



Wirral Schools Forum

Date:	Wednesday, 26 June 2019
Time:	6.00 p.m.
Venue:	Council Chamber - Wallasey Town Hall

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AGENDA

1. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15TH MAY 2019 (Pages 1 - 6)**
2. **MATTERS ARISING**
3. **SCHOOL ADMISSIONS UPDATE (Pages 7 - 8)**
4. **LACES SERVICE AND LAC PUPIL PREMIUM (Pages 9 - 12)**
5. **ALTERNATIVE PROVISION UPDATE (Pages 13 - 18)**
6. **ENERGY UPDATE (Pages 19 - 20)**
7. **TRADED SERVICES UPDATE (Pages 21 - 22)**
8. **EARLY YEARS WORKING GROUP UPDATE (Pages 23 - 24)**
9. **HIGH NEEDS WORKING GROUP UPDATE**

Notes to follow
10. **SCHOOL FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS 2020-21 (Pages 25 - 26)**
11. **GROWTH FUND UPDATE (Pages 27 - 30)**
12. **SCHOOL BUDGET MONITORING 2019-20 (Pages 31 - 36)**
13. **SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP (Pages 37 - 38)**

14. WORK PLAN (Pages 39 - 40)

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

WIRRAL SCHOOLS' FORUM

15th May 2019

MINUTES

Present: Adrian Whiteley (Chair)

Schools Group

L Ayling	N Lightwing
R Bridges	M Morris
J Bush	T Taylor
L Davidson	J Weise
M Forber	R Wood
H Johnson	

Non-Schools Group

I Harris	S Ralph
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In Attendance:

S Allen	J Forsey
S Ashley	V Ikin
A Davies	I McGrady
C Fenlon	S Talbot

Apologies:

M Bellamy	E Neal
K Brown	N Prance
S Davies	D Spencer
A Donelan	A Waller
R Mahoney	

1. Minutes from the Meeting held on 16th January 2019

The minutes from the meeting were accepted as a true record.

2. Matters Arising

High Needs Review

The interim report from the independent SEND review has not yet been circulated to Schools Forum Members as the report was not structured as requested. Although it had been shared with the High Needs Working Group, the consultants were asked to re-structure the report before it was circulated further. This has now been produced and has been shared with all Special School Headteachers. It will

be shared with Forum members once approved by the Corporate Director for Children's Services.

3. Sensory Service

Vanessa Ikin briefed the forum of the support and advice provided by the Sensory Service to the children and young people with significant visual/hearing impairment in Wirral. There are currently 604 children accessing the service, supported by 8.8 fte teachers, a rehabilitation officer and 9.1fte specialist teaching assistants (TAs). There is also a specialist base at Townfield primary and two pupils currently supported in out of area establishments.

Projections suggest an increase in Early Years children who are blind, so specialist TAs need to be reviewed for September 2019. This service is part of the High Needs Review.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

4. Edsential Update

Ian McGrady updated Forum on Edsential's third year of trading as a Community Interest Company. Highlights from 2018-19 are: -

- the Conway Centre Anglesey provides sailing opportunities for children throughout the country, with a national programme for people with disabilities.
- £1.1m of savings in catering passed onto schools and parents in Wirral and CWAC.
- Edsential are working hard to be the first school catering provider to be fully sustainable palm oil certified.
- Duke of Edinburgh scheme continues to thrive, with "junior" D of E scheme launched for KS1 & 2 this year.

Wirral Schools have benefitted from Edsential's Grant funding. Community and group bids were more successful: -

- Deeside Cluster – Recycling Plastic Pledges
- Wallasey Cluster – Attendance
- Birkenhead North Cluster – Arts Passport App
- Riverside and Thornton Hough Primary schools won individual bids.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

5. Home Education Service

Jackie Forsey updated Forum on the changes to the Home and Continuing Service since the previous report in May 2018. The service provides support for children who cannot attend school for physical or mental health reasons.

The impact of the new structure and funding were identified, particularly

- all those entered for qualifications passed.
- those who transitioned into EET (79%) are supported by a Learning Mentor.
- some pupils are being re-integrated back into school.

The revised structure has not been fully implemented due to ongoing budget pressures. Referrals to the service have increased in recent years and the service is experiencing similar budget pressures as those faced by schools, and as such overspent by £110k in 2018-19.

The service, which falls within the remit of the SEND review, supports pupils who are electively home educated, and from post-16 who are unfunded due to not being on a school roll. In light of the recently published Timpson Report on off-rolling, this will be discussed further at the High Needs working group.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

6. Early Years Update

Carol Fenlon briefed the Members on the discussions from the recent Early Years Working Group as follows: -

- Updated proposals on the Charging Policy is awaiting Senior Leadership and Cabinet agreement after a challenge brought about at the January Schools Forum.
- The new Early Years staffing structure is now in the process of being implemented.
- New processes are being developed to maximise the use of IPF particularly on the criteria for those SEND children taking up the 30 hour offer.
- A consultation concerning the Quality supplement will be issued in the autumn term to ensure there is a consistent approach across the sector.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

7. Budget Outturn 2018-19

Shaun Allen outlined the year end position for the 2018-19 Schools budget, which is still subject to audit and is therefore provisional. There is an overspend of £141k which is significantly better than the January prediction, partially due to additional funding received relating to High Needs (£712k), and the closure of

Kingsway Academy (£173k). £15k of the overspend relates to the LA's contribution to the PFI affordability gap.

The underspend on the Disability Access Fund allocation is ringfenced for use on related initiatives as per DfE guidance, and therefore cannot be used to offset other pressures.

Resolved

8.1 Forum noted the report and the financial position for 2018/19.

8.2 The remaining £1.4m in the DSG reserve be ringfenced as follows:

- £181.5k to support the Inclusive Practice Fund;
- £114.2k to support the Disability Access Fund;
- £1.119m to support High Needs and general budget pressures in future years (subject to 8.3).

8.3 A report on the Growth Fund will be brought to Schools Forum in June, to include the potential redistribution of the £173k returned by ESFA on the same basis as the Growth Fund distribution.

8. School Balances at 31st March 2019 and Deficit Budgets

Sue Ashley confirmed that the school balances as at 31st March 2019 are £8.9m, a reduction from last year of £1.06. With increased costs, particularly Teachers Employers Contribution Pension and increased staffing costs projections for future years suggest this downward trend will continue to the point that by March 2021 there could be an estimated overall negative balance if action is not taken., with a possible 74 schools in a deficit position.

School budget projections are subject to a number of uncertainties in terms of future grant allocations, which are subject to the government spending review in autumn.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

9. Schools Budget Update 2019-20

Shaun Allen outlined changes to the Schools' budget since it was approved at Schools' Forum in January. These include:

- Primary and secondary schools' budgets have reduced to take account of changes for de-delegation and academy recoupment;
- Early Years budgets have been adjusted and reduced to take account of the Early Years Census in January 2019;
- High needs adjustments for 6th forms and academy provision;
- A PFI adjustment in respect of the affordability gap;
- An LA contribution of £186k to the Schools budget elements of the SEN restructure.

Resolved

Forum noted the report and the changes made to the Schools Budget.

10. Workplan

The workplan was provided for information.

The dates of the meetings for the 2018-19 academic year are:-

Wednesday 26th June 2019.

A meeting of the High Need Working Group was arranged for 09:30 on 6th June 2019, at Birkenhead Town Hall to consider the interim report from the SEND review.

11. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

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REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN

MAINSTREAM SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a brief outline of Mainstream Admissions during the most recently completed 2017-2018 admission year and an update on upcoming changes to selective testing.

2.0 Mainstream Admissions

2.1 Statutory roles of the Mainstream Admissions team include the administration and allocation of places in all primary and secondary schools, and representing the Council in school place appeals.

For entry to primary/secondary school in September 2018 there were over 3,800 applications for primary school (Foundation 2) and 3,700 for secondary schools (Year 7). The team co-ordinates admission to school with all own admission authority schools within Wirral and other admission authorities in England.

2.2 The team produces appeal statements and presents appeals on behalf of all community and voluntary controlled (VC) schools as a statutory function. For information, the outcomes for the community and VC school appeals handled by the team are shown below.

	Withdrawn (%)	Resolved (%)	Refused (%)	Agreed (%)	Total
2015-2016	97 (26%)	82 (22%)	173 (47%)	20 (5%)	372
2016-2017	48 (25%)	43 (23%)	92 (48%)	7 (4%)	190
2017-2018	38 (28%)	25 (18%)	69 (50%)	5 (4%)	137

Outcome of appeals lodged for community and voluntary controlled primary and secondary schools by academic year.

The outcome of appeals was proportionately similar to previous years.

2.3 The team administers the grammar school selection tests on behalf of the four non-Catholic grammar schools. Around 1,800 children are tested each year. The team also administers the Independent Assessment Board, and is responsible for disseminating the outcome of the selective tests to parents.

2.4 As well as admissions to Foundation 2 and Year 7, the team also processes around 2,000 in-year transfers between and into/out of Wirral schools.

2.5 The Council's Fair Access Protocol applies to "hard to place" young people, for example with a history of poor attendance or significant behavioural issues. 37 young people were placed at Wirral secondary schools through the Fair Access Protocol in 2017-2018, compared to 26 in the previous year. This excludes placements into Alternative Provision, placements into mainstream schools from EMA or the Progress School, or Managed Move decisions.

2.6 The Wirral Fair Access Protocol arrangements were re-evaluated in 2017-2018 in order to provide a clear consistent process leading to the most appropriate outcome for young people.

2.7 The role of the Fair Access Panel, with a wider membership including officers with responsibility for alternative provision special educational needs and educational psychology, exclusions etc. has expanded to also include decisions on applications

from schools for young people to be placed on the Alternative Provision Census, decisions on Managed Move destinations, and re-integration decisions for young people with a single permanent exclusion.

3.0 Update on changes to selective testing

3.1 The non-Catholic grammar schools comprise the Wirral Consortium of schools for testing purposes. The test provider is The University of Durham (CEM). A one year contract has been signed for the 2019-2020 testing period.

Testing in primary schools

3.2 September 2019 will be the first year in which all pupils registered for the non-Catholic selective tests will attend a grammar or other test centre.

3.3 The new test arrangements will include assigning pupils to a test centre, and to either a morning or afternoon session. All children whose additional needs require them to be tested in a room separate from the main group will attend one of the four grammar test centres.

3.4 Primary and junior schools should be aware that this change will mean that all pupils registered to take the non-Catholic selective test will need to provide photographic proof of identity using an official form in order to sit the test. Verification of the ID forms will be the responsibility of primary schools.

3.5 Primary and Junior schools should note that the IAB (Independent Assessment Board) will no longer operate. This means that parents are not required to submit mitigating circumstances via the school, and that primary schools will not be asked to submit "borderline" referrals to the IAB. Parents of children who do not reach the standard retain a right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel after 1st March in the year of allocation.

4.0 Finance

4.1 The overall budget for School Admissions in 2019-2020 is £372,200. The costs include:

Staffing (8.6 FTE)	£262,600
Software and implementation	£64,800
Selective tests	£40,000
Overheads	£43,300
Income/recharges	(£38,500)
Total	£372,200

The budget has been reduced by £30,000 compared to spend levels in 2011-2012. There is potential for a further reduction in one-off costs in future years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **That the Forum notes the report.**

Paul Boyce
Corporate Director for Children

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM 26th June 2019

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN

The Virtual School

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. BACKGROUND

On 1st April 2014, as part of the Children and Families Bill, it became a legal requirement for every local authority to appoint a Virtual School Head to oversee the education of children in care. Wirral has always been committed to this responsibility and has had a nominated Virtual School Head in post for a number of years; this role became full time from April 2017. The New Virtual Head was appointed to post from September 2018.

There are currently 588 children in care from Reception to year 11 on Wirral Virtual School roll 106 in other Local Authorities, so the Virtual School's first task is to monitor the completion and quality of Personal Education Plans, attendance and attainment & progress of these children wherever they go to school. The out of borough schools are quite wide-spread and collecting attendance information quite a challenge.

Current figures by Year Group - (Total and Out of Borough, OB)

Year	F2	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11
Total	43	29	31	56	33	46	41	51	63	50	73	72
OB	8	7	6	10	5	6	8	7	10	6	15	18

The current structure of the Virtual School comprises of:

Virtual Head

2 x full time EPO's

2 x part time EPO's

Part time admin

The current staffing structure only allows a basic service as we are down one part time Education Progress Officers (EPO's) and relying on the remaining staff to manage the case load of nearly 200 children each. We are not strategic nor providing schools with support as we remain inward looking and largely unskilled in the kind of support schools and social workers require from us.

The role of the Virtual Head is stifled by day to day issues which require urgent attention and leave no time to identify need or provide an exemplary service to our most vulnerable children. The current staff have no school experience and are therefore reliant on

guidance and support regarding the quality of plans for children and expected outcomes. There is a need for a permanent member of staff to be able to support them.

3.

Since April 2017, The Virtual School has 'top sliced' Pupil Premium Plus which rose from £1900 per child to £2300 and The Virtual Head made the decision to retain the increase of £400 per child to enable the service provided to improve and be able to support schools better. However, schools were not advised of this and this oversight has caused significant issues across the authority which is the intention of the Virtual Head to address.

Furthermore, the 'top sliced' funding was not earmarked for any particular service and was simply sent back to schools at the end of the financial year. This is not a good situation to be in as The Virtual Head cannot track and monitor use of the funding nor comment on the impact that the Government Funding has had on the progress of Children in care.

The Virtual Head has attended many meetings with Heads to explain the reasons behind the 'top slicing' and to ensure them that they will all benefit in the long term from a Virtual School that is able and skilled in offering advice, support and expertise in dealing with the many issues that our Children in care often present.

It is the Virtual Head's intention to:

- **Strengthen the capacity of the Virtual School** by appointing a '**Deputy**' who will take on the day to day running of the school in the absence of the Head leaving her with more time to network and investigate good practice. The appointed person will also have responsibility for a proportion of the Children in Care thus reducing the numbers allocated to EPO's and therefore improving the service they are able to provide. It would benefit the service greatly if all EPO's go to full time as this would provide another 3 days working time which would have the same desired affect.
 - **Cost of Deputy head - £50 k**
 - **Cost of full time EPO's - £30 k**
- The Virtual Head intends that all Wirral Schools become '**Attachment Aware Schools**' and all staff have training in what Attachment is, how this manifests through challenging behaviour and strategies that can be used to support both children and staff through some of the more difficult times. Attachment Trauma is often the reason behind the challenging behaviour frequently displayed by children in care and is the product of neglect and trauma in early years. This training would be cascaded across the authority over a number of years beginning with `15 schools in 2019 – 2020 academic year. This would link with The Alex Timpson Programme which supports and monitors the impact of the training on the schools to provide evidence of impact on Children in care and their schools.
 - Cost of training **£9000** each year.
 - Cost of The Alex Timpson support is nil.
- The service provided by the Virtual School would benefit greatly from permanent staff to be able to deliver training across the authority in dealing with the increasing issue **of Social, Emotional and Mental Health and have researched a Programme** that would enable the EPO's to be trained as trainers and deliver this in schools on a rolling programme. The cost for this would be offset by a reduction

in exclusions and further equip schools in strategies for enabling children in care (and others) to receive the right kind of support when it is needed.

- Cost of this training for 2 members of Virtual School staff would be **£10 k** and this could be easily cascaded to every school, in and out of borough over the forthcoming years.
- Another plan is to introduce **Positive Behaviour Strategies** across the authority and have contacted colleagues in an organisation called BILD which is the centre for the advancement of Positive Behaviour Support. The purpose of this is to improve the quality of the person's life and the quality of life for those around them. PBS means that people receive the right support at the right time and will certainly skill school staff in identifying the actual cause of challenging behaviour, to understand it and offer support through it. This is an excellent model used in many residential schools managing our most complex children and there is an evidence base of research which substantiates the impact of this practice.
 - Cost for piloting this in a robust model in one school in the authority would initially be **£15,000** which would then come down as we move forward from year to year when senior coached become equipped to cascade this into other schools.
- One resource commissioned this year that is proving successful is the support of a company called **Safebase** who work with schools experiencing difficulties presented by a particular child. Their services include staff training, group supervision and assessment of need and all schools who have been involved this year have commented very favourable on how this has impacted positively on staff and children. It is the intention to draw up a monitoring system to measure the impact of this as we progress forward.
 - The cost of this will vary from year to year depending on need and, as other strategies impact, may be required less and less. This year, The Virtual School have commissioned **£10 k** of support.
- Another commissioned service proving successful is '**Teens to Toddlers**' who work with a group of young people in their teens who are at risk of not achieving their academic potential and build resilience and empathy with them through engaging them in supporting little ones in a school setting. This intervention was used for the first time this year and they will provide feedback evidencing the impact this has had on each young person included in the project.
 - Cost is **£4000** per annum
- **Designated Teacher Training**
Termly meetings with all Designated Teachers to strengthen skills and practice in all issues relating to Children in care.
 - Ongoing cost of venue and on-line resources purchased £5000
- **Boxall Profiling** - Licence to be purchased to allow all school to access Boxall and assess and monitor SEMH etc for all children in care.

➤ Approximately £3000 per annum but to be confirmed.

- Purchasing specialist time from Educational Psychologists, Attendance Officers and Behavioural Support in the future would greatly enhance the provision offered to schools across the authority and is something to be considered in the next steps.

Total cost over this year would be £133 K leaving capacity to be able to parachute support into schools when a child is in crisis as the team have been doing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Forum noted the report

Paul Boyce

Corporate Director for Children

RE-SHAPING THE ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION LANDSCAPE IN WIRRAL

REPORT FOR SCHOOLS FORUM JUNE 2019

PART 1: WIRRAL COMMISSIONED ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The past two years have seen significant developments in the way in which the education of permanently excluded students has been managed and delivered in Wirral. Where previously the LA had solely depended on commissioning the services of the local PRU (Emslie Morgan Academy), a number of factors have led to the development of wider services which have impacted positively on the outcomes and life chances of some of our most vulnerable and often challenging young people. These factors have included:

- The urgent need to address rising numbers of students being permanently excluded from school
- The importance of ensuring that young people can be effectively re-integrated back into mainstream education if and when they are ready
- The need to establish appropriate pathways for those who are unable to return to mainstream education to ensure that they have the skills, knowledge, attributes and worthwhile qualifications necessary to make a positive contribution to society and support themselves financially
- The fact that the local PRU is in Special Measures with little improvement evident (Ofsted monitoring visit March 2019)

In addition to this, it has become increasingly difficult to place certain categories of students including:

- CLA students who are exhibiting behaviours which mainstream educational settings find particularly difficult to manage
- Students on the edge of care and others who are experiencing challenging or traumatic issues within their family life or domestic arrangements, and who cannot cope with school until such issues are resolved, or they have had chance to build resilience and/or coping strategies
- Students transferring into Wirral from other Authorities who were previously placed in PRUs or similar provisions and for whom mainstream educational settings may not be suitable
- Students presenting with possible undiagnosed SEND who require an urgent assessment place in order to ascertain whether an EHCP would be beneficial, or

the level of support or suitable strategies required to enable the young person to be successful in education, either in a mainstream or special school setting.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS

In light of the information that Emslie Morgan Academy will be closing at the end of this academic year, the Local Authority has acted rapidly in considering how best to develop commissioning arrangements which will cater for students who need to be re-allocated into suitable alternative educational placements in 2019/20. There are approximately 30 KS4 students and 10 KS3 students based on current numbers and possible further permanent exclusions during the latter half of the Summer term 2019. The closure of EMA also gives Wirral an ideal opportunity to re-shape the local educational landscape to include other students who may need some form of alternative education as part of short term/ longer term provision due to circumstances listed in the introduction section of this document.

Based on the evidence provided through pilot projects in Wirral as well as good practice in other Local Authorities, the plans for 2019-2021 are as follows:

Progress -Schools (Birkenhead): to continue to develop and embed the 12 week re-integration programme for KS3 students, as preparation for students to re-join mainstream school. Over 90% of KS3 students who have been re-integrated back into mainstream education have done so successfully; thanks are due to our secondary schools who have worked in collaboration with Progress-Schools to secure the success of this project.

12 places

Progress - Pathways: to continue to offer a vocationally based curriculum for permanently excluded KS4 students in conjunction with high quality local providers including Cornerstone and Tranmere Rovers FC.

35 places

A Nurture and Wellbeing Centre: the development of a provision for children in crisis, requiring a strongly therapeutic approach. The curriculum would be aimed at building resilience, self regulation, anger management, with opportunities for art, craft and PE, as well core subjects. This provision is planned as short term (6 weeks), with the emphasis on re-integration back into the student's home school facilitated as early as possible.

15 places

An Assessment Centre: the creation of a small assessment facility aimed at rapid assessment of students who present as having undiagnosed SEND, leading to EHCPs where appropriate. On conclusion of assessment, students who demonstrate that their needs would be best met through special school placement would be facilitated; students who do not meet the threshold would be supported through strategies identified during the assessment process to either re-integrate back into

mainstream school or allocated a place at Progress Pathways, if that was deemed to be more appropriate (KS4 only).

10 places

Pre-reintegration programmes: With the final 40 places released from the closure of EMA, there will be students in both Key Stages 3 & 4 who are not ready for re-integration, or who may have already experienced Progress Schools/ Progress Pathways and not responded positively to the opportunities presented. These students will require continuing educational programmes with the effective delivery of English and Maths at an appropriate level, a curriculum with a strong practical bias, and interventions designed to help them to become ready to access education either through re-integration back to mainstream or to progress on to the Progress Pathways programme. For Y11 students there will be a need for intensive, high quality IAG, with progression opportunities for post 16 education/ training clearly signposted to avoid young people becoming NEET. In some cases the programmes will need to have a higher academic content, for example, for students permanently excluded from Grammar schools and who need the added stimulation from a more challenging curriculum.

This provision will split into two separate facilities, one for KS3, one for KS4, nominally **15 places for KS3 and 25 places for KS4**, with flexibility to adapt according to need.

40 places

This is an exciting, strategic challenge for Wirral. There is no doubt that, by moving away from a 'one size fits all' model and creating smaller, more bespoke provisions, we have a real opportunity to shape an improved educational service for some of our most vulnerable, often challenging young people. These proposals will be run as pilot projects in order to assess their success, both in terms of educational outcomes for young people but also the value for money they provide. Key Stage 3 and 4 provisions will be registered separately with the DfE to minimise any potential risk in having a single provider overseeing the project.

In terms of benefits, the following can be evidenced from our experience of working with Progress-Schools Ltd:

1. They have developed our confidence and trust by working closely and collaboratively with named representatives of the LA, responding to any concern or constructive criticism positively. As a commissioned service, they are responsive to our needs as a client and are constantly aiming to develop and improve the quality of the provision on offer. Their OFSTED inspection reports are uniformly 'good' both locally and nationally, and they are continuously striving for 'outstanding'.
2. By having a single leadership group overseeing all provision, it will be much easier to move students between facilities, according to their need. For example, a KS3 student who presented as aggressive and uncooperative would be deemed to be suitable for the pre-reintegration programme, but as soon as the student's behaviour modified suitably, she/he would be transferred on to the

Progress-Schools re-integration programme in readiness for return to mainstream school.

3. As a fully commissioned service, the issue of finding suitable accommodation etc is not the responsibility of the LA. Once the SLA is agreed, it is the company's responsibility to deliver the package.
4. We have well established means of communication with the company, including regular review meetings which enable both parties to share concerns and to act proactively for the benefit of the students. This ensures that any issues are addressed at an early stage and are not allowed to become entrenched.
5. Progress-Schools Ltd has regularly demonstrated its capacity to respond quickly and effectively to our needs, even in the most trying of circumstances as evidenced with the unexpected closure of The Vocational College in 2018. Their proven track record inspires confidence and their local infrastructure is already in place, making a September 2019 start both realistic and achievable.

PART 2: SCHOOL COMMISSIONED ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

2018/19 has not been the easiest of years for Alternative Education in Wirral, or indeed nationally; the pressures on school budgets have seen a number of Provisions close as they have not been financially viable, and Providers that have seen cuts from their post-16 budgets which have historically supported 14-16 work have also removed provision or ceased trading altogether.

Nevertheless, in Wirral from the start of this academic year to date there have been **303 referrals** to Alternative Educational provision through the Portal, of which:

207 are boys

96 are girls

107 have some form of SEND (85 'K' code)

170 are Pupil Premium and

23 are CLA

This is fairly typical of the picture nationally.

In terms of secondary school permanent exclusions, the following three year trend has emerged:

2016/17	2017/18	2018/19 (to date)
64	43	46

Despite the slight increase in number this year, Wirral has succeeded in sustaining the downward pressure on permanent exclusion numbers. This has been achieved through close collaborative working with schools, identifying students at risk of permanent exclusion and putting effective intervention into place, often including the pro-active involvement of alternative education.

In an interesting development, we have welcomed Evolve Enterprise, based at the site of Hillside Primary School, who are offering a purely therapeutic package for

children in Years 4, 5 and 6, in order to build resilience, and support self regulation, self calming and anger management in younger children, especially in readiness for secondary school transfer. Currently, there are 9 full time equivalent primary school children attending for one or two days a week. Early indications suggest some positive impact.

Other Providers who continue to support Wirral schools and who are affiliated to the Wirral Guild of Alternative Education are as follows:

Cornerstone Training (Construction)

Liviva (Hair and Beauty)

Michael John Academy (Hair and Beauty) – closing July 2019

WRAP (Educational support, therapeutic intervention)

Forte (Construction offered through WRAP at Co Op Academy Bebington)

Utopia Project (KS4 study support plus vocational qualifications and GCSE Eng and Maths)

Tranmere Rovers Football Club (vocational qualifications through Progress Pathways)

Reaseheath College (land-based qualifications) – pilot commencing September 2019

The challenge for the next academic year is to continue to develop the growth of safe, high quality provision in Wirral, enhancing the breadth and range of our offer.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION IN WIRRAL: FUTURE PLANS

Moving forward, the key objectives for 2019/20 are as follows:

1. Reviewing and evaluating the success of the newly commissioned provisions replacing Emslie Morgan Academy, ready for tendering arrangements in 2020/ 2021
2. Continuing to work collaboratively with schools in order to further develop the Alternative Education landscape and broaden the offer currently available for schools to commission
3. Ensuring that students who access the bulk of their education through Alternative Provision are not disadvantaged in any way, establishing better coordinated services with health, social care, CAMHS and other relevant agencies.

Jan Levenson
June 2019

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM – 26 JUNE 2019

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR DELIVERY SERVICES

ENERGY PURCHASING FOR SCHOOLS UPDATE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper provides a brief update on the procurement of electricity and natural gas on behalf of Schools and suggests budget changes for the 2019/20 financial year.

2. PURPOSE OF THIS UPDATE

The purpose of this report is to provide schools with information on:

- Increases in natural gas and electricity prices that were anticipated for the 2019/20 financial year in January 2019.
- Unit prices achieved by the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) framework.
- Budget change suggestions to ensure provision for purchase of electricity and natural gas over the 2019/20 Financial Year.

The report content is only applicable to accounts that are part of the CCS framework agreement. The Council holds no information for schools that make their own energy supply arrangements and cannot make any meaningful comment on these accounts.

3. ANTICIPATED 2019/20 PRICE INCREASES FROM JANUARY 2019

Under the framework arrangement, natural gas and electricity is purchased on our behalf by CCS over a six-month window that ran from 1 September 2018 to 31 March 2019. In January 2019, a CCS budget forecast suggested the following increases could be expected if conditions did not change.

Energy type	Final delivered cost: % annual change 2019 vs 2018 (12/12/2018)	Climate Change Levy (CCL) increase
Gas (Supplied by Corona)	20.7%	67.0%
HH (Supplied by EdF)	16.19%	45.3%
NHH (Supplied by British Gas)	18.3%	45.3%

4. AVERAGE UNIT PRICES ACHIEVED BY CCS

The CCS risk managed approach has reduced the increases that were a real possibility in January. The final average unit prices achieved for 2019/20 are shown below together with previous years for reference and context.

	2016/17 (p/kWh)	2017/18 (p/kWh)	2018/19 (p/kWh)	2019/20 (p/kWh)
HH Elec. Day (07:00 to 24:00)	11.391	11.8287	8.7081	10.7460
HH Elec. Night (00:00 to 07:00)	6.886	7.6427	7.7204	9.6490
NHH Electricity	11.241	12.642	13.509	15.598
Natural Gas	1.916	1.926	2.096	2.437

Please note that these unit prices are indicative as each supply point is individually priced. Unit prices do not include standing charges or Climate Change Levy.

The HH electricity p/kWh day unit rate remains significantly below the non-half hourly unit rate. This is because all our HH supplies are priced on a Grid Supply Point (GSP) basis and means that non-energy costs such as transmission and distribution used of system charges (TNUoS and DUoS) are included as 'pass-through' costs. This eliminates the need for the supplier to estimate these charges and to include any contingency for major fluctuations. This ensures maximum billing transparency and reduces the risk of excess charges being levied.

All unit prices (p/kWh) for natural gas under the CCS fall into the range between 2.2246p/kWh and 2.5283 p/kWh. This is an increase from last year because of the rising costs on the wholesale markets. A business energy comparison website suggests that the best indicative price commercially available on 3 June 2019 was 3.08 p/kWh, 24.5% higher than the average unit prices that CCS has achieved.

5. INCREASE IN PROVISION FOR GAS & ELECTRICITY EXPENDITURE

Market forces and increases in non-commodity costs and tax have led to a rise in energy prices that, if patterns of consumption do not alter significantly, inevitably mean higher expenditure on energy. Weather conditions, especially over the winter and spring periods, are significant as cold weather will increase the use of gas for heating and costs will rise. Similarly, increasing the use of electricity with additional equipment or increasing the hours of use will also push up costs.

In order to determine realistic recommendations, sample calculations comparing £/kWh for 2018/19 to the new pricing information that applies to the current financial year were carried out. The projections included energy costs, non-energy costs and the increased Climate Change Levy.

As well as the increased cost of energy on the wholesale markets, the final prices we have to pay have to take account of the Climate Change Levy increases of 45.3% for Electricity and 67.0% for Natural Gas. Rises in non-energy costs are set by Government (Ofgem and HMRC) and must be applied by all suppliers. These now contribute up to 60% of an electricity bill and 22% of a typical gas bill. A proportion of these costs are used to fund Government schemes including the Feed-in-tariff scheme, the Renewables Obligation and Contracts for Difference.

The following increases from 2018/19 expenditure are suggested as precautionary provisions to take account of the increased prices.

- Increase provision for **natural gas** supplied by Corona by 21.5%
- Increase provision for **electricity** supplied by British Gas Business by 25.7%
- Increase provision for **electricity** supplied by EdF by 25.2%

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the forum notes the content of this report.

David Armstrong
Corporate Director for Delivery Services/Assistant Chief Executive

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM Wednesday 26th June 2019

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

WIRRAL TRADED SERVICES FOR SCHOOLS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a brief update on Wirral Traded Services for schools.



2. BACKGROUND

Wirral Council operates a range of traded services to its schools and beyond. The current range of 22 Wirral Traded Services for 2019/20 includes:

- Construction and Facilities Management
- Corporate Procurement
- Data Protection Officer
- Distribution Services
- Financial Support for Schools
- Health & Safety
- HR Consultancy Services
- ICT Schools' Telecoms
- Independent School Appeals Clerking (Admission and Exclusions)
- Internal Audit
- IT Services for Schools
- Legal Services
- Marketing Services
- Minority Ethnic Achievement Service (MEAS)
- Occupational Health
- Payroll & Human Resources Administration
- Risk and Insurance
- Safeguarding Training and Support Service for Schools and Educational Settings
- Software Support
- Schools' Library Service
- Wirral Community Patrol
- Wirral Printing Services

Some of these services, such as Software Support and the Minority Ethnic Achievement Service provide their service almost exclusively for schools. Others, such as Payroll & Human Resources Administration and Health & Safety are integrated into providing their services for other customers such as the Council.

Wirral Traded Services is coordinated by a Senior Manager and for 2019/20, the Wirral Traded Services brochure was used from 18/19 but the pricing was updated. Also the new additional service offers were sent out as an separate booklet.

These new additional service offers from Wirral Traded Services for 2019/20 included:

- Corporate Procurement
- Internal Audit
- ICT Schools' Telecoms
- Marketing Services
- Safeguarding Training and Support Service for Schools and Educational Settings

WESCOM contains the full SLAs for each of the services. A new website is currently under construction.

There was a successful launch event attended by over 60 school colleagues in January 2019 at the Floral Pavilion.

Overall Wirral Traded Services generated income in 18/19 of around £4.5 million. All of the services look to at least break even so that their income at least matches their expenditure. Collectively they employ nearly 150 Wirral Council staff (around 120 FTE).

For 2019/20 the level of annual buyback for schools has held up across most of the traded services with some services winning back school customers. Schools have expressed interest in al of the 5 new services offered for 19/20. Projected income figures for 19/20 suggest that income will be similar across Wirral Traded Services on the previous year by This is partly down to increasing the range of products with new services for schools This retention of income has been achieved despite increased competition and also greater financial challenges for schools with their budgets.

Every maintained and academy school across Wirral buys at least one of the annual SLAs on offer. There are over 1000 individual SLA agreements from Wirral Traded Services across Wirral Schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Forum notes the report.

Paul Boyce
Corporate Director for Children's Services

**WIRRAL COUNCIL
SCHOOLS FORUM – 26th June 2019
REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES
EARLY YEARS WORKING GROUP UPDATE**

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the School Forum on discussions at the recent Early Years working group meeting, 6th June 2019 on the following matters; core staffing arrangements, Disability Access Funds and quality supplement consultation.

2.0 EARLY YEARS CORE STAFFING STRUCTURE

2.1 Recruitment has now completed on filling the x2 Business Support officer posts, this will give more capacity to the team for 30 hours offer, cohort tracking and Family Information Service functions. In addition, also the SEND officer post has been recruited too. All above are awaiting finalisation of Safer Recruitment processes and it is expected posts will be filled by September 2019. However, the fixed term post of Inclusion Officer is currently awaiting Human Resources sign off for advertising.

3.0 EARLY YEARS FREE ENTITLEMENT – QUALITY/FLEXIBLE SUPPLEMENT

3.1 A consultation questionnaire has been produced for dissemination in the autumn term to obtain feedback on applying the quality supplement. The rationale for the consultation is to create a consistent and transparent approach across the whole early years provision. To better understand how many hours the Early Years graduate is deployed across settings. To give profile to the role of the Early Years graduate through tasking out responsibilities in a job description. On conclusion of the consultation feedback will inform a Wirral wide policy.

3.2 There was a proposal to also consult on flexibility, to review and compare across all providers the hours of operation that draws on flexibility. For instance; would being open 7am-7pm 4 days per week be viewed as being flexible against a setting opened 5 days per week delivering within the school day. However, it was agreed that given the choice available for families, particularly since implementation of 30 hours it could reverse some flexible arrangements by building in new parameters.

4 DISABILITY ACCESS FUND (DAF)

4.1 As a response to the underspend within this funding element the following processes will be applied to maximise spend;

- Promotion on awareness raising of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) through partners.
- Utilise the Children Centre and early years workforce in supporting families to apply for DLA.
- Attributed 10k to Medicare contract.
- £40k resource budget for Portage to access specialised educational equipment to aid transitions to early educational settings.
- Audit process of Health notifications to the LA of SEND.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Forum to note the report.

Paul Boyce – Corporate Director for Children's Services

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM – 26th JUNE 2019

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN SERVICES

SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA 2020-21

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to propose and seek Schools Forum's views on the consultation process in respect of the 2020-21 funding formula.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2019-20 totaled £202,890,532, which was allocated to mainstream schools via the local funding formula as reported to January Forum and approved by Cabinet on 18th February 2019. This formula adopted the National Funding Formula (NFF) values for Low Prior Attainment, as well as the minimum per pupil funding amounts included within the NFF.
- 2.2 At the time of writing, there has been no indication from the Department for Education that there will be any change to the level of DSG funding for 2020-21, as future funding is subject to the government spending review 2019. It is therefore assumed at this stage that the DSG Schools Block will remain the same.
- 2.3 Wirral's DSG allocation is in line with the National Funding Formula. 2019-20 was originally planned to be the last year that Local Authorities could set a local funding formula ('soft NFF') before adopting the 'hard' NFF in 2020-21. However, in July 2018 it was confirmed that LAs will also determine local formulae in 2020-21. It is assumed that the 'hard' NFF formula will therefore be implemented in 2021-22.
- 2.4 The local formula has to have a Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) between minus 1.5% and 0.5%. This protects schools from large changes to their budget year on year on a per pupil basis. The 2019-20 formula included 0% MFG to maintain stability and ensure no school lost funding (per pupil). However, the higher the MFG percentage (i.e. the more protection included) in the formula the longer it will take to bring Wirral's local formula in line with the National Funding Formula.
- 2.5 The DfE usually release details of the following year's NFF along with indicative allocations based on the previous October census data in July. However, it has been indicated that this is unlikely for the 2020-21 NFF, with early autumn being more realistic.
- 2.6 This presents a difficulty in terms of consultation for the local 2020-21 funding formula as allowing for time to analyze the data and produce funding models would not leave significant time for meaningful consultation, although no significant changes to the NFF are expected.

3.0 2020-21 FUNDING FORMULA CONSULTATION

- 3.1 Local Authorities must consult with all schools and the Schools Forum on how the funding formula should look. It is likely that if there is no agreement, the existing formula would be retained by Cabinet.
- 3.2 The consultation process for the 2020-21 schools funding formula aims to learn from lessons learnt in previous years. Following a difference in views between Schools Forum and the consultation feedback regarding the MFG level included in the 2019-20 formula, it should be clarified that any vote by Schools Forum on the final formula and MFG will be for consultative purposes only, and would be to obtain the view of Forum rather than a decision or approval of the formula.
- 3.3 Feedback in previous years has also highlighted that schools require clarity in the consultation, which must be balanced with not being overloaded with information. Consultation for the 2019-20 formula was based on 5 different models, each demonstrated with 2 MFG levels, which meant a significant amount of data was presented.
- 3.4 To simplify this, and considering Wirral's current local funding formula has already adopted some of the elements of the NFF, it is proposed to demonstrate just two models within the consultation:
1. Current formula unchanged from 2019-20 formula;
 2. National Funding Formula factor values.
- 3.5 As the formula models would be using pupil data from the October 2018 census, they would be purely illustrative. Each model would be displayed with both a minus 1.5% and 0% MFG, and would assume no top-slice as it is unclear at this stage if this would still be possible for 2020-21.
- 3.6 As any changes to the 2020-21 NFF, along with indicative allocations, are not likely to be received until the autumn term it is proposed that the models assume no change to the funding level, and no changes to the structure of the NFF to enable a meaningful consultation period. However, should DfE release details prior to summer recess, models will be updated accordingly.
- 3.7 The intention is to begin the consultation at the beginning of September, and to run until half-term, which would allow at least 6 weeks for responses. Results will then be reviewed and reported back to Schools Forum with a proposed formula in November.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That the Forum notes the report.
- 4.2 That consultation regarding the schools funding formula runs for 6 weeks from early September until October half term, and a proposed 2020-21 formula is subsequently presented to Schools Forum in November.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM – 26th JUNE 2019

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN SERVICES

GROWTH FUND 2018-19

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Forum on the use of the growth fund that was created as part of the local schools funding formula in 2018-19 as a means of redistributing funding for the children attending Kingsway Academy which closed in August 2018.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 It was announced in July 2017 that the Kingsway Academy would close in August 2018 at the end of the academic year. However, there were 140 pupils remaining at the school at the time of the autumn 2018 census, which is used as the basis for the following years funding formula allocations.
- 2.2 The schools' budget was allocated to schools based on Wirral's local formula as agreed by Schools Forum in January 2018, and this process accounted for the closure of Kingsway Academy. Where the successor school was known for a pupil, adjustments were made to allocations.
- 2.3 However at the point of submitting allocations to the ESFA it was not known which schools a number of Kingsway Academy pupils would be attending. Advice was sought from ESFA, whose solution was to create a 'growth' fund to enable successor schools to be funded once known. As reported to Forum in May 2018 a growth fund of £391k was therefore created.
- 2.4 It was agreed by Schools Forum that the growth fund criteria to be considered in 2018-19 was in relation to growth in pupil numbers from the closure of Kingsway Academy, and was for one year only, with consideration given to growth in the number of year 7 pupils who otherwise would have gone to Kingsway.

3.0 GROWTH FUND DISTRIBUTION

- 3.1 For each pupil whose successor school was known at the time of submitting 2018-19 schools budget details to ESFA, successor schools were given an additional 7/12ths of a pupil on their submission in line with the LA financial year.
- 3.2 However, DfE guidance states that where growth funding is payable to academies, the local authority should fund the increase for the period from the additional September intake through until the following August. Academies allocated additional pupils in their original allocations therefore required a further 5/12ths of pupil funding for each additional pupil. ESFA agreed to fund this additional cost via an adjustment to DSG recoupment.

3.3 Allocations from the growth fund were based on successor school's information for the 140 pupils from the Admissions team, adjusted to remove those adjusted on the APT. As reported to Forum in May 2018, the per pupil rate of the successor school was used to distribute funding.

3.4 The following table shows the initial allocation of the growth fund, including the amount that was reclaimed from ESFA for the additional amount paid to Academies, which totaled £109,765:

School	Pupils		Per Pupil funding rate (£)		Transferred (£)			Of which 5/12ths claimed from ESFA
	KS3	KS4	KS3	KS4	KS3	KS4	Total	£
Not included in original school budgets:								
Hilbre High School	5.08	2.00	4,667	5,824	23,724	11,648	35,372	14,738
St Mary's Catholic College	0.42	8.00	5,174	6,331	2,156	50,646	52,802	22,001
Olderhaw	0.92	22.00	5,358	6,515	4,911	143,322	148,233	61,764
Weatherhead	0.00	1.00	4,765	5,922	0	5,922	5,922	2,467
Birkenhead Park	-0.75	3.00	5,639	6,795	-4,229	20,386	16,157	6,732
Woodchurch High School	1.00	0.00	4,949	6,106	4,949	0	4,949	2,062
Already transferred on APT	33.33	0.00						
Out of borough / Post-16	64.00							
Total	140.00						263,436	109,765
Original Growth Fund Balance							391,544	
Reclaimed from ESFA							109,765	
Total growth fund available							501,309	
Remaining balance							237,873	

3.5 As the above table shows, there was £273k remaining due to a number of Kingsway pupils moving to post-16 or out of area schools. It was agreed by the Formula working group that any remaining growth fund should be distributed proportionately for indicative growth in year 7s caused by the closure of Kingsway Academy.

3.6 Allocations were not based on year 7 growth alone, as although September 2018 was the first year of Kingsway being closed, the impact on other schools would have taken effect prior to this, so year 7 growth only would have been disproportionate.

- 3.7 Instead, allocations were based on net growth of overall school numbers on roll in years 7-11 between autumn 2017 and autumn 2018, allowing for a nominal 'standard' growth of 20. However, only schools within 5 miles of Kingsway Academy were included (using shortest driving route) to give a reasonable commute time.
- 3.8 These criteria were agreed verbally by secondary school (including Academy) Forum reps, and resulted in the following allocations:

School	Net growth Oct-17 to Oct-18 (yr 7-11)	Shortest distance by road from Kingsway Academy (miles)	Growth after initial 20	Proportion of remaining Kingsway 'growth' fund	Amount transferred (£)
Birkenhead High	26	4	6	2.14%	5,079
Hilbre	29	5	9	3.20%	7,619
Mosslands	113	2.1	93	33.10%	78,727
Ridgeway	43	3.7	23	8.19%	19,470
St. Anselm's	31	3.8	11	3.91%	9,312
Birkenhead Park	53	4.1	33	11.74%	27,935
Oldershaw	105	2.9	85	30.25%	71,954
Upton Hall	24	2.6	4	1.42%	3,386
Weatherhead High	37	2.6	17	6.05%	14,391
			281		237,873

4.0 ADDITIONAL FUNDING

- 4.1 As reported in the 2018-19 Budget Outturn report at May 2019 Forum, as well as providing the £109k referred to in paragraph 3.4, ESFA also returned £173,236 of Wirral's recoupment as a way of repaying 7/12ths of Kingsway Academy's 2018-19 formula allocation for the period after they closed.
- 4.2 This was clarified with ESFA at the time, and it was confirmed that it was the correct final figure, and no further adjustments were to be made. This amount was included in the total DSG reserves reported in May (£2.2m), but it is proposed that as this sum relates to the closure of Kingsway Academy it should be distributed on the same basis as described in paragraph 3.7.
- 4.3 When reconciling Wirral's 2018-19 Pupil Premium grant income, there was £45,270 income unaccounted for. Clarification was sought from ESFA who confirmed that this was the returned amount for Kingsway Academy pupils. It is proposed that this sum is distributed on the same basis as described in paragraph 3.7.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The growth fund, which was created in response to the pending closure of Kingsway Academy, has been used to redistribute funding to known successor schools of Kingsway Pupils. The remaining fund has been distributed proportionately based on agreed criteria to meet indicative year 7 growth resulting from the school closure.
- 5.2 The growth fund was for one year only and has not been repeated in 2019-20.
- 5.3 It is proposed additional funding received from ESFA (referred to in section 4) relating to the closure is distributed to schools on the same basis as the indicative year 7 growth allocations.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 That the Forum notes the report and the use of the growth fund in 2018-19.
- 6.2 £173,236 received from ESFA via DSG recoupment adjustment is distributed to secondary schools using the criteria described in paragraph 3.7.
- 6.3 £45,270 received from ESFA for Kingsway Academy's Pupil Premium grant is distributed to secondary schools using the criteria described in paragraph 3.7.

Paul Boyce
Corporate Director for Children Services

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM – 26th JUNE 2019

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN SERVICES

SCHOOLS BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2019/20

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Forum on the Schools Budget position and anticipated variations in the current year.

2.0 ANTICIPATED BUDGET VARIATIONS

2.1 The table attached summarises the Schools Budget for 2019-20. Comments on specific budget areas and associated pressures are set out below.

2.2 **Primary, Secondary and Special Schools - £5.869m favourable variance**

Bebington High School converted to Academy status as part of the Co-op Multi-Academy Trust from 1st April 2019. The final balance for this school at the date of conversion is currently being finalised.

Schools converting to Academy status result in a reduction in DSG grant income received, which is matched by reduced spending through the delegated budget. At the time of writing, no further academy conversions are expecting during 2019-20.

2.3 **Early Years Grant**

The Early Years budget of £20.2m reflects the funding required for 2, 3 and 4 year olds who are entitled to receive free Early Education and Early Years Pupil Premium, as well as the 3 and 4 year old extended offer. The budget for this is based on the January 2019 census.

2.4 **Contribution to Combined Budgets**

The combined budgets of £0.9m are broken down as follows:

	Budget
	£
School Improvement	330,000
Discretionary Rate Relief Top Up	106,600
LCSB contribution	30,000
Governors Forum	2,200
PFI Support Team	61,800
LACES	140,500
School Intervention	136,000
CLC PFI	68,500
Total	875,600

It is anticipated that these budgets will be fully committed.

2.5 Contribution to Combined Budgets

The £10.3m budget relates to place funding in special schools as in 2018-19, including the additional places at 4 schools agreed from September 2018 and 2 additional places at Foxfield School from September 2019. The budget also included 8/12ths of the special school 6th form places (4/12ths deducted by ESFA and repaid within 16-19 grant).

2.6 Special Staff Costs

This budget is currently projecting no variance. However, maternity/paternity costs have overspent the last 2 years so will be monitored closely throughout the year, as this may suggest an increase in delegation may be required. The budget is broken down as follows:

	Budget
	£
Maternity, Paternity & Other Staff Costs	536,500
TU Facilities	84,200
Insurance & Recharges	6,900
Total	627,600

2.7 School Specific Contingencies

There is a contingency budget of £91,100 to take into account any specific costs that need to be met. The purpose of this budget is to meet exceptional and unforeseen costs, which would be unreasonable to expect the schools and governing bodies to bear including Business Rates charges in excess of those estimated in the budget, and support for schools in Key Stage 1 where a larger than usual reception class (above the published admission numbers) requires additional staff.

2.8 Special Education Needs Top Ups

A budget of £11.5m funds the Pupil Led Top Up funding in Specialist Provision, Resource Bases (including pilot bases created from September 2018), FE, Colleges and Alternative Provision. Budgets have been increased to reflect increased numbers and greater needs moving towards higher top-up bands.

Special School top-up budget reflects an increased top-up rate of £10,000 for Kilgarth and Gilbrook following a benchmarking exercise with North West LAs by the former Head of SEN, with the intention that this would relieve pressure on the Exceptional Needs budget.

The Exceptional Needs panel has not met since summer 2018, due to the potential for conflict of interest that could arise from having Special Heads on the panel. The intention was to review the exceptional needs award process, but little progress was made prior to the Head of SEN leaving the authority. A total 22 awards have been made with a 2019-20 cost of £357k in addition to existing awards. However a number of these, along with a number of existing awards, relate to Kilgarth and Gilbrook. These are currently being reviewed in relation to the increased top-up rate, in terms of whether they should still be paid. The award process for Exceptional Needs will also be reviewed.

The alternative provision top-up budget includes full year top-ups for Emslie Morgan at 100 places reducing to 80 places from September 2019, as well as costs of the Progress Pathways placements. The saving made from the closure of Emslie Morgan top-ups will be used towards further alternative provision initiatives.

The Summer Term census figures are not yet available but as previously reported pressures on High Needs budgets continue to increase nationally and this area will continue to be monitored throughout the year.

	Budget £
Top Ups for Maintained Special Schools	7,708,600
Top Ups for Resourced provision	1,038,200
Alternative provision	434,900
FE and 6 TH Form Top Ups	1,700,000
Additional Nursing Support	106,600
Exceptional Needs	504,100
Total	11,492,400

2.9 Special Education Needs Statements

The budget has been increased in this area to reflect the greater number and cost of EHCPs, using the number of units paid during autumn 2018 as the basis (2,500 for primary, 1,900 for secondary). Numbers vary during the year and will continue to be monitored closely.

This area will include costs for a group PFA agreed with Egremont Primary school at £60k per academic year (pro-rata) running from February 2018 to August 2020, and a nurture group at Rock Ferry Primary school costing per £14.5k per year.

It was also agreed to fund cost of a portacabin (installation costs of £7.2k and rental costs of £168 for 2 years) for a Speech therapy room, sensory circuit place, and small intervention room at Clare Mount Special School.

A primary school believe that the former Head of SEN also agreed to fund group PFA at £38k. This is currently being reviewed by the SEN team as the arrangements and timescales are unclear.

2.10 Independent Special Schools

The budget in this area has remained the same as in 2018-19 and is based on 84 students at an average annual cost of £45k. However, there was an overspend of £100k in 2018-19, due to increased cost of placements. There are currently 74 students placed at Independent Special Schools, although this is likely to increase in September.

2.11 Home Tuition

The Home Tuition budget was increased in 2018-19 to ensure the service could meet its statutory requirements. However, due to cost pressures and increased demand (as reported to Forum in May-19), the service overspent by £111k. This budget will be closely monitored and reported to Forum throughout the year.

2.12 DSG - £168,114,800 - £5.869m adverse variance

The revised Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2019-20 is expected to be published in July and will confirm Wirral's allocation.

Original DSG Budget	264,165,500
Academy Recoupment – Schools Block	(92,067,400)
Academy Recoupment – High Needs Block	(3,049,600)
Early Years reduction (Jan-19 census)	(933,700)
	168,114,800

3.0 UPDATE ON SPECIFIC RESERVES

3.1 The final figure of DSG reserves carried forward into 2019/20 was £2.2m as follows:

- **Job Evaluation and Pay Harmonisation Reserve - £0.65m**

- **DSG Reserve - £1.1m** (*subject to decision elsewhere on the agenda*)

	£
DSG Carry Forward from 2018/19	1,414,700
Inclusive Practice Fund	(181,500)
Disability Access Fund	(114,200)
Balance	1,119,000

- **City Learning Centres - £0.045m**

This reserve will be used for some remaining final closure / school reuse costs in relation to the former City Learning Centres.

- **Early Years £0.094m**

This reserve is expected to fund development in the Early Years Portal.

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 The Schools Budget will be monitored throughout the year, and any projected variances against budget will be reported to the Forum.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 That the Forum notes the report.

Paul Boyce
Corporate Director for Children Services

Appendix 1 – Schools Budget
2019-20

	Revised Budget 2019-20
Individual Schools Budget	
Primary	85,814,000
Secondary	23,481,700
Special	10,328,600
Wirral Hospital Schools	1,354,300
SEN Bases	1,108,000
Alternative Provision	0
6th Form / Further Education	0
Early Years	20,203,500
Individual Schools Budget Total	142,290,100
Central School Costs	
Early Years	518,700
Admissions	372,200
School Closure / Retirement Costs	60,000
Licenses and subscriptions	246,600
Schools Forum	10,600
Contribution to combined budgets	875,600
PFI Affordability Gap	1,118,400
Retained duties (ex-ESG)	730,000
Costs delegated to / de-delegated from schools	
Library service	170,100
Insurances	25,900
School Specific contingencies	91,100
Special Staff costs	627,600
School meals	0
Behaviour Support	86,000
School Improvement	159,100
General duties (ex-ESG)	493,900
High Needs pupils	
Statements	5,715,100
SEN top-ups	11,492,400
High Needs contingency	310,000
Independent Special Schools	3,700,000
Home Tuition	400,500
Exclusions	60,000
Support for SEN	2,150,200
Special School Transport	58,200
Non-delegated school costs total	29,472,200
Total School and Central costs	171,762,300
Dedicated Schools Grant	-168,114,800
Use of reserves - High Needs deficit	-2,343,200
LA contribution - SEN restructure	-186,000
Grand Total	1,118,300

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS' FORUM 26th June 2019

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN

Forum Membership Review

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report describes the current representation of the Forum and membership changes.

Current Representation

The table below details the current makeup of the Wirral Schools' Forum representation and when the terms of office are.

		2015- 2019	2016- 2020	2017- 2021	2018- 2022	2019- 2023	Total
Total Membership							
5	Primary Headteachers		2	2	1		5
4	Primary Governors		1	1	1		3
1	Secondary Headteachers		1				1
1	Secondary Governors	1					1
1	Special Headteacher				1		1
1	Special Governors				1		1
1	Nursery Representative		1				1
14	Total Schools Membership						
1	Academy Pupil Referral Unit (EMA)				1		1
8	Academy Representative	1	1	4	1		7
9	Total Academy Membership						
1	Non-teacher representative		1				1
1	Teacher representative	1					1
1	Catholic Diocese				1		1
1	Church of England Diocese	1					1
1	Further Education			1			1
3	PVI Early Years Providers	1	1			1	3
8	Total Non-Schools Membership						
31	Total Membership	5	8	8	7	1	29

There are currently 2 vacancies

- Primary governor – A request has been sent out – responses were due in on Friday, there has been some interest in this position.
- Academy Representative – A request has been sent out, but at the time of writing the report, no nominations had been received.

Membership changes

Regulations governing the forum requires school/academy membership to take account of pupil weighting. Table 2 below details the total pupils in each school phase based on January 2019 census, but taking account of the latest academy conversions in the spring term:-

Phase	Current Representation	Pupil Numbers (Jan 19 Census)	New Forum Representatives
Primary	9	21918	9
Secondary	2	3360	1
Academy	8	21597	9
Total	19	46875	19

Due to the number of academy conversion during the 2018-19 financial year the number of secondary representatives has reduced from 2 to 1, with the academy representatives increasing from 8 to 9.

The term of office for the Secondary Governor is due to end in July 2019, so it would be appropriate to adjust this to an academy representative at this time.

Due to the closure of Emslie Morgan Academy, from 1st September 2019 the Academy Pupil Referral Unit will no longer be required.

There are a number of other terms of office that are due to end, or have recently ended and most of those members have been contacted. Where nominations are required paperwork will be sent out shortly.

Recommendations

- Forum notes the report

Paul Boyce
Corporate Director for Children

**WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM – 26th June 2019
WORK PLAN**

Meeting Date	September 2019	November 2019	January 2020	May 2020	June 2020
	Elect chair & vice chair				
Budget	Budget monitoring and Final DSG Update on School budgets/balances		Budget Monitoring Schools Budget 2019-20 De-delegation of budgets Update on School budgets/balances	Schools Budget update 2020-21 Schools Budget provisional outturn Update on School budgets/balances	School Balances and Reserves School Budget Monitoring
Consultation	2020-21 National Funding Formula for Schools, High Needs and Early Years	Outcome of school funding formula consultation			2021-22 School Funding Arrangements
DfE Regs & guidelines	DfE Operational Guide Schools Forum Constitution Scheme for Financing Schools – Directed updates		School Finance Regulations Schools Forum Structure (identifies voting rights)		School Forum Membership
Working Groups	School Formula High Needs Early Years		School Formula High Needs Early Years	School Formula High Needs Early Years	High Needs Early Years
Other	Forum Membership (SMA) High needs funding & places De-delegated services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contingency • Special Staff Costs • Library Service • Insurance 		MEAs Update	Early Years Edsential Business Plan High Needs Funding arrangements Home Tuition Update Sensory Support Service Update	Energy update Wirral Traded Services Update Alternative Provision School Admissions Growth Fund LACES /LAC PP

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