

Cheshire West & Chester Council

Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum

Monday 11 February 2019
4.30pm – 6.30 pm

To be held at

Queen's Park High School
Queen's Park Road
Handbridge
Chester CH4 7AE

Refreshments will be available from 4pm

Schools Forum Clerk
Children and Families
Cheshire West and Chester Council
Telephone 01244 972901



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Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum

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Agenda for Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum 11 February 2019

1.	4.30	Introductions and apologies		
2.	4.40	Minutes and matters arising of last meeting 2.1 To agree the minutes from part two of the meeting held 14 January 2019 2.2 Matters arising		Page 4-9
3.	4.50	Special Educational Needs (SEN) Funding for Mainstream and Special Schools – Funding from the High Needs Block 2019-2020	Natalie Cole Debbie Steele	Page 10-16
4.	5.20	Early Years funding formula for February submission	Natalie Cole	Paper to follow
5.	5.40	Central Spend budgets 2019-2020	Natalie Cole	Page 17-22
6.	6.00	Funding increases to teachers' pensions employer contributions consultation	John Murray	Paper to follow
7.	6.10	Increase funding for schools petition	John Murray	Page 23-24
8.	6.20	Any Other Business		
9.	6.30 Finish	Next meeting: Monday 18 June 2019 Queen's Park High Schools Forum and finance sub group meeting schedule and forward plan		Page 25

**Cheshire West and Chester
Schools Forum
11 February 2019**

Agenda Item 2

**Cheshire west and Chester Schools Forum, Queen's Park High School, Chester
14 January 2019**

Present:

Marie Allen
Hilary Berry
David Bradburn
Sarah Curtis
Ian Devereux Roberts
John Freeman
Kate Docherty
Duncan Haworth
Mike Holland
Luci Jones
Kath Lloyd
Jason Lowe
Mike McCann
John Murray (Chair)
David Rowlands
Andy Stewart
Sue Tomlinson
Katie Tyrie
Lyndsay Watterson
Susan Yarnall

Representing:

Academies - Special
CWAPH Chair
Primary governors
Primary headteachers
Primary headteachers
Secondary governors
Primary headteachers
Primary governors
Secondary headteachers
Academies - Primary/Secondary
Primary governors
Academies - Primary/Secondary
Special headteachers
Academies - Primary/Secondary
Secondary governors
PRU
Primary headteachers
Nursery headteacher
Academies - Primary/Secondary
Primary governors

Officers:

Natalie Cole
Charlotte Fenn (Clerk)
Anna Jones
Sue Lawson
Jonathan Lear
Mark Parkinson
Ric Turnock

1. Introductions and apologies

Apologies were noted from Paula Adolph, Sue Anderson, David Curry, Greg Foster, Carol Gahan, Amanda Harrison, Sarah Worthington, Caroline Vile, and Harry Ziman.

John Murray, welcomed new members to the meeting; Lyndsay Watterson, Head Queens Park High School, taking over from Steve Dool as Academy representative; Mike Holland, Head Hartford High School, taking over from Sue Yates as secondary heads representative; David Bradburn, governor Wincham Community Primary school, taking over from Sue Pearson as primary governor representative; Susan Yarnall governor Lache Primary taking over from Francis Kwateng as primary governor representative; Sue Tomlinson, Vice Chair CWAPH (Cheshire West Association of Primary Heads) who was covering the primary heads vacancy following the retirement of Cheryl Bullen. A permanent representative would be elected at the next CWAPH meeting 23 January.

It was noted that Luci Jones' term of office had come to an end but Luci was covering the vacancy while nominations were being sought and would be standing for re-election.

John also reported that David Curry was the new CWASH (Cheshire West Association of secondary Heads) chair.

Forum members introduced themselves for the benefit of the new members.

2. Minutes and matters arising of last meeting

2.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

2.2 Matters arising

None to report.

3. Dedicated schools grant (DSG) allocations for 2019-2020 and budget setting

Natalie Cole, Finance Manager, introduced the paper which confirmed the indicative DSG allocation for 2019-2020 and draft budget proposals for the next financial year.

Forum members' attention was drawn to paragraphs 4 and 5 which provided a summary of the current and next year allocation and explained the changes resulting in an increase in available funding. Natalie also informed Forum members that the increase included an extra £600k growth funding which had not been included in the paper.

Natalie referred forum members to appendix A which provided the indicative DSG allocation details. It was noted that it was proposed that the additional DSG funding was largely to be allocated as received, to fund increased pupil numbers and growth in high needs. Forum members were also informed that the early years block data had not yet been received and any changes to early years funding as a result of revised pupil numbers would be confirmed in July.

Forum's attention was drawn to paragraph 7 and 8 and the proposal to reverse the previous decision to transfer 0.5% from the schools block to the high needs block. It was noted that this would require Cabinet approval.

David Rowlands questioned now wise this reversal was in light of the increasing pressures on the high needs block.

It was noted that the new injection of funds demonstrated the Government's acknowledgement of the ongoing situation regarding increasing high needs expenditure, though it was unfortunate this had not been anticipated; it was hoped that this would be taken into account under the next spending review.

Mark Parkinson reported that, although high needs expenditure had been increasing in CW&C, other local authorities were under more pressure, one local authority in the North West had an 11 million overspend.

Resolved that the Schools Forum

- i. approve the draft DSG budget proposals (vote: unanimous); and
- ii. note the next steps for confirming the DSG budget proposals for 2019-2020.

4. Draft of 2019-2020 school funding formula for January submission

Natalie Cole introduced the item and circulated a document entitled 'draft schools block funding allocation 2019-2020 compared to 2018-2019'. The document showed the impact, on individual school funding, between the two proposed options. It was noted these figures were for illustrative purposes only and were not the final figures as some factors were still to be included, in particular, rates.

Forum's attention was drawn to paragraph 8 which outlined the proposal to allocate the additional high needs funding (£703k) out to schools using the prior attainment factor. It was noted that this proposal ensured the additional funding was used in alignment with current priorities.

Resolved that Schools Forum approve allocating the additional high needs funding (£703k) to schools using the prior attainment factor (vote: unanimous maintained, Academy and PVI).

5. Ellesmere Port Private Finance Initiative (PVI) schools contribution

John Murray introduced the paper and provided some background to the item. Officers had explained the complexities of PVI and sought the views of the sub group at a previous meeting on the proposed arrangement to revise the contribution mechanism. The subgroup had taken the view, at that meeting, that the proposals ensured a 'level playing field' with other schools.

John reported that officers had come back to the subgroup to update them on the responses from the schools concerned, as outlined under paragraph 5. It was noted that one school had contested the principles. Forum members' attention was drawn to the principles in appendix A which provided an extract of the letter sent to the Ellesmere Port PVI schools.

Luci Jones asked what the school's concern was. Ric Turnock, School Organisation Manager, responded that he believed that whilst most of the PFI schools had accrued surpluses as a result of not having to meet the full cost of services such as caretaking etc; the school contesting the arrangement felt they were now being disadvantaged as they had fully committed their available budget into planned expenditure. The authority's proposal was not to disadvantage the PFI schools but to remove the mechanism that had given them a financial advantage.

Resolved that the Schools Forum endorsed the finance subgroups view that the principles outlined in appendix A were fair and confirmed their support for the LA implementing them.

6. Review of Early Years Inclusion and Support fund (EYISF) and support for mainstream pupils with SEND in primary and secondary school

Sue Lawson, Commissioning Officer, introduced the item and took Forum members through the report. It was noted that the resources allocated to early years children with SEND were high compared with other authorities, though there was no evidence of this in the impact on educational progress and outcomes. It was also noted that there had been no increase in funding to support those pupils accessing 30 hours and the lack of monitoring of pupils progress meant the approval process around allocating EYISF was not sufficiently robust.

Jon Lear, SEN Advisory Officer, reported that the current descriptors were out of date and did not link to the new 0-25 age range. It was noted that the new descriptors would show what was expected under the universal offer and would help manage parent's expectations and reduce the number of inappropriate requests to SEN panel. The new document would also be posted on the Local Offer.

Jon Lear drew Forum members' attention to the sample descriptors on pages 29 – 32 and sought their views on the proposal. It was noted that the A-C bands referred to in the sample descriptors reflected the old B-D bands.

The group discussed the proposals and sample descriptors; comments were made that the current band A was not useful and that the new band C was very complex compared to what it had been.

John Murray raised concerns voiced at the last finance sub group meeting as to the impact of removing band A and whether the temptation would be to seek the new higher level A banding. It was noted that the criteria would be used more rigorously to ensure funding was allocated at the appropriate band.

Sarah Curtis suggested that it would be helpful to see the overlap with Specialist provision. This suggestion would be taken back to the 0-25 working group. Mark informed Forum that the authority had looked at what other authorities had been doing in this area. It was noted that the introduction of the new banding would be done alongside a programme of workforce development in conjunction with Teaching School Alliances.

Katie Tyrie referred Forum members to Sue Anderson's comments, circulated prior to the meeting. Katie shared many of her concerns in particular regarding the impact and pressure of finding skilled staff especially when working to a short time frame. Katie suggested a rolling programme of staff employed short term would help manage the pressures.

Mark explained that the intention was to ensure funding goes across transition phases and during the transition period conversations between settings were needed. Mark acknowledged that staffing in PVI setting was a challenge. Mark

reiterated that the authority was not seeking to reduce the level of funding but to endure the criteria were clear on how funds were allocated. The authority would support settings to implement the new criteria.

In general the forum felt that the principles made sense, recognised the concerns of the PVI settings and the need to get to the position where parents understood the criteria and what support they would get.

In response to a question regarding when this was to be implemented, Mark responded that it was likely to be from the next academic year as April may be too soon.

Sarah Curtis flagged that using the word specialist in the bandings might be misleading and confused with specialist support. It was suggested that enhanced be used instead of specialist when referring to banding.

It was noted that the proposals would be taken forward through the Schools Forum finance sub group for further consultation with Schools Forum at a future meeting.

7. Combined budgets and miscellaneous expenditure

Natalie Cole introduced the paper which outlined the proposed allocation of the combined budgets element of the DGS and the former miscellaneous budget items.

It was noted that from 2020 to 2021 the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) expected this expenditure to reduce. Other funding would need to be identified to maintain these commitments otherwise they would become chargeable activities or cease.

Natalie drew Forum members' attention to the realignment of funding, shown in table 2, to cover the increase FFT (Fischer Family Trust) licence costs to ensure the costs stay within the permitted total funding envelope.

It was noted that the CWEIB (Cheshire West Education Improvement Board) had additional funds, to those shown in table 2, accrued from unspent funds from previous years. Mark would be speaking to CWEIB regarding how these funds were to be spent.

John Murray informed Forum that he was now a member of CWEIB as part of his role as Schools Forum chair.

Resolved that the Schools Forum agree the allocation and configuration of the combined budgets element of the DSG and the miscellaneous expenditure for the 2019-2020 financial year as outlined in table 1 and 2.

8. De-delegated – proposals for 2019-2020

Natalie Cole introduced the report which outlined the amounts to be de-delegated by maintained primary and secondary schools for 2019-2020. Forum members'

attention was drawn to paragraph 8 which explained the increases to the proposed rates.

Resolved that the Schools Forum agree the amounts to be de-delegated to the Local Authority for 2019-2020 as set out in the paper. (Vote: maintained primary unanimous; maintained secondary unanimous).

9. Dedicated schools grant (DSG) 2018-2019 forecast outturn at Third Review

Natalie Cole introduced the report which provided an update on the financial forecast outturn position for 2018-2019 for centrally held DSG as reported at the Third Review.

Resolved that the Schools Forum note the Third Review position on the DSG.

10. Any other business

None to report.

11. Next meeting

Monday 11 February 2019

Agenda Item 3

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Funding for Mainstream and Special Schools – Funding from the High Needs Block 2019-2020

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update Schools Forum on proposed changes to allocations from the High Needs Block for 2019-2020 for commissioned places and top up funding.

Recommendations

2. Schools Forum is asked to provide a view on the proposals within the report on financial arrangements for pupils with special educational needs in 2019-2020 for the following:
 - i. No proposed changes to commissioned place numbers
 - ii. Interim additional Resource Provision funding
 - iii. Proposed changes to special school band funding rates
 - iv. Revision of mainstream top up funding bands and implementation timeline for revised descriptors for mainstream pupils.

Background

3. In 2018-2019 Schools Forum endorsed a number of changes in high needs funding and processes to address immediate pressures on the High Needs Block. A package of measures were recommended by the High Needs Sub Group and endorsed following wider consultation with all schools and academies in the Borough.
 - a) The transfer of 0.5% of funding from the schools block to the high needs block
 - b) A 3% reduction in mainstream funding across all bands
 - c) To apply an efficiency factor reduction to top up funding rates for special schools and academies
 - d) Agree in principle to the allocation of funding to deliver work on inclusion and workforce development in mainstream schools
 - e) Top up funding without a plan agreed prior to 2014 is agreed for two years only. This is in line with the two year top up funding process for requests after 2014 as already implemented.
 - f) Support the audit of SEN funding to be undertaken by internal audit and Associate School Improvement Advisors.
4. These measures are set to continue for the 2019-2020 financial year with the exception of the transfer of 0.5% funding from the schools block which has been mitigated by the additional funding announcement in December 2018. In addition, the application of the efficiency factor reduction to the top up funding rates for

special schools was only partially implemented due to the rejection by the Secretary of State to disapply Minimum Funding Guarantee protection without the agreement of the schools affected. This report now details the proposals for commissioned places and top up funding that will form the basis of high needs funding allocations for 2019-2020.

Commissioned places for 2019-2020

5. In view of the consultation pending on the recommendations of the High Needs Strategic Review, there are no proposed changes to commissioned place numbers for 2019-2020. Current commissioned places for establishments where CW&C are the commissioning authority will remain unchanged for the 2019-2020 academic year as detailed in the tables below.

Table 1 Proposed Commissioned Places in Special Schools

School	Current commissioned places Academic Year 2018/2019	Proposed increase academic Year places Sept 2019	Commissioned places Academic Year 2019/2020
Archers Brook School	75	0	75
Cloughwood Academy	60	0	60
Dee Banks School	110	0	110
Dorin Park School	130	0	130
Greenbank School	99	0	99
Hebden Green School	112	0	112
Hinderton School	42	0	42
Oaklands School	155	0	155
Rosebank School	49	0	49
The Russet School	113	0	113
Total	945	0	945

Table 2 Proposed commissioned places in other provisions

School	Current commissioned places Academic Year 2018/2019	Proposed increase academic Year places Sept 2019	Commissioned places Academic Year 2019/2020
Resource Provision			
Barnton Primary	7	0	7
Upton Westlea Primary School	10	0	10
Frodsham Weaver Vale Primary	7	0	7
Darnhall Primary	7	0	7
Acresfield Primary	9	0	9
Dee Point Primary	9	0	9
Lache Primary	9	0	9
The Acorns Primary	7	0	7
Willow Wood Primary	7	0	7

St Nicholas Catholic High	12	0	12
The Catholic High, Chester	15	0	15
Total Resource Provision	99	0	99
School and academy 6th forms			
Christleton High	0	0	0
Neston High	1	0	1
The Catholic High, Chester	3	0	3
The Whitby High	0	0	0
Upton by Chester High	1	0	1
Total School and academy 6th forms	5	0	5
Further Education			
Sir John Deane's College	0	0	0

Interim additional Resource Provision Funding

6. Pupils in Resource Provision places are currently funded at the 3C rate of mainstream top up funding in addition to element 1 schools block funding and place funding for element 2 of £6,000. Funding for element 1 differs for each provision depending on the demographics and key stage of the cohort. As in 2018-2019, schools with average element 1 per pupil funding less than £4,000 will receive an additional amount up to that level for the commissioned places, those over the £4,000 will receive a reduction to total funding. These adjustments will be shown in the high needs block funding statements to schools with resource provisions.

7. There have recently been discussions with some schools about the sustainability of Resource Provisions, particularly those with seven places. In addition to the rising cost of staffing, schools have increasingly been requested to admit pupils with a higher level of need. The impact of this is that staffing within the resource provision needs to be maintained at a level to accommodate pupils who are able to access mainstream provision at differing levels. As such, staffing ratios are in most resource bases now higher than specified in the Service Level Agreements with those schools. This issue was discussed by the Schools Forum Finance Sub Group at the January meeting and the change in provision acknowledged. In view of the consultation pending on the High Needs Strategic Review, it was felt that the top up rates would not be revised in isolation at this time however an additional lump sum payment would be made available to those provisions in 2019-2020. This would be pro- rata according to the size of the provision so that smaller units received a higher lump sum. The following lump sums are proposed and are based on the current difference in 3C and 3D funding for a proportion of the commissioned places. This would be funded from the mainstream top up funding budget.

Table 3 Proposed additional lump sum payment to Resource Provision schools 2019-2020

Commissioned Places	Lump sum	Number of schools	Additional lump sum funding 2019-2020
7	£7,640	5	£38,200
9	£5,942	3	£17,827
10	£5,348	1	£5,348
12	£4,457	1	£4,457
15	£3,565	1	£3,565
Total			£69,397

Proposed changes to special school band funding rates

8. In autumn 2017, a recommendation was made following consultation with all schools for a tapered reduction to special school top up rates. The proposal was to recognise the increasing levels of efficiency in larger schools by varying current banding rates according to the size of the school. This would have implemented reductions of 1.5%, 3% and 6% depending on the size of the school to deliver reductions of £0.5m across all schools. This proposal required the disapplication of the 1.5% minimum funding guarantee and the agreement of the schools affected. As agreement was not reached, this proposal was not taken forward in 2018-2019 as intended and instead a reduction of 1.5% of funding was applied across all special schools. This fell short of the planned budget saving for the sector.
9. For 2019-2020, the proposal from Schools Forum Finance Sub Group is to continue to implement the planned tapered reductions in top up funding. This is in line with findings and recommendations from the High Needs Strategic Review which has independently identified higher than average funding in our special schools which will need to be addressed in future years. Taking into account the reductions made in 2018-2019, the £0.5m reduction will be implemented as permitted within the Minimum Funding Guarantee regulations over three years. The details of the proposed funding rates for 2019-2020 are included in **Appendix A**.

Revision of mainstream top up funding bands and implementation timeline for revised descriptors for mainstream pupils

10. Following from the earlier report tabled to Schools Forum in January 2019 (Review of Early Years Inclusion and Support Fund (EYISF) and support for mainstream pupils with SEND in Primary/Secondary Schools), from September 2019 Band 3A funding will cease for mainstream pupils. Revised bands from September 2019 onwards will be as follows. Bands may subsequently be renamed as a result.

Band	Current Funding Rate	Funding rate September 2019
3A	£3,092	
3B	£4,365	£4,365

3C	£6,911	£6,911
3D	£10,731	£10,731

11. The Primary/Secondary inclusion descriptors within the 0-25 document will be completed in early February. This will then be shared with schools and parents for wider feedback in February/March for discussion and feedback. A final version of this section will then be shared with all parties in the Summer term alongside training and support opportunities. The Primary/Secondary sections will be published on the local offer and introduced for all SEN panel decision making from September 2019. The new inclusion descriptors will be used for both new and review applications. The Post 16 descriptors are still being developed through college network meetings and are expected to be completed in Autumn 2019.

Next steps

12. Proposed changes are to be implemented from April 2019 for the 2019-2020 financial year and included in High Needs budget allocation notifications to schools and academies to be distributed after the Forum meeting

Appendix A Special school top up funding – implementation of the efficiency factor

School	Proposed banding rates 2018-2019			Total place plus funding 2017-2018 £	Reduction to total funding from revised top up funding bands £	% proposed change in top up bands
	Band 1 £	Band 2 £	Band 3 £			
Archers Brook	3,781	12,206	16,214	1,672,089	29,807	-3.00%
Cloughwood	3,781	12,206	16,214	1,360,381	24,161	-3.00%
Dee Banks	4,032	12,197	16,080	2,386,413	81,252	-6.00%
Dorin Park	3,896	12,060	15,944	2,502,624	81,642	-6.00%
Greenbank	3,664	11,829	15,712	2,146,039	73,577	-6.00%
Hebden Green	3,847	12,012	15,895	2,268,303	74,808	-6.00%
Hinderton	5,395	13,950	18,019	991,961	7,779	-1.50%
Oaklands	3,664	11,829	15,712	2,132,084	41,410	-6.00%
Rosebank	5,089	13,645	17,714	1,089,870	8,881	-1.50%
The Russett	3,664	11,829	15,712	2,473,423	85,750	-6.00%
Total all special schools				19,023,189	509,068	

Actioned in 2018-2019

School	Unit rate Band 1 £	Unit rate Band 2 £	Unit rate Band 3 £	Total place plus funding 2018-2019 £	Reduction of 1.5% MFG on total place plus funding £	2018-2019 % Reduction in top up bands
Archers Brook	3,797	12,257	16,280	1,701,896	25,528	-2.6%
Cloughwood	3,797	12,257	16,280	1,371,959	20,579	-2.6%
Dee Banks	4,148	12,610	16,633	2,454,719	36,821	-2.6%
Dorin Park	4,010	12,454	16,468	2,609,893	39,148	-2.8%
Greenbank	3,789	12,232	16,247	2,169,280	32,539	-2.8%
Hebden Green	3,964	12,409	16,422	2,304,813	34,572	-2.8%
Hinderton	5,311	13,772	17,795	985,600	14,784	-2.6%
Oaklands	3,715	11,993	15,929	2,173,493	32,602	-4.7%
Rosebank	5,018	13,488	17,514	1,112,585	16,689	-2.5%
The Russett	3,793	12,244	16,264	2,521,421	37,821	-2.7%
Total all special schools				19,405,659	291,085	

Proposal for 2019-2020

School	Initial proposal for tapered reduction	2018-2019 Reduction in top up bands	2019-2020 Reduction in top up bands	Balance remaining for 2020-2021	Unit rate Band 1 £	Unit rate Band 2 £	Unit rate Band 3 £	Reduction in top up funding 2019-2020 £
Archers Brook	3%	2.6%	0.4%	0.0%	3,781	12,208	16,215	4,002
Cloughwood	3%	2.6%	0.4%	0.0%	3,781	12,208	16,215	3,300
Dee Banks	6%	2.6%	2.7%	0.7%	4,035	12,267	16,180	36,690
Dorin Park	6%	2.8%	2.8%	0.4%	3,898	12,109	16,011	42,469
Greenbank	6%	2.8%	2.8%	0.4%	3,684	11,893	15,797	32,397
Hebden Green	6%	2.8%	2.7%	0.5%	3,856	12,071	15,975	37,469
Hinderton	1.5%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	5,311	13,772	17,795	-
Oaklands	6%	4.7%	1.3%	0.0%	3,667	11,837	15,722	9,461
Rosebank	1.5%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	5,018	13,488	17,514	-
The Russett	6%	2.7%	2.7%	0.6%	3,691	11,915	15,827	38,366
Total all special schools								204,154

Effect of proposal in total over three years

School	Reduction in top up funding rates 2018-2019 £	Reduction in top up funding rates 2019-2020 £	Reduction in top up funding rates 2020-2021 £	Total three years £
Archers Brook	25,528	4,002	-	29,530
Cloughwood	20,579	3,300	-	23,880
Dee Banks	36,821	36,690	8,733	82,244
Dorin Park	39,148	42,469	6,319	87,936
Greenbank	32,539	32,397	4,089	69,025
Hebden Green	34,572	37,469	4,716	76,757
Hinderton	14,784	-	-	14,784
Oaklands	32,602	9,461	-	42,064
Rosebank	16,689	-	-	16,689
The Russett	37,821	38,366	7,474	83,661
Total all special schools	291,085	204,154	31,330	526,569

Please note: 2020-2021 changes are also subject to further consultation following the recommendations of the High Needs Strategic Review.

Agenda Item 5

Central Spend budgets 2019-2020

Purpose of the report

1. Following from the agreement of the Dedicated Schools Grant budgets at the January Schools Forum meeting, this report outlines the proposed level of prescribed central spend budgets for 2019-2020 for agreement by the Schools Forum.

Recommendations

2. That the Schools Forum approve the proposed changes to the level of central spend budgets for 2019-2020 for the activities defined in the Section 251 statement.

Background

3. Under the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2018, the Schools Forum have the responsibility for deciding on the budgeted level of funding for a list of central spend activities as defined and reported in the Section 251 budget statement. The relevant extract from the Schools Revenue Funding 2019-2020 Operational Guidance July 2018 which details the approvals required is included in Appendix A. Decisions are required on the budgets for the following activities for 2019-2020 under the section of Central Provision for the Schools Budget.

- 1) Central expenditure on children under 5
- 2) Contribution to combined budgets
- 3) School admissions
- 4) Servicing of schools forums
- 5) Termination of employment costs
- 6) Falling Rolls Fund
- 7) Capital expenditure from revenue (CERA)
- 8) Prudential borrowing costs
- 9) Fees to independent schools without SEN
- 10) Equal pay - back pay
- 11) Pupil growth/ Infant class sizes
- 12) Central provision within schools budget (former ESG retained duties)

Proposed Budgets

4. As outlined in Appendix B below, there are changes proposed to two of the centrally held budgets in 2019-2020 in line with the budget setting agreed with Forum in January 2019.

5. Some central spend lines are subject to restriction in that the School and Early Years Finance Regulations specify they may not exceed the value committed for 2013-2014 for the purpose for which expenditure has already been committed. In all cases where restrictions apply, the proposed value of the budget has not been increased since 2013-2014.

Next Steps

6. To include the central spend budgets in the 2019-2020 Section 251 Budget statement submission to the DfE for April 2019.

Appendix A

Extract from Schools Revenue Funding 2019-2020 Operational Guidance July 2018

Schools forum approvals for centrally held funding

A number of the services that are covered by funding that is held centrally are subject to a limitation of no new commitments or increases in expenditure from 2018 to 2019.

- This limit does not now apply to admissions or the servicing of schools forums.
- Schools forum approval is required each year to confirm the amounts on each line.
- The following table sets out the level of approval required for each service and for funding of brought forward deficits.

When using centrally held funding, local authorities must treat maintained schools and academies on an equivalent basis.

Centrally retained service	Approval required
high needs block provision central licences negotiated by the Secretary of State	Schools forum approval is not required (although they should be consulted)
funding to enable all schools to meet the infant class size requirement back pay for equal pay claims remission of boarding fees at maintained schools and academies places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils admissions servicing of schools forum contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for all schools	Schools forum approval is required on a line-by-line basis

Centrally retained service	Approval required
<p>contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for maintained schools (voted on by relevant maintained school members of the forum only)</p> <p>de-delegated services from the schools block (voted on by the relevant maintained school members of the forum only)</p>	
<p>central early years block provision</p> <p>any movement of funding out of the schools block</p> <p>any deficit from the previous funding period that is being brought forward and is to be funded from the new financial year's schools budget (this should be specifically agreed at the time the budget is set, using the latest estimated outturn position)</p> <p>any brought forward deficit on de-delegated services which is to be met by the overall schools budget</p>	<p>Schools forum approval is required</p>
<p>capital expenditure funded from revenue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • projects must have been planned and decided on prior to April 2013; no new projects can be charged • details of the remaining costs should be presented <p>contribution to combined budgets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where the schools forum agreed prior to April 2013 a contribution from the schools budget to services which would otherwise be funded from other sources <p>existing termination of employment costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • costs for specific individuals must have 	<p>Schools forum approval is required on a line-by-line basis. The budget cannot exceed the value agreed in the previous funding period, and no new commitments can be entered into.</p> <p>Read establishing local authority DSG baselines for more information.</p>

Centrally retained service	Approval required
<p>been approved prior to April 2013; no new redundancy costs can be charged</p> <p>prudential borrowing costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the commitment must have been approved prior to April 2013 • details of the remaining costs should be presented <p>SEN transport where the schools forum agreed prior to April 2013 a contribution from the schools budget (this is now treated as part of the high needs block but still requires schools forum approval as a historic commitment)</p>	
<p>funding for significant pre-16 pupil growth, including new schools set up to meet basic need, whether maintained or academy</p> <p>funding for good or outstanding schools with falling rolls where growth in pupil numbers is expected within three years</p>	<p>Schools forum approval is required on a line-by-line basis, including approval of the criteria for allocating funds to schools</p>

Appendix B Central Spend 2019-2020 - Section 251 Lines which require approval from the Schools Forum

S251 Line	S251 Line Description	Restriction to previous year's expenditure	2018-2019 £000	2019-2020 £000	Change £000	Reason for Change
1.3.1	Central expenditure on children under 5	No	776	806	30	Increase for additional 0.5FTE post Leuven Scales implementation agreed by Schools Forum October 2018
1.4.1	Contribution to combined budgets	Yes	720	720	0	No change proposed as agreed at January 2019 Schools Forum.
1.4.2	School admissions	No	628	628	0	No change proposed
1.4.3	Servicing of schools forums	No	48	48	0	No change proposed
1.4.4	Termination of employment costs	Yes	0	0	0	No expenditure
1.4.5	Falling rolls fund	No	200	150	-50	Reduction for third year of capped allocation as agreed at January 2017 Schools Forum
1.4.6	Capital expenditure from revenue (CERA)	Yes	0	0	0	No expenditure
1.4.7	Prudential borrowing costs	Yes	430	430	0	No change proposed
1.4.8	Fees to independent schools without SEN	No	120	120	0	No change proposed. Please note that this is a nominal budget should such places be required and this budget will be used flexibly for high needs provision in year.
1.4.9	Equal pay - back pay	No	0	0	0	No expenditure
1.4.10	Pupil growth/ Infant class sizes	No	307	307	0	No change proposed
1.5.1 to 1.5.3	Central provision within schools budget (Education Welfare, Asset Management and Statutory Duties)	No	709	709	0	Retained funding for services previously funded from the ESG retained duties rate applicable from April 2017. No change proposed.
1.6.2 to 1.6.4	Central provision within schools budget (Education Welfare, Asset Management and Statutory Duties)	No	0	0	0	Retained funding for services previously funded from the ESG general duties rate applicable from April 2017. No change proposed.

Agenda Item 7

Increase funding for schools petition

F40 are encouraging schools, governors and schools forums to sign up and respond to this petition positively. Ideally schools will respond themselves through their headteachers, but also by encouraging their governors to sign up as well. An email was sent on 30 January, on behalf of the Schools Forum chair, to all primary and secondary schools sharing the message from the F40 group.

The text of the message from the F40 group is as follows:

Below is a link to an education funding petition that is currently gaining substantial support across the country. F40's Executive Committee has agreed that I should circulate details of the petition to all members and encourage you to do all you can to support it.

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/232220>

The wording is as follows:

Increase funding for schools

Schools are having to make difficult choices on how to spend their limited funding as their income has not kept pace with the rise in costs since 2010. All schools are working very hard to "make ends meet" but this is becoming increasingly difficult and verging on almost impossible. As funding has become tighter, schools have had to cut back on:

- Teaching and non-teaching staff
- Support for more vulnerable pupils
- Small group work for children who are not thriving in school
- Teaching resources (parents being asked to pay for books and materials)
- Subject choices in secondary schools
- Range of activities for primary pupils
- Extra curricula activities provided free or subsidised
- Repairs to buildings
- Renewal of equipment

The petition currently has over 53,000 signatories and it is hoped that it can quickly increase to 100, 000, which could trigger a debate in the House of Commons.

You might consider:

- Signing the petition yourself
- Circulating the petition within your authority/department and asking everyone to sign it
- Sending details to headteachers, governors and Schools Forums, with a request that they encourage colleagues to sign
- Mentioning the petition in any newsletters or email communications you are due to publish
- Circulating the petition on your social media channels
- Announcing your support for the petition and encouraging parents to sign.

I hope you will agree to give this all the support you can.

**Cheshire West and Chester
Schools Forum
11 February 2019**

Agenda Item 9

Schedule of meetings 2018-2019

Schools Forum – all meetings 4.30pm – 6.30pm (refreshments at 4pm) unless otherwise stated

Date	Venue	Proposed agenda
Monday 8 July 2019	Queen's Park High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School funding arrangements –national data comparison 2019-2020• School funding arrangements for 2020-2021• Directed revisions to schemes for financing schools• DSG 2018-2019 outturn• Financial year 2018-2019 analysis of schools balances (including Academies)• Basic needs capital programme• Annual review of Schools Forum membership, constitution and terms of reference

Schools Forum finance sub group – all meetings 2pm – 4pm unless otherwise stated.

Tuesday 18 June 2019

G2 Nicholas House, Chester