



Wirral Schools Forum

Date:	Wednesday, 6 November 2019
Time:	6.00 p.m.
Venue:	Committee Room 1

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AGENDA

1. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25TH SEPTEMBER 2019 (Pages 1 - 6)**
2. **MATTERS ARISING**
3. **SEND AND INCLUSION UPDATE (Pages 7 - 12)**
4. **SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA CONSULTATION (Pages 13 - 20)**
5. **BUDGET MONITORING 2019-20 UPDATE (Pages 21 - 26)**
6. **INSURANCES, STAFF COSTS AND CONTINGENCY (Pages 27 - 30)**
7. **SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP UPDATE (Pages 31 - 34)**
8. **WORKPLAN (Pages 35 - 36)**
9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

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WIRRAL SCHOOLS' FORUM

25th September 2019

MINUTES

Present: Adrian Whiteley (Chair)

Schools Group

M Bellamy	E Neal
J Bush	D Spencer
H Johnson	T Taylor
T Kelly	J Weise
N Lightwing	R Wood
M Morris	

Non-Schools Group

S Bennett	N Prance
S Davies	S Ralph
G Edwards	A Ryecroft

In Attendance:

S Allen	T Ghosh
S Ashley	C McNally
A Davies	L Rice
C Fenlon	S Talbot

Apologies:

R Bridges	Cllr Lewis
K Brown	E Longbone
L Davidson	R Mahony
M Forber	Cllr Norbury

1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Adrian Whitely was elected as Chair and Nikki Lightwing was elected as Vice Chair for 2019-20 academic year.

2. Minutes from the Meeting held on 26th June 2019

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

3. Matters Arising

Energy Update

It was noted that the high increase in the utility costs has not materialised. Andrew Snow has been asked to review this to establish what the actual increases are.

High Needs Working Group Update

It was confirmed that after discussions with the appropriate schools the increased top-up values agreed by the former Head of SEN have now reverted to the previous level and the Exceptional needs funding was re-instated.

4. Library Service Update

Catherine McNally updated the Forum on the Library Service. Most of their funding is through de-delegation from Primary Schools. However, de-delegation has not increased for a number of years, whilst staffing and the cost of books have. The costs will be reviewed with a view to requesting an increase in the de-delegation rate in January. They are continuing to offer a premium service to primary schools and promote services to academies, where there has been further uptake.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

5. Early Years Update

Carol Fenlon informed Forum that the early years team are now working towards their new staffing structure, with only 1 vacancy left to fill. The consultation on the quality supplement runs until October half term. The take up of 2 year old funding has dipped to 80.4% due to increased eligibility, but it is still above the national average, the team are continually working to increase uptake. A further 30 pupils have accessed IPF's since the spring term and 24 pupils have benefitted from the new transitional funding available as they move to F2. This funding will continue to be reviewed.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

6. High Needs Update

The High Needs update report highlighted all the areas and roles within the High Needs Team. Tarun Ghosh highlighted the priorities and areas of interest within this area:

- Compliance with statutory 20-week EHCP assessments
- To provide good quality services
- Good quality EHCPs with annual reviews
- Communications with parent & colleagues
- Preparation of joint local area inspection

- Sufficiency in specialist provision panels
- Performance management of Services
- The impact of High needs funding
- The Personal Funding Arrangement (PFA) process will be reviewed.

Premier Advisory Group have confirmed that they will provide a report by the end of October.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

7. High Needs Funding Report

Shaun Allen briefed Forum on the High Needs Funding Provision. Following the last forum meeting the service has been working with the schools, and the situation regarding the previously agreed increased top-up rate for Gilbrook and Kilgarth special schools has now been resolved, with their top-up bands reverting to their original values.

In primary schools there were 163 pupils with funded EHCPs in summer and 344 with PFAs, while in secondary schools there were 250 and 97 respectively.

£700m additional SEN funding nationally from April 2020 was announced in the Spending Round. It's unclear at this stage how this will be allocated to local authorities, but Wirral may receive up to £4m. It is unlikely that this will be enough to allow for future growth in SEN population and Wirral are likely to be in a growing deficit position in 2 years without changes to provision.

The Head of SEND confirmed there was no way to identify the number of pupils 'stuck in the EHCP system' and will need a formal group to cleanse/audit the data.

Forum requested an update from the Director / Assistant Director at the next Forum meeting on the independent review being conducted by Premier Advisory Group. Also requested further information/clarification from the Head of SEN at a future meeting in respect of:

- Inclusion funding including 1st day exclusion funding, and Specialist funding;
- Review of Pilot Provision;
- Group PFAs;
- Exceptional Needs awards process;

Forum welcomed the report but will need more clarity going forward.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

8. School Balances Update

Sue Ashley informed forum of the current position on School balances. The information is based on budget setting and projections at that time. Based on this information balances will continue to reduce and be in an overall deficit position by March 2021. However, these figures do not take account of Teachers Pay or Pension Grant after 31st March 2020, or any funding announced in the government spending round. On this basis it is expected that future reports may reflect a more positive position.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

9. School Budget Monitoring Report 2019-20

Shaun Allen presented the Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring report, which forecasts an adverse variance of £1.4m, largely relating to High Needs, particularly Exceptional Needs, Independent Placements, and Primary EHCPs/PFAs.

The £1.4m overspend together with a budgeted £2.34m contribution from reserve will leave the DSG reserve in an deficit position at the end of 2019-20.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

10. Schools Revenue Funding 2020-21 and Funding Formula Consultation for 2020-21

Shaun Allen updated Forum on the recent funding announcements, and the consultation on the schools funding formula for 2020-21.

Central Government have announced an additional £14.6m of funding for schools. It is not yet clear how this will be allocated, and there is not enough information available to calculate Wirral's indicative allocation. It has therefore not been possible to produce Schools level models for the consultation, which asks 3 questions:

- retain Wirral's current formula or adopt the National Funding Formula factor rates;
- Minimum Funding Guarantee of +0.5%, +1%, or +1.5%;
- use of Headroom (additional funding).

The consultation is being conducted via Survey Monkey, with a deadline of Friday 25th October 2019.

Forum requested Shaun Allen attend Primary Headteacher Group and WASH to brief on the funding announcements and consultation.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

11. Schools Forum Membership

Sue Ashley updated Forum on the current membership of the Forum. There are 4 new members, with 3 vacancies still to be filled. A full list of the membership was included for reference.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

12. Workplan

The workplan was provided for information.

The dates of the meetings for the 2019-20 academic year, which will be held in Council Chamber at Wallasey Town Hall unless stated otherwise, are:-

Wednesday 6th November 2019 (**Committee Room 1, Wallasey town Hall**)

Wednesday 15th January 2020

Wednesday 13th May 2020

Wednesday 1st July 2020

A meeting of the High Needs Working Group was arranged for Monday 4th November 2019 at 13:30, Birkenhead Town Hall, room to be confirmed.

13. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM Wednesday, 06th November 2019

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion brief update

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A report for information only.

2. BACKGROUND

3. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Review by Premier Advisory Group

There was an Invitation to Tender for External Review of Mainstream Provision for Special Educational Needs and Commissioning of Specialist and Special School Places Phase 2 & 3. The closing date for tender submissions was 12 noon 20 December 2018. Premier Advisory Group (PAG) were successful in their tender.

Premier Advisory Group (PAG) are attending the High Needs working group on Monday 4th November 2019. Premier Advisory Group (PAG) have been identified as better able to speak to their report and respond to questions from the High Needs working group on matters arising from their report; than officers from the local authority. By Friday, 25th October 2019 the local authority was expecting to be in receipt of the final report from PAG. The main report did not arrive with the local authority on the 25th October. The report was received on Monday, October 28, 2019, morning. This main report included sections the local authority had not received before and was the first time the local authority had received the report as a 'whole'.

Premier Advisory Group (PAG) notified the local authority on 28th October 2019 that they wanted to discuss further the options appraisals. There also appeared from PAG's comments to be formatting remaining to be completed. PAG enquired about engagement with Parent Carer Participation Wirral (PCPW) and the High Needs Working Group on the 4th November. The presentation from PAG to High Needs Working Group had not been seen by the local authority as at 28th October 2019.

By Tuesday, 22nd October 2019 Premier Advisory Group (PAG) had corresponded with Head of SEND & Inclusion on the list of 'chapter' headings below:

- Local and National Policy Context
- Demographics and Need
- Out of Borough and Independent Schools
- Home to School Transport Provision
- Option 1 – Renewal of Wirral Hospitals' School operating objectives and admissions criteria, which is time limited

- SEMH Option vDraft Final
- Resourced Provision
- Option 1 - Re-organisation of Foxfield School and Meadowside School
- Overview of the Kingsway Site, Feasibility Study and Outline of Potential Options
- Transition to Adulthood
- Transition between Key Stages and Phases
- Background
- Wirral Strategic Aims
- Current Education Provision
- Quality of Provision
- Educational Outcomes
- Consultation and Feedback
- Data and Process Management
- Improving Quality of EHCPs
- Training and CPD

The 'chapters' above were not received in sequential order and were not proofread to a finished product. This adversely affected the 'flow of the totality of the document' when reading standalone 'sections/chapters' one at a time. It is envisaged that not all the 'chapters' listed above will be part of the final report, for example operational documents around training. The final report ought to focus on the recommendations in relation to future SEND provision across Wirral at a strategic level. Operational issues such as training and quality of EHC plans are being actively supported by DfE, and (IPSEA) Independent Provider of Special Education Advice.

In September and October 2019 Premier Advisory Group (PAG) attended several meetings with the Head of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) & Inclusion, Assistant Director, Education and other local authority colleagues to provide a face to face update to the local authority, at the request of the local authority. The Premier Advisory Group (PAG) introduced the following professionals:

Keith Warburton – Education Director
 David Noble – Research Director
 Ellie Wright – Consultant
 Brenda Mullen – Associate Director – SEND & Inclusion
 Martin Bertulis – Associate – SEND & Inclusion
 Cole Andrew – Associate – SEND & Inclusion
 Mike Giddings – Associate – SEND financial planning
 Tom Legge – Managing Director

In May 2019 Premier Advisory Group (PAG) provided an Interim Report entitled, Emerging Themes of SEND Review Interim Report Placement Planning. It is understood that this was made available and shared with leaders from educational settings.

4. Review of Pilot Provision;

The educational settings under review are indicated to be:

- The Co-op Academy Woodslee
- The Observatory School
- The Oldershaw Academy
- Hilbre High School Humanities College

- Ridgeway High School
- The Mosslands School.

The substantive Head of Special Educational Needs and Disability and Inclusion is working with Assistant Director, Education and 'system leaders' headteachers and SENCOs to establish an infrastructure whereby there will be a review of pilot provision through an 'educational-sector' led process to the local authority. The SENCO System Leaders and or the Local Area Panel (headteachers) will make a recommendation to the local authority on pilot provision. For example, agree, disagree, amend, decline, maintain or propose to cease.

The local authority is considering writing to (i) request advice and information from the educational settings in the pilot project on the (ii) impact of the support that is given to children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). How the pilot provision has made a difference to the (iii) outcomes and experiences of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

5. Group PFAs;

As reported at Schools Forum 25th September 2019 a Group Pupil Funding Agreement (PFA) has been agreed for Egremont Primary School for Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Base Support in Key Stages 1 and 2. Some £60,000 has been agreed for Key Stage 1 base and an additional £60,000 for Key Stage 2 base. This is pro-rata from February 2019 and will end 31st August 2020. This agreement was made between the leadership of Egremont Primary School and the previous Strategic Commissioner, Special Educational Needs and Disability, circa February – March 2019.

If the leadership of Egremont Primary School want to discuss a new agreement after 01st September 2020 they will need to discuss this with, amongst others, Commissioning Service – Children's Services.

6. Exceptional Needs awards process;

As reported at Schools Forum 25th September 2019 Exceptional Needs funding is available to Special Schools, Alternative Provision, and Mainstream Resource Provision where an assessed pupil's needs indicate that enhanced staffing is necessary.

Previously applications for exceptional needs were assessed on an individual basis by a panel consisting of a special school Headteacher, and mainstream resource provision Headteacher, and the manager of SEN, using a clear set of criteria. However, there has not been an Exceptional Needs panel meeting since summer 2018, with the former Interim Strategic Commissioner, Special Educational Needs and Disability intending to review the awards process.

The substantive Head of Special Educational Needs and Disability and Inclusion is working with Assistant Director, Education and 'system leaders' headteachers and SENCOs to establish an infrastructure whereby requests for exceptional needs will progress through a 'educational-sector' led process to the local authority. The SENCO System Leaders and or the Local Area Panel (headteachers) will make a recommendation

to the local authority on requests for exceptional needs. For example, agree, disagree, amend, decline, maintain or propose to cease exceptional needs awarded funding.

The local authority is considering writing to (i) request advice and information from the educational settings with exceptional needs on the (ii) impact of the support that is given to children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). How the exceptional provision has made a difference to the (iii) outcomes and experiences of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

7. Individual Pupil Funding Agreements (PFA)

A Review of Pupil Funding Agreements was notified in writing to primary and secondary schools on 21st October 2019 by the Assistant Director, Education. The review is being led by Assistant Director for Education. Headteachers will be aware that the Assistant Director for Education mentioned at PHCG and WASH there would be a review of the whole process around Pupil Funding Agreements (PFAs).

Under the current system reviewed PFAs should be emailed to the EHCP coordinator linked to the school no later than 14 days after the meeting has taken place. Having scrutinised the list of pupils receiving PFAs not all schools are following this process.

In order to establish a comprehensive baseline and to monitor the evaluation of impact of PFAs the Assistant Director, Education has requested that an electronic copy of each PFA is emailed to the local authority no later than Friday November 8th, 2019.

Moving forward there is a plan to establish a Local Area Board with significant representation by headteachers, who will make recommendations to the Local Authority to (i) approve, (ii) maintain, (iii) amend (iv) propose to cease, or (v) decline PFA budget allocations. The Assistant Director, Education is looking for headteacher representatives for this Board. If you wish to volunteer, please could you email the Assistant Director, Education directly.

8. Inclusion funding including 1st day exclusion funding

The educational settings under review for EBD Outreach / 1st Day Exclusion are indicated to be:

- Kilgarth School
- The Observatory School
- Gilbrook School
- Hayfield School
- Clare Mount Specialist Sports College
- Orrets Meadow School
- Meadowside School
- Foxfield School
- Elleray Park School
- Stanley School

The local authority is considering writing to (i) request advice and information from the educational settings with Inclusion funding including 1st day exclusion funding on the (ii) impact of the support that is given to children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). How the Inclusion funding including 1st day exclusion funding provision

has made a difference to the (iii) outcomes and experiences of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Forum Notes the Report

Tarun Ghosh

Head of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion

Paul Boyce

Corporate Director for Children

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM – 6th NOVEMBER 2019

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN SERVICES

2020-21 SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA CONSULTATION

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Forum with feedback from the consultation on the 2020-21 Schools Funding Formula, and to seek Forum's views on the formula for the 2020-21 financial year, which will in turn be considered in recommendations to Cabinet.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As reported to Schools Forum in September 2019, the government's Spending Round announced on 4th September 2019 an increase in funding for education, including an additional £14.6 billion to schools in England across 3 years, and an increase to the minimum per pupil funding levels including in the National Funding Formula (NFF) to £3,750 for primary schools and £5,000 for secondary schools, with the primary rate increasing further to £4,000 per pupil from 2021-22.
- 2.2 Further information released by the Department for Education (DfE) confirmed that the core NFF formula factors would increase by up to 4%, and the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) rate that Local Authorities include in their schools funding formula could be between +0.5% and +1.84%.
- 2.3 DfE also reaffirmed their intention to implement a 'hard' NFF whereby all schools in the country are funded on the same basis, and the first step towards achieving this would be to make the national minimum per pupil funding levels, at the values in the school NFF (per paragraph 2.1), compulsory for local authorities to use in their own funding formulae from 2020-21.
- 2.4 Although at the time of issuing Wirral's schools funding formula consultation there was insufficient information available to produce school level models, The DfE have now confirmed that key factors in the NFF will increase by 4%, while the Free School Meals factor rate will increase by 1.84% in line with inflation (as the factor is based on the actual cost of providing school meals). Premises funding will continue to be allocated at local authority level on the basis of actual 2019-20 allocations, with the PFI factor increased in line with the RPIX measure of inflation.
- 2.5 Provisional NFF 2020-21 schools block allocations have now been published for each LA, based on 2019-20 pupil numbers:

	Schools Block
2019-20 allocation (£)	202,890,533
2020-21 indicative allocation (£)	209,868,263
Diff (£)	6,977,730
Diff (%)	3.44%

3.0 LOCAL SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA GUIDELINES

- 3.1 Wirral remains responsible for agreeing the funding formula for its schools until a “hard” formula is implemented. DfE have confirmed that their intention remains to implement a ‘hard’ formula which could not be implemented until 2021-22 at the earliest. During this intervening time the NFF will run alongside any local formula for schools. This “soft” period is seen by the DfE as a transition, giving LA’s flexibility to move towards the NFF and may also protect against turbulence.
- 3.2 In agreeing any changes to the funding formula for schools the final decision is taken by the Council and Cabinet. However, local authorities must engage in open and transparent consultation with all maintained schools and academies in their area, as well as with their schools forums, about any proposed changes to the local funding formula.
- 3.3 Schools Forum regulations confirm that in considering recommendations on the Schools Funding Formula voting is restricted to Schools, Academy and PVI members. All other non-school members are not permitted to vote on the funding formula.

4.0 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 As reported to Schools Forum in September, due to there being insufficient information released by the Department for Education to determine an indicative allocation for Wirral, it was not possible to provide illustrative school level funding models within the consultation documents. Instead schools were asked to consider the principles underpinning the consultation.
- 4.2 Schools were consulted on the following:
1. Retaining Wirral’s existing schools funding formula for 2020-21, or adopting the individual factor values from the NFF.
 2. Including within the funding formula a Minimum Funding Guarantee of +0.5%, +1.0%, or +1.5%.
 3. The use of any ‘headroom’ monies.
- 4.3 The consultation documents were issued to all schools and academies on 27th September 2019, and ran for 4 weeks until 25th October 2019. Briefings were also held with both Primary Headteachers Consultation Group (PHCG) with additional Headteacher attendance, and Wirral Association of Secondary Headteachers (WASH), and individual conversations also held with numerous Headteachers and School Business Managers.

4.4 In total there were 51 responses received via the electronic survey issued, giving a 41% response rate:

Phase	Response count	%
Primary	30	59%
Secondary	14	27%
Special	1	2%
Not specified	6	12%
	51	100%

5.0 SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

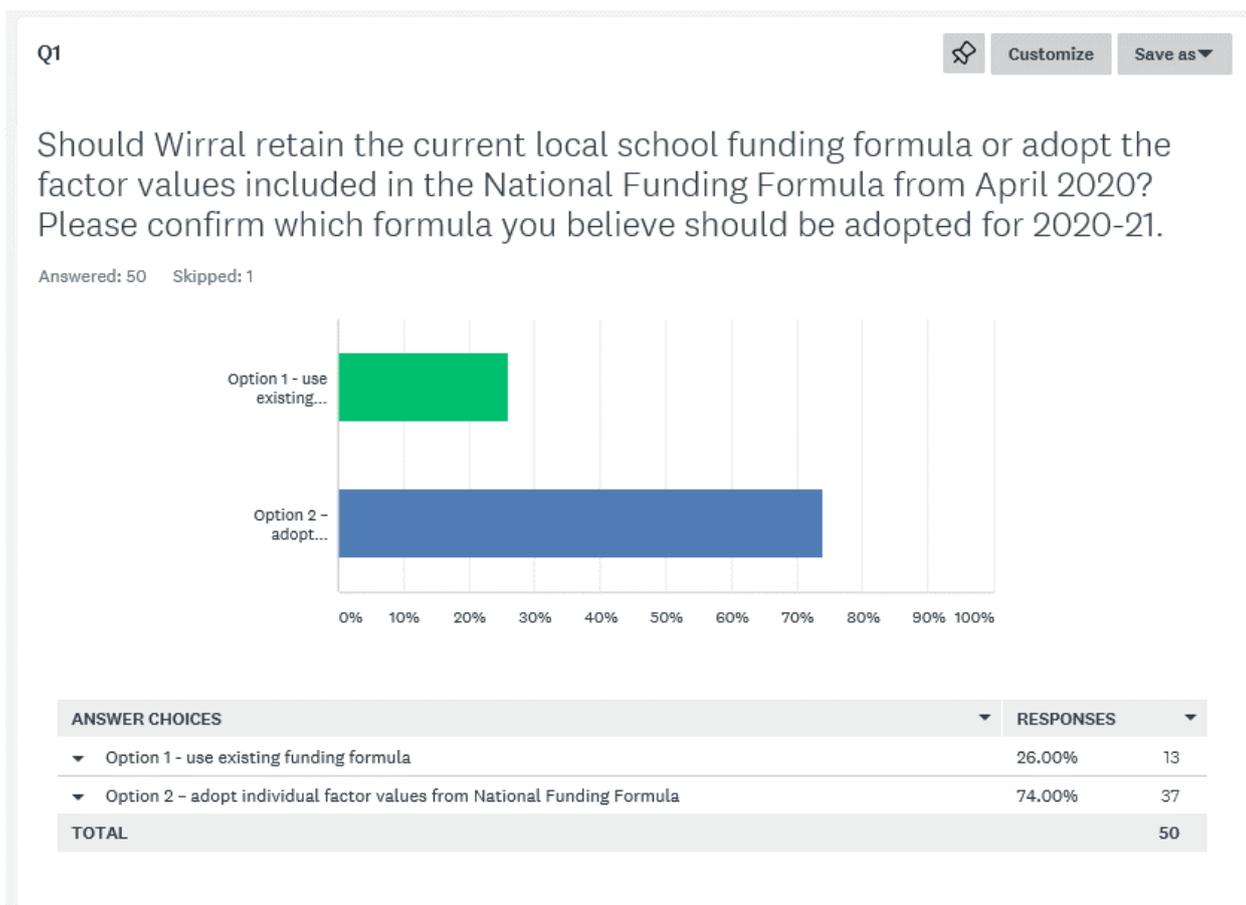
5.1 Schools Funding Formula

5.1.1 Views were sought on the preferred formula from the following:

1. Retain Wirral's current formula with funding allocated across formula factors using existing proportions;
2. Adoption of individual formula factor rates from the National Funding Formula.

5.1.2 Only one responder didn't specify a favoured funding model, with the preferred model being the option 2, the adoption of factor rates from the National Funding Formula which was selected in 37 responses (74%), with the remaining 13 (26%) preferring to retain Wirral's current formula in its existing structure:

	Primary	Secondary	Special	Other	Total
Option 1 - existing formula	6	5	1	1	13
Option 2 - NFF	23	9	0	5	37
Total	29	14	1	6	50



5.1.3 Some schools commented that due to the inevitability of a ‘hard’ National Funding Formula that it should be implemented straight away in Wirral rather than delay, particularly while there is additional funding in the system and while a positive MFG is compulsory, to enable a smoother transition. Some also commented that this reflects central Governments view of a ‘fair’ funding system for all schools nationally, and would therefore offer consistency, transparency and certainty to aid longer term planning.

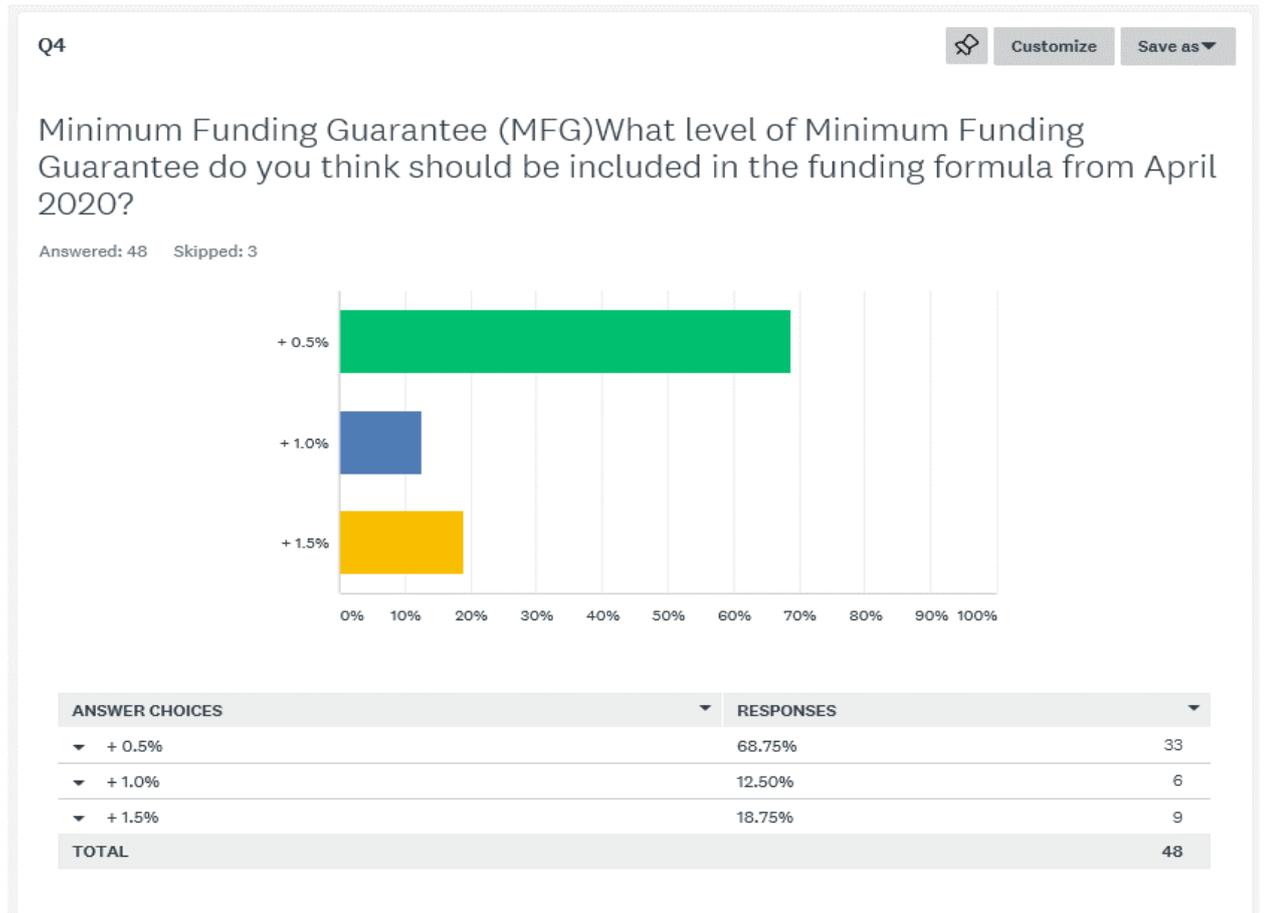
5.1.4 Some responses supporting the retention of Wirral’s current formula structure noted that their particular school would lose out with the NFF due to the broader allocation of deprivation funding, and some felt that the current formula reflects local circumstances due to being based on annual consultations, and therefore met local needs which are different to other areas of the country.

5.1.5 **Recommendation:** Schools Forum’s views are sought on the proposal to adopt individual factor rates from the National Funding Formula (option 2) in Wirral’s schools funding formula in 2020-21 based on 74% of consultation feedback supporting that option.

5.2 Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG)

5.2.1 Three options were given for the MFG rate included in the formula: +0.5%, +1% and +1.5%, with views sought on the preferred rate. Of 51 responses, 48 answered this question, with the majority of responses (69%) preferring an MFG of +0.5%:

	Primary	Secondary	Special	Other	Total
Option 1 - + 0.5%	21	11	0	1	33
Option 2 - + 1.0%	4	1	1	0	6
Option 3 - + 1.5%	5	2	0	2	9
Total	30	14	1	3	48



5.2.2 A large number of schools commented that a higher MFG rate would delay transition to the NFF as it would be protecting against the current formula, and therefore a lower protection rate should be adopted, particularly with a positive MFG meaning an increase in per pupil funding compared with the previous year.

Others felt that schools have had sufficient time to prepare budgets for a national allocation and so there wasn't a need for a high protection rate, and a lower MFG would reduce the cap on schools due to gain the most from the National Funding Formula.

Others felt that while they supported the NFF being implemented that a higher MFG would help to smooth the transition from the current formula and therefore limit the negative impact it would have on some schools.

5.2.3 **Recommendation:** Schools Forum's views are sought on the proposal to include a +0.5% Minimum Funding Guarantee within Wirral's funding formula in 2019-20 based on 69% of feedback supporting that rate.

5.3 Headroom

- 5.3.1 As per paragraph 2.5 above, illustrative allocations released by the DfE in October 2019 indicate that Wirral will have an additional £6.98m (3.44%) in its Schools Block of the DSG grant compared with its 2019-20 allocation. This would first be allocated to increased Business Rates estimates and PFI allocations, pupil number changes and increased NFF rates should that option be implemented. Views were sought on how any remaining funding should be allocated across the funding formula.
- 5.3.2 Approximately half of responders (27 out of 51) commented on this question. There were various suggestions by individual responses such as distributing to all schools based on the same rate per pupil, using for school-based projects, and supporting the Education Welfare Service.
- 5.3.3 Two responses suggested using any remaining funds to support Special Education Needs (SEN). However, this would be classed as a top slice from the schools block to High Needs block of DSG, which would require support of the wider schools estate and Schools Forum.
- 5.3.4 Some responses suggested holding a small contingency pot to support schools as and when necessary via a growth fund and falling roll fund. However, the majority of responses supported any additional funding being shared amongst schools and included in the formula. In Wirral's current formula this would be allocated across all formula factors in current proportions, while in the NFF this would reduce the cap on gaining schools due to the factor rates being fixed.
- 5.3.5 **Recommendation:** Schools Forum's views are sought on the proposal to include all funding received in the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant within the funding formula by minimising the cap applied to the highest gaining schools should the NFF option be adopted (or across all formula factors should Wirral's current formula be retained), and that any remaining funding be split between a falling rolls fund and a growth fund to be accessed by schools meeting specific criteria to be agreed.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The level of engagement with this consultation process has reduced from the previous year which is perhaps understandable given the absence of school level information. However, the process has provided valuable feedback to inform the plans for the 2020-21 School Funding Formula, and thanks are expressed to all those who took part.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 That the Forum notes the report.
- 7.2 Schools Forum's views are sought on the proposal to adopt individual factor rates from the National Funding Formula (option 2) in Wirral's schools funding formula in 2020-21 based on 74% of consultation feedback supporting that option

- 7.3 Schools Forum's views are sought on the proposal to include a +0.5% Minimum Funding Guarantee within Wirral's funding formula in 2019-20 based on 69% of feedback supporting that rate.
- 7.4 Schools Forum's views are sought on the proposal to include all funding received in the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant within the funding formula by minimising the cap applied to the highest gaining schools should the NFF option be adopted (or across all formula factors should Wirral's current formula be retained), and that any remaining funding be split between a falling rolls fund and a growth fund to be accessed by schools meeting specific criteria to be agreed.

Paul Boyce
Corporate Director for Children Services

Appendix 1

Schools responding to the Funding Formula Consultation

Bedford Drive Primary School	Weatherhead High School
Brackenwood Infant School	The Mosslands School
Brackenwood Junior School	Pensby High School
Brookhurst Primary School	Hilbre High School
Co-op Academy Portland	Calday Grange Grammar School
Co-op Academy Woodslee	St Mary's Catholic College
Devonshire Park Primary School	St Anselm's College
Greasby Junior School	Woodchurch High School
Holy Cross Catholic Primary School	The Birkenhead Park School
Holy Spirit Catholic & C of E Primary	Upton Hall School
Irby Primary School	Wirral Grammar School for Girls
Lingham Primary School	South Wirral High School
Mendell Primary School	West Kirby Grammar School
Mersey Park Primary School	Wirral Grammar Schools for Boys
New Brighton Primary School	Wirral Hospitals' School
Overchurch Infant School	
Overchurch Junior School	
Overchurch Junior School	
Prenton Primary School	
Raeburn Primary School	
Rock Ferry Primary School	
Somerville Federation	
St George's Primary School	
St Michael and All Angels	
St Paul's Catholic Primary School	
St Peters Catholic Primary School	
St Peters CE Primary School	
St. Alban's Catholic Primary School	
Woodchurch CE Primary School	

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM – 6th NOVEMBER 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. There is an estimated adverse variance of £1.478m within the High Needs budget, which is in addition to the £2.34m contribution from the DSG reserves that was included in the budget.

2.0 ANTICIPATED BUDGET VARIATIONS

- 2.1 The table attached summarises the Schools Budget for 2019-20. The main variations, as well as comments on specific budget areas, 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. Schools converting to Academy status result in a reduction in Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) income received, which is matched by reduced spending through the delegated budget. No further academy conversions are expected during 2019-20.

2.3 **Alternative Provision Places**

As part of the 2019-20 budget, £883,300 was allocated to Emslie Morgan Academy, reflecting £10,000 per place for 100 places from April to August, reducing to 80 places from September. As with all academies, this sum is deducted from Wirral's DSG by ESFA and paid directly to the school. However, due to the school closure on 31st August 2019 it is expected that £467k will be added back to Wirral's DSG grant to provide funding for the Alternative Provision arrangements reported to Schools Forum in June.

2.4 **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, and the summer term claims and payments are currently being reconciled. A further update will be provided at the next forum, although it is expected any variation against the budget will be met by a corresponding grant adjustment.

2.5 **Central Early Years Budget – projected £40,000 favourable variance**

An underspend is expected within this centrally managed budget as a result of some part-year vacant posts.

2.6 **Admissions – projected £26,500 adverse variance**

This centrally managed budget is expecting an overspend relating to increased pension costs and agency cover for maternity leave.

2.7 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.

2.8 Licenses and subscriptions – projected £5,500 favourable variance

This budget is expected to underspend due to an error in the initial charge information distributed by the Department for Education (DfE) for national copyright licences for 2019-20, which has now been corrected.

2.9 Schools Forum – projected £10,600 favourable variance

There are no commitments to date against this budget of £10,600.

2.10 Insurances – projected £10,000 favourable variance

This de-delegated budget is projected to underspend by £10,000, reflecting a reduced number of claims received in recent years.

2.11 Special Staff Costs – projected £60,000 adverse variance

An adverse variance is currently expected due to an increase in primary maternity cases. This area will be closely monitored, as if spend continues at the current rate an increase in the de-delegation rate will be required.

2.12 Special Education Needs Statements – projected £529,400 adverse variance

Pressure on this budget continues with an overspend of £529k projected despite an increase in the budget from 2018-19.

Although no variance is currently expected for secondary schools (including £100k provision for further awards) an overspend of £444k is projected for primary schools due to an increase in awards and number of children out of area. This includes £14,500 committed for a nurture group at Rock Ferry Primary and £60k committed for a group PFA at Egremont Primary. The estimated £444k overspend does include a £165k provision for further awards made during the remainder of the financial year.

2.13 Special Education Needs Top Ups – projected £414,000 adverse variance

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.

The Special School top-up budget is projecting an adverse variance of £226k due to several schools being over place numbers in the Summer 19 term. Those numbers have been used to project numbers for the rest of the year, which also includes an additional 5 pupils at Gilbrook School and 23 extra pupils at Ellera Park from September 2019.

This overspend has been partially alleviated due to the top-up rate for two SEMH schools reverting to their original top-up rates as opposed to the increased top-up rate of £10,000 previously agreed.

The Alternative Provision top-ups budget of £434k included £263k for Emslie Morgan Academy. However, as described in paragraph 2.3 above, the school closed on 31st August 2019, with the saving being used to fund new Alternative Provision initiatives.

FE/6th Form budget is currently projecting an underspend of £216,800. This is partly due to a one-off £43k saving in 2019-20 arising from overstated commitments in 2018/19. There is also a £90k contribution from DASS (£35k of which relates to 2018/19) for one particularly expensive placement.

A £408k overspend is projected on the Exceptional Needs budget. 60 pupils were funded in summer 2019, with 53 currently being funded as well as the installation and rental costs of a portacabin at a special school. As reported to Forum earlier in the year, the award process for Exceptional Needs funding is currently being reviewed.

	Budget	Projected Spend	Projected Variance
	£	£	£
Top Ups for Maintained Special Schools	7,708,600	7,934,600	226,000
Top Ups for Resourced provision	1,038,200	1,000,000	(38,200)
Alternative provision	434,900	434,900	0
FE and 6 TH Form Top Ups	1,700,000	1,483,200	(216,800)
Additional Nursing Support	106,600	142,100	35,500
Exceptional Needs	504,100	911,600	407,500
Total	11,492,400	11,906,400	414,000

2.14 Independent Special Schools – projected £395,800 adverse variance

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. From September 2019 there are 103 pupils in placements resulting in a projected overspend of £395k.

There are approximately £460k of 2018-19 commitments which remain unpaid/invoiced, and some pupils whose summer 2019 charge has not yet been received. The SEN team are currently investigating these issues.

2.15 Home Tuition – projected £110,000 adverse variance

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 is projecting an overspend of £110k. This budget will be closely monitored and reported to Forum throughout the year.

2.16 High Needs Contingency – projected £108,500 adverse variance

This budget funds the 90% Notional SEN Guarantee, where mainstream schools are compensated if their element 2 costs exceed 90% of their notional SEN allocation, although the actual cost of this is not yet known as it is based on autumn term numbers. The projected overspend includes place funding for an additional 5 pupils at Gilbrook and 23 pupils at Elleray Park from September 2019.

2.17 Support for SEN – projected £100,200 favourable variance

An underspend is projected mainly relating to part-year vacant posts within the KIND/Clinical Psychologists and Communication Difficulty teams, although these are partially offset by an overspend within the Physical/Medical budget relating to the increased cost of the Mediquip contract.

2.18 DSG - £162,245,900 - £5.869m adverse variance

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2019-20 is adjusted to the reported position as follows:

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)
Bebington High academy conversion	(5,868,900)
	162,245,900

DfE have also now published the final DSG allocations for the 2018-19 financial year. This confirmed Wirral's allocation as £168.512m, £7.8k more than the outturn reported to Forum in May-19. This is following the January 2019 Early Years census and mainly relates to the supplementary funding for Maintained Nursery Schools. This additional amount will be added to the DSG reserve.

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)
Remaining 2018/19 growth fund	(173,200)
Budgeted use of reserve in 2019/20	(2,343,200)
Projected 2019/20 overspend	(1,477,900)
Final 2018-19 DSG adjustment (Jan-19 EY census)	7,800
Projected balance (deficit)	(2,867,500)

- 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 – Projected Schools Budget Variations 2019-20

	Revised Budget 2019-20	Projected outturn 2019-20	Projected variance 2019- 20 favourable / (adverse)
	£	£	£
Individual Schools Budget			
Primary	85,814,000	85,814,000	0
Secondary	23,481,700	17,612,800	5,868,900
Special	10,328,600	10,328,600	0
Wirral Hospital Schools	1,354,300	1,354,300	0
SEN Bases	1,108,000	1,108,000	0
Alternative Provision	0	0	0
6th Form / Further Education	0	0	0
Early Years	20,203,500	20,203,500	0
Individual Schools Budget Total	142,290,100	136,421,200	5,868,900
Central School Costs			
Early Years	518,700	478,700	40,000
Admissions	372,200	398,700	(26,500)
School Closure / Retirement Costs	60,000	60,000	0
Licenses and subscriptions	246,600	241,100	5,500
Schools Forum	10,600	0	10,600
Contribution to combined budgets	875,600	875,600	0
PFI Affordability Gap	1,118,400	1,118,400	0
Retained duties (ex-ESG)	730,000	730,000	0
Costs delegated to / de-delegated from schools			
Library service	170,100	170,100	0
Insurances	25,900	15,900	10,000
School Specific contingencies	91,100	91,100	0
Special Staff costs	627,600	687,600	(60,000)
School meals	0	0	0
Behaviour Support	86,000	86,000	0
School Improvement	159,100	159,100	0
General duties (ex-ESG)	493,900	493,900	0
High Needs pupils			
Statements	5,715,100	6,244,500	(529,400)
SEN top-ups	11,492,400	11,906,400	(414,000)
High Needs contingency	310,000	418,500	(108,500)
Independent Special Schools	3,700,000	4,095,800	(395,800)
Home Tuition	400,500	510,500	(110,000)
Exclusions	60,000	60,000	0
Support for SEN	2,150,200	2,050,000	100,200
Special School Transport	58,200	58,200	0
Non-delegated school costs total	29,472,200	30,950,100	(1,477,900)
Total School and Central costs	171,762,300	167,371,300	4,391,000
Dedicated Schools Grant	(168,114,800)	(162,245,900)	(5,868,900)
Use of reserves - High Needs deficit	(2,343,200)	(2,343,200)	0
LA contribution - SEN restructure	(186,000)	(186,000)	0
Grand Total	1,118,300	2,596,200	(1,477,900)

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM 6th NOVEMBER 2019

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN

CONTINGENCY, SPECIAL STAFF, AND INSURANCE COSTS

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to summarise the current provision for contingency, special staff, and insurance costs for Wirral's maintained nursery, primary, secondary and special schools in accordance with Schools Forum Good Practice Guidance.

2.0 SCHOOL SPECIFIC CONTINGENCIES

2.1 This is a de-delegated budget, and is used for exceptional and unforeseen costs, which would be unreasonable to expect the schools and governing bodies to bear.

2.2 Costs met from the contingency budget vary each year, but in the past have included:

- Adjustments for Business Rates, where actual charges are greater than those estimated when setting the budget;
- Support for schools in Key Stage 1 where a larger than usual reception class (above the published admission numbers) requires additional staff;
- In exceptional cases deficits arising from closing schools;
- Support for managed moves;
- Support for unfunded additional places required in Special Schools.

2.3 At January 2019 Schools Forum it was agreed to de-delegate this budget for primary and secondary maintained schools at £3.64 and £2.90 per pupil respectively. All special schools agreed to buy back this service for 2019-20.

2.4 The contingency budget for 2019-20 is as follows:

	Budget
	£
Primary Schools	79,400
Secondary Schools	11,700
Specials Schools	<u>155,000</u>
Gross budget	<u>246,100</u>

3.0 SPECIAL STAFF COSTS

3.1 This is another de-delegated budget that makes provision for staff maternity, paternity and trade union facility time for both teaching and non-teaching staff. It may also in certain circumstances meet additional costs arising from staff suspensions.

- 3.2 Maternity costs make up approximately 90% of the overall spend. While a member of staff is on maternity their costs are held centrally, while the school meets the cost of any required supply cover. Costs can vary greatly from year to year depending on the number of maternity cases, and the salary costs of those staff.
- 3.3 This budget also meets paternity costs, by reimbursing the cost of supply cover for the statutory 2 weeks of paternity leave allowed.
- 3.4 The Trade Union Facilities time budget has regard to guidance which confirms that representatives are entitled to reasonable paid time off during working hours to undertake Trade Union duties and relevant training. Wirral like many LA's has a local facility agreement in place. The budget for facility time also includes non-teacher representation. Primary and Secondary schools de-delegated this budget for 2019-20, Special Schools Buyback and there is a separate SLA for Academy schools.
- 3.5 Spend in 2018-19 was as follows:

	Staff Numbers	Cost £
Maternity	196	707,700
Paternity	10	13,600
TU		82,300
Special School buy back		(55,000)
Insurance & Recharges		<u>6,900</u>
Total		<u>755,500</u>

- 3.6 The budget for special staff costs in 2019-20 is as follows:

	Budget £
Maternity, Paternity & Other Staff Costs	536,500
TU Facilities (Net cost including Secondary)	84,200
Insurance & Recharges	<u>6,900</u>
Total budget	<u>627,600</u>

4.0 INSURANCE

- 4.1 This budget is to cover the cost of governors' liability insurance for Voluntary Aided schools. A VA school's governing body should insure 10% of the replacement cost of the whole of the school premises. Where a VA school makes a claim under the policy, the Department for Education has the power (but not an obligation) to pay capital grant, usually at 90% of relevant expenditure, with governing bodies being responsible for the other 10%.
- 4.2 For a number of years Wirral schools have de-delegated budget to meet the cost of this insurance. Since 2017-18 only Primary schools have de-delegated, all secondary VA schools now having converted to Academy status.
- 4.3 VA schools purchase the insurance, and can then claim the cost back from the Authority. Spend in recent years from this budget is as follows:

	Spend £
2014-15	29,900
2015-16	28,700
2016-17	16,000
2017-18	15,500
2018-19	11,000

- 4.4 It should be noted that even though the governing body need only insure 10% of its premises liabilities, it is essential that proper security measures are taken to protect the premises and appropriate risk management advice to minimise losses is accessed.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That the Forum notes the report.

Paul Boyce
Corporate Director for Children Services

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS' FORUM 6th November 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 due to expire.

		2015-2019	2016-2020	2017-2021	2018-2022	2019-2023	Total
Total Membership							
5	Primary Headteachers		1	1	2	1	5
4	Primary Governors		1	1	1	1	4
1	Secondary Headteachers		1				1
1	Special Headteacher				1		1
1	Special Governors				1		1
1	Nursery Representative		1				1
13	Total Schools Membership						
9	Academy Representative			5	1	2	8
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	2
8	Total Non-Schools Membership						
30	Total Membership	0	6	8	7	7	28

There are currently 2 vacancies

- Early Years expression of interest to the Private, voluntary and independent sector have been requested by the Early Year's Team. Nicky Prance's term of office has come to an end but she has offered to continue until it is filled.
- 1 x Academy Representative – A request was sent out. There was one response as detailed below, but one vacancy remains.

New Members

There have been a couple of changes to the membership since September, they are as follows:-

Geraldine Fraser– Academy Rep, Deputy Head Teacher from Prenton High School for Girls.

Emily Morris – Primary Headteacher Representative, replaces Bernie Cassidy.

Appendix 1 identifies all current members and their role on School's Forum.

Membership Changes

Regulations governing the forum requires school/academy membership to take account of pupil weighting. As there are no schools currently planning to convert to academy there are no planned changes to the school/academy split.

Recommendations

- Forum notes the report

Paul Boyce
Corporate Director for Children

**Wirral Schools Forum
Membership as at 6th November 2019**

Appendix 1

Group	Name	Category of Membership	SCHOOL/establishment	Date of Election	Date of renewal
Schools	Rebecca Bridges	Primary Headteacher (Birkenhead S)	Bedford Drive	Sep-18	Aug-22
Schools	Nikki Lightwing	Primary Headteacher (Birkenhead N)	Manor Primary	Apr-16	Mar-20
Schools	Emily Morris	Primary Headteacher (Wallasey)	Eastway Primary	Oct-19	Sep-23
Schools	Kate Brown	Primary Headteacher (Deeside)	Pensby Primary	Jul-17	Jun-21
Schools	Liz Davidson	Primary Headteacher (Beb/Brom)	Brookhurst	Jul-18	Jun-22
Schools	Dave Spencer	Primary Governor	Pensby Primary	Jul-17	Jun-21
Schools	Roy Wood	Primary Governor	Hillside Primary	Oct-18	Sep-22
Schools	Tim Kelly	Primary Governor	Grove Street	Dec-16	Nov-20
Schools	Cllr Tony Norbury	Primary Governor	Prenton Primary	Sep-19	Aug-23
Schools	Tony Taylor	Secondary Headteacher	Ridgeway High School	Sep-16	Aug-20
Schools	Margaret Morris	Special Headteacher	Elleray Park	Sep-18	Aug-22
Schools	John Weise	Special Governor	Hayfield Primary	Dec-18	Nov-22
Schools	Michael Forber	Nursery Representative	Brentwood Early Years/Somerville	Apr-16	Mar-20
Academy	Emma Neal	Academy Rep	Stanton Road (Oak Tree Mat)	Sep-17	Aug-21
Academy	Adrian Whiteley	Academy Rep (Chair)	St Anselms	Aug-19	Jul-23
Academy	Helen Johnson	Academy Rep	The Birkenhead Park School	Sep-17	Aug-21
Academy	Rebecca Mahony	Academy Rep	Birkenhead High School Academy	Jan-17	Dec-20
Academy	Mark Bellamy	Academy Rep	Hilbre High School	Sep-17	Aug-21
Academy	Andy Waller	Academy Rep	West Kirby Grammar School	May-18	Apr-22
Academy	Jon Bush	Academy Rep	Oldershaw Academy	Dec-17	Nov-21
Academy	Geraldine Fraser	Academy Rep	Prenton High School for Girls	Oct-19	Sep-23
Academy	Vacancy	Academy Rep		Nov-19	
Non-Schools	Steve Bennett	Non-teacher representative	Wirral Unison	Sep-16	Aug-20
Non-Schools	Anne Rycroft	Teacher representative	NASUWT	Aug-19	Jul-23
Non-Schools	Susan Ralph	Catholic Diocese	St Michaels & All Angels	Nov-18	Oct-22
Non-Schools	Greg Edwards	Church of England Diocese	The Priory	Sep-19	Aug-23
Non-Schools	Sue Higginson	16-19 Provider	Wirral Metropolitan College	Sep-17	Aug-21
Non-Schools	Nicky Prance	PVI Early Years Providers	Barnston Buddies	Apr-15	Sep-19
Non-Schools	Simon Davies	PVI Early Years Providers	Penguins Nurseries	Oct-16	Sep-20
Non-Schools	Ellie Longbone	PVI Early Years Providers	Stepping Stones	May-19	Apr-23

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**WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM – 6th November 2019
WORK PLAN**

Meeting Date	15th January 2020	13th May 2020	1st July 2020	September 2020	November 2020
				Elect chair & vice chair	
Budget	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	Budget monitoring and Final DSG Update on School budgets/balances	
Consultation			2021-22 School Funding Arrangements	2021-22 National Funding Formula for Schools, High Needs and Early Years	Outcome of school funding formula consultation
DfE Regs & guidelines	School Finance Regulations Schools Forum Structure (identifies voting rights) Scheme for Financing Schools – Directed updates		School Forum Membership	DfE Operational Guide Schools Forum Constitution Scheme for Financing Schools – Directed updates	DfE Operational Guide Schools Forum Constitution
Working Groups	School Formula High Needs Early Years	School Formula High Needs Early Years	High Needs Early Years	School Formula High Needs Early Years	
Other	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	Forum Membership (SMA) High needs funding & places	De-delegated services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contingency • Special Staff Costs • Library Service • Insurance

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