance P9 Forecast to P13 Closing Balance
Surplus / (Deficit)	1	2	3	3-1	3-2
Enborne Primary School	£5,330	£3,130	(£32,598)	(£37,928)	(£35,728)

Action by Local Authority: None required

(11) Hermitage

Balance at end of financial year	Main School Budget	
2019/20	£26,971	Surplus
2020/21	£19,019	Surplus
2021/22	(£7,151)	Deficit
2022/23	£1,911	Surplus
2023/24	(£13,311)	Deficit

The final outturn position was a £13.3k deficit, which is £27.4k worse than the budgeted surplus of £14.1k.

SCHOOLS/FEDERATIONS WITH LICENSED DEFICITS 2023/24	Budget (Main School Budget)	P9 Forecast	Closing balance	Variance Original MSB to Closing Balance	Variance P9 Forecast to P13 Closing Balance
Surplus / (Deficit)	1	2	3	3-1	3-2
Hermitage Primary School	£14,070	(£25,920)	(£13,311)	(£27,381)	£12,609

Action by Local Authority: Licence application required for 2024/25 as deficit budget set.

(12) Theale

Balance at end of financial year	Main School Budget	
2019/20	£5,747	Surplus
2020/21	£38,018	Surplus
2021/22	£37,384	Surplus
2022/23	£8,626	Surplus
2023/24	(£39,994)	Deficit

The final outturn position was a £40k deficit, which is £40k worse than the budgeted nil balance.

SCHOOLS/FEDERATIONS WITH LICENSED DEFICITS 2023/24	Budget (Main School Budget)	P9 Forecast	Closing balance	Variance Original MSB to Closing Balance	Variance P9 Forecast to P13 Closing Balance
Surplus / (Deficit)	1	2	3	3-1	3-2
Theale Primary School	£0	(£65,330)	(£39,994)	(£39,994)	£25,336

Action by Local Authority: None as deficit to be recovered during 2024/25

(13) Woolhampton

Balance at end of financial year	Main School Budget	
2019/20	£1,588	Surplus
2020/21	£13,505	Surplus
2021/22	£23,094	Surplus
2022/23	£9,782	Surplus
2023/24	(£133)	Deficit

The final outturn position was a £76.1k deficit, which is £86.1k worse than the budgeted surplus of £9.9k.

SCHOOLS/FEDERATIONS WITH LICENSED DEFICITS 2023/24	Budget (Main School Budget)	P9 Forecast	Closing balance	Variance Original MSB to Closing Balance	Variance P9 Forecast to P13 Closing Balance
Surplus / (Deficit)	1	2	3	3-1	3-2
Woolhampton Primary School	£18,540	£2,220	(£133)	(£18,673)	(£2,353)

School's statement on Financial Year 2023/24 was not requested as the deficit is negligible.

Action by Local Authority: Deficit budget set for 2024/25 so licence application required.

7. Consultation and Engagement

7.1 Schools included in the report have been consulted.

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Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring Report 2024/25 – Quarter One

Report being considered by: Schools Forum on 15th July 2024

Report Author: Lisa Potts

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

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To report 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

2. Recommendation

2.1 1.1 That the report be noted.

Is the Schools' Forum required to make a decision as part of this report or subsequent versions due to be considered later in the meeting cycle?

Yes:

No:

3. Implications and Impact Assessment

Equalities Impact:	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Commentary
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		x		

B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		
Data Impact:		x		
Consultation and Engagement:				

4. Introduction/Background

- 4.1 The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is a ring fenced specific grant which can only be spent on school/pupil activity as set out in The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2024. The Local Authority and Schools' Forum are responsible for ensuring that the DSG is deployed correctly according to the Regulations. Monitoring of spend against the grant needs to take place regularly to enable decision making on over spends/under spends and to inform future year budget requirements.
- 4.2 There are four DSG funding blocks: Schools Block, High Needs Block, Early Years Block and Central Schools Services Block. The funding for each of the four blocks is determined by a national funding formula.

5. Supporting Information

- 5.1 The 2024/25 Dedicated Schools Grant allocation is £181.9m. This includes £57m which funds Academies and post-16 high needs places which is paid direct by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to schools. The DSG budget for 2024/25 has been built utilising the remaining grant.
- 5.2 The Schools block is ring fenced but the Local Authority can transfer up to 0.5% of the funding out of the schools block with Schools Forum agreement. The other blocks are not subject to this limitation on transfers. For the 2024/25 budget, Schools Forum agreed to transfer 0.25% of the Schools Block funding to the High Needs Block amounting to £335k.
- 5.3 The DSG expenditure budgets required for 2024/25 total £133.7m, which is £7.9m more than the funding available. As a result, a £7.9m in-year efficiency target has been set against this in order to balance the DSG budget, against the High Needs Block
- 5.4 There is a brought forward deficit on the DSG of £9.45m.

5.5 The forecast position at the end of June is shown in Table 1. A more detailed position per cost centre is shown in Appendix A.

Prior Years				2024/25				
2021/22 Outturn	2022/23 Outturn	2023/24 Outturn	Table 1 - DSG Block forecast 2024/25	Original Budget	Budget Changes	Final Budget	Quarter 1 Forecast	Deficit/ (surplus)
£'000	£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
			Expenditure:					
70,512	73,090	77,070	Schools Block (inc ISB)	79,518	0	79,518	79,518	0
9,899	10,240	11,325	Early Years Block	17,371	0	17,371	17,329	(42)
1,001	967	935	Central School Services Block	961	0	961	974	13
23,827	26,456	31,157	High Needs Block	35,823	0	35,823	34,927	(896)
0	0	0	High Needs Block In-Year deficit recovery	(7,881)	0	(7,881)	0	7,881
105,240	110,754	120,487	Total Expenditure	125,793	0	125,793	132,747	6,955
			DSG Grant Income:					
(70,293)	(72,937)	(77,005)	Schools Block	(79,518)	0	(79,518)	(79,518)	0
(9,834)	(10,102)	(11,115)	Early Years Block	(17,371)	0	(17,371)	(17,371)	0
(1,009)	(992)	(973)	Central School Services Block	(961)	0	(961)	(961)	0
(22,601)	(24,983)	(26,892)	High Needs Block	(27,942)	0	(27,942)	(27,942)	0
(103,737)	(109,014)	(115,985)	Total DSG Income	(125,793)	0	(125,793)	(125,793)	0
	(53)		In-year adjustments					
(103,737)	(109,067)	(115,985)	Total Income	(125,793)	0	(125,793)	(125,793)	0
			In year net deficit/(surplus):					
219	153	65	Schools Block	0	0	0	0	0
65	138	210	Early Years Block	0	0	0	(42)	0
(8)	(25)	(38)	Central School Services Block	0	0	0	13	0
1,227	1,474	4,265	High Needs Block	0	0	0	6,984	0
	(50)	39	Grant adjustment (re PPG)					
1,503	1,689	4,541	Net In-year Deficit	0	0	0	6,955	0
1,461	2,964	4,761	Deficit Balance in reserves	9,450		9,450	9,450	9,450
	108	148	In year reserve movement	0		0	94	94
2,964	4,761	9,450	Cumulative Deficit	9,450	0	9,450	16,499	9,544

5.6 The Quarter One forecast shows an in-year forecast deficit of £6.96m, against the in-year efficiency target. When added to the cumulative deficit of £9.45m, the forecast year end deficit on the DSG is £16.5m.

5.7 In the Schools Block, the de-delegation for Ethnic Minority & Traveller Achievement Service is currently reviewing their staffing establishment and offer to schools. There could be a £50k underspend in year which will be off-set against future years costs.

5.8 The Early Years Block has some savings against the service manager post of £42k. With new funding streams in 24/25 it is difficult to forecast accurately so early in the year.

5.9 Central Schools Services Block is showing a slight pressure due to a change in Capita recharges. It is hoped there will be other savings in different cost centres to balance this later in the year.

5.10 The High Needs Block is currently showing a £900k underspend at Quarter One. However, we have had some issues with the top up system for maintained and academy Schools which has meant a delay in the forecast for these areas.

5.11 The table below shows the forecast position for the end of 2024/25 by block. The surplus balance on the Schools Block of £996k is supporting the forecast overspend position on the other blocks.

Reserve Balances (surplus)/deficit	1.4.2024 Actual	Change in reserves	In-year Deficit/ (Surplus)	31.3.2025 Forecast
Schools Block - growth fund	(817)	0	0	(817)
Schools Block De-delegated	(176)	94	0	(82)
Schools Block - other	(97)	0	0	(97)
Early Years Block	1,261	0	(42)	1,219
Central School Services Block	1	0	13	13
High Needs Block	9,336	0	6,984	16,320
Grant changes	(58)	0	0	(58)
Total Deficit Balance	9,450	94	6,955	16,499

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The total forecast deficit on the DSG amounts to £16.5m, comprising £9.45m from previous years and a further £6.96m forecast overspend in year. The forecast position will be kept under review and updates provided to Schools' Forum.

7. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix A – DSG 2024-25 Budget Monitoring Report Month 3

Dedicated School's Grant (DSG) 2024/2025 Budget Monitoring Month Three

Cost Centre	Description	Original Budget 2024/25	Net Virements in year	Amended Budget 2024/25	Forecast	Variance	Comments
90020	Primary Schools (excluding nursery funding)	57,339,140		57,339,140	57,339,140	0	
DSG top slice	Academy Schools Primary	0		0	0	0	
90025	Secondary Schools (excluding 6th form funding)	21,226,730		21,226,730	21,226,730	0	
DSG top slice	Academy Schools Secondary	0		0	0	0	
90230	DD - Schools in Financial Difficulty (primary schools)	0		0	0	0	
90113	DD - Trade Union Costs	61,690		61,690	61,690	0	
90255	DD - Support to Ethnic minority & bilingual Learners	195,100		195,100	195,100	0	
90349	DD - Behaviour Support Services	243,430		243,430	243,430	0	
90424	DD - CLEAPSS	3,480		3,480	3,480	0	
90470	DD - School Improvement	318,730		318,730	318,730	0	
90423	DD - Statutory & Regulatory Duties	128,030		128,030	128,030	0	
90235	School Contingency - Growth Fund/Falling Rolls Fund	0		0	0	0	
90054	De-delegated funding from reserves	-94,020		-94,020	-94,020	0	
	SSR	95,420		95,420	95,420	0	
	Schools Block Total	79,517,730	0	79,517,730	79,517,730	0	
90583	National Copyright Licences	179,860		179,860	179,860	0	
90019	Servicing of Schools Forum	46,250		46,250	46,250	0	
90743	School Admissions	186,210		186,210	191,710	5,500	
90354	ESG - Education Welfare	179,900		179,900	179,900	0	
90460	ESG - Statutory & Regulatory Duties	271,250		271,250	283,690	12,440	
90054	Surplus budget to off-set cumulative deficit	5,420		5,420	0	-5,420	
	SSR	92,425		92,425	92,425	0	
	Central School Services Block DSG	961,315	0	961,315	973,835	12,520	
90010	Early Years Funding - Nursery Schools	1,140,380		1,140,380	1,140,380	0	
90037	Early Years Funding - Maintained Schools	2,278,300		2,278,300	2,278,300	0	
90036	Early Years Funding - PVI Sector	7,218,660		7,218,660	7,218,660	0	
90052	Early Years PPG & Deprivation Funding	219,580		219,580	219,580	0	
90053	Disability Access Fund	90,090		90,090	90,090	0	
90018	2 year old funding	3,646,040		3,646,040	3,646,040	0	
90023	Under 2's	1,886,860		1,886,860	1,886,860	0	
90017	Central Expenditure on Children under 5	414,060		414,060	371,740	-42,320	
90287	Pre School Teacher Counselling	68,610		68,610	68,610	0	
90238	Early Years Inclusion Fund	108,000		108,000	108,000	0	
90054	Early Years adjustment re grant funding	218,295		218,295	218,295	0	
	SSR	82,458		82,458	82,458	0	
	Early Years Block Total	17,371,333	0	17,371,333	17,329,013	-42,320	

Dedicated School's Grant (DSG) 2024/2025 Budget Monitoring Month Three

Cost Centre	Description	Original Budget 2024/25	Net Virements in year	Amended Budget 2024/25	Forecast	Variance	Comments
90026	Academy Schools RU Top Ups	1,259,560		1,259,560	1,259,560	0	
90539	Special Schools - Top Up Funding	6,218,340		6,218,340	6,218,340	0	
90548	Non WBC Special Schools - Top Up Funding	215,290		215,290	254,470	39,180	
90554	Non WBC free schools	618,120		618,120	622,600	4,480	
90556	SEMH provision at Theale	1,450,880		1,450,880	1,457,638	6,758	
90575	Non LEA Special School (OofA)	1,423,550		1,423,550	1,057,940	-365,610	
90579	Independent Special School Place & Top Up	7,389,410		7,389,410	7,141,010	-248,400	
90580	Further Education Colleges Top Up	1,465,000		1,465,000	1,244,510	-220,490	
90617	Resourced Units top up Funding maintained	1,095,930		1,095,930	1,095,930	0	
90618	Non WBC Resourced Units - Top Up Funding	105,640		105,640	108,140	2,500	
90621	Mainstream - Top Up Funding maintained	1,821,000		1,821,000	1,821,000	0	
90622	Mainstream - Top Up Funding Academies	1,142,500		1,142,500	1,142,500	0	
90624	Non WBC Mainstream - Top Up Funding	140,380		140,380	161,820	21,440	
90625	Pupil Referral Units - Top Up Funding	1,139,400		1,139,400	1,139,400	0	
90627	Disproportionate No: of HN Pupils NEW	150,000		150,000	180,000	30,000	
90628	EHCP PRU Placement	1,045,800		1,045,800	1,045,800	0	
	High Needs Block: Top Up Funding Total	26,680,800	0	26,680,800	25,950,658	-730,142	
90320	Pupil Referral Units	660,000		660,000	660,000	0	
90540	Special Schools	2,860,000		2,860,000	2,860,000	0	
90546	Special Schools - Place Funding Post 16	790,000		790,000	790,000	0	
90551	Mainstream Maintained - post 16 SEN places	36,000		36,000	36,000	0	
90552	Special Schools and PRU Teachers Pay and Pension	332,520		332,520	332,520	0	
90584	Resourced Units - Place Funding	242,000		242,000	234,000	-8,000	
	High Needs Block: Place Funding Total	4,920,520	0	4,920,520	4,912,520	-8,000	
90240	Applied Behaviour Analysis	270,420		270,420	284,090	13,670	
90280	Special Needs Support Team	363,830		363,830	363,830	0	
90281	SEND Strategy (DSG)	69,230		69,230	69,230	0	
90282	Medical Home Tuition	381,690		381,690	346,690	-35,000	
90237	High Needs Contingency	240,500		240,500	240,500	0	
90286	Early Years Speech & Language	0		0	0	0	
90287	Pre School Teacher Counselling	97,140		97,140	97,140	0	
90288	Elective Home Education Monitoring	49,480		49,480	49,480	0	

Dedicated School's Grant (DSG) 2024/2025 Budget Monitoring Month Three

Cost Centre	Description	Original Budget 2024/25	Net Virements in year	Amended Budget 2024/25	Forecast	Variance	Comments
90290	Sensory Impairment	296,460		296,460	276,460	-20,000	
90295	Therapy Services	526,080		526,080	526,080	0	
90372	Therapeutic Thinking	69,330		69,330	69,330	0	
90373	Emotional Based School Avoiders (EBSA)	139,240		139,240	139,240	0	
90374	SEMH Practitioner	43,560		43,560	43,560	0	
90555	LAL funding	171,840		171,840	171,840	0	
90565	Equipment For SEN Pupils	15,000		15,000	15,000	0	
90577	SEN Commissioned Provision	650,830		650,830	665,830	15,000	
90582	PRU Outreach	61,200		61,200	61,200	0	
90585	HN Outreach Special Schools	50,000		50,000	50,000	0	
90610	Hospital Tuition	36,180		36,180	36,180	0	
90830	ASD Teachers	301,490		301,490	301,490	0	
90961	Vulnerable Children	179,400		179,400	179,400	0	
90581	Dingleys Promise	35,000		35,000	77,000	42,000	
	High Needs Block: Non Top Up or Place Funding	4,047,900	0	4,047,900	4,063,570	15,670	
90054	Efficiency Target	-7,880,605		-7,880,605	0	7,880,605	
	SSR	173,697		173,697		-173,697	
	High Needs Block Total	27,942,312	0	27,942,312	34,926,748	6,984,436	
	TOTAL DSG EXPENDITURE	125,792,690	0	125,792,690	132,747,326	6,954,636	
90030	DSG Grant Account	-125,792,690		-125,792,690	-125,792,690	0	
	Net In-year Deficit	0	0	0	6,954,636	6,954,636	
	Deficit Balance brought forward	9,450,120		9,450,120	9,450,125	5	
	In year reserve movement				94,020	94,020	Funding from reserves for de-delegations
	Cumulative Deficit	9,450,120	0	9,450,120	16,498,781	7,048,661	

Agenda Item 11

Schools Forum Work Programme 2024/25

	Item	HFG Deadline	Heads Funding Group	SF Deadline	Schools Forum	Action required	Author
Term 1	Schools Funding Formula Consultation 2025/26	25/09/2024	02/10/2024	08/10/2024	14/10/2024	Decision	Melanie Ellis
	Draft De-delegations 2024/25	25/09/2024	02/10/2024	08/10/2024	14/10/2024	Decision	Lisa Potts
	Longitudinal data tracking exercise report	25/09/2024	02/10/2024	08/10/2024	14/10/2024	Discussion	tbc
	Update on the the DfE's Delivering Better Value Programme	25/09/2024	02/10/2024	08/10/2024	14/10/2024	information	Hester Collicut / Susan Tanner
	DSG Monitoring 2024/25 Month 6			08/10/2024	14/10/2024	Information	Lisa Potts/Neil Goddard
	Update on the the DfE's Delivering Better Value Programme (<i>standing item</i>)	25/09/2024	02/10/2024	08/10/2024	14/10/2024	Discussion / Decision	Hester Collicut / Susan Tanner
	Deficit Schools (<i>standing item</i>)	25/09/2024	02/10/2024	08/10/2024	14/10/2024	Decision	Melanie Ellis
Term 2	Provisional DSG Funding Settlement Overview 2024/25	12/11/2024	19/11/2024	26/11/2024	02/12/2024	Discussion	Melanie Ellis
	Final De-delegations 2025/26	12/11/2024	19/11/2024	26/11/2024	02/12/2024	Decision	Lisa Potts
	Update on HNB Invest to Save Projects	12/11/2024	19/11/2024	26/11/2024	02/12/2024	Discussion	tbc/Nicola Ponton
	School Funding Formula 2025/26	12/11/2024	19/11/2024	26/11/2024	02/12/2024	Decision	Melanie Ellis
	Budgets for Additional Funds 2025/26	12/11/2024	19/11/2024	26/11/2024	02/12/2024	Decision	Melanie Ellis
	Draft Central Schools Block Budget 2025/26	12/11/2024	19/11/2024	26/11/2024	02/12/2024	Discussion	Melanie Ellis
	Draft High Needs Budget Proposals 2025/26	12/11/2024	19/11/2024	26/11/2024	02/12/2024	Discussion	tbc
	Update on the the DfE's Delivering Better Value Programme (<i>standing item</i>)	12/11/2024	19/11/2024	26/11/2024	02/12/2024	Discussion / Decision	Hester Collicut / Susan Tanner
	Deficit Schools (<i>standing item</i>)	12/11/2024	19/11/2024	26/11/2024	02/12/2024	Information	Melanie Ellis
	Final DSG Funding Settlement Overview 2025/26	19/12/2024	08/01/2025	14/01/2025	20/01/2025	Discussion	Melanie Ellis
Term 3	Final School Funding 2025/26	19/12/2024	08/01/2025	14/01/2025	20/01/2025	Decision	Melanie Ellis
	High Needs Block Budget Proposals 2025/26	19/12/2024	08/01/2025	14/01/2025	20/01/2025	Decision	tbc
	Final Central School Block Budget Proposals 2025/26	19/12/2024	08/01/2025	14/01/2025	20/01/2025	Decision	Lisa Potts
	Growth Fund 2023/24	19/12/2024	08/01/2025	14/01/2025	20/01/2025	Information	Melanie Ellis
	DSG Monitoring 2024/25 Month 9			14/01/2025	20/01/2025	Information	Lisa Potts/Neil Goddard
	Update on the the DfE's Delivering Better Value Programme (<i>standing item</i>)	19/12/2024	08/01/2025	14/01/2025	20/01/2025	Discussion / Decision	Hester Collicut / Susan Tanner
	Deficit Schools (<i>standing item</i>)	19/12/2024	08/01/2025	14/01/2025	20/01/2025	Information	Melanie Ellis
Term 4	Work Programme 2025/26			04/03/2025	10/03/2025	Decision	Jessica Bailiss
	Delivering Better Value Programme Update	18/02/2025	25/02/2025	04/03/2025	10/03/2025	Discussion	tbc
	Final High Needs Block Budget 2025/26	18/02/2025	25/02/2025	04/03/2025	10/03/2025	Decision	tbc
	Final Early Years Block Budget 2025/26	18/02/2025	25/02/2025	04/03/2025	10/03/2025	Decision	Lisa Potts
	DSG Monitoring 2024/25 Month 10			04/03/2025	10/03/2025	Information	Lisa Potts/Neil Goddard
	Update on the the DfE's Delivering Better Value Programme (<i>standing item</i>)	18/02/2025	25/02/2025	04/03/2025	10/03/2025	Discussion / Decision	Hester Collicut / Susan Tanner
	Deficit Schools (<i>standing item</i>)	18/02/2025	25/02/2025	04/03/2025	10/03/2025	Information	Melanie Ellis

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Schools' Forum - Contracts - Forward Plan

The Schools' Forum must be consulted when the local authority is proposing a contract for supplies and services which is to be funded from the Schools Budget (Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)) and is in excess of the EU procurement thresholds (£170,781.60).

Contract Title	Contract Start Date	Contract End Date (initial term)	Contract End Date (Including any Extension)	Contract Term in years (in brackets maximum possible extension)	Contract Total Value (£) based on Initial Term	Contract Amount (Total Value inclusive of Contract Extension Agreed)	Supplier name	WBC Responsible Officer	Notes
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)	01/08/2021	31/07/2024	31/07/2025	3 (4)	£164,850	£239,500	Rose Road Association	Thomas Ng / Kiki Hurford (supports procurement process only)	This contract is not funded from the DSG and is an Information item only. One year extension was negotiated between council and provider and approved at Procurement Board
West Berkshire Schools Meals Service	24/07/2020	23/07/2023	23/07/2025	3 (2)	£600000approx	£1,000,000	Caterlink	Kiki Hurford (supports procurement process only)	Invoices are paid directly from schools that opted to be in the contract. The contract has been extended by two years to 2025 in consultation with the relevant WBC officers and the schools that are part of the contract. The contract is reviewed on an annual basis by the head teachers (in July). The procurement process is supported by a WBC Officer.
Education Packages for Young People with Severe Social Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties	01/09/2020	31/08/2023	31/08/2025	3 (2)	£1,674,000	£2,790,000	Engaging Potential LTD	Jane Seymour / Kiki Hurford (supports procurement process only)	Information on this contract was included within the High Needs Block Report brought to the Forum in March 2023.
Energy Framework - CCS framework RM6011 - Electricity	01/04/2017 (rolling contract since 2008)	01/10/2023	31/03/2025		£5,421,522		EDF (HH)	Adrian Slaughter/Sarah Wood	The central energy contract is a non-mandated contract that maintained schools can access for provision of their gas and electricity. Any schools interested in joining the contract should email energymanagement@westberks.gov.uk for more information.
Energy Framework – CCS Framework RM6011 - Gas	01/04/2017 (rolling contract since 2008))	01/10/2023	31/03/2025		£1,325,589		Total	Adrian Slaughter/Sarah Wood	
Children and Young People's Integrated Therapies (CYPIT)	01/04/2023	31/08/2028	31/03/3031	5 (3)	£2,348,480	£3,757,568	Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust	Kiki Hurford / Thomas Bailey	A report was brought to the Schools' Forum meeting in October 2022 and the new therapy contract was agreed.

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