

SLOUGH SCHOOLS FORUM

SCHOOLS GROUP:

John Constable (Chair), Ben Bausor, Rhodri Bryant, Peter Collins, Gill Denham, Claire Fletcher, Valerie Harffey, Emma Lister, Navroop Mehat, Angela Mellish, Eddie Neighbour, Jon Reekie, Jo Rockall, Jamie Rockman, Neil Sykes and Maggie Waller

LOCAL AUTHORITY:

Sue Butcher, Sarah Hockly, Neil Hoskinson, Tony Madden, Len Brazier
Councillor Puja Bedi (Lead Member for Education & Children's Services)

MEETING DETAILS

DATE & TIME:

WEDNESDAY, 13TH MARCH, 2024 AT 9.15 AM
VIRTUAL MEETING

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87558370256?pwd=ZUc3MFJDTlIxUTB3MEt3QUxVem15UT09&from=addon>

Meeting ID: 875 5837 0256
Passcode: 605083

AGENDA

| | Presenter |
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| 1. Apologies | <i>Chair</i> |
| 2. Notification of Any Other Business | <i>Chair</i> |
| 3. Declarations of Interest | <i>Chair</i> |
| 4. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 11.01.24 | <i>Chair</i> <i>(Pages 1 - 6)</i> |
| 5. Schools Forum Membership update | <i>Chair</i> |
| 6. Local and national funding update/announcements | <i>Sarah Hockly</i> |
| 7. DSG Management Plan/Safety Valve programme update | <i>Neil Hoskinson</i> |
| 8. Schools Block 2024/25 update | <i>Sarah Hockly</i> <i>(Pages 7 - 24)</i> |
| 9. Central School Services Block 2024/25 | <i>Sarah Hockly</i> <i>(Pages 25 - 28)</i> |
| 10. Early Years Block 2024/25 - centrally retained budgets | <i>Sarah Hockly</i> <i>(Pages 29 - 32)</i> |
| 11. 2023/24 Forward Agenda Plan | <i>Chair</i> <i>(Pages 33 - 34)</i> |
| 12. Key Decisions Log | <i>Chair</i> <i>(Pages 35 - 38)</i> |
| 13. Any Other Business (notified at start of meeting) | <i>Chair</i> |

*** Declarations of Interest**

The Chair will ask Members to confirm whether they have any declarable interests in relation to any item on the agenda. All Members who believe they may have such an interest must declare it and may only (a) remain in the meeting while that matter is discussed at the discretion of the Chair, and (b) speak on the matter by invitation. Examples of declarable interests include: where the outcome of a discussion may provide a personal advantage or avoid disadvantage (pecuniary or non-pecuniary), or where the focus of an agenda item and the likely impact of any outcome is wholly or mainly on a school with which the Member is associated.

Slough Schools Forum – Minutes of Meeting held on 11 January 2024

DRAFT MINUTES – for approval at meeting on 13 March 2024

Present: John Constable, Langley Grammar School (Chair)
 Ben Bausor, Always Growing Ltd
 Eddie Neighbour, Upton Court Grammar School
 Jon Reekie, Phoenix Infants School
 Jo Rockall, Herschel Grammar School
 Jamie Rockman, Haybrook College
 Maggie Waller, Holy Family Primary School
 Rhodri Bryant, The Langley Academy
 Emma Lister, Chalvey Early Years Centre
 Gill Denham, Marish Primary School
 Angela Mellish, St Bernard’s Catholic Grammar School
 Valerie Harffey, Ryvers School
 Navroop Mehat, Wexham Court Primary School
 Neil Sykes, Arbour Vale School

Officers: Neil Hoskinson, Associate Director for Education and Inclusion
 Sarah Hockley, Interim Strategic Finance Manager, People (Children)
 Tony Madden, Development Manager
 Len Brazier – SBC Send Lead

Observer: Angela Mumford, Littledown School
 Cllr Puja Bedi, Lead Member for Education & Children’s Services

Apologies: Sue Butcher, Director of Children’s Services
 Peter Collins, Slough & Eton Church of England Business and Enterprise College
 Claire Fletcher, Penwood Primary School

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and explained that there was no clerk available for this meeting. Instead, the meeting would be recorded and transcribed afterwards.

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| 986 | Apologies Received as from Sue Butcher, Peter Collins and Claire Fletcher. |
| 987 | Notification of any other business None |
| 988 | Declarations of Interest None |
| 989 | Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising The minutes of previous meeting held on 9 November were agreed as an accurate recollection of the previous meeting. There were no matters arising. |
| 990 | Schools Forum Membership update The Chair recorded thanks to Carol Pearce who has resigned from Forum. Clare Fletcher, Headteacher at Penwood School is replacing Carol as a maintained schools representative. The Chair noted that there is still a vacancy for an academies member within the primary phase and would refer this back to SPHA. MW noted the importance of maintaining governor representation on Forum. The Chair noted that there were a number of members whose terms officially ended on 31 st December 2023, and would write to ask if they were happy to have their term of office extended for another 2 years. |

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| <p>991</p> | <p>Local and National Funding Update/Announcements</p> <p>SH commented that she had looked through ESFA updates for updates, which were minimal. DSG allocations were announced in December for both the schools and early years blocks, with subsequent work on these blocks at LA level to be discussed later in the agenda.</p> <p>A High Needs place number change report was completed in November; this feeds into the high needs funding with a high need place notification outcome expected in mid or late January.</p> <p>Pupil premium rates have been announced for 2024-25. These are paid quarterly either to the local authority for the maintained schools, or directly to academies, special schools and alternative provision. There are slight increases but no significant changes. Primary rate has increased from £1,455 to £1,480, secondary from £1,035 to £1,050, and previously looked after children from £2,530 to £2,570 across phases.</p> <p>SH commended on the National Tutoring Programme, noting that nationally a significant proportion of NTP grant was clawed back as unused. The ESFA was looking to run webinars to support schools to make the most of their funding.</p> |
| <p>992</p> | <p>Safety Valve Programme</p> <p>NH confirmed that he had prepared a presentation for the SEND Partnership Board with some background information which would provide additional detail for these headlines and would be sent to the Chair for distribution.</p> <p>NH reminded Forum members of the predicted High Needs deficit of £27m at the end of 22-23 on which entry into the safety valve agreement with the DfE was predicated. The DfE had agreed to pay £27 million pounds of additional funding over a 5 year period subject to certain conditions and the elimination of the in-year deficit.</p> <p>The key year is 2024-25, with an expectation of a balanced in-year budget. The safety valve agreement then suggests a positive balance and a surplus of £400,000 in 2025-26 which will contribute to the cumulative deficit reduction. Additional funding from the DfE would then eliminate the cumulative deficit by 2026-27. The LA received the first tranche of funding £10.8 million; looking forward, further payments are expected following a defined schedule. The conditions within the safety valve agreement focus on dealing with demand for EHCP provision, independent special school places, post 16 provision, ARPs in schools and all alternative provision. Progress in these areas against the agreement is RAG rated – all five areas were rated green following reviews in September and December.</p> <p>There are then 5 identified risks which are around escalating cost pressures, workforce, reputation, legal and economic. The only area where the LA is currently not RAG-rating as green is legal because of the risk of a backlog of complaints about timescale of EHCP approval escalating to tribunal level.</p> <p>The Chair thanked NH and commented that it is encouraging to hear that things are progressing according to plan. There were no immediate questions from Forum members.</p> |
| <p>993</p> | <p>Resource Provision & AP Place Commissioning</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Len Brazier as SEND Commissioner and current Head of SEND to give a verbal report on the present position with ARPs, the possible movement to specialist resource provision and designated units, and an update on the position of numbers for 2024-25.</p> <p>LB noted that in September 2022 the total number of places in the resource bases across nursery, primary and secondary, was 292. In September 2023, that was reduced to 252. The safety valve agreement requires the LA to ensure that it has the right support in place, which means looking at specialist resource provision, wider provision within mainstream schools, and then designated units as the most complex provisions. This provision is being discussed by the 0-25 SEND Sufficiency working group which includes a number of headteachers from both primary and secondary phases. LB expressed thanks to the headteachers for contributing to a discussion which he is aware has been ongoing for a long time.</p> <p>LB gave an example of the level of discussion, noting that one way of moving forward and rationalising the provision across the authority to meet the needs coming through would be to focus on aligning provision with the four categories of need in the code. This would mean primary SRPs focused on cognition and learning, communication, interaction, SEMH and sensory, with further RPs matching this provision in</p> |

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| | <p>secondary. DUs would offer more complex provision, but ensuring there is a follow-through from primary through to secondary.</p> <p>LB commented on the place planning process, noting that there could be a shortfall of around 20 places in specialist provision in September 2024. There is work to do to meet the need within to avoid significant costs associated with out-of-borough provision.</p> <p>NM asked for a clearer timeline on when the LA was expecting thinking to have a conclusion around resource basis. LB confirmed that nothing will change overnight and it wouldn't be this academic year. NM asked if LB has spoken to all schools that have a resource base? LB confirmed that this wasn't yet the case.</p> <p>NM asked when schools would be consulted on the plans. LB confirmed that he didn't know yet. NM advised that she wanted to be able to report back that there has been some movement made, but also wanted to highlight that although there are 22 pupils known to the LA that need to have a specialist provision, there will be others in primary schools that also need that specialist provision; these will be pupils where the school is still trying to get EHCP approval. LB confirmed he would be happy to provide a written answer on the timescale for consultation outside the meeting.</p> <p>NH noted that a revised joint commissioning strategy needs to go to cabinet by the end of the financial year, which means being drafted by early February. This will set out the principles behind revised joint commissioning, looking at places for 2025, 2026 and 2027.</p> |
| <p>994.</p> | <p>Growth Fund</p> <p>TM introduced the item on the 2024-25 Growth Fund, confirming that the paper is shared in January every year to set out the criteria that should be applied for allocation of the growth fund and the top slice that the LA is recommending should be allocated.</p> <p>TM noted the demographic changes which affected the demand on Growth Fund. Following significant growth in recent years, the birth rate has been dropping in the west area, leading to surplus primary capacity in the west. However, there is significant in-year pressure in the central and east areas, particularly with higher primary year groups. Two bulge classes have been opened this year already at Marish and Godolphin Junior, and Ryvers School have increased class sizes since April 2023. Secondary schools are at the peak of demand for year 7. All Year 7 pupils have got a school place, and there are some pressures in upper year groups. Most of the available capacity is at Grove Academy, with some also at Wexham. Places are sufficient for future demand.</p> <p>TM noted the current thinking to use bulge classes and increased class sizes rather than proposing full form-of-entry expansions. However, the LA would be seeking expressions of interests from schools that might want to expand by whole or partial forms of entry. TM drew members' attention to the DfE criteria for the growth fund, and also commented that falling roles funding was not judged to be required at this point. No changes were being proposed to the criteria for accessing growth funding, including the second year of support for academies because of the different financial year and lagged funding mechanism.</p> <p>Although there is expected to be an underspend on 2023-24, likely to be around £120k, this is absorbed into the DSG because of the overall deficit. TM confirmed that the recommendation was therefore for a top slice from Schools Block of £500k in 2024-25. This included commitments to bulge of around £91,000, and a high contingency sum of £409,000. This is a higher contingency there than we would normally have, and potentially covers 6 in-year primary classes.</p> <p>The Chair thanked TM for a very detailed and comprehensive presentation and asked for any questions or comments. JoR queried the amount of the contingency and asked for some further comment from TM on why it was thought to be necessary. TM noted that that the overall allocation requested was relatively low compared to previous years, so the percentage looks high, and further commented that given that the funding for a secondary class would be around £150,000-£160,000, the level was felt to be reasonable given the pressure we're under and the number of classes we may need. A number of colleagues have met as part of the place planning working group; the initial recommendation is for 4 additional classes on top of what has already been opened, which use the whole contingency if all opened immediately.</p> <p>MW asked what happens to the previous year's underspend being absorbed into the DSG why is doesn't simply offset next year. SH advised that for the DSG and for all blocks, any overspend goes into a ring-fenced reserve, not accessible to SBC for general purposes. Almost the only element in the schools block which goes into the schools block DSG reserve is growth fund, because everything else is either transferred</p> |

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| | <p>to another block or paid to schools. SH advised that she wanted to check movement in and out of this reserve, and the Chair agreed that they would pick this issue up outside the meeting.</p> <p>The Chair proposed that Forum approve the criteria as they are unchanged, and also endorse the £500k top slice for 2024-25. This was agreed by Form members.</p> |
| <p>995</p> | <p>Proposal for AP Place Funding 2024/2025</p> <p>The Chair asked Jamie Rockman (JR) summarise for his proposal.</p> <p>JR noted that, as part of the DSG Management plan and safety valve programme, funding for alternative provision and particularly preventative alternative provision places has been reduced in Slough over the last few years, with an impact at secondary level more than primary. Schools recognise that the local authority doesn't have a statutory duty to fund preventative alternative provision. However, schools still require that provision to support their young people and try to prevent permanent exclusions across the town, which obviously would have an adverse effect on the funding of statutory provisions. Without preventative alternative provision, it is very likely that permanent exclusions will increase. That burden tends to fall on a small number of schools both at primary and secondary level. The idea behind proposal was to try and collectively fund and develop a preventative alternative provision across Slough which would support all schools across the town as and when they need it, and trying to ensure that all schools are contributing at some point in order to build and develop that system.</p> <p>The Chair thanked JR and confirmed that the proposal had been discussed extensively in the Slough Secondary Headteacher's meeting. He confirmed that the proposal from JR was for an additional top slice of £150k pounds from the 2024-25 schools block to support these provisions, in other words, to spread the cost of the additional provision out amongst all schools.</p> <p>The Chair noted that the 5-16 task group had discussed this at some length in a meeting with SH the previous day; the conclusion was that the group had been very supportive of the principles, but could not see a mechanism in the current version of the formula to actually allocate the funding, primarily due to the tightening of criteria around how you can use money. With this being the case, the purpose of this discussion now was understand what Forum members thought about the principle of trying to use schools block funding to support non-statutory provision, and how pressure could be applied to the DfE to allow this.</p> <p>MW confirmed the detailed discussion from the Task Group and the absolute support for the principle of collaborative or collective funding, as although non-statutory, this element of preventative provision is potentially so powerful in avoiding permanent exclusion. However, the inability to guarantee the funding because of the lack of a mechanism through the formula means that that there is less staffing stability for the provider organization.</p> <p>VH confirmed the support within the Task Group, and the interest in collaborative funding through top slice. NM confirmed it was a positive discussion and suggested that the right approach might be to go to the DfE commissioners and really push them to see how preventative AP funding could be secured.</p> <p>SH confirmed her support for the principles of this, and that by doing so there was a potential for saving long-term funds. However, the schools block funding methodology does not have a way in which this could happen. The only way to top slice the schools block, apart from to fund growth, is to transfer to another block. The most appropriate way of putting this funding somewhere for this purpose would be to put it to the high needs block. However, the issues is the level of attention given to the high needs block because of the deficit, and the DfE Commissioners position that the high neds block can only fund statutory services.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Sarah and advised that even if there were a way of transferring the funding, or putting some sort of collaborative arrangement in place to fund, there was insufficient time given the deadline for APT submission in mid-January. The Chair suggested trying to put some pressure on the Commissioners to come up with a mechanism, and also for Forum to start exploring what we might be possible for 2025-26 so that the proper proposal could be put in place.</p> <p>RB commented that he agreed with the principles but was concerned about what would happen to young people if an alternative model cannot be developed.</p> <p>The Chair summarised the Forum position as being very supportive of the principle of the proposal for collaborative funding of non-statutory alternative provision from the schools block, and beginning willing to press the Commissioners for help in finding a way to move this forward.</p> |

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| <p>996</p> | <p>DSG Schools Block 2024/2025</p> <p>The Chair introduced this item by commending the significant amount of work done by SH and colleagues in the local authority in a very short space of time. The DfE had published the APT later than expected while keeping the same deadline for return. There have been a number of “technical issues” within the structure of the NFF this year, and some changes which had been more challenging to work through.</p> <p>The Chair referred to the meeting of the 5-16 Task Group which had been held the previous day, where the LA proposals had been subject to a significant level of scrutiny and discussion. Forum members were reminded of the powers of Forum in relation to the schools block, which was to comment on the formula proposals and make recommendations to the LA, who retained the decision-making authority.</p> <p>SH noted the majority of NFF factors were kept at the mid-point of the allowable range. Mobility and split site factors were kept at the lower end of the range. A significant change for 2024-25 was to bring the payments for split sites fully within the formula. Payments comprise a base factor for each additional site, and a factor is based on the distance from the main school; the effect is to raise the funding to £84k per additional site, compared to the local level of £34k in previous years. Slough has two schools with split sites, Claycotts and Langley Hall Primary Academy; in 2023-24 each school received £34k for its additional site. LPHA has had two further sites approved by the DfE and therefore receives a significantly higher level of funding than in previous years. The total allocation through the split site factor has increased from £68k in 2023-24 to £305k in 2024-25, reducing the headroom available for distribution to all schools. After applying the NFF based on revised census numbers, and including the £500k growth fund allocation, the remaining headroom level was £0.623m - significantly lower than anticipated at the December Forum.</p> <p>The Chair asked SH to confirm that the split site issue was out of our control because the DfE have changed the criteria and schools can have additional sites directly approved by the DfE. SH confirmed that the information is pre-populated on the APT. SH confirmed she had raised a query with the DfE who had confirmed the approval of the additional sites. The Chair advised that there had been significant discussion about this issue within the 5-16 Task Group and had asked SH to raise a further query with the DfE to ensure that all the criteria for attracting split site funding were being properly met.</p> <p>The Chair summarised the 5-16 Task Group discussion, noting the recommendation to agree the LA proposals for the local formula and endorse the distribution of the remaining headroom through basic entitlement. The Task Group recognised the need to review the position on mobility, which historically has been a factor that was thought not to target the right pupils in the right schools.</p> <p>SH also asked Forum to confirm the November 2023 provisional decision to transfer 0.5% from the schools block to the high needs block. SH confirmed that her understanding was that the additional transfer of £100k to the CSSB which had been made in previous years had not been requested and the assumption was that it was not required. If it proved to be necessary because of a mistake having been made, the £100k would be taken from the 0.5% transfer, with the balance transferring to the high needs block.</p> <p>Forum members therefore confirmed the November 2023 provisional decision to transfer 0.5% to the high needs block, and endorsed the local authority's proposals for the 2024-25 local formula and the distribution of schools block headroom through basic entitlement.</p> |
| <p>997</p> | <p>Early Years Block 2024/2025</p> <p>The Chair introduced the Early Years block paper which set out the conclusion of the Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) modelling following the outcome of the consultation with the EY Task Group. Forum was asked to endorse Slough's Early Years Funding Formula for 2024-25 by noting the conclusions of the work to develop the 2024-25 EYNFF funding model and associated budget development, and the LA recommendation to implement option 2 as per the outcome of the Early Years Task Group.</p> <p>BB commented that the LA had done a fantastic job here of producing a paper with a high level of clarity about the rationale behind the decision-making process. The Chair noted that it was encouraging to hear about the good work going on in the EY sector and the management of finances around early years.</p> <p>Forum members noted the contents of the report and endorsed the decisions made</p> |
| <p>998</p> | <p>2022/23 Forward Agenda Plan</p> <p>The Chair directed Forum members to the forward agenda for the remaining meetings of the academic year, and noted this would be updated prior to the next meeting in March.</p> |

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| 999 | Key Decisions Log The Chair directed members to the log and noted this would be updated following this meeting. |
| 1000 | Any Other Business (notified at start of meeting) None |

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| School Forum 13th March 2024 | |
| Report from Executive Director of People - Children Service | |
| School Block Final Allocation 2024-25 | |
| Wards Affected: | All |
| Key or Non-Key Decision: | N/A |
| No. of Appendices: | N/A |
| Contact Officer(s): | Neil Hoskinson Director of Education Email: Neil.Hoskinson@slough.gov.uk Sarah Hockly Strategic Finance Manager – Children’s Email: Sarah.Hockly@slough.gov.uk |

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To advise Schools Forum of the final Schools Block Allocation for financial year 2024-25 and detail any changes from the draft information provided in the January 2024 Schools Forum.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Schools Forum note the DSG cabinet report presented on 26th February 2024, and subsequently forwarded to Council on 7th March 2024 detailing DSG allocations, including APT factors for the School Block.

3 Schools Block Final Allocations

- 3.1 In Schools Forum meeting January 2024, it was reported that after application of the agreed funding factors, there was a provisional headroom of £0.623m to be allocated to Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) as per the consultation undertaken in November 2023.
- 3.2 Following initial submission to ESFA and following ESFA guidance on necessary adjustments to PFI and NNDR, the final Authority Proforma Tool (APT) was agreed and submitted to ESFA.
- 3.3 A report was developed and presented to Cabinet on 26th February 2024 and the Cabinet agreed to recommend the budgets to Council on the 7th March 2024. The Cabinet paper is available as a public document online, but for ease will be distributed to Schools Forum with the agenda pack.

- 3.4 Detailed Individual School Budgets were distributed to maintained schools on 28th February 2024.
- 3.5 The agreed funding factors and allocations used in the calculation of the APT are included in Appendix A, and the Individual School Budgets are detailed in Appendix B.

4 Adjustments and allocation of headroom

- 4.1 The provisional headroom was allocated to the factors as per table 1 below: -

Table1:-

| Reconciliation of submitted APT | | |
|---|-------|--------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Provisional headroom Schools Forum Jan24 | | 0.623 |
| Adjustments advised by ESFA | | |
| NNDR prior year adjustment | | 0.112 |
| PFI funding | | 0.027 |
| Revised headroom for allocation to AWPU | | 0.484 |
| Made up of:- | | |
| Allocation to AWPU | | |
| Primary | 0.323 | |
| Secondary KS3 | 0.226 | |
| Secondary KS4 | 0.178 | |
| | | 0.726 |
| Minimum funding guarantee | | - 0.216 |
| Minimum per pupil funding level | | - 0.027 |
| Total | | 0.484 |

- 4.2 As advised by ESFA an adjustment of £0.112m was included as an allocation to maintained schools to compensate for the difference between the NNDR funding received through the APT and the incurred NNDR in 2023-24.
- 4.2.1 National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) are included in the APT at the estimated level for the prior year, as submitted in the previous year's APT. ESFA settle the rates payable for Academies directly with the Local Authority, so any differences due to the estimate or time lag are not incurred by the schools.
- 4.2.2 Until 2023-24, maintained schools received the NNDR as reported in the APT which differed to the actual value payable due to the time lag and the estimated nature of the figures. From 2024-25, maintained schools will also have their NNDR settled directly between ESFA and the Local Authority.
- 4.2.3 ESFA advised that the difference between the NNDR received by maintained schools through the APT in 2023-24 and the NNDR incurred in 2023-24 should be paid to those schools through the 2024-25 APT. No adjustment would be payable in future years as all schools will have their NNDR settled directly by ESFA.

4.3 As advised by ESFA the RPI(X) used to calculate the PFI funding was amended to be 10.4%, being the April 2023 rate. This resulted in an increase in the allocation of £0.27m.

4.4 As a result of the NNDR and PFI adjustments detailed above, the remaining headroom to be allocated to AWPU was £0.484m. Increased allocations to AWPU feed through the model and reduce the calculated allocations for Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) and Minimum Per Pupil Funding Level (MPPFL). As a result, £0.726m was allocated to AWPU, and this was offset by a reduction of £0.216m for MFG and £0.027m for MPPFL.

5. Block Transfers

5.1 Schools were consulted prior to the November 2023 Schools Forum meeting and although there was a low response, the majority of schools agreed to 0.5% reduction in schools block for the purpose of funding high needs. This was provisionally agreed in the November 2023 Schools Forum for ratification in January 2024 once the APT was published.

5.2 At its meeting in January 2024, Schools Forum agreed to transfer 0.5% of the Schools Block allocation to the High Needs Block with the caveat that, if required, £100,000 of this balance was to be transferred to CSSB to support admissions activities as per the previous two years. Further analysis of the CSSB budget for 2024/25 indicated that this block transfer of £100,000 was necessary, resulting in a High Needs Block transfer of £761,539.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The financial implications have been detailed in the body of this paper.

7 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 Not applicable

8 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

8.1 Not applicable

9 Legal Implications

9.1 There are no legal implications for this report.

10 Equality Implications

10.1 Not applicable

Appendix A:- Authority Proforma Tool 2024/25

| 1) Basic Entitlement Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) | Description | Amount per pupil | | Pupil Units | | Sub Total | Total | Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%) |
|---|--|---------------------------|--|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| | Primary (Years R-6) | £3,794.51 | | 16,532.00 | | £62,730,839 | £133,483,273 | 78.22% |
| | Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9) | £5,349.82 | | 7,589.00 | | £40,599,784 | | |
| | Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11) | £6,030.53 | | 5,000.00 | | £30,152,650 | | |
| | Description | Primary amount per pupil | Secondary amount per pupil | Eligible proportion of primary NOR | Eligible proportion of secondary NOR | Sub Total | Total | Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%) |
| 2) Deprivation | FSM | £520.00 | £520.00 | 3,383.00 | 2,551.00 | £3,085,680 | £12,493,635 | 7.32% |
| | FSM6 | £870.00 | £1,275.00 | 3,464.00 | 2,806.00 | £6,591,330 | | |
| | IDACI Band F | £250.00 | £360.00 | 3,598.21 | 2,845.98 | £1,924,108 | | |
| | IDACI Band E | £305.00 | £480.00 | 989.69 | 871.30 | £720,081 | | |
| | IDACI Band D | £475.00 | £670.00 | 156.19 | 117.06 | £152,619 | | |
| | IDACI Band C | £515.00 | £735.00 | 2.01 | 17.01 | £13,534 | | |
| | IDACI Band B | £550.00 | £785.00 | 0.00 | 8.01 | £6,284 | | |
| | IDACI Band A | £720.00 | £1,005.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | £0 | | |
| | Description | Primary amount per pupil | Secondary amount per pupil | Eligible proportion of primary NOR | Eligible proportion of secondary NOR | Sub Total | Total | Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%) |
| 3) English as an Additional Language (EAL) | EAL 3 Primary | £625.00 | | 5,485.51 | | £3,428,443 | £4,962,123 | 2.91% |
| | EAL 3 Secondary | | £1,680.00 | | 764.42 | £1,284,231 | | |
| 4) Mobility | Pupils starting school outside of normal entry dates | £302.78 | £434.65 | 555.88 | 186.68 | £249,449 | | |
| | Description | Weighting | Amount per pupil (primary or secondary respectively) | Percentage of eligible pupils | Eligible proportion of primary and secondary NOR respectively | Sub Total | Total | Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%) |
| 5) Low prior attainment | Primary low prior attainment | | £1,240.00 | 30.15% | 4,983.88 | £6,180,005 | £10,274,214 | 6.02% |
| | Secondary low prior attainment (year 7) | 55.77% | | 17.55% | | | | |
| | Secondary low prior attainment (year 8) | 54.47% | | 17.34% | | | | |
| | Secondary low prior attainment (year 9) | 54.47% | £1,880.00 | 17.44% | 2,177.77 | £4,094,209 | | |
| | Secondary low prior attainment (year 10) | 64.53% | | 17.13% | | | | |
| | Secondary low prior attainment (year 11) | 64.53% | | 17.02% | | | | |
| Factor | | | Lump Sum per Primary School (£) | Lump Sum per Secondary School (£) | Lump Sum per Middle School (£) | Lump Sum per All-through School (£) | Total (£) | Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%) |
| 6) Lump Sum | | | £142,250.00 | £142,250.00 | | | £6,116,750 | 3.58% |
| 7) Sparsity factor | | | £60,435.00 | £87,850.00 | £87,850.00 | £87,850.00 | £0 | 0.00% |
| 8) Fringe Payments | | | | | Fringe multiplier | 1.0000 | £0 | 0.00% |
| 9) Split Sites | | Basic eligibility funding | | £55,415.18 | Distance funding rate | £27,759.19 | £304,938 | 0.18% |
| 10) Rates | | | | | | | £1,857,631 | 1.09% |
| 11) PFI funding | | | | | | | £1,056,268 | 0.62% |
| 13) Additional funding to meet minimum per pupil funding level | | | | | | | £99,721 | 0.06% |
| Total Funding for Schools Block Formula (excluding MFG Funding Total) | | | | | | | £170,648,553 | 100.00% |
| 14) Minimum Funding Guarantee | | | | | | 0.50% | £297,789 | |
| Total Funding for Schools Block Formula | | | | | | | £170,946,342 | |
| Growth fund (if applicable) | | | | | | | £500,018 | |
| Total Funding For Schools Block Formula (including growth and falling rolls funding) | | | | | | | £171,446,360 | |
| Block transfers | CSSB | | | | | | £100,000 | |
| | HNB | | | | | | £761,539 | |
| DSG School Block | | | | | | | £172,307,899 | |

Abbreviations:-

FSM – Free School Meals

IDACI – Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index

Appendix B:- **Summary Individual School Budgets**

| URN | LAESTAB | School Name | NOR | Post De-delegation and Education functions budget after deduction of 24-25 NFF NNDR allocation |
|--------------|---------|---|---------------|--|
| Total | | | 29,121 | £169,201,180 |
| 109943 | 8712252 | Wexham Court Primary School | 634 | £3,146,614 |
| 130372 | 8712255 | Penn Wood Primary and Nursery School | 627 | £3,769,972 |
| 132089 | 8712256 | Claycots School | 1,532 | £7,929,496 |
| 109995 | 8713070 | St Mary's Church of England Primary School | 626 | £3,271,166 |
| 110035 | 8713353 | Our Lady of Peace Catholic Primary and Nursery School | 402 | £1,950,064 |
| 135099 | 8713367 | Iqra Slough Islamic Primary School | 623 | £3,007,638 |
| 110089 | 8715201 | Priory School | 590 | £2,971,844 |
| 110090 | 8715202 | Holy Family Catholic Primary School | 422 | £1,992,996 |
| 110095 | 8715207 | Pippins School | 175 | £952,696 |
| 110078 | 8714089 | Wexham School | 1,071 | £7,722,879 |
| 110084 | 8714700 | St Bernard's Catholic Grammar School | 790 | £4,798,111 |
| 136951 | 8712000 | Langley Hall Primary Academy | 737 | £3,619,334 |
| 139198 | 8712001 | Willow Primary School | 408 | £2,092,008 |
| 139333 | 8712002 | James Elliman Academy | 647 | £3,186,516 |
| 139567 | 8712003 | Colnbrook Church of England Primary School | 197 | £1,154,763 |
| 139943 | 8712004 | Foxborough Primary School | 203 | £1,220,274 |
| 140335 | 8712005 | Montem Academy | 834 | £4,236,454 |
| 140857 | 8712006 | Western House Academy | 629 | £3,023,655 |
| 140994 | 8712007 | The Langley Heritage Primary | 447 | £2,211,577 |
| 142173 | 8712008 | The Langley Academy Primary | 632 | £2,913,520 |
| 144501 | 8712009 | The Godolphin Junior Academy | 432 | £2,246,806 |
| 138731 | 8712196 | Phoenix Infant Academy | 270 | £1,567,105 |
| 143802 | 8713363 | St Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School | 404 | £2,042,125 |
| 143804 | 8713364 | St Anthony's Catholic Primary School | 452 | £2,293,227 |
| 138166 | 8713365 | Marish Primary School | 743 | £3,676,771 |
| 148379 | 8713366 | Khalsa Primary School | 450 | £2,213,267 |
| 138013 | 8715200 | Cippenham School | 1,025 | £4,828,697 |
| 138659 | 8715204 | Castleview Primary School | 431 | £2,046,242 |
| 137010 | 8715208 | Lynch Hill School Primary Academy | 839 | £4,218,795 |
| 138192 | 8715209 | Ryvers School | 632 | £3,144,126 |
| 141009 | 8714002 | Ditton Park Academy | 900 | £6,132,872 |
| 141970 | 8714003 | Eden Girls' School, Slough | 620 | £4,227,319 |
| 146820 | 8714006 | Lynch Hill Enterprise Academy | 871 | £6,265,654 |
| 137259 | 8714082 | Baylis Court School | 799 | £5,478,327 |
| 143327 | 8714085 | Beechwood School | 721 | £5,981,383 |
| 137287 | 8714510 | Slough and Eton Church of England Business and Enterprise College | 922 | £6,759,907 |
| 143803 | 8714800 | St Joseph's Catholic High School | 779 | £5,079,945 |
| 136521 | 8715405 | Langley Grammar School | 903 | £5,453,213 |
| 137726 | 8715407 | Herschel Grammar School | 754 | £4,581,188 |
| 136420 | 8715408 | Upton Court Grammar School | 827 | £5,016,874 |
| 138012 | 8715409 | The Westgate School | 1,191 | £8,037,427 |
| 135631 | 8716905 | The Langley Academy | 909 | £6,064,796 |
| 149897 | 8714008 | Grove Academy | 1,021 | £6,673,538 |

Note:-

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Distributable Schools budget (as above) | £169,201,180 |
| NNDR direct payments | £1,745,162 |
| Total Funding for School Block Formula | £170,946,342 |

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Slough Borough Council

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Report To: | Cabinet |
| Date: | 26 February 2024 |
| Subject: | School Funding Report – Dedicated Schools Grant 2024/2025 |
| Lead Member: | Cllr. Puja Bedi – Lead Member for Education, Children’s Services and Lifelong Learning |
| Chief Officer: | Sue Butcher – Executive Director Children’s Services |
| Contact Officer: | Neil Hoskinson – Associate Director of Education Sarah Hockly – Strategic Finance Manager |
| Ward(s): | All |
| Key Decision: | Yes |
| Exempt: | No |
| Decision Subject To Call In: | Yes |
| Appendices: | Appendix A:- Authority Proforma Tool 2024/25 |

1. Summary and Recommendations

1.1 This report sets out details of the 2024/2025 Dedicated School Grant (DSG) and the formula funding to be used in the Authority Proforma Tool submission which indicates the level of funding for each mainstream school in Slough.

Recommendations:

1.2 Cabinet to recommend the budgets to Council to:

- (a) Note the DSG allocations for Slough (Table 1) as published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
- (b) Approve the local authority formula for allocating resources to Slough schools for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix A, the Authority Proforma Tool (APT).
- (c) Approve a transfer from the Schools Block allocation of £100,000 to the Central Schools Services Block and £761,539 to the High Needs Block in the 2024/25 financial year (£861,539 being 0.5% of the total schools' block allocation).
- (d) Approve the Dedicated Schools Grant Budget for 2024/25 at £231,514,470 including the allocations between the four funding blocks as set out in this report.
- (e) Delegate authority to the Executive Director – Children’s Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Children and Education and the Executive Director for Finance and Commercial, to make minor changes to the schools’ budget in year.

Reason:

- 1.3 The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is the ringfenced grant from Government that provides each local authority with an allocation of funding for schools and services for pupils.
- 1.4 This report outlines the 4 blocks of the DSG, and the current proposals to allocate the published DSG allocation. Schools Forum received the Schools Block and Early Years Block proposals at the meeting held on 11 January 2024, as well as allocation information for High Needs and Central Services.
- 1.5 ESFA require political ratification of the formula funding to be used in the Authority Proforma Tool (APT) prior to distribution of final budgets to schools by 29th February 2024. The completed APT was returned to ESFA by the deadline of 22 Jan 2024. On this occasion, schools will receive indicative budgets with confirmation of ratification following the Council meeting.

In future years, the service will work with Democratic Services to ensure that the budget paper for DSG is discussed at a Council meeting in February to enable this deadline to be achieved.

Commissioner Review

- 1.6 This report sets out Slough's share of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and the proposed allocations for 2024/25, which include the breakdown for the Schools Block, High Needs Block, Early Years Block and Central School Services Block, which enable local authorities to deliver their statutory duties.

The Council retains responsibility for setting the overall level of their Individual Schools Budget (ISB) and for determining schools' budget shares, subject to the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations. The move towards a 'hard' National Funding Formula (NFF) continues, whereby individual school budgets will be set directly by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) rather than through a locally agreed funding formula. However, in 2024/25 the Council still has a degree of flexibility and following consultation with schools and Schools Forum, decides whether the formula is applied in full or a locally determined adjusted formula used.

Report

2. Introduction

- 2.1 School Funding is received through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), and is split into four blocks, each with its own formula to calculate the funding to be distributed to each local Authority, and with specific regulations on what each block of funding can be spent on:
 - 2.1.1 Schools Block (SB) – funds pupils in Reception to Year 11 in state-funded mainstream schools and academies through the school's funding formula, premises funding and growth funding for new and growing schools or bulge classes.
 - 2.1.2 High Needs Block (HNB) – funds places in special schools, resource units and alternative provision, and top up funding for pupils with Education, Health & Care

Plans (EHCPs) in all settings including non-maintained special schools, independent special schools, and further education colleges.

- 2.1.3 Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) – funds services provided by the local authority centrally for all schools and academies, such as the admissions service.
- 2.1.4 Early Years Block (EYB)– funds the free entitlement for 2, 3, & 4-year olds in all early year’s settings in the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector as well as maintained nursery schools, and nursery classes in mainstream primary schools. In 2024/25, funding has been extended to include further funding for qualifying working parents of 2-year-olds and children over 9 months.
- 2.2 The DSG is a ring-fenced grant and must be deployed in accordance with the conditions of grant and the latest School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations. Detailed guidance for each block is contained within various operational documents issued by the Education Funding & Skills Agency (EFSA).
- 2.3 Certain transfers between the individual blocks of the DSG are allowed providing they meet the regulations and appropriate procedures are followed. This includes a maximum of 0.5% of the schools budget being transferred to other blocks but only if Schools Forum has explicitly agreed this. Any transfer over this limit or up to this limit without Schools Forum approval would require a disapplication from the Department for Education.
- 2.4 Schools were consulted prior to the November 2023 Schools Forum meeting and although there was a low response, the majority of schools agreed to 0.5% reduction in schools' block for the purpose of funding high needs. This was provisionally agreed in the November 2023 Schools Forum for ratification in January 2024 once the APT was published.
- 2.5 At its meeting in January 2024, Schools Forum agreed to transfer 0.5% of the Schools Block allocation to the High Needs Block with the caveat that, if required, £100,000 of this balance was to be transferred to CSSB to support admissions activities as per the previous two years. Further analysis of the CSSB budget for 2024/25 indicated that this block transfer of £100,000 was necessary, resulting in a High Needs Block transfer of £761,539.
- 2.6 Schools Forum meet a minimum of four times a year and the papers for the meetings can be found on the following link:

[Browse meetings - Slough Schools Forum](#)

3. DSG Allocation and Budgets for 2024/25

3.1 The detailed DSG allocations for 2024/25 are as follows: -

Table 1: DSG Funding 2023/24 and 2024/25 (excluding block transfers)

| DSG Block | 2023/24 Funding | Adjustment Jul23 | Adjusted 2023/24 Funding | 2024/25 Funding | Change | Change |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | % |
| Schools Block ¹ | 162,757 | 0 | 162,757 | 172,308 | 9,550 | 5.87% |
| High Needs Block ² | 34,597 | 1,950 | 36,547 | 37,481 | 1,024 | 2.80% |
| Central Schools Services Block | 785 | 0 | 785 | 840 | 55 | 8.28% |
| Early Year Block ³ | 15,532 | -649 | 14,883 | 20,886 | 6,003 | 40.33% |
| | 213,672 | 1,301 | 214,972 | 231,515 | 16,543 | 7.70% |

Note 1:- In addition to the DSG Schools Block Funding there was a Main Stream Additional Grant (MSAG) of £5.433 million in 2023/24. When added to the schools block funding above this takes mainstream schools funding to £168.190 million in 2023/24. MSAG is incorporated into the 2024/25 Schools Block allocations.

Note 2:- The HNB Allocation 2023/24 was amended by DfE in July 2023 to reflect subsequent data on places and import/export figures.

Note3:- The EYB Allocation 2023/24 was amended by the DfE in July 2023 to reflect the latest EY census data from January 2023. This amendment was in relation to 2022/23 funding. The EYB allocation 2024/25 may be revised for 2023/24 when the January 2024 census data becomes available.

4. Schools Block

- 4.1 The Schools Block funding allocations to local authorities are calculated by aggregating the amount of funding for pupils in Reception to Year 11 in Maintained schools and Academies and is calculated for each school using October 2023 census information under the National Funding Formula.
- 4.2 Each local authority has the flexibility to set each factor within a 2.5% tolerance of the NFF, except where local formulae are not already mirroring the NFF in which case they must move 10% closer to the NFF each year. Other than the mobility factors, all factors in Slough mirror NFF +/- 2.5%. For proposed factor values, see Appendix A.
- 4.3 In agreement with Schools Forum, Slough Borough Council's approach to setting the schools funding formula for 2024-25 has been to mirror the national funding formula rates, rounded up to the closest 5 or 0, with the following exceptions: -
- 4.3.1 Mobility factors – set to the minimum allowable value, converging to NFF by 10% per year as per agreement with Schools Forum and following previous years funding formula.
- 4.3.2 Split site allowances – new formulaic approach to allocating funding for split sites introduced in 2024/25 which is far more generous than prior year allocations. Rates set to minimum which is 2.5% below NFF.

- 4.3.3 AWPU (basic entitlement for Age Weighted Pupil Unit) – allocated all headroom remaining after setting other NFF factors, growth fund, block transfers and prescribed NNDR (National Non-Domestic Rates) adjustments. This is in accordance with a consultation undertaken with maintained schools and academies prior to the November 2023 meeting of Schools Forum.
- 4.4 In 2024/25 ESFA introduced a compulsory national formulaic approach to split site funding which replaces the previous locally agreed approach and more than doubles the allocation for each additional site. In 2023/24, two schools were allocated £34,300 for one additional site each. In 2024/25 one of the schools applied to ESFA for two further sites to be acknowledged, and, as a result, there have been 4 additional site payments totalling £304,938. Split site funding can only be given if the additional site is part of the main site (sharing same unique reference number), separated by a public road or railway and has a school-maintained building on it primarily used for the education of 5 to 16 year olds in mainstream education.
- 4.5 PFI Premises allocations of £1.056m are in respect of 2 mainstream schools and increase annually with RPI(X) which has been advised by ESFA to be 10.4% for the 2024/25 APT, being the published rate for April 2023. Allocations for PFI contracts only cover additional costs relating to building costs, it does not cover other services such as facilities management or energy costs.
- 4.6 The vast majority of PFI costs, in relation to 2 mainstream schools and 1 special school, are paid under contract to QED Ltd and elements of the charge are increased annually using the February RPI(X). In 2023/24, invoiced costs are forecast to be £7.74m. There are contributions towards these costs via a number of routes (the schools themselves, other DfE grants and Schools Block DSG), but the remaining costs, known as the funding gap, are currently funded through the General Fund of Slough Borough Council. The funding gap in 2024/5 is budgeted at £1.67m.
- 4.7 The School Block funding includes funding for National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR). ESFA already pays NNDR for academies directly to the local authority and from 2024/25 the local authority has opted into a central payment system to enable ESFA to pay NNDR for maintained schools directly. This improves efficiency for officers and maintained schools by removing the need to distribute and then later re-collect funds and removes the time lag relating to the allocated ESFA funding which is based on estimates for prior years rates.
- 4.8 The 2024/25 allocations for NNDR include an adjustment for maintained schools equal to the difference between the NNDR funding for 2023/24 and the actual NNDR rates billed for 2023/24. This will be unnecessary in future years due to the adoption of the central payment system.
- 4.9 Using the October 2023 census information which outlines the number of children on roll at each setting, schools may be allocated funding to ensure a Minimum Per Pupil Level (MPPL).

Table 2: The minimum funding rate per pupil in 2024/25

| Factor | Unit Value | Eligibility |
|---|------------|--|
| Primary basic per pupil funding | £4,610 | Each pupil on the school roll in year groups from reception to year 6 inclusive. |
| Key stage 3 (KS3) basic per-pupil funding | £5,771 | Each pupil on the school roll in year groups from year 7 to year 9 inclusive. |
| Key stage 4 (KS4) basic per-pupil funding | £6,331 | Each pupil on the school roll in year 10 and year 11 |

4.10 The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) has been set at +0.5% which means that every primary and secondary school will receive an increase in funding per pupil of at least this percentage in 2024/25 through the pupil led element of the schools funding formula. The MFG can be set between 0.00% and 0.5%. In setting the MFG at the maximum, this reduces the headroom to address other local factors in the formula.

4.11 Growth Fund of £500,000, and the related funding criteria, has been approved by Schools Forum to fund the growth needs of all the schools in Slough, including new and existing maintained schools and academies. Any over or under spend in relation to this growth funding will be carried forward in a ring-fenced DSG reserve for Schools Block. A small rounding difference (£18) is also included to balance the APT.

5. Central Schools Services Block

5.1 The CSSB covers funding allocated to LAs to carry out central functions on behalf of pupils in maintained schools and academies. CSSB funding is split into two elements: funding for ongoing responsibilities and funding for historic commitments, where the LAs' total CSSB NFF funding is the sum of these two values. LAs will receive the majority of their CSSB funding through a basic per-pupil rate.

5.2 The per pupil rate used in CSSB for Slough is the 3rd lowest in the country at £27.98 for 2024/5 compared to an average in England of £40.27. These rates are based on a proforma completed by local authorities in 2017 detailing spend in each of the DSG blocks which showed a very low spend in Slough and resulted in a baseline of £20.19 per pupil. This rate has increased by the gains cap each year under the current DSG format.

Table 3 CSSB funding comparisons 2024/25

| Area | Per pupil rate 2024/25 (£) | Historic commitments 2024/25 (£) | Inclusive per pupil rate 2024/25 (£) |
|--------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Slough | 27.98 | 25,560 | 28.86 |
| RBWM | 43.98 | 20,077 | 48.35 |
| Reading | 42.82 | 21,372 | 53.25 |
| Average South East | 39.85 | | 51.33 |
| Average England | 40.27 | 557,427 | 51.39 |

- 5.3 This low level of per pupil funding has resulted in an ongoing pressure on Central School Services and, as a result, Schools Forum have agreed to an additional transfer from School Block to CSSB of £0.1m for the past 2 years (2022/23 and 2023/24) to support the admissions process.
- 5.4 The CSSB budget for 2024/25 is due to be presented for approval by Schools Forum in March 2024 and is expected to follow a similar format to previous years. The 2023/24 budget is as follows:-

Table 4 CSSB Budget 2023/24

| CSSB | 2023-2024 Budget |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Pupil led funding | 752,882 |
| Funding for historic commitments | 31,949 |
| Total CSSB allocation | 784,831 |
| | |
| Schools Block Contribution | 100,000 |
| | |
| Total Allocation in 2023 -24 | 884,831 |
| | |
| Expenditure | |
| Admissions | 292,000 |
| Statutory and Regulatory | 188,231 |
| Copyright Licences | 161,700 |
| Education Welfare | 144,700 |
| Accounting Support | 50,400 |
| LA Children’s Safeguarding Board | 30,000 |
| Asset Management | 12,800 |
| Servicing of Schools Forum | 5,000 |
| | 884,831 |

Latest forecasts indicate that Admissions and Copyright Licences will be overspent by approximately £22k in 2023/24 and that the Accounting Support is currently underfunded by £4k. This may be partially offset by savings in Statutory and Regulatory Services.

- 5.5 The central services budget allocation has increased by £0.055m from £0.785m in 2023/24 to £0.840m in 2024/25. Of this, £58k of the uplift is due to an increase in the per pupil rate and £4k is due to increased pupil numbers, offset by a reduction of £6k in the funding of historic commitments.
- 5.6 In line with 2022/23 and 2023/24, Schools Forum have approved a block transfer from Schools Block of £0.1m to support the admissions process in 2024/25 due to specific concerns about whether the admissions team would have adequate resource without this additional funding due to historic issues in this area.

6. Early Years Block (EYB)

6.1 The Early Years Block funds children under 5, it is comprised of the following entitlements:

- the 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of children from 9 months to 2 years old (new entitlement from 1 September 2024)
- the 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of 2-year-old children (new entitlement from 1 April 2024)
- the 15 hours entitlement for disadvantaged 2-year-olds
- the universal 15 hours entitlement for all 3 and 4-year-olds
- the additional 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of 3 and 4-year-olds

The EYB also contains an entitlement for:

- Maintained Nursery School (MNS) supplementary funding for 3 and 4-year-olds
- the Disability Access Fund (DAF) for eligible children accessing the early years entitlements
- the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) for each hour an eligible child takes up any of the early years entitlements

6.2 In light of the extended entitlements for 2-year-olds and under-twos, the Early Years Block allocation has increased by £6.003m to £20.886m (40.33%).

6.3 Early Years Funding regulations state that at least 95% of available early years funding must be passported to early years providers. Therefore, a maximum of £968k (5%) can be utilised by the authority to fund central functions that support early years provision.

6.4 A focus group of Early Years providers are consulted annually on the distribution of the early years funding formula and the central spend is agreed at Schools Forum. The Early Years task group were presented with 4 options to consider in December 2023 and selected 2 preferred options to put forward for the Early Years Sector to vote on.

Table 5: Early Years Funding Rates

| Current and proposed Early Years Funding Formula Factors 2024-25 | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Options put forward by the EY Task Group on 11-12-2023 | | | |
| EY Funding Formula Factor | Current-all EY Providers | Option 1 | Option 2 |
| 3&4 rate | £5.81 | £6.25 | £6.27 |
| Universal 15 hours | | | |
| Extended (working parent) 15 hours | | | |
| Deprivation (mandatory supplement) | £0.73 | £0.75 | £0.73 |
| 2 year old rate | | | |
| Disadvantaged 15 hours | £6.52 | £9.13 | £9.15 |
| Working parent 15 hours | New | | |
| Under 2 year old rate (from Sep'24) | New | £12.30 | £12.50 |

6.5 As a result of the consultation, Option 2 was selected as the preferred choice with 55% of the votes. The full report on the Early Years National Funding Formula 2024/25 can be found in the agenda papers for January 2024 Schools Forum.

7. High Needs Block

7.1 Educational provision in England for children and young people with 'high needs' is funded at local authority level through the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This covers the costs of placements in all types of specialist provision, additional funding for pupils in mainstream schools and settings with this level of needs and the costs of some special educational needs and disability (SEND) support services.

7.2 The allocation for the High Needs block has increased from £36.547m in 2023-24 to £37.481m in 2024-25.

7.3 At its meeting in January 2024, Schools Forum agreed to transfer 0.5% (£0.862m) of the Schools Block allocation to the High Needs Block to be adjusted by a transfer of £0.1m to the CSSB if deemed necessary. Further analysis of the CSSB budget have concluded that the £0.1m transfer will be required, and therefore the adjusted transfer to the High Needs Block will be £0.762m.

7.4 The 0.5% School Block transfer to the High Needs Block, adjusted for the £0.1m transfer to CSSB, has been assumed to be agreed annually until 2026/27 in the deficit management plan, as agreed with the DfE, as part of the Safety Valve Agreement.

8. Safety Valve Monitoring Report December 2023 Update

8.1 The provisional cumulative DSG Deficit at the start of the 2022/23 financial year was £25.5m and this increased to £25.6m at the end of the year due to an overspend on all DSG blocks of £0.1m. The actual DSG Deficit reduced to £14.8m due to the Safety Valve contribution for Year 1 of £10.8m. These figures are subject to further due diligence including a review of opening and closing balances as part of the wider council balance sheet review.

Table 6: DSG Cumulative Deficit

| All in millions | Schools | High Needs | Early Years | Central Services | Total Deficit | Cumulative Deficit |
|---|---------|------------|-------------|------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 2017-18 | | | | | 4.9 | |
| 2018-19 | -0.1 | 2.7 | -0.5 | 0.0 | 2.1 | 7.0 |
| 2019-20 | -0.1 | 5.9 | 0.4 | 0.0 | 6.2 | 13.2 |
| 2020-21 | 0.6 | 6.6 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 7.3 | 20.5 |
| 2021-22 | -0.1 | 4.8 | 0.3 | 0.0 | 5.0 | 25.5 |
| DSG Management Plan Deficit Write-off 2022-23 | | | | | -10.8 | 14.7 |
| Cumulative Deficit at 2022-23 | | | | | 0.1 | 14.8 |
| P8 2023-24 Forecast | | | | | -0.6 | 14.2 |
| Potential DSG Management Plan Deficit Write-off 2023-24 | | | | | | -3.2 |
| Forecast Cumulative Deficit 2023-24 | | | | | | 11.0 |

8.2 2023-24 Period 8 (November 2023 position) Budget Management report for High Needs DSG has total forecast spend of £24.9m against a budget of £25.1m. This contrasts with the Period 5 position of a forecast spend of £22.3m. However, the

previous report identified the potential risk of the backlog of 290 EHC plans with additional forecast spending of £2.6m and this is now factored into the outturn position. Therefore, the predicted position for 2023-24 is largely unchanged from the Period 5 position at an underspend of £0.155m. The actual predicted DSG Deficit position for the end of 2023/24 is a reduction to £11.0m once the Safety Valve contribution of £3.2m is received.

8.3 Overall, in 2023/24 the four DSG blocks are projected an underspend of £0.6m (£0.3m in schools block, £0.2m in high needs block and £0.1m in the early years block). Any over or underspend in 2023/24 will be posted to the ringfenced DSG reserves by block. Any School Block variance in 2023/24 will be in relation to the growth fund and the cumulative position will be monitored.

8.4 The biggest risks to the budget position for the High Needs Block are the rising demand for EHC plans, the shortage of special schools places and inflationary pressures.

9. Implications of the Recommendation

9.1 Financial Implications are contained within the report.

9.1.1 The DSG is a ring-fenced grant awarded by the ESFA to local authorities to allocate to schools. For a period of 3 years up to 31st March 2026, any deficit associated with the DSG is kept off local authorities' balance sheet due to a statutory override as set out in The Local Authorities Capital Finance and Accounting (England) Regulations. These regulations also prohibit local authorities from contributing from the General Fund to reduce the deficit.

9.2 Legal implications

9.2.1 The School and Early Years Finance Regulations are updated annually to set out the regulations for setting school budgets. These are supplemented by operational guidance by the Education & Skills Funding Agency. Whilst there is a move towards a national funding formula for schools, there remains an element of discretion for local authorities, subject to consultation and in some cases agreement of the Schools Forum. It is also expected that maintained and academy schools are consulted on any proposed amendments.

9.3 There are no Risk Management Implications directly arising.

9.4 There are no Environmental Implications directly arising.

9.5 There are no Equality Implications directly arising.

10. Background Papers

[Agenda for Slough Schools Forum on Thursday, 11th January, 2024, 9.15 am](#)

Appendix A:- Authority Proforma Tool 2024/25

| | Description | Amount per pupil | | Pupil Units | | Sub Total | Total | Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%) |
|---|--|---------------------------|--|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| 1) Basic Entitlement Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) | Primary (Years R-6) | £3,794.51 | | 16,532.00 | | £62,730,839 | £133,483,273 | 78.22% |
| | Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9) | £5,349.82 | | 7,589.00 | | £40,599,784 | | |
| | Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11) | £6,030.53 | | 5,000.00 | | £30,152,650 | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | Description | Primary amount per pupil | Secondary amount per pupil | Eligible proportion of primary NOR | Eligible proportion of secondary NOR | Sub Total | Total | Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%) |
| 2) Deprivation | FSM | £520.00 | £520.00 | 3,383.00 | 2,551.00 | £3,085,680 | £12,493,635 | 7.32% |
| | FSM6 | £870.00 | £1,275.00 | 3,464.00 | 2,806.00 | £6,591,330 | | |
| | IDACI Band F | £250.00 | £360.00 | 3,598.21 | 2,845.98 | £1,924,108 | | |
| | IDACI Band E | £305.00 | £480.00 | 989.69 | 871.30 | £720,081 | | |
| | IDACI Band D | £475.00 | £670.00 | 156.19 | 117.06 | £152,619 | | |
| | IDACI Band C | £515.00 | £735.00 | 2.01 | 17.01 | £13,534 | | |
| | IDACI Band B | £550.00 | £785.00 | 0.00 | 8.01 | £6,284 | | |
| | IDACI Band A | £720.00 | £1,005.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | £0 | | |
| | Description | Primary amount per pupil | Secondary amount per pupil | Eligible proportion of primary NOR | Eligible proportion of secondary NOR | Sub Total | Total | Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%) |
| 3) English as an Additional Language (EAL) | EAL 3 Primary | £625.00 | | 5,485.51 | | £3,428,443 | £4,962,123 | 2.91% |
| | EAL 3 Secondary | | £1,680.00 | | 764.42 | £1,284,231 | | |
| 4) Mobility | Pupils starting school outside of normal entry dates | £302.78 | £434.65 | 555.88 | 186.68 | £249,449 | | |
| | Description | Weighting | Amount per pupil (primary or secondary respectively) | Percentage of eligible pupils | Eligible proportion of primary and secondary NOR respectively | Sub Total | Total | Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%) |
| 5) Low prior attainment | Primary low prior attainment | | £1,240.00 | 30.15% | 4,983.88 | £6,180,005 | £10,274,214 | 6.02% |
| | Secondary low prior attainment (year 7) | 55.77% | | 17.55% | | | | |
| | Secondary low prior attainment (year 8) | 54.47% | | 17.34% | | | | |
| | Secondary low prior attainment (year 9) | 54.47% | £1,880.00 | 17.44% | 2,177.77 | £4,094,209 | | |
| | Secondary low prior attainment (year 10) | 64.53% | | 17.13% | | | | |
| | Secondary low prior attainment (year 11) | 64.53% | | 17.02% | | | | |
| Factor | | | Lump Sum per Primary School (£) | Lump Sum per Secondary School (£) | Lump Sum per Middle School (£) | Lump Sum per All-through School (£) | Total (£) | Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%) |
| 6) Lump Sum | | | £142,250.00 | £142,250.00 | | | £6,116,750 | 3.58% |
| 7) Sparsity factor | | | £60,435.00 | £87,850.00 | £87,850.00 | £87,850.00 | £0 | 0.00% |
| 8) Fringe Payments | | | | | Fringe multiplier | 1.0000 | £0 | 0.00% |
| 9) Split Sites | | Basic eligibility funding | | £55,415.18 | Distance funding rate | £27,759.19 | £304,938 | 0.18% |
| 10) Rates | | | | | | | £1,857,631 | 1.09% |
| 11) PFI funding | | | | | | | £1,056,268 | 0.62% |
| 13) Additional funding to meet minimum per pupil funding level | | | | | | | £99,721 | 0.06% |
| Total Funding for Schools Block Formula (excluding MFG Funding Total) | | | | | | | £170,648,553 | 100.00% |
| 14) Minimum Funding Guarantee | | | | | | 0.50% | £297,789 | |
| Total Funding for Schools Block Formula | | | | | | | £170,946,325 | |
| Growth fund (if applicable) | | | | | | | £500,018 | |
| Total Funding For Schools Block Formula (including growth and falling rolls funding) | | | | | | | £171,446,360 | |
| Block transfers | CSSB | | | | | | £100,000 | |
| | HNB | | | | | | £761,539 | |
| DSG School Block | | | | | | | £172,307,899 | |

Abbreviations:-

FSM – Free School Meals

IDACI – Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index

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| | |
|--|--|
| School Forum 13th March 2024 | |
| Report from Executive Director of People - Children Service | |
| CSSB Proposed Budget Allocation 2024-25 | |
| Wards Affected: | All |
| Key or Non-Key Decision: | N/A |
| No. of Appendices: | N/A |
| Contact Officer(s): | Neil Hoskinson Director of Education Email: Neil.Hoskinson@slough.gov.uk Sarah Hockly Strategic Finance Manager – Childrens Email: Sarah.Hockly@slough.gov.uk |

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To report on forecast figures for CSSB 2023-24 against previously agreed budgets.
- 1.2 To advise Schools Forum of the Central School Services Block (CSSB) Allocation for financial year 2024-25 and related block transfers.
- 1.3 To propose CSSB budget allocations for 2024-25.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Schools Forum note the latest forecast figures for CSSB 2023-24.
- 2.2 That Schools Forum note the CSSB allocation under the DSG and the associated block transfer of £100,000 from the Schools Block DSG to the CSSB DSG as allowed in the January 2024 Schools Forum meeting.
- 2.3 That Schools Forum agrees the budget allocations for 2024-25 as outlined in this paper.

3 CSSB Forecast 2023-24

- 3.1 In the November 2023 Schools Forum meeting, the CSSB budget was presented for 2023-24. Most of the costs have been finalised in the accounts with a few costs still expected in March 2024. The latest forecast outturn for 2023-24 is shown below with a comparison to the original budget.

Table 1:- CSSB Budget and Forecast 2023-24

| Area | 2023-24 Budget £m | P11 Forecast £m | Variance £m | Notes |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Income Streams | | | | |
| Pupil led funding | 0.753 | 0.753 | 0.000 | |
| Funding for historic commitments | 0.032 | 0.032 | 0.000 | |
| Total CSSB DSG Allocation | 0.785 | 0.785 | 0.000 | |
| Schools Block Contribution | 0.100 | 0.100 | 0.000 | |
| Total Income Streams | 0.885 | 0.885 | 0.000 | |
| Budget Allocations | | | | |
| LA Safeguarding Childrens Board | 0.030 | 0.030 | 0.000 | |
| Sub Total - Historical Commitment | 0.030 | 0.030 | 0.000 | |
| Servicing of Schools Forum | 0.055 | 0.061 | 0.005 | Salary forecast re-aligned to actuals |
| Admissions | 0.292 | 0.311 | 0.019 | Re-aligned to actuals |
| Copyright Licences | 0.162 | 0.164 | 0.002 | |
| Education Welfare | 0.145 | 0.145 | 0.000 | |
| Asset Management | 0.013 | 0.005 | -0.008 | |
| Statutory Regulatory | 0.188 | 0.176 | -0.012 | Audit charge favourable to budget |
| Sub Total - Ongoing Commitment | 0.855 | 0.861 | 0.007 | |
| Total Budget Allocations | 0.885 | 0.891 | 0.007 Adverse | |

3.3 Overall, it is expected that the 2023-24 CSSB budget will be slightly overspent by £0.007m. The most significant variances were in relation to salary costs for the admission team (£0.019m adverse) and Statutory & Regulatory costs (£0.012m favourable of which £0.08m is due to audit charges).

3.4 A number of allocations reflect a percentage of staff costs for administrative and management roles. During 2023-24 some of these roles were resourced, at least in part, through interim contracts. For the avoidance of doubt, the charges against the CSSB budget were calculated at the equivalent cost of a permanent resource.

4 CSSB Allocation 2024-25 and Block Transfers

4.1 The CSSB Allocation for 2024-25 is £839,974 and comprises of £814,414 pupil led funding (based on a pupil count of 29,107) and £25,560 funding for historic commitments. This is an overall increase of £55,143 compared to 2023-24.

4.2 ESFA are phasing out funding for historic commitments and this element has been reduced by 20% compared to the 2023-24 funding.

4.3 The per pupil rate used for Slough is the 3rd lowest in the country at £27.98 per pupil for 2024/5. This compares to an average in England of £40.27. These rates are based on a proforma completed by local authorities in 2017 detailing spend in each of the DSG blocks which showed a very low spend in Slough and resulted in a baseline of £20.19 per pupil. This rate has increased by the gains cap each year under the current DSG format.

Table 2:- CSSB funding comparisons 2024-25

| Area | Per pupil rate 2024/25 (£) | Historic commitments 2024/25 (£) | Inclusive per pupil rate 2024/25 (£) |
|--------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Slough | 27.98 | 25,560 | 28.86 |
| RBWM | 43.98 | 20,077 | 48.35 |
| Reading | 42.82 | 21,372 | 53.25 |
| Average South East | 39.85 | | 51.33 |
| Average England | 40.27 | 557,427 | 51.39 |

- 4.4 This low level of per pupil funding has resulted in an ongoing pressure on Central School Services and, as a result, Schools Forum agreed to an additional transfer from School Block to CSSB of £0.1m for the past 2 years (2022-23 and 2023-24) to support the admissions process.
- 4.5 At its meeting in January 2024, Schools Forum agreed to transfer 0.5% of the Schools Block allocation to the High Needs Block with the caveat that, if required, £100,000 of this balance was to be transferred to CSSB to support admissions activities as per the previous two years. Further analysis of the CSSB budget for 2024-25 indicates that this block transfer of £100,000 is necessary, in line with the prior 2 years.

5 CSSB Proposed Budget 2024-25

- 5.1 The proposed CSSB budget for 2024-25 follows a very similar format to 2023-24 with a small uplift of 4% for cost inflation which is largely in relation to salaries. Where actual costs in 2023-24 have exceeded budget, the 2024-25 figures are based on the period 11 forecast values.

Table 3:- CSSB Proposed Budget 2024-25

| Area | P11 2023-24 Forecast £m | 2023-24 Budget £m | Proposed 2024-25 Budget £m | Variance £m | Notes |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| Income Streams | | | | | |
| Pupil led funding | 0.753 | 0.753 | 0.814 | 0.062 | |
| Funding for historic commitments | 0.032 | 0.032 | 0.026 | -0.006 | |
| Total CSSB DSG Allocation | 0.785 | 0.785 | 0.840 | 0.055 | |
| Schools Block Contribution | 0.100 | 0.100 | 0.100 | 0.000 | |
| Total Income Streams | 0.885 | 0.885 | 0.940 | 0.055 | |
| Budget Allocations | | | | | |
| LA Safeguarding Childrens Board | 0.030 | 0.030 | 0.030 | 0.000 | |
| Sub Total - Historical Commitment | 0.030 | 0.030 | 0.030 | 0.000 | |
| Servicing of Schools Forum | 0.061 | 0.055 | 0.064 | 0.009 | Uplift calculated on P11 forecast |
| Admissions | 0.311 | 0.292 | 0.325 | 0.033 | Uplift calculated on P11 forecast |
| Copyright Licences | 0.164 | 0.162 | 0.171 | 0.009 | Uplift calculated on P11 forecast |
| Education Welfare | 0.145 | 0.145 | 0.151 | 0.006 | |
| Asset Management | 0.005 | 0.013 | 0.013 | 0.001 | |
| Statutory Regulatory | 0.176 | 0.188 | 0.186 | -0.002 | Amended to reflect new structure |
| Sub Total - Ongoing Commitment | 0.861 | 0.855 | 0.910 | 0.055 | |
| Total Budget Allocations | 0.891 | 0.885 | 0.940 | 0.055 | |

- 5.2 Contributions towards statutory and regulatory costs have been amended to better reflect the current structure within the Children's Services Directorate and show a small decrease compared to 2023-24.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The financial implications have been detailed in the body of this paper.

7 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 Not applicable

8 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 8.1 Not applicable

9 Legal Implications

- 9.1 There are no legal implications for this report.

10 Equality Implications

- 10.1 Not applicable

| | |
|--|---|
| School Forum 13th March 2024 | |
| Report from Executive Director of People - Children Service | |
| Early Years Centrally Retained Funds 2024-25 | |
| Wards Affected: | All |
| Key or Non-Key Decision: | N/A |
| No. of Appendices: | N/A |
| Contact Officer(s): | Neil Hoskinson Interim Director of Education Email: Neil.Hoskinson@slough.gov.uk Sarah Hockly Strategic Finance Manager – Children’s Email: Sarah.Hockly@slough.gov.uk |

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To advise and propose to Schools Forum the planned use of centrally retained funds across the Early Years Block for financial year 2024-25

2 Recommendations

2.1 That Schools Forum **review** and **agree** the use of centrally retained funds across the Early Years Block, which is to be set at 5% of the Under 2 years, 2 year and 3 & 4 year –old funding allocation.

3 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 In-line with current regulations, as described under 4.2 of the “Early Years entitlements: local authority funding operational guide for 2024-25”, local authorities are required to pass through a minimum of 95% of the following funding blocks to Early Year providers:

- 3 and 4 year old universal funding
- 3 and 4 year old working parent funding
- 2 year old disadvantaged funding
- 2 year old working parent funding
- Under 2 year old working parent funding (from 9 months) from the 1st September 2024

3.2 The balance (maximum 5%) is used to support central Early Years functions. As with previous years, the LA is seeking to maximise the use of this allowance.

- 3.3 The 5% remaining expenditure can be used to support:
- Centrally retained funding (for central services or services in-kind, including special educational needs and disability (SEND) services)
 - Transfer of funding to any of the other early years entitlements
 - Any extra hours that local authorities choose to fund in addition to the government's entitlement hours
 - Any funding movement out of the early years block

4 Supporting Information

- 4.1 The provisional settlement for the 2024-25 financial year is £20.886m, which is predicated on January 2023 census data. As per the EY sector consultation and as endorsed by Schools Forum in January 2024, the funding formula for 2024-25 is as follows.

Table 1:- Early Years National Funding Formula 2024-25

| <u>Early Years National Funding Formula 2024/25</u> | | | | |
|---|--------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|
| | 3-4 year old | 2 year old | Under 2 year old | Total |
| DfE rate | £ 6.75 | £ 9.82 | £ 13.36 | |
| Slough Rate | £ 6.27 | £ 9.15 | £ 12.50 | |
| Deprivation Rate | £ 0.73 | £ 0.73 | £ 0.73 | |
| Hours (DfE estimate) | 1,999,988 | 421,977 | 127,857 | 2,549,822 |
| Pass through Cost | £ 12,539,925 | £ 3,861,090 | £ 1,598,213 | £ 17,999,227 |
| Deprivation supplement | £ 238,153 | £ 63,333 | £ 19,190 | £ 320,676 |
| SEN inclusion fund (SENIF) | £ 46,500 | £ 12,000 | £ 5,300 | £ 63,800 |
| Pass through | £ 12,824,578 | £ 3,936,423 | £ 1,622,703 | £ 18,383,703 |
| Growth | £ 343.00 | £ 198.00 | £ 56.00 | £ 597 |
| Centrally retained 5% | £ 674,996.00 | £ 207,191.00 | £ 85,408.00 | £ 967,595 |
| Subtotal | £ 13,499,917 | £ 4,143,812 | £ 1,708,167 | £ 19,351,895 |
| MNS supplementary funding allocation | | | | £ 1,219,253 |
| Disability Access Fund (DAF) | | | | £ 92,820 |
| EY Pupil Premium (EYPP) | | | | £ 221,666 |
| Total | | | | £ 20,885,634 |

Note that MNS, DAF and EYPP are not included in the pass through calculation.

- 4.2 Budgets are provisional and are therefore subject to change. A revised settlement will be determined in July 2025 using a combination of January 2024 and January 2025 census data. This may result in changes to the level of centrally retained funds available.
- 4.3 The provisional centrally retained early years budget allocation is shown below in table 2.

Table 2 – EY Indicative funding allocations and provisional central budget

| Universal entitlement for 3-4 yr olds | Additional 15 hrs entitlement for working parents of 3-4 yr olds | 2 yr old disadvantaged entitlement | 2 yr old working parent entitlement | Under 2s entitlement | Total eligible for top-slice |
|---|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| £10,710,671 | £2,789,246 | £1,665,675 | £2,478,137 | £1,708,166 | £19,351,895 |
| 5% provisional Central EY Budget 2024-25:- | | | | | |
| £535,534 | £139,462 | £83,284 | £123,907 | £85,408 | £967,595 |

5. Proposed Central Early Years Budget 2024-25

5.1 Table 3 below illustrates the proposed allocation of the centrally retained early years budget for 2024-25, reflecting the most up to date settlement provided by the DfE.

Table 3 – EY Centrally retained budget allocation 2024-25

| Early Years Central Budget | Proposed Allocation 2024-25 | Description |
|---|-----------------------------|---|
| Early Years Strategic Financial Support | £79,758 | Financial contribution for the budget overview / management by the Strategic Finance Manager and EY Accountant. |
| EY Advisory Teacher for EY SEND & SENDIASS | £80,500 | Statutory duty for children with suspected or diagnosed SEND; managing referrals across the sector and delivering identified programmes and packages of support. |
| Quality Care & Learning | £123,499 | Statutory duty to provide:-support to all new providers; mandatory training; support and challenge settings receiving an Ofsted outcome of Inadequate (FIPP). Additional non-statutory duties: Quality Improvement, promotion of self - evaluation and action planning through the Partnership Improvement Plan and regular QT involvement in settings. |
| EY funding and other statutory responsibilities | £244,800 | Statutory duty to secure free early education places; pass through of funding to all providers; the promotion of partnership working including flexibility of provision; compliance work to ensure providers offer entitlements appropriately & in line with statutory guidance. |
| Behaviour Support | £42,000 | Contractual support for a range of behaviour services. |
| Sub TOTAL | £580,557 | |
| New Funding Entitlements programme 2024-25 | 387,038 | Statutory duty to support sector in the development and extended provision of early years childcare to include working parent under 2 and 2 yr old entitlement. Place shortfall in Sep25 currently forecast at approx. 500. |
| Grand Total | £967,595 | |

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The financial implications have been detailed in the body of this paper.

7 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 Not applicable

8 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

8.1 Not applicable

9 Legal Implications

9.1 There are no legal implications for this report.

10 Equality Implications

10.1 Not applicable

SLOUGH SCHOOLS FORUM

PROPOSED AGENDA PLAN 2023/24

Updated 08/03/24

Substantive Agenda items

| Meeting 1 – Thursday 28 September 2023 | |
|---|--|
| Agenda Item | Notes |
| 2022/23 DSG monitoring | Q4/final outturn for 202/23 – Forum to note |
| 2023/24 DSG monitoring | Q1 report - Forum to note |
| Safety Valve plan update | Update on progress with DfE ‘Safety valve’ programme |
| 2024/25 DSG workplan | To include confirmation of process for Schools Block 2024/25 consultation. |
| Task Groups | Confirmation of role and membership of task groups |
| Meeting 2 – Thursday 9 November 2023 | |
| Agenda Item | Notes |
| DSG Monitoring Report 2023/24 | Q2 report - Forum to note |
| Growth Fund update | Forum to note 2022-23 outturn and projection for 2023-24 |
| CSSB budget 2023/24 | Forum to retrospectively approve budget |
| DSG Management Plan update | To include update on DfE ‘Safety valve’ programme. |
| Provisional DSG settlement 2024/25 | Forum to note position and make provisional recommendation on any headroom allocation. |
| DSG Consultation 2024/25 | Forum to note report on outcome of consultation with schools for DSG block funding transfer. |
| DSG Block transfer proposals 2024/25 | Forum to consider and make provisional decision |
| Meeting 3 – Thursday 11 January 2024 | |
| Agenda Item | Notes |
| DSG Management Plan update | To include update on DfE ‘Safety valve’ programme. |
| Growth Fund report | LA confirms of 2024-25 ‘top slice’ from Schools Block. Forum agrees allocation criteria. |
| Resource Provision and AP place commissioning | LA to confirm places commissioned in academies for 2023/24 |
| DSG Schools Block 2024/25 – confirmed settlement | Forum notes final DSG settlement, recommends local formula to LA, confirms decisions on block transfer requests |
| Early Years block 2024/25 | LA confirms funding arrangements for 2024/25 |
| Meeting 4 – Wednesday 13 March 2024 | |
| Agenda Item | Notes |
| DSG Management Plan update | To include update on DfE ‘Safety valve’ programme |
| DSG 2024/25 Schools Block – confirmation of APT submission and school budgets | LA confirmation of APT submission and any subsequent adjustments |
| DSG 2024/25 - CSSB budget | Forum approves CSSB budget allocations for 2024/25 |
| DSG 2024/25 - Early Years centrally retained | LA confirms allocation of EY centrally retained funding |
| Meeting 5 – Thursday 13 June 2024 | |
| Agenda Item | Notes |
| DSG Monitoring Report 2023/24 | Q3/Q4 report and outturn – Forum to note |
| DSG Management Plan update | To include update on DfE ‘Safety valve’ programme |
| DSG HNB centrally retained 2024/25 | LA confirms allocation of HNB centrally retained funding. |
| Growth Fund - outturn from 2023/24 financial year | LA confirms outturn from 2023/24 and any consequent update to the allocations for 2024/25 |
| Resource Provision and AP place commissioning | LA to provide update |
| Scheme for financing schools | Approval of revised scheme by maintained school reps following consultation. |
| 2024/25 workplan | Agree Forum workplan for 2024-25 academic year |
| Annual membership review | |

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| ACADEMIC YEAR 2021/22 | | | |
|--|------------|-------------|------------|
| Issue and decision | Forum date | Agenda item | Minute ref |
| School Forum membership update | 09/12/21 | 4 | 866 |
| Gill Denham confirmed as academies member | | | |
| Chair to write to Coral Snowden and Peter Collins to ask if they wish to continue in post from January 2022 | | | |
| DSG 2021/22 Monitoring report | 09/12/21 | 6 | 868 |
| Forum NOTED the current DSG position as set out in the monitoring report | | | |
| DSG funding update 2022/23 | 09/12/21 | 7 | 869 |
| Forum NOTED the provisional DSG allocation for 2022/23 as set out in the report | | | |
| Schools Block 2022/23 | 09/12/21 | 9 | 871 |
| LA to provide scenario modelling with and without requested 0.5% DSG top slice, to inform decision on block transfer in January meeting | | | |
| Early Years update | 09/12/21 | 10 | 872 |
| Forum NOTED the verbal report on EY funding | | | |
| Scheme for Financing Schools | 09/12/21 | 11 | 873 |
| Changes to the Scheme for Financing Schools, required in relation to the UK leaving the European Union, APPROVED by maintained school members, subject to confirmation from maintained secondary member (absent from meeting) | | | |
| Schools Forum membership update | 19/01/22 | 5 | 879 |
| Peter Collins confirmed as academies member for two years until January 2024 | | | |
| Coral Snowden’s term extended until July 2022 | | | |
| Nominations to be sought for secondary academy member vacancy | | | |
| DSG 2021/22 monitoring report | 19/01/22 | 7 | 880 |
| Forum NOTED current 2021/22 DSG position | | | |
| DSG Management Plan update | 19/01/22 | 8 | 881 |
| Forum NOTED the verbal update from Johnny Kyriacou on the DSG management plan | | | |
| SEND Banding | 19/01/22 | 9 | 882 |
| Forum NOTED the verbal update from Chelsea Barnes on changes to the SEND banding matrix | | | |
| Growth Fund update | 19/01/22 | 10 | 883 |
| Forum APPROVED the Growth Fund criteria for 2022/23 | | | |
| Forum NOTED the forecast position for the three years 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 | | | |
| Schools Block 2022/23 | 19/01/22 | 11 | 883 |
| Forum APPROVED the transfer of £100k from Schools Block to the CSSB | | | |
| Forum APPROVED the transfer of the balancing 0.44% figure (£676k) to the High Needs block transfer. | | | |
| Report to brought to March Forum meeting describing in detail the difference that this funding has made and how the funds transferred are being allocated. | | | |
| Early Years funding 2022/23 | 19/01/22 | 12 | 884 |
| Forum members endorsed the EY Task Group recommendation and APPROVED Option 1 from the 2022/23 funding consultation | | | |
| AOB – School Improvement funding | 19/01/22 | 16 | 888 |
| Discussion to be arranged between LA officers and the chairs of SPHA and SASH to develop proposals for school improvement funding to take to the School Improvement Board and bring back to Forum. | | | |

| | | | |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| DSG monitoring report 2021/22 | 10/03/22 | 7 | 894 |
| Forum NOTED the latest DSG position. | | | |
| DSG Schools Block 2022-23 | 10/03/22 | 8 | 895 |
| Kamaljit Kaur confirmed she would follow up NNDR payment mechanism and issue clarification for all schools. | | | |
| CSSB budget 2022-23 | 10/03/22 | 9 | 896 |
| Forum APPROVED transfer of £180,815 from High Needs block to the CSSB for 2022-23 | | | |
| Forum AGREED allocation within the CSSB as proposed by the local authority. | | | |
| EY centrally retained budget 2022-23 | 10/03/22 | 10 | 897 |
| Forum AGREED the use of the central retained funding as proposed by the local authority. | | | |
| DSG Management plan update | 10/03/22 | 11 | 898 |
| Forum NOTED the Cabinet report on current status of DSG Management Plan and accompanying verbal update | | | |
| Written or verbal update to be given at next meeting | | | |
| Task group update | 10/03/22 | 12 | 899 |
| Work of Task groups (Schools Block, High Needs and EY) | | | |
| Forward agenda and Key decisions log | 10/03/22 | 14 | 901 |
| Key decisions log to be updated for May meeting (Chair) | | | |
| Forum membership | 05/07/22 | 5 | 906 |
| Forum NOTED the adjustments to members' terms of office to better align with the academic terms. | | | |
| Chair agreed to seek nominations to fill primary and secondary vacancies in September | | | |
| Update on national/local funding issues | 05/07/22 | 6 | 907 |
| Chair agreed to collate and return Forum response to DfE consultation on national funding formula. | | | |
| High Needs Budget 2022/23 | 05/07/22 | 10 | 911 |
| Forum NOTED the allocation of centrally retained funding | | | |
| Scheme for financing schools | 05/07/22 | 14 | 912 |
| Maintained Forum members AGREED the proposed minor change to the current Scheme raising the tender threshold from £10k to £25k | | | |
| ACADEMIC YEAR 2022/23 | | | |
| Issue and decision | Forum date | Agenda item | Minute ref |
| DSG 2022/23 Monitoring report | 10/11/22 | 7 | 923 |
| Forum NOTED the current DSG position as set out in the monitoring report | | | |
| DSG Management Plan update | 10/11/22 | 8 | 924 |
| Forum NOTED the verbal update from Johnny Kyriacou on the DSG management plan and the application to the DfE Safety Valve programme | | | |
| Schools Block 2023/24 | 10/11/22 | 10 | 926 |
| Forum APPROVED the transfer of £100k from Schools Block to the CSSB. | | | |
| Forum APPROVED the transfer of the balancing figure (0.5% less £100k) to the High Needs block, subject to confirmation in January 2023 following final DSG settlement. | | | |
| Forum ENDORSED the LA recommendation that DSG headroom be allocated through the basic entitlement factor | | | |
| Resource provision and AP place commissioning | 13/01/23 | 7 | 937 |
| Forum NOTED the number of resource and alternative provision places commissioned by the LA in academies for September 2023. | | | |
| Growth Fund 2023/24 | 13/01/23 | 8 | 938 |
| Forum NOTED the proposed 2023/24 Schools Block top slice of £565k to support the Growth Fund. | | | |
| DSG Management Plan and Safety Valve programme | 13/01/23 | 9 | 939 |
| Forum NOTED the verbal update from Johnny Kyriacou on the DSG management plan and the application to the DfE Safety Valve programme | | | |

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| DSG settlement 2023/24 | 13/01/23 | 10 | 940 |
| Forum CONFIRMED the overall 0.5% transfer from Schools Block to the CSSB (£100k) and HNB (0.5% less £100k) as provisionally approved in November 2022. | | | |
| Forum ENDORSED the LA's proposals for the overall 2023/24 DSG allocation. | | | |
| Forum NOTED the LA's continued commitment to allocate DSG headroom through the basic entitlement factor. | | | |
| DSG Management Plan update | 14/07/23 | 6 | 949 |
| Forum NOTED the verbal update from Neil Hoskinson on the DSG management plan and the application DfE Safety Valve programme | | | |
| Primary-secondary funding ratio | 14/07/23 | 7 | 950 |
| Forum AGREED that discussion of the impact of the formula decisions on the primary-secondary ratio be discussed within the 5-16 Task Group Chair was tasked with responding to the SPHA letter | | | |
| Local School Improvement Fund | 14/07/23 | 8 | 951 |
| Forum AGREED the proposed principles for the future operation of the LSIF, to now be delegated to the phase associations with a regular report back to Forum. | | | |
| Schools Forum membership update | 14/07/23 | 9 | 952 |
| Forum NOTED that the terms of office of a number of members would end in August 2023. Chair to write to members asking if they wish to continue. Chair to seek nominations to fill primary and secondary academy vacancies | | | |
| Reappointment of Chair | 14/07/23 | 10 | 953 |
| John Constable reappointed as Chair for the AY 2023/24 | | | |
| Forward agenda plan | 14/07/23 | 11 | 954 |
| Forum AGREED the structure of meetings proposed for 2023/24 | | | |
| ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/24 | | | |
| Issue and decision | Forum date | Agenda item | Minute ref |
| Schools Forum membership update | 28/09/23 | 5 | 961 |
| Rhodri Bryant confirmed as secondary academies member (subject to formal approval by academy proprietors), representing The Langley Academy | | | |
| 2022/23 DSG outturn | 28/09/23 | 7 | 963 |
| Forum NOTED the 2022/23 DSG outturn and the receipt of the first payment of £10.8 million from the DfE under the Safety Valve programme. | | | |
| DSG Management Plan update | 28/09/23 | 8 | 964 |
| Forum NOTED the verbal update from Neil Hoskinson on the DSG management plan and the application DfE Safety Valve programme | | | |
| 2024/25 DSG Budget setting timetable | 28/09/23 | 9 | 965 |
| Forum NOTED the LA's timetable for consultation with schools on (a) the annual request to transfer 0.5% from Schools Block to the High Needs Block, and (b) the proposed allocation of any headroom through AWPU. | | | |
| Update on task groups | 28/09/23 | 11 | 967 |
| Forum NOTED the continued role of the Early Years Task Group. Forum ENDORSED the role of the 5-16 Task Group in examining the impact of the DSG settlement on 2024/25 school budgets, and in clarifying how the primary-secondary ratio is affected by decision about NFF factor rates. Forum ENDORSED the membership of the 5-16 group, to include Valerie Harffey. | | | |
| Forum AGREED that there was sufficient headteacher representation on other groups to provide oversight of the High Needs block, and that a High Needs Task Group was not currently needed. | | | |
| 2023/24 DSG update | 09/11/23 | 7 | 977 |
| Forum NOTED the Quarter 2 position for the 2023/24 DSG. | | | |
| 2023/24 Growth Fund update | 09/11/23 | 7a | 978 |
| Forum NOTED the updated 2023/24 Growth Fund position. | | | |
| 2023/24 Central School Services Block (CSSB) | 09/11/23 | 8 | 979 |
| Forum NOTED the CSSB allocation for 2023/24. | | | |

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| Forum APPROVED the line-by-line allocation within the CSSB as proposed by the local authority. | | | |
| DSG Management Plan update | 09/11/23 | 9 | 980 |
| Forum NOTED the update from Neil Hoskinson on the DSG management plan and the Safety Valve programme | | | |
| Schools Block 2023/24 | 09/11/23 | 10 | 981 |
| Forum PROVISIONALLY APPROVED a transfer of 0.5% to the High Needs block, subject to confirmation in January 2024. | | | |
| Forum ENDORSED the LA recommendation that DSG headroom be allocated through the basic entitlement factor. | | | |
| Schools Forum membership update | 11/01/24 | 5 | 990 |
| Claire Fletcher confirmed as primary maintained schools member representing Penn Wood School | | | |
| DSG Management Plan update | 11/01/24 | 7 | 992 |
| Forum NOTED the update from Neil Hoskinson on the DSG management plan and the Safety Valve programme | | | |
| Resource Provision & AP Place Commissioning | 11/01/24 | 8 | 993 |
| Forum NOTED the update from Len Brazier on the work of the SEND Sufficiency working group and the LA plans for a revised joint commissioning strategy to be put forward by the end of the financial year. | | | |
| Growth Fund 2024/25 | 11/01/24 | 9 | 994 |
| Forum APPROVED the criteria for the 2024/25 Growth Fund and AGREED the LA proposal for a top slice of £500k top slice for 2024/25. | | | |
| AP Place Funding 2024/2025 | 11/01/24 | 10 | 995 |
| Forum members supported the principle of collaborative funding non-statutory alternative provision from the schools block, and requested the LA explore this with the DfE Commissioners. | | | |
| DSG Schools Block 2024/2025 | 11/01/24 | 11 | 996 |
| Forum CONFIRMED the November 2023 provisional decision to transfer 0.5% to the high needs block, and ENDORSED the LA proposals for the 2024/25 local formula and the distribution of headroom through basic entitlement. Forum also APPROVED the transfer of £100k from within the overall 0.5% to the CSSB should this be deemed necessary by the LA, with the balance transferring to the high needs block. | | | |
| Early Years Block 2024/25 | 11/01/24 | 12 | 997 |
| Forum members NOTED the contents of the report and endorsed the decisions made | | | |