

Cheshire West & Chester Council

Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum

Tuesday 11 October 2022
4.30pm – 6.30 pm

Virtual Meeting

Schools Forum Clerk
Children and Families
Cheshire West and Chester Council
Telephone 07584 206913



Notes for members of the public

Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum

The Council welcomes and encourages you to be at its meetings and Committees.

You are requested to remain quiet whilst the meeting is taking place.

The agenda is sometimes divided into two parts. You are allowed to stay for the first part. When the Forum is ready to deal with the second part you will need to leave the meeting because the business will be of a confidential nature, for example, dealing with individual people, contracts and financial affairs of other parties.

Members of the public wishing to attend Schools Forum meetings should contact the Schools Forum Clerk:

Email: school.relationshipteam@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Telephone: 07584 206913

Agenda for Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum 11 October 2022

1.	4.30	Introductions and apologies		
2.	4.35	Minutes and matters arising of last meeting 2.1 To agree the minutes held 5 July 2022 2.2 Matters arising		Page 4-9
3.	4.45	Education – Capital Programme 2022-2026	Janine Smart	Page 10-13
4.	5.00	Update on Council Financial Position	Natalie Cole	Presentation
5.	5.10	School Funding Arrangements 2023-2024	Natalie Cole	Page 14-21
6.	5.30	Final Allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2022-2023	Natalie Cole	Page 22-25
7.	5.45	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2022-2023 Forecast Outturn at First Review	Natalie Cole	Page 26-28
8.	6.00	Early Years Funding Formula Consultation and proposal for 2023-2024 - Outcomes	Bo White	To follow
9.	6.15	Brief Update – SEND Review Final Report	Debbie Murphy	Verbal
10.	6.20	Any Other Business		
11.	6.30	Next meeting: Tuesday 11 October 2022		
	Finish	Schedule of meetings 2022-2023		Page 29

**Cheshire West and Chester
Schools Forum
11 October 2022**

Agenda item 2

Minutes of Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum, virtual meeting, on 5 July 2022

Members	Representing	Attendance
Schools and Academies		
Alan Brown	Primary headteachers	Attended
Julie Chambers	Primary headteachers	Absent
Sarah Curtis	Primary headteachers	Attended
Ian Devereux Roberts	Primary headteachers	Apologies
Kate Docherty	Primary headteachers	Attended
Sharon Broughton	Primary governors	Attended
Duncan Haworth (Chair)	Primary governors	Attended
Lisa Rigby	Primary governors	Absent
David Nield	Primary governors	Attended
Nick Lacey	Primary governors	Attended
David Curry	Secondary headteachers	Attended
Mike Holland	Secondary headteachers	Attended
David Rowlands	Secondary governors	Attended
Rob Williams	Secondary governors	Attended
Mike McCann	Special headteachers	Attended
Philip Hopwood	Special governors	Attended
Andy Stewart	PRU	Absent
Deborah Beaumont	Academies - mainstream	Attended
Sarah Connolly	Academies - mainstream	Attended
Darran Jones	Academies - mainstream	Attended
Luci Jones	Academies - mainstream	Attended
Vacancy	Academies - mainstream	Vacancy
Helen Studley	Academies - mainstream	Apologies
Vacancy	Academies - special	Vacancy
Michelle Duval	Academies - special	Substitute
Non Schools		
Vacancy	PVI early years providers	Vacancy
Angela Thornton	PVI early years providers	Apologies
Kathryn Magiera	Diocese	Absent
Caroline Vile	Diocese	Absent
Greg Foster	Unions	Attended
Geoff Wright	Unions	Absent
Rob Pullen	CWAPH	Attended
Vacancy	16-19 providers	Vacancy
Official Observers		
Councillor Robert Cernik	Cabinet Member for Children and Families	Attended

Officers in attendance

Natalie Cole	Finance Manager
Charlotte Fenn	Clerk
Rosemary Hodgson	Senior HR Manager
Debbie Murphy	Acting Head of Education and Inclusion
Kate Thomson	HR Lead- Schools Team

Observer

Councillor Razia Daniels Shadow Cabinet Member for Children and Families

1. Introductions and apologies

Apologies were noted.

Belated apologies were noted from Nick Lacey for the February meeting as he had been unable to send them on the day.

Duncan Haworth reported the following membership changes:

Marie Allen, Special Schools Academy representative term of office had ended - Emma Leach, The Russett School, would be the new representative from September with Michelle Duval Cloughwood as the reserve.

Jason Lowe, Academies representative, term of office had ended – the Schools Forum clerk would seek nominees to fill the vacancy and an election will be held if appropriate.

Mike Holland was standing down as secondary Heads representative at the end of this academic year – the secondary Heads association would be seeking a new representative.

Duncan thanked, Marie, Jason and Mike, on behalf of Schools Forum, for their contribution to Forum work over the years.

2. Minutes and matters arising of last meeting

2.1 To agree the minutes from the meeting held 8 February 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on the 8 February 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

2.2 Matters arising

No matters arising to report.

3. Apprenticeship Levy

Rosemary Hodgson provided a PowerPoint presentation on the apprenticeship levy which covered background to the scheme, where the money went, what it could be used for, the principles of apprenticeships, apprenticeship standards,

finding apprenticeship providers, current position, and apprenticeship challenges in schools.

Rosemary reported that part of the reason for bringing the item to Schools Forum was to help promote and increase awareness. Apprenticeship starts were low within schools and current contributions exceeded the spend. It was noted that any unspent levy goes back to government after 24 months, therefore there was a need to consider how we can maximise the spend. It was also noted that Rosemary had been to see Heads and Business managers to promote apprenticeships at every opportunity.

Rosemary posed several questions for Forum to comment on:

- How can we use the levy more effectively?
- What are some of the challenges you are facing?
- Could we enable aided, foundation and academy schools to access our levy?
- Could we allow other community organisations to bid for our levy funds?

Forum members voiced their concerns over the possibility of levy funds going back to central government and acknowledged that anything that could be done to change this would be good. The following comments were noted by Rosemary:

- make the apprenticeship option more visible to schools and encourage schools to consider when appointing staff
- issues having to balance on the job learning
- issue of affordability of employing an apprentice due to the funding restrictions
- help promote by providing a list of types of apprenticeships available in schools for leadership teams and governors
- currently not on governors' agenda to consider apprenticeships when appointing staff
- have a breakdown of what levy can be used for to share with governors
- promote best practice and share heads experiences where it has worked
- share examples/case studies

Rosemary thanked Forum for their comments and asked if they had anymore thoughts to email her.

4. Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2021-2022 Final Outturn

Natalie Cole introduced the item and took Forum through the report on the 2021-2022 final outturn position for the centrally held DSG budget and reserve.

It was noted that the final overspend figure had decreased from the position reported at Third Review.

Forum members' attention was drawn to the table in paragraph 6 which summarised the main variances and changes from the position at Third Review

and paragraph 7 which summarised the cumulative overspend position on the centrally held DSG reserve.

It was noted that officers would be taking forward further development of a DSG recovery plan over summer term for 2023-2024 following the outcome of the external SEND review.

Forum had no questions regarding the report.

Resolved that Schools Forum note the final outturn on the 2021-2022 centrally held DSG and reserve and next steps.

5. Maintained School Balances Financial Year 2021-2022 and Academy Balances 2020-2021

Natalie Cole took Forum through the report which provided the final outturn position of maintained schools in the Borough for the 2021-2022 financial year and included academy balances for the latest reported position for the 2020-2021 academic and financial year accounts.

Forum members' attention was drawn to the outturn position, in paragraphs 4-5, of maintained schools and the movement in school balances as outlined in paragraphs 6-9.

It was noted that heads associations had raised concerns with regards to the level of surplus balances in schools and the lack of context behind the outturn positions.

Natalie reminded Forum that all maintained school accounts were published and publicly accessible and there was no facility for schools to add context to their financial position and encouraged schools to ensure that sufficient challenge and discussion was undertaken by the Governing Body and minutes kept.

Natalie sought Forum's view on the two proposed actions to review schools with surplus balances as outlined in paragraph 12. The authority would review those balances where they have been over the scheme threshold for three or more years and approved committed balances identified for specific purposes would be accounted for on a separate cost centre for each school and monitored by Schools Finance Team.

It was noted that the Academies balances, as shown in appendix A, in the absence of further context, same as with maintained school balances, did not explain the way the academy was operating or represent future spending plans or pressures.

Greg Foster questioned the accuracy of the Academies balances having just reviewed balances on Company House website, one school, for example, had a 9 million discrepancy. Natalie explained that to present a comparable balance to that of maintained schools, the balances reported were only for the general

unrestricted and restricted funds and excluded pension liabilities and capital funds.

Resolved that Schools Forum

- i. note the outturn position and movement in balances for both schools and academies; and
- ii. endorse the actions to review schools with surplus balances.

6. Directed revisions to schemes for financing schools

Natalie Cole provided a verbal report for Forum to note.

There were no directed revisions from the DfE. There was only one change in the statutory guidance which would need to be reflected in the local scheme: Section 5.8 Borrowing by schools - the reference to the Salix Scheme had been removed, as this scheme has now closed. The Scheme would be updated before being republished.

7. Government Consultation on Implementing the direct national funding formula

Natalie Cole introduced the report and referred Forum members to the link within the report where the full consultation document could be found.

It was noted that the consultation was due to close on 9 September 2022, was briefly discussed at the Schools Forum Finance Subgroup on 14 June and that the draft response was from the Council's point of view and sought to show how the changes would affect Cheshire West and Chester schools.

Natalie went through the report which summarised the key points of the consultation; interaction between the direct National Funding Formula (NFF) and funding for high needs, growth and falling rolls funding, premises funding, the minimum funding guarantee (MFG) under the direct NFF and the annual funding cycle.

Natalie sought feedback from Forum as to any changes or additions they would like included in the response.

David Rowlands commented that having discussed this as a member of the finance subgroup felt that having less local discretion would have an impact on high needs pupils' being educated in the appropriate settings and asked how this could best be addressed. Debbie Murphy responded that, following the recent SEND review and SEND Inspection, an action plan was in place which included creating additional capacity in special schools amongst other priorities.

Duncan Haworth sought guidance from Forum members as to how they wished to proceed with regard to submitting a response to the consultation. Questions were raised as to whether a statement should be added to the Council's

response that it had been endorsed by Schools Forum but it was felt that the more responses submitted the better and it would show that the Forum had discussed the consultation.

Resolved that School Forum would submit their own response which mirrored that of the Council's final response.

8. Annual review of the Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum's membership, constitution, and terms of reference

Charlotte Fenn took Forum through the report to review the Schools Forum's membership, constitution and terms of reference and ensure that the composition of the Schools Forum was compliant with the regulations.

There were no comments from Forum to report.

Resolved that Schools Forum note:

- i. that officers have determined that the pupil ration does not warrant a revision in the Schools Forum membership at this time; and
- ii. there are no changes to the constitution and terms of reference.

9. Any Other Business

None to report.

10. Next meeting

Next Schools Forum meeting Tuesday 11 October 2022.

Forum members noted the scheduled dates for the next academic year and had a discussion as to whether to reinstate face to face meetings. It was generally felt that there should be a mixture of face to face and virtual meetings whilst also taking into consideration the levels of covid.

11 October meeting to be virtual but would be reviewed near the time.

Agenda item 3

Education – Capital Programme 2022-2026

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to share with the Schools Forum an update on the Education Basic Need Capital Programme.

Recommendations

2. The Schools Forum is asked to note the paper.

Introduction and Context

3. The Education Basic Need capital programme supports the development of the educational environment by improving, enlarging or replacing assets in a planned and structured way so that children and young people learn in the best possible environment. This continues to contribute to raising educational standards, improving school attendance and young people's involvement in positive activities as well as making buildings more energy efficient and fit for purpose. Schools that are well maintained can inspire children and young people to achieve and can enable teachers to concentrate on teaching and learning.

Capital Programme Update – Basic Need

4. Basic need funding is the grant money allocated to local authorities each year to help them fulfil their duty to make sure there are enough school places for children in their local area. This includes maintained schools, free schools or academies and by establishing new schools. The allocations are based on forecasts submitted to DfE of pupil numbers in future years (SCAP) to establish whether there is sufficient capacity to accommodate those pupils.
5. In Cheshire West and Chester we have qualified to receive the following amounts of basic need funding over a 6 year period;

Basic Need Funding:	
Year	£'m
2018-2019	.32
2019-2020	1.14
2020-2021	0
2021-2022	24.75
2022-2023	2.24
2023-2024	4.94

6. The 2023-2024 allocation has been generated by the forecasts submitted to DfE in 2021 (SCAP 21). The allocation recognises that there is a need for additional places than that we have previously been funded. As with all SCAP returns the data considers a 5 year forecast for Primary and 7 year forecast for Secondary. Over this period of time, annual returns will be submitted and evaluated to see if sufficient funding has been provided to supply the places.

Grant Conditions

7. The grant is technically un-ring-fenced, meaning the only formal requirement placed on it is that it must be used for capital expenditure and not revenue. However, there is an expectation by DfE that it will be spent on the creation of pupil places. The Council is required to submit an annual return to DfE stating the investment we have made in our schools for the creation of pupil places and comparing that to the amount of grant received.
8. The DfE compile a scorecard to provide a snapshot of each local authority's progress towards ensuring there are sufficient good school places in each local authority area across England.
9. The scorecards show how many places have been delivered or are planned to be delivered, provide information about the quality of the places between set time periods, forecasting accuracy of local authorities, how well parental preference is met and the cost of providing places in their area. A copy of the scorecard for Cheshire West and Chester is attached to this report.

Cheshire West & Chester Capital Programme 2022-2026

10. The previous Education Capital Programme was originally drawn up in 2014-2015 the programme delivered places across 48 schools. The programme identified a forecasted portfolio of works which was then continually monitored and altered to ensure that it continued to target towards demand.
11. In 2021 a new Education Capital Programme was developed and included in the Councils budget report, this programme is reviewed and updated annually against forecasted demand. The programme identifies School Planning areas with an estimated number of places required, for the investment of the available grant allocations, this can be seen in appendix 1.
12. The planning areas listed within the 'Planning areas – schools to be confirmed' are being reviewed against the most recent forecasts (SCAP 22) and to identify where the pupil place demand could be met.
13. Planning area data will be shared with schools over the coming weeks, any areas that remain to be a priority for investment will be highlighted in these meetings.
14. As with the previous programme, the priority areas identified for future years will remain in the programme and will continue to be monitored through the review of

data that supports the pupil place planning process to ensure that investment will be made in the areas where it is needed. This may result in alterations to the planning areas stated in future years.

15. This revised programme has been drafted utilising data that would have formed part of SCAP 21.
16. Formal approval to allocate funding will be sought in line with the authority's budget setting process, with final approval from Cabinet in February.

Appendix 1

Education Schools Basic Need Programme 22-26

Planning Area	Deliver by - Year	Estimated No. places
Active Schemes		
Secondary - Winsford	2022	150
Secondary - Chester (all areas)	2022	30
Secondary - Helsby	2023	135
Secondary - Weaverham/Northwich	2023	150
Secondary - Weaverham/Northwich	2023	75
Secondary - Chester (all areas)	2023	80
Secondary - Tarporley and Tattenhall	2023	150
PRU - Ellesmere Port	2023	n/a
Primary - Ellesmere Port West	2022	105
Primary - Northwich TOWN South	2022	n/a
Primary - Chester East and Rural South East	2023	105
Primary - Chester North and Rural East	2023	2
Primary - Northwich TOWN South	2023	105
Planning Areas - Schools to be confirmed		
Secondary - Chester (all areas)	TBC	TBC
Secondary - Neston	TBC	TBC
Primary - Chester North and Rural East	TBC	TBC
Primary - Chester South	TBC	TBC
Primary - Ellesmere Port West	TBC	TBC
Primary - Chester Rural West	TBC	TBC
Primary - Ellesmere Port East	TBC	TBC
Primary - Helsby	TBC	TBC
Primary - Winsford Rural West	TBC	TBC
Primary Area TBC	TBC	TBC

* Temporary accommodation

** Under review, may be removed or altered

Agenda Item 5

School Funding Arrangements for 2023-2024

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of the report is to provide Schools Forum with details on the school funding arrangements for 2023-2024 following the publication by the Department for Education (DfE) in July 2022. The report also details the impact on Cheshire West and Chester (CW&C) and proposals for consulting with schools and Schools Forum on the arrangements for 2023-2024.

Recommendations

2. The Forum is asked to note the report, in particular the proposals that have been put forward by the Finance Sub Group not to further consult with schools on the schools block funding formula as no changes are proposed. Consultation will be held with schools on the decisions to be taken by Schools Forum on other funding elements for the December meeting.
3. Forum is requested to make a recommendation to Cabinet on the Schools Block funding formula continuing to mirror the Schools National Funding Formula (SNFF) values for 2023-2024.

Background

4. In 2023-2024 local authorities will continue to receive Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding through the national funding formulae (NFF) for schools for allocation to primary and secondary schools and academies. Following last year's DfE consultation on completing the reforms to the national funding formula, the department has confirmed that it will move forward with its plans to implement a direct national funding formula (NFF), whereby funding will be allocated directly to schools based on a single national formula. As set out in the DfE consultation response, they are taking a gradual approach to transition. In 2023-2024, each local authority will continue to set a local schools funding formula, in consultation with local schools. To ensure a smooth transition, local authorities will be required to start bringing their own formulae closer to the schools NFF from 2023-2024. The department expect to have moved to the direct NFF by the 2027-2028 funding year, if not sooner.

Schools revenue funding arrangements for 2023-2024

5. In July 2022, the DfE published arrangements for schools revenue funding for 2023-2024 financial year. The operational guidance includes details on the schools block allocation methodology along with indicative funding rates to allow local authorities to start to plan with schools and Schools Forum for next year. In 2023-2024, the NFF will again set notional allocations for each school, which will be aggregated, and used to calculate the total schools block received by each local authority – schools will not receive the amounts published in the notional allocations which are based on October 2021 pupil numbers and demographics.
6. The NFF announcement in July 2022 confirmed that there would be a higher level of funding in each local authority area in 2023-2024 compared to 2022-2023. Overall nationally, core schools funding (including funding for mainstream schools and high needs) is increasing by £1.5 billion in 2023-2024 compared with the previous year, on top of the £4 billion increase in 2022-2023. For CW&C, the indicative increase in allocation is £14m from £314m in 2022-2023 to £328m in 2023-2024. This excludes confirmation of the Early Years Block which is expected in December 2022. The change in allocation announced to date is detailed in **Appendix A** and in summary shows the following:
 - £11.2m (5%) increase in schools block funding. This includes the mainstreaming of £6.9m supplementary funding so the year on year increase is £4.3m (1.8%)
 - £2.8m (5%) increase in high needs block funding
 - No announcement on the early years block funding
 - £0.1m (4%) reduction in central schools services block funding

All allocations will be updated from pupil number changes on the October 2022 census and schools block growth funding will also then be determined.

7. The allocations reflect the following national increases to the funding blocks in 2023-2024.
 - Funding for mainstream schools through the schools NFF is increasing by 1.9% per pupil compared with 2022-2023.
 - The core factors in the schools NFF (such as basic per-pupil funding, and the lump sum that all schools attract) will increase by 2.4%.
 - Funding for disadvantaged pupils will see greater increases – with funding for two deprivation factors in the NFF increasing by a greater amount than other factors. These two factors (the FSM6 factor and the IDACI factor) will increase by 4.3% compared with their 2022-2023 values. This means that the schools NFF is targeting a greater proportion of funding towards deprived pupils.
 - The funding floor will ensure that every school attracts at least 0.5% more pupil-led funding per pupil compared with its 2022-2023 NFF allocation.
 - The minimum per pupil funding levels (MPPLs) will increase by 0.5% compared with 2022-2023. This will mean that, next year, every primary

school will be allocated at least £4,405 per pupil, and every secondary school at least £5,715.

- The 2022-2023 schools supplementary grant has been rolled into the schools NFF for mainstream pupils in Reception to year 11.
- High needs funding is increasing by a further £570 million (6.3%) in 2023-2024. All local authorities will receive at least a 5% increase per head of their 2 to 18 population compared to their 2022-2023 allocations.
- Central schools services funding in 2022-2023 will increase to £292m for the on-going responsibilities that local authorities continue to have for all schools, while funding for historic commitments within this block will decrease by a further 20% for those local authorities in receipt of this funding.

Technical changes to Schools Block Funding allocations

8. The structure of the SNFF in 2023-2024 is not changing from 2022-2023. Formula factor values are being updated and local authorities will be required to bring their own formulae closer to the schools NFF from 2023-2024 as follows:

- local authorities will only be allowed to use NFF factors in their local formulae. This means that the looked after children (LAC) factor will no longer be an allowable factor
- local authorities must use all NFF factors – except for the locally determined premises factors which remain optional, and the fringe factor which is compulsory for the 5 local authorities on the fringe.
- local authorities must move their local formula factor values at least 10% closer to the NFF, except where local formulae are already mirroring the NFF.
- local authorities must use the NFF definition for the EAL factor, although flexibility over the sparsity factor methodology will remain in 2023-2024.

Since the local formula for CW&C already mirrors the NFF, no changes are necessary to meet these requirements.

Changes to High Needs Block Funding allocations

9. The basic structure of the high needs national funding formula is not changing in 2023-2024. The allocation will be updated in December for changes in pupil numbers and their movement between local authorities (captured by the basic entitlement factor update and import/export adjustment). In addition, the funding floor will be set at 5% so each local authority can plan for an increase of at least that percentage, taking into account changes in their 2 to 18 population. The indicative allocation for Cheshire West and Chester is an increase of £2.8m (5%) overall.

Changes to Central School Services Block (CSSB) allocations

10. This block allocation comprises of formula funding for ongoing central local authority commitments and protected funding for historic commitments. The government has confirmed the total national funding for the ongoing responsibilities will increase to fund all local authorities for the functions they have a statutory duty to deliver for all pupils in maintained schools and academies. However, as Cheshire West and Chester are currently protected above the NFF per pupil rate, funding for ongoing responsibilities in 2023-2024 will reduce slightly by £1k (3p per pupil) due to the unwinding of protection, despite the increase to the NFF.
11. As in previous years, the government will continue to reduce the element of funding that some local authorities receive for historic commitments made prior to 2013-2014. In 2023-2024, historic commitments funding will be reduced by 20% as anticipated.

The total indicative central school services block for the authority will reduce by £0.131m (20%).

Approach to setting the Schools Block funding formula

12. As in previous years, each local authority will continue to set a local schools funding formula, in consultation with local schools. In October 2017, a consultation was held with CW&C schools on the proposal to move the local funding formula in line with the NFF to be consistent with the direction of travel of central government. This has continued to be the main principle of decisions taken each year since 2017. As there are no changes in the formula factors from 2023-2024 for the LA to consider, we are proposing that we do not hold a consultation with schools this year as we would only be seeking to re-confirm previous decisions. Also, given the direction of travel to the national funding formula, any alternative proposals would be contrary to the key principle we have been following for the past few years to mirroring the NFF values. Schools would continue to be protected against adverse impacts from the technical changes by the current Minimum Funding Guarantee of 0.5%.
13. The funding announcement was discussed with the Finance Sub Group of the Schools Forum on 20 September. Following consideration by the Schools Forum Finance Sub Group, it was agreed that subject to approval by Schools Forum, schools would be informed of the continuation of previous decisions in the allocation of the SNFF for 2023-2024. The only aspects that require annual agreement are de-delegation arrangements and any transfer to the high needs block and we would propose that this is consulted and agreed with schools and through the Primary and Secondary Heads Associations rather than through a specific consultation. The decisions would be taken by Schools Forum in December 2022 in recommending the final formula and budget. The indicative SNFF values that we would propose to apply are shown in **Appendix B**. As with usual practice, the Basic Entitlement factors would be adjusted to manage school allocations within the overall allocation.

Notional SEN

14. DfE have published separate guidance to help local authorities review their notional SEN budget calculations, and to help schools understand what the notional SEN budget is for. The guidance states that all authorities should keep this calculation under review to make sure that their schools' notional SEN budget is a realistic amount for meeting the costs of additional SEN support up to £6,000 per pupil, and that any shortfall in this notional budget can be appropriately met from additional high needs targeted funding. In view of this guidance, a review of the notional SEN calculation will be undertaken for review by Schools Forum in December.

Exceptional circumstances

15. This is an optional formula factor and local authorities can apply to the department to use exceptional circumstances relating to school premises where the value of the factor is more than 1% of a school's budget and applies to fewer than 5% of the schools in the local authority's area. Where local authorities have already received approval for exceptional circumstances from 2018-2019 onwards, they can continue to use the approved factors if the criteria are still being met. Where the latest approval was prior to 2018-2019 the local authority will need to submit a new disapplication request for consideration. This is the case for the two exceptional circumstances in CW&C, Upton-by-Chester High School sports facilities and Wincham Primary School rental of a hall. The submission date for local authorities to submit any application for exceptional circumstances to the ESFA is 18 November 2022. Officers will liaise with these schools directly to review the applications to maintain the existing exceptional circumstances in the Borough.

Next steps

16. The recommendations of Schools Forum will be made to Cabinet in November 2022. Final allocations for 2023-2024 will be received in December 2022 with the final funding formula to be agreed and submitted to the ESFA in January 2023. Schools Forum will be consulted on budget setting for the remaining elements of DSG funding in December.

Appendix A Current DSG 2022-2023 and Indicative 2023-2024 allocation

	Final (July 22) 2022-2023			Illustrative (September 2022)			Change to 2022-2023 £000	Change to 2022-2023 %
	Pupil Numbers	Amount per pupil £	Allocation £000	Pupil Numbers	Amount per pupil £	Allocation £000		
DSG Allocation Block								
Schools Block								
Primary unit of funding	27,291	4,617	126,009	27,291	4,817	131,459	5,450	4%
Secondary unit of funding	18,741	5,824	109,148	18,741	6,126	114,811	5,663	5%
Funding of growth			930			930	0	0%
Funding of premises			2,908			3,037	129	4%
	46,032		238,995	45,900		250,238	11,243	5%
High Needs Block								
NFF			44,068			48,627	4,559	10%
Hospital education and pay and pension grant			806			839	33	4%
Basic Entitlement factor	1,108	4,686	5,192	1,108	4,687	5,193	0	0%
Import/export			-666			-666	0	0%
Additional allocation			1,818			0	-1,818	-100%
			51,218			53,993	2,775	5%
Early Years Block								
3 and 4 year old Universal entitlement	4,723	2,628	12,410	4,723	2,628	12,410	0	0%
3 and 4 year old extended entitlement	2,458	2,628	6,459	2,458	2,628	6,459	0	0%
Disability Access Funding			109	0	0	109	0	0%
2 Year Olds	801	3,221	2,580	801	3,221	2,580	0	0%
Early Years Pupil Premium			149	0	0	149	0	0%
			21,707			21,707	0	0%
Central School Services Block								
Ongoing responsibilities	46,032	36.92	1,699	46,032	36.89	1,698	-1	0%
Historic commitments			648			518	-130	-20%
			2,347			2,216	-131	-6%
Total DSG Allocation			314,267			328,155	13,887	4%

Appendix B 2023-2024 indicative SNFF formula values compared to 2022-2023

Funding Factors	2022-2023 SNFF formula values £	2022- 2023 CW&C formula values £	2023-2024 indicative SNFF formula values £
Basic per-pupil funding			
Basic entitlement: Primary	3,217	3,250	3,394
Basic entitlement: Secondary – Key Stage 3	4,536	4,555	4,785
Basic entitlement: Secondary – Key Stage 4	5,112	5,131	5,393
Minimum per pupil funding level Primary	4,265	4,265	4,405
Minimum per pupil funding level Secondary	5,525	5,525	5,715
Additional needs funding			
Current Free School Meal (FSM) top up (Pupils currently claiming FSM at the last census): Primary	470	470	480
Current FSM top up (Pupils currently claiming FSM at the last census): Secondary	470	470	480
FSM6 (Any pupil that has ever claimed FSM in the past 6 years): Primary	590	590	705
FSM6 (Any pupil that has ever claimed FSM in the past 6 years): Secondary	865	865	1030
Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) band F: Primary	220	220	230
IDACI band F: Secondary	320	320	335
IDACI band E: Primary	270	270	280
IDACI band E: Secondary	425	425	445
IDACI band D: Primary	420	420	440
IDACI band D: Secondary	595	595	620
IDACI band C: Primary	460	460	480
IDACI band C: Secondary	650	650	680
IDACI band B: Primary	490	490	510
IDACI band B: Secondary	700	700	730
IDACI band A: Primary	640	640	670
IDACI band A: Secondary	890	890	930
Low prior attainment: Primary	1,130	1,130	1,155
Low prior attainment: Secondary	1,710	1,710	1,750
English as an additional language: Primary	565	565	580
English as an additional language: Secondary	1,530	1,530	1,565
Mobility: Primary	925	925	945
Mobility: Secondary	1,330	1,330	1,360
School led funding			
Lump sum: Primary	121,300	121,300	128,000

Appendix B 2023-2024 indicative SNFF formula values compared to 2022-2023

Funding Factors	2022-2023 SNFF formula values £	2022-2023 CW&C formula values £	2023-2024 indicative SNFF formula values £
Lump sum: Secondary	121,300	121,300	128,000
Sparsity: Primary	55,000	55,000	56,300
Sparsity: Secondary	80,000	80,000	81,900
Premises			
Split Sites (criteria specified locally)	Outside of NFF	Continue 2021-2022 criteria	Continue 2022-2023 criteria
Private Finance Initiative (PFI) (criteria specified locally)	Outside of NFF	Continue 2021-2022 criteria	Continue 2022-2023 criteria
Rates (to be funded based on actual charges)	Outside of NFF	Funded on actual charges	Funded on actual charges
Exceptional factors (criteria specified locally)	Outside of NFF	Continue 2021-2022 criteria	Reapplication of criteria to ESFA

Agenda Item 6

Final Allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2022-2023

Purpose of the report

1. To report to the Forum the final allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2022-2023 as published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency in July 2022, highlighting the changes from the draft allocation used in budget setting for this financial year.

Recommendations

2. The Schools Forum is asked to note the amendments to the DSG allocation for the high needs and early years funding blocks and the adjustments to centrally held budgets for 2022-2023.

Background

3. In December 2021, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) announced the details of the DSG funding settlement for the 2022-2023 financial year. This was the basis for setting the schools budget share and centrally held budgets for 2022-2023 and were agreed at the January 2022 Forum.
4. In July 2022, the ESFA published revised DSG allocations for all local authorities to reflect changes in high needs commissioned places, early years census data and academy recoupment. It is a requirement for local authorities to discuss the published DSG allocation with the Schools Forum in confirming that the grant has been used in support of schools.

Changes to the Allocation

5. The indicative DSG allocation available in December 2021 for the local authority was £321.526m. A table detailing this calculation which was presented to the Schools Forum in January 2022 is included in Appendix A.
6. Table 1 below shows in summary the changes to the Local Authority's allocation since January 2022. The net change to the allocation is a decrease of £7.247m of which £6.885m relates to the school's supplementary grant for mainstream schools, originally included with the indicative DSG allocation but then administered as a separate grant by the ESFA. A further net reduction of £0.362m across the high needs and early years blocks gives a revised gross allocation of £314.279m. For the allocation held by the authority, there has been further academy recoupment of £2.621m for conversions since January 2022 and a further £0.070m recouped for additional high needs places funded directly by the ESFA 2022 census. The overall

change to DSG funding held by the Local Authority is £9.938m. Details of individual amendments are included in Table 2 in paragraph 7.

Table 1 Summary of change to the final DSG allocation

	Indicative December 2021 £m	Final 2022 £m	July Change £m
DSG Allocation	321.526	314.279	-7.247
Less deductions for high needs places	(2.226)	(2.296)	-0.070
Less academy recoupment	(80.516)	(83.137)	-2.621
Net DSG allocation	238.784	228.846	-9.938

7. In order to maintain the integrity of the budgets set on the indicative allocations, adjustments have been made to budgets in accordance with the reason for the change in the allocation. The actions that have been taken for each adjustment are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Adjustments to DSG allocation December 2021 to July 2022

Funding Block	Description of Adjustment	Adjustment £m	Budget adjustment actioned
High Needs Block	Import/export adjustment for high needs places in other authorities	-0.390	This was more than the estimated growth of £0.2m included at budget setting of and has been reflected as a pressure against the high needs post 16 budget to which the change largely relates.
High Needs Block	Recoupment of increased place funding for special academies and resource provisions	-0.070	Included at budget setting and reflected in budgets for place funding. No impact on the financial position.
High Needs Block	Additional funding for 2 pre 16 places in special free schools previously funded by the ESFA	0.012	Additional funding for pre16 special free school places previously recouped and funded directly by the ESFA. This was not included at budget setting and has been reflected against high needs budgets for out of borough provision.
Early Years Block	Adjustments to the indicative allocation based on the January 2022 census headcount	0.016	The following adjustments have been reflected in the early years entitlement budgets: -£0.126m decrease for 48 less part time equivalent children accessing 3 & 4 year old universal entitlement -£0.015m decrease for children accessing early years pupil premium

Funding Block	Description of Adjustment	Adjustment £m	Budget adjustment actioned
			£0.177m increase for 67 more part time equivalent children accessing 3 & 4 year old extended entitlement £0.015m increase of 5 more part time equivalent children accessing 2 year old entitlement -£0.035m for the removal of the remaining maintained nursery school supplement
Schools Block	Academy recoupment for conversions post January 2022	-2.621	Reflected in schools block budget and in the closure position of the school accounts. No impact on the financial position.
Total		-3.053	

Next Steps

8. The revised allocations and adjusted budgets will form the basis of reporting for the remainder of 2022-2023.

Appendix A Final DSG 2021-2022 and Indicative 2022-2023 allocation

	Final 2021-2022			Indicative 2022-2023			Change to 2021-2022 £000	Supplementary allocation £000	Change to DSG £000
	Pupil Numbers	Amount per pupil £	Allocation £000	Pupil Numbers	Amount per pupil £	Allocation £000			
DSG Allocation Block									
Schools Block									
Primary unit of funding	27,364	4,492	122,926	27,291	4,617	126,009	3,083		
Secondary unit of funding	18,536	5,659	104,885	18,741	5,824	109,148	4,263		
Funding of growth			1,085			930	-156		
Funding of premises			2,921			2,908	-13		
	45,900		231,818	46,032		238,995	7,177	6,885	14,062
High Needs Block									
NFF			41,100			44,874	3,773		
Basic Entitlement factor	1,083	4,686	5,075	1,108	4,686	5,192	118		
Import/export			-276			-276	0		
			45,899			49,790	3,891	1,818	5,709
Early Years Block									
3 and 4 year old entitlement	5,059	2,531	12,804	4,771	2,628	12,536	-267		
Maintained nursery supplement			66	26	1,351	35	-31		
Disability Access Funding	146	615	90			109	19		
3 and 4 year old extended hours	2,468	2,531	6,245	2,390	2,628	6,281	36		
2 Year Olds	771	3,101	2,389	796	3,221	2,565	175		
Early Years Pupil Premium	558	302	169			165	-4		
			21,763			21,691	-72	0	-72
Central School Services Block									
Ongoing responsibilities	45,900	37.06	1,701	46,032	36.92	1,699	-2		
Historic commitments			810			648	-162		
Funding for centrally employed teachers	45,900	0.81	37				-37		
			2,548			2,347	-201	0	-201
Total DSG Allocation			302,028			312,823	10,795	8,702	19,498

Agenda Item 07

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2022-2023 Forecast Outturn at First Review

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the financial forecast outturn position for 2022-2023 for centrally held DSG as reported at the First Review. This is based on the position as at end of July 2022.

Recommendations

2. The Forum is asked to note the First Review position on the DSG.

Forecast Outturn

3. The forecast outturn position for the centrally held DSG is a pressure of £0.211m as at the end of July.
4. Within this overall position, there is a forecast overspend of £0.644m on the high needs provision budgets for SEN pupils with mainstream and special school top up funding, independent school placements, alternative provision and tuition packages.
5. The forecast also builds in a pay award pressure of £0.1m reflecting the difference between the estimated 3% included in the 2022-23 budget, and an estimate of the potential actual pay awards for local government staff and teachers, based on the latest national negotiations.
6. These pressures are currently being partially offset by forecast underspends on contingencies for mainstream school growth funding (£0.1m), Independent school fees for non SEN pupils (£0.120m) and slippage in service investment £0.1m pending the outcome of the High Needs Review. The forecast position also assumes a further £0.2m of further slippage during the year from service vacancies and planned spend until the recommendations from the review can be implemented.
7. The key variances are summarised in the table below.

Budget	Forecast variance Overspend/ - underspend £000	Reason for forecast variance
Pay budgets	98	Funding gap for local government and teachers pay awards above budgeted 3%
Independent and non-maintained school fees	61	Forecast based on current known and potential placements. Increase in the

		number of cases judged in favour of independent school placements above budgeted growth.
Top up funding mainstream	250	Forecast overspend based on continued growth in applications to date and trend experienced in 21-22.
Top up funding special schools	200	Forecast overspend due to growth in placements agreed post budget setting to meet demand for 22-23 academic year.
Inter Authority England	-146	Less growth than budgeted in high needs pupils in other LAs and associated top up funding
Inter Authority Wales	63	Increase in Welsh high needs pupils in CW&C schools and associated top up funding
SEN Personal budgets	16	Increase in personal budgets being accessed
Additional learning needs	200	Increase in alternative packages for high needs pupils, particularly post 16
Non SEN Independent schools	-120	Potential for budget not to be fully spent as no spend to date
Investment in high needs	-100	Slippage in the planned investment in expanding Speech and Language Therapy pending the outcome of the High Needs Review
Mitigation	-200	Assumed slippage against planned spend, unfilled vacancies and remote working
Growth fund	-100	Potential not to be needed in full due to reduction in expansions relating to housing developments
Other	-11	Small variances on other budgets
Total variance reported	211	

DSG Reserve

8. The table below summarises the position on the DSG reserve as at First Review.

	£000
DSG reserve brought forward (deficit)	1,970
In year allocation of reserves	
Ring-fenced De-delegation allocated to 2022-2023	7
Current reserve held (deficit)	1,977

9. Local authorities will need to demonstrate their ability to cover DSG deficits from their available reserves from 2023-24 onwards. The Council is working towards a solution to

recover the current deficit as failure to address this will have an impact on the Council's budgetary pressures going forward.

Next Steps

10. All areas of DSG will be reviewed as commitments for the new academic year are confirmed in the autumn term. Officers will continue to monitor the financial position and seek ways to mitigate the impact across all areas of the DSG. The forecast DSG outturn position will next be reviewed and reported as part of the Second Review of Financial Performance (end of September).

**Cheshire West and Chester
Schools Forum
11 October 2022**

Agenda item 11

Schedule of meetings 2022-2023

Schools Forum – all meetings 4.30pm – 6.30pm

Date	Venue	Proposed agenda
Tuesday 6 December 2022	MS Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DSG 2022-2023 Forecast Outturn at Mid-Year Review • Initial Planning for DSG Allocations for 2023-2024 and Budget Setting
Tuesday 17 January 2023	tbc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget setting 2023-2024 • Draft of 2023-2024 School Funding Formula for January submission • Combined Budgets and Miscellaneous Expenditure • De-delegation – Proposals for 2023-2024 • DSG 2023-2024 Forecast Outturn at Third Review
Monday 13 February 2023	tbc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years Funding for 2023-2024 • Arrangements for funding from the High Needs Block 2023-2024 • Central Spend budgets 2023-2024
Tuesday 4 July 2023	tbc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School funding arrangements for 2024-2025 • DSG 2022-2023 outturn including schools' balances • Directed revisions to schemes for financing schools • Education – Basic Need Capital Programme 2021-2025 • Annual review of Schools Forum membership, constitution, and terms of reference

Schools Forum Finance sub-group

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday 15 November 2022	2.00 – 4.00 pm	MS Teams
Tuesday 24 January 2023	2.00 – 4.00 pm	MS Teams
Tuesday 13 June 2023	2.00 – 4.00 pm	MS Teams

Schools Forum High Needs sub-group - dates to be confirmed