



Wirral Schools Forum

Date:	Wednesday, 15 January 2020
Time:	6.00 p.m.
Venue:	Council Chamber, Wallasey Town Hall

Contact Officer: Sue Ashley
Tel: 0151 666 4579
e-mail: SueAshley@wirral.gov.uk
Website: <http://www.wirral.gov.uk>

AGENDA

1. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6TH NOVEMBER 2019 (Pages 1 - 4)**
2. **MATTERS ARISING (Pages 5 - 6)**
3. **MEAS UPDATE (Pages 7 - 8)**
4. **EARLY YEARS UPDATE (Pages 9 - 12)**
5. **HIGH NEEDS UPDATE (Pages 13 - 22)**
6. **BUDGET 2020-21 (Pages 23 - 38)**
7. **DE-DELEGATION OF BUDGETS 2020-21 (Pages 39 - 44)**
8. **BUDGET MONITORING 2019-20 QUARTER 3 (Pages 45 - 50)**
9. **UPDATE ON SCHOOL'S BALANCES AND DEFICIT POSITION (Pages 51 - 52)**
10. **WORKPLAN (Pages 53 - 54)**
11. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL SCHOOLS' FORUM

6th November 2019

MINUTES

Present: Adrian Whiteley (Chair)

Schools Group

L Ayling	T Kelly
M Bellamy	N Lightwing
R Bridges	M Morris
J Bush	Cllr Norbury
L Davidson	T Taylor
M Forber	N Turner (Deputy)
G Fraser	J Weise
H Johnson	R Wood

Non-Schools Group

S Bennett	N Prance
S Davies	A Ryecroft
G Edwards	

In Attendance:

S Allen	T Ghosh
S Ashley	M Gotts
A Davies	S Talbot

Apologies:

K Brown	E Morris
E Longbone	E Neal
R Mahoney	D Spencer

1. Minutes from the Meeting held on 25th September 2019

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

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

3. SEND and Inclusion Update

Tarun Ghosh informed Forum that the High Needs working group met with the Premier Advisory Group (PAG) who outlined their report on the SEND review. PAG are running a workshop for elected members on 26th November. They are also trying to meet with parents through the Parent Care Participation Wirral. Forum expressed its' concerns about the quality of the report and about the recommendations that appear to be driven by finance rather than need. Forum members request that a meeting is organised between the report authors and the High Needs working group before the report is discussed with cabinet members, they do not feel that at this time, the report accurately represents the needs of the sector.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

4. School Funding Formula Consultation

Shaun Allen updated Forum on the process and outcomes of the Schools' funding formula consultation. He met with Primary Heads Group and WASH to explain the consultation, and attendance at these meetings was extended to all headteachers. Due to lack of information from the DfE at the time of completing the census school level information could not be provided. This is the likely cause of the lower response rate as the consultation was sent out to all Headteacher and School Office e-mail addresses, as well as being loaded onto WESCOM, and reminders were sent closer to the closing date.

Some members were concerned that some schools completed the consultation but were not on the list. Some responses came through without a school name and were marked as "other" in the report.

Since the consultation was sent out the DfE have confirmed that the key factors in the National Funding Formula will increase by 4%, including lump sum, but excluding FSM in respect of funding passed to the LA, so for Wirral this is reflected by a 3.4% increase on 19-20 funding.

The outcome and recommendations of the consultation is as follows:-

- Recommendation 1 is to adopt the individual factor rates from the National Funding Formula (NFF) as 74% of consultation feedback supported this option.
- Recommendation 2 is to apply a +0.5% Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) to the formula as 69% of the consultation feedback preferred this option.
- Recommendation 3 is to include headroom in the formula to reduce any capping for NFF option or to increase all formula factors if the Wirral

formula option and any remaining funding be split between a falling roll and a growth fund.

There were no views or comments from Forum members concerning these recommendations.

Resolved

1. Forum noted the report.
2. Forum members agreed favourably with the proposal to adopt option 2, the individual factor rates of the NFF in Wirral's school funding formula in 2021.
3. Forum members agreed favourably with the proposal to include a +0.5% MFG within Wirral's funding formula.
4. Forum members agreed favourably with 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 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.

5. Budget monitoring 2019-20 Update

Shaun Allen updated forum on the Schools budget position, which is a slightly higher overspend than the previous report. The following changes were highlighted: -

- An estimated 60k overspend on special staff costs due to an increase in primary maternity cases. A request to increase de-delegation may be required in January if this continues to spend at the current rate.
- There continues to be a significant overspend on SEN top-ups
- Independent Special Schools deficit continues to rise.

These changes will assume a deficit at the end of the financial year of approximately £1.8m.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

6. Insurances, Staff Costs and Contingency

Shaun Allen outlined the purpose and use of Contingency, Special Staff costs and Insurance budgets. These budgets are currently de-delegated.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

7. Schools Forum Membership

Sue Ashley updated Forum on the current membership of the Forum. There are still 2 vacancies that have been vacant for some time. The members whose term of office has finished has agreed to continue until new reps come forward. A full list of the membership was included for reference.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

8. 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

Wednesday 15th January 2020

Wednesday 13th May 2020

Wednesday 1st July 2020

An extraordinary High Needs Working Group Meeting will be set up with the Premier Advisory Group so questions and issues can be raised before the meeting with councillors.

9. Any Other Business

The Chair thanked Shaun Allen for his hard work and support over the last couple of years.

There was no other business.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM – 15th JANUARY 2020

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN SERVICES

2020-21 SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to propose an increased Minimum Funding Guarantee in the 2020-21 schools funding formula to that which was previously recommended and supported at the November 2019 Forum, this being due to an increase in the funding level.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Following a consultation across all Wirral maintained primary, secondary and special schools, academies, and 6th form colleges, feedback was presented to Schools' Forum on 6th November 2019 who supported the following recommendations:

1. To adopt the individual factor rates from the National Funding Formula (NFF) in Wirral's school funding formula in 2020-21;
2. To include a +0.5% Minimum Funding Guarantee within Wirral's funding formula in 2020-21;
3. To include all funding received in the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) within the funding formula by minimising the cap applied to the highest gaining schools should the NFF be adopted, 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.

2.2 Indicative NFF 2020-21 schools block allocations for Wirral at that time, based on 2019-21 pupil numbers, were as follows:

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

2.3 Local Authorities are able to set a Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) of between +0.5% and +1.84% in their local funding formula.

2.4 The Department for Education (DfE) retain their intention to implement a 'hard' NFF, and as a first step towards doing so have made the Minimum Per Pupil Funding rates compulsory for all LAs from 2020-21. These rates are £3,750 for primary school pupils and £5,000 for secondary school pupils for 2020-21.

3.0 FINAL 2020-21 SCHOOLS BLOCK ALLOCATIONS

3.1 Following completion of the autumn 2019 school census, final schools block allocations were published on 19th December 2019, along with the other 3 blocks of the DSG.

3.2 Wirral's final 2020-21 schools block is as follows:

	Schools Block
2019-20 allocation (£)	202,890,533
2020-21 final allocation (£)	211,908,043
Diff (£)	9,017,510
Diff (%)	4.44%

3.3 This increase from the indicative schools block is in part due to a net increase in pupil numbers from October 2018 to October 2019. However, in total there is £2,039,780 in addition to the indicative amount previously reported.

3.4 Initial work on the 2020-21 funding formula has identified that, with this increased level of funding, no gains cap will be required for any school in the 2020-21 formula. However in line with the recommendations supported by Schools Forum in November 2019 (referred to in paragraph 2.1 above), using a +0.5% MFG with the NFF factor rates would leave a significant sum remaining for growth/falling roll funds:

	+0.5% MFG (£)	+1.84% MFG (£)
Available schools block funding	211,908,000	211,908,000
Funding allocated through NFF factors	206,784,647	206,784,647
Additional funding to meet the minimum per pupil funding level	3,656,622	3,656,622
Total formula funding excluding MFG	210,441,270	210,441,270
Minimum Funding Guarantee	306,496	1,000,417
Total funding for Schools Block Formula	210,747,766	211,441,687
<i>Funding remaining for growth/falling roll funds</i>	<i>1,160,234</i>	<i>466,313</i>

3.5 It is therefore proposed that the previously recommended MFG of +0.5% is revised to the maximum permitted +1.84% so as to maximise the funding allocated to school budgets via the funding formula.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 That the Forum notes the report.

4.2 Schools Forum's views are sought on the proposal to increase the previously proposed +0.5% MFG to the maximum permitted 1.84%, so as to maximise funding directed to schools via the funding formula. The remaining funding will be used to create a falling rolls fund and growth fund as previously agreed.

**Wirral Schools Forum
Minority Ethnic Achievement Service (MEAS)
January 2020**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report updates the Forum on the recent changes to the Minority Ethnic Achievement service and the service plans for the future.

The Minority Ethnic Achievement Service (MEAS) helps you to meet the needs of bilingual learners and ethnic minority pupils at risk of underachievement. We support your staff to challenge racism and enhance provision for SMSC development. We pride ourselves on being an experienced, professional team of EAL professionals who respond quickly to the challenges of a new arrival or queries about cultural differences and communication with families. MEAS is unique in the breadth and flexibility of our offer to schools and settings.

MEAS is a fully traded service within the council.

Income source	Income April 2019 – March 2020
Wirral SLA schools 72 schools (62 primary, 7 secondary, 3 special)	£ 100,810
Income from other sources	£ 19,955
Syrian resettlement grant	£ 37,516
Total Income	£ 154,881
Total Expenditure	£ 155,000

CUSTOMER PRIORITIES:

- Support for pupils/families with EAL (English as an Additional Language) which include whole school development, pupil assessments, interpreting, & family learning
- Support for SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) development which include Multicultural workshops/sessions focussing upon languages, countries, cultures and religions and School of Sanctuary
- Support for challenging racism and race equality planning in schools
- Support for engaging with BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) families and improving outcomes.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS

- 72 Wirral schools continue buy back MEAS packages
- Appointment of a full time Arabic speaking bilingual project officer
- 24 Schools of Sanctuary in Wirral. 5 new schools were awarded in July and we expect at least 5 schools to complete this year.

- Developing training and support to staff and settings in PVI sector using funding from Children's Centres
- New EAL volunteers course delivered Autumn term and several are currently placed in schools. Languages include: Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Tamil, Turkish

2020-21 PRIORITIES

- To continue meeting the needs of Wirral schools and to be flexible to changes in demand. Schools maintain current level of buyback in the challenging economic climate.
- To continue supporting schools to challenge racism and celebrate diversity
- To develop support materials around Windrush to develop awareness, empathy and understanding
- To develop family learning workshops which include information about UK schools and how to help your child learn English and achieve highly in school

STAFFING

There are currently 5.2 FTE members of staff (7 members of staff)

1FTE manager

0.2 FTE deputy manager (1 staff)

1.6 Teaching assistants (2 staff)

2.4 Bilingual project officers (4 staff)

Additional voluntary staff support with different language requirements as and when required.

The service is based at:

Birkenhead Town Hall, Hamilton Sq, Birkenhead, Wirral CH41 5BR

Please see our entry in the Wirral Traded Services Brochure for more information on the service offer and pricing.

**WIRRAL COUNCIL
SCHOOLS FORUM – 15th January 2020
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
EARLY YEARS WORKING GROUP UPDATE**

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update the School's Forum on discussions at the recent Early Years working group meeting, 20th December 2019, on the following matters; ***update of 2, 3- and 4-year funding, Quality supplement consultation, Inclusive Practice and Disability Access Funding and updates on Early Years Business Projects.***

2.0 UPTAKE OF 2, 3- AND 4-YEAR FUNDING ENTITLEMENTS

2.1 Whilst access to free early educational entitlements remains strong across Wirral there were fluctuations across the Summer and Autumn terms as outlined below;

2-year old take-up - Wirral actual 80.96% - National 68%

- Reduction in Summer 2018 and 2019.
- Increase in Autumn 2018 and 2019.

3/4-year old Universal take-up – Wirral actual 95.60% - National 93.50%

- Reduction in Summer 2018 and 2019.
- Increase in Autumn 2018 and 2019.

3/4-year old Extended take-up – actual 95.46% - National % (not available at time of report)

- Increase in Summer 2018 and 2019.
- Reduction in Autumn 2018 and 2019.

All %'s are above National and in line with statistical neighbours. To add, 97.20% of Wirral's EY settings (PVI/childminders) have Ofsted judgements as being “**good**” or “**outstanding**” presently.

3.0 EARLY YEARS FREE ENTITLEMENT CONSULTATION – QUALITY SUPPLEMENT

3.1 There was an improved response of 75 to this consultation but acknowledged a small minority in comparison to number of settings, which on average is around 440.

3.2 There was an overwhelming response to the supplement being applied per setting, where they demonstrate having either an Early Years Professional (EYP). Early Years Teacher Status (EYTS) or Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Therefore, owners of more than one setting and childcare chains will need to identify a person per setting, not as currently having one shared across a multiple of sites.

3.3 As a result of above it is anticipated that the claim for the quality supplement could reduce, for a short period, whilst settings identify or indeed employ/develop a qualified staff to mark the claim against. Any underspend, as aforementioned will be considered in the Spring of next year along with increased base rate consideration.

- 3.4** It was also agreed that the dedicated person should have a set amount of direct time with children and practitioners in settings, however there were variations to this so not concluded at this stage. This will be revisited with providers in the Spring term.
- 3.5** There was an anomaly identified within the last question, as it did not lock down the options, resulting in a slight skew to the response of where any supplement underspend would be applied. Subsequently, given the imminent funding increase to base rate through the proposed 66 million to be distributed across LA's any redistribution of underspend will be considered at this time.
- 3.6** In summary, the quality rate will remain the same for next year. Number of setting who will qualify, will potentially decrease for a short period based on the new criteria. Any underspend of supplement as a result of changes to criteria will be reviewed during 2020/21.

4.0 INCLUSIVE PRACTICE + DISABILITY ACCESS FUNDS (IPF/DAF)

4.1 IPF - Currently there are around 141 children benefiting from this fund and will move across to the Spring term in receipt of it. Given the positive increase of early identification of children's needs and access to financial resource to support, caution will be required at the Spring term panel. If this rate of increased take up continues it could place a projected overspend of £38,000 in year, however with £140,000 reserve this will reduce risk. As a result, the EY working group proposed the post of Inclusion Officer, which due to recruitment freeze has not been filled, will be placed on hold to take pressure off this budget.

4.2 DAF – There has been a slight increase of children claiming Disability Living Allowance (DLA) identifying themselves to their childcare provider as eligible for this fund, 29 in Autumn term (+4 children). A proportionate, 10k, of this fund supports the Mediquip contract of specialist equipment for 3 + 4-year olds in settings. A further 40k of this fund is accessible by the Portage workers to support 0-3's with specialised equipment in their homes. A discussion took place and was agreed in principle to further utilise this fund for vulnerable 2-year olds accessing their free funding entitlements and requiring adaptations to do so.

5.0 UPDATE ON EARLY YEARS BUSINESS PROJECTS

5.1 Department for Education, Professional Development Fund – is a high quality CPD programme focused on improving workforce skills in language development, early literacy & numeracy.

There will be 45 settings trained at completion of programme, of which 12 will become language champions and cascade learnt skills across the sector. There was a delay in information coming from the Department for Education (DfE) during Purdah which did result in a drift of starting the programme and some settings losing interest. However, the early years team have been very proactive in filling places for this great opportunity.

5.2 Early Years Funding Entitlement Agreement

This is in draft stage and reviewed by the working group; some changes will be made to section 15.7, in relation to impact of inaccuracies in headcount returns by a minority of settings on payment timeframes. It was felt this negates settings who consistently return accurate reports and feel should not be penalised by others. Once an amend to wording has

been agreed the draft will be released for wider consultation on 10th January, to the full sector.

5.3 School Nursery Capital Fund

There have been no further updates from DfE regarding this Capital Fund, in the main due to Purdah.

5.3 Early Years Social Mobility – SLCN Pathway

By support of The Communication Trust and working in partnership with Cheshire East and Warrington, Wirral's response to "**closing the word gap**" is well underway, through a multi-agency working group developing a SLCN pathway and CPD programme.

To date there has been;

- **Health Visitor SLCN training** - Delivered by Institute of HV – approx. 20 across Wirral trained.
- 175 practitioners access the commissioned "**Finding my Child's Hidden Voice**" programme – delivered by Dr Helen Bibby which is a foundation of the SLCN CPD pathway.
- 3 SLCN local area partnership **action learning sets** - shared practice opportunities.
- **SLCN working group** set up for Wirral from the above – to develop the pathway from universal to specialist support.
- Wirral is 1 of only a few Local Authorities chosen to review the Public Health England and DfE Guidance papers - which will support the new **SLCN Assessment Tool** currently being developed by Newcastle University for National rollout Spring 2020
- Wirral is 1 of 6 LA's working in partnership with The National Literacy Trust together with the Foundation Years Trust (FYT) programme to launch the "**Hungry Little Minds**" campaign in February 2020.
- Preparation underway for the revisit by the **LGA Early Years Peer Review** to assess progress from February 2019, in March 2020.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Forum to note the report.

Paul Boyce - Director of Children's Service

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM Wednesday, 15th January 2020

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN

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

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A report for information and a steer is requested from the Schools Forum on the three options for High Needs Funding.

2. BACKGROUND

This paper serves as an update on 'High Needs' as requested by the Schools' Forum via Principal Officer LMS & Finance on 11 December 2019.

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) attended:

- High Needs working group on Monday 4th November 2019 at Birkenhead Town Hall
- School's Forum (special meeting) on Tuesday, 26th November 2019 (1.30 p.m.) at Pensby High School
- SEND Workshop for elected members of the Council Tuesday, 26th November 2019 (6.00 p.m.) at Wallace Town Hall
- Parent Carer Participation Wirral (PCPW) on Friday, 29th November 2019

SEND Review: Final Report

Premier Advisory Group (PAG) sent the local authority a SEND Review: Final Report on Friday, 13th December 2019. The local authority received the following six documents:

- The Main Report
- Option Appraisal 1 – Development of the Kingsway Site
- Option Appraisal 2 – SEMH Secondary Schools
- Option Appraisal 3 – Wirral Hospitals' School
- Option Appraisal 4 – Expansion of Resourced Bases
- Option Appraisal 5 – PMLD/SLD Secondary Schools Reconfiguration

Premiere Advisory Group (PAG) informed the local authority that these six documents in their totality constitute the 'Final Report'. On Tuesday, 17th December 2019 Premiere Advisory Group (PAG) contacted the local authority and requested an "...update..." on the six documents sent. On Wednesday, 18th December 2019 Premier Advisory Group (PAG) contacted the local authority and requested "...checking on progress...". The local authority

responded on the same day stating that there is not, as such, an update from the local authority. Two comments were shared about the six documents:

- I. The 'Final Report' contained a very small number of typographical and or grammatical errors.
- II. A senior colleague would have preferred the 'Final Report' in one document, not six.

Other than the above two minor points, the local authority has progressed the 'Final Report' into its senior leadership and elected members decision making processes. The 'Final Report' in one document, not six, has since been received by the local authority.

4. Locality Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Coordinators (SENDCo) Boards

Headteachers have supported and encouraged their SENDCos to volunteer to participate in the SENDCo Locality Boards. The Local Offer Communication Officer will lead this initiative. The arrangements are as follows:

Birkenhead: Chair – Bedford Drive Primary School
Vice Chair – Mersey Park Primary School

Wallasey: Chair – The Oldershaw Academy
Vice Chair – New Brighton Primary School

Wirral South: Chair St. Andrew's CE Primary School
Vice Chair Wirral Grammar for Girls

Wirral West: Chair Pensby High School
Vice Chair Heswall Primary School

The chairs and vice chairs have met and draft terms of reference for the Boards made. The first SENDCo Locality Board is expected to be held in January 2020. The proposed time for the meeting is 3.00 p.m. – 4.30 p.m. So that SENDCos could be released slightly early to attend. Some of the SENDCo system leaders informed the local authority that there are some existing meeting forums in some localities, so where possible these will be used. The Chair of each SENDCo Locality Board will email school SENDCos to invite them to the meeting.

It is likely that the agenda for the first meeting will cover the following:

Agree terms of reference

Discuss the current priorities in the SEND Local Area Strategy and suggest future priorities

Suggestions for SEND survey for parents and young people

The local authority asks leaders of schools to support this venture by encouraging SENDCo to attend as they will have the opportunity to influence and shape strategy for SEND young people moving forward.

5. Review of Pilot Provision

The educational settings under review are indicated to be:

- The Co-op Academy Woodslee
- The Observatory School
- The Oldershaw Academy (review ongoing)
- 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.

6. Individual Pupil Funding Agreements (IPFA)

A Review of Individual Pupil Funding Agreements (IPFA) (also known as pupil funding agreements (PFA) was notified in writing to primary and secondary schools on 21st October 2019 by the Assistant Director, Education. A request has been made to Wirral Association of Secondary Headteachers (WASH) to re-send the letter to secondary schools. The request was made by a Principal of a local Academy.

The review is of the whole process around Pupil Funding Agreements (PFAs). A comprehensive baseline is being established to monitor the evaluation of impact of IPFAs. The emerging themes include:

- Legacy requests remain to be processed by the local authority
- How to request an IPFA is not well understood and or straightforward when understood
- IPFA need to be closely linked to improving and or supporting the outcomes for children and young people.
- Ensure that the approaches used and resourced by IPFA are based on the best possible evidence and are having the required impact on progress and outcomes for children and young people.

Moving forward there remains 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 IPFA 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. It is understood that some volunteers have contacted the local authority.

7. Group Pupil Funding Agreements (PFAs)

No new or additional extra Group Pupil Funding Agreements (GPFA) were agreed by the local authority in the autumn term 2019. As reported previously at Schools Forum 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. This was from February 2019 and will end 31st August 2020.

8. Inclusion funding including 1st day exclusion funding

The educational settings under review for Emotional Behavioral Difficulties (EBD) Outreach / 1st Day Exclusion are:

- 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

Inclusion funding January 2020:

	Base Funding (£)	EBD Outreach / 1st Day Exclusion (£)	Specialist School (£)	Total (£)
Kilgarth	33,470	60,566	0	94,036
The Observatory	33,470	0	0	33,470
Gilbrook	33,470	209,578	0	243,048
Hayfield	33,470	0	0	33,470
Clare Mount	33,470	0	119,560	153,030
Orrets Meadow	33,470	0	0	33,470
Meadowside	33,470	0	0	33,470
Foxfield	33,470	0	0	33,470
Elleray Park	33,470	0	0	33,470
Stanley	33,470	0	0	33,470
	334,700	270,144	119,560	724,404

The local authority is proposing a significant change to Inclusion funding specialist school (status) from 1st April 2020. This would have a significant financial effect for Clare Mount Specialist Sports College only. The proposal is to re-allocate £119,560.00 from Clare Mount to a management equivalent level post(s) within Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion Services in Wirral Council's Children's Services. It is envisaged that this post(s) would be a fixed term secondment opportunity for a senior teacher(s) from a local school. The role of this proposed management level post would be to undertake a review of the Inclusion funding (above), whilst at the same time continuing to provide outreach and first day exclusion support for children/young people (CYP). The review would present options and recommendations for Inclusion funding, which would include all ten schools listed above.

Previously in October 2010 The Secretary of State announced changes to the specialist schools programme. Funding for specialist schools, including for High Performing Specialist Schools (HPSS), would be mainstreamed from April 2011. The funding, approximately £450 million for 2010-11, was not being removed from the schools system and would continue to be routed to schools through the Dedicated Schools Grant.

The Secretary of State decided that from April 2011 funding for specialism should no longer take the form of a dedicated grant, so that all schools can decide how to develop their specialisms in the light of the total resources available to them. It was stressed that funding was not being removed from schools: money currently paid as specialist schools grant will continue to be routed to schools through the DSG.

9. Kids In Need of Development (also known as KIND Team)

There is an ongoing local authority review of the Kids In Need of Development (KIND Team). The review is being assisted by the Kids In Need of Development Team and colleagues from social care and inclusion services as some of the children/young people (CYP) known to the Kids In Need of Development Team are also being supported by other local authority services. The Consultant Clinical Psychologist who leads and manages the Team has returned to work after a period of absence.

The Kids In Need of Development Team has been focusing on behaviour in school that challenges. Behaviour in school is seen as inseparable from academic achievement, safety, welfare and well-being, and all other aspects of learning. The focus has been from a clinical perspective (colloquial medical and or health). There has been a shift in thinking recently within the local authority away from a clinical approach to behaviour that challenges in schools, towards an 'educational' approach to behaviour that challenges in school.

There are preliminary discussions ongoing within the local authority Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion services to identify whether or not it is feasible to shift the focus of support for children/young people (CYP) with behaviour that challenges from a clinical approach to an educational approach. The educational approach would be led by (local) teachers in practice, sometimes conversationally referred to as 'specialist teachers social, emotional and mental health (SEMH)'.

The aim(s) of these specialist teachers social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) would be to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs of children/young people (CYP) whose behaviour challenged in school. The specialist teachers would work to an agreed protocol, in collaboration with Wirral schools and aim to keep the children/young people (CYP) within mainstream education provision if possible and only if appropriate. The age range of the children/young people (CYP) would initially be compulsory school age. The specialist teachers would provide evidence-based services to children/young people (CYP) to improve and or support their outcomes whilst in school.

10. High Needs Funding in Wirral

The current systems in place to allocate High Needs Funding are being reviewed by the local authority. There are several ways to request/access high needs funding in Wirral for children/young people (CYP) with identified and assessed special educational needs.

Option 1

The current system (also known as **Option 1**)

1. Education Health and Care (EHC) plans
 - a. Banding Model for Top Ups for Specialist SEN and Alternative Provision
 - b. Units of Resource (mainstream)
 - c. Exceptional Needs Funding
 - d. 'Out of Borough' funding and sometimes 'joint' funding with health and social care
2. Individual Pupil Funding Agreements (IPFA)
3. Early Years Funding Entitlement (EYFE) – Inclusive Practice Fund

(a) Banding Model for Top Ups for Specialist SEN and Alternative Provision

Band	Cognition and	Communication and Interaction	Behaviour Emotional	Physical, Medical and
------	---------------	-------------------------------	---------------------	-----------------------

	Learning		and Social Difficulties	Sensory
Band One Resourced Provision £0 Special School £1,100				
Band Two Resourced Provision £3,100 Special School £6,100				
Band Three Resourced Provision £6,000 Special School £7,100				
Band Four Resourced Provision £7,000 Special School £8,100				
Band Five Resourced Provision £10,000 Special School £16,100				

The grouping of profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) pupils in the main will be placed in Band 4. However, in the most extreme cases when a pupil meets the criteria of being permanently in the P-Scale 1-3 assessment range, requires gastrostomy feeding and is unable to sit unaided and walk even with assistance, then such pupils will be placed in Band 5

(b) Units of resource (mainstream)

Unit	Amount
One unit =	£1,090.00
Two units =	£2,180.00
Three units =	£3,270.00
Four units =	£4,360.00
Five units =	£5,450.00
Six units =	£6,540.00
Seven units =	£7,630.00
Eight units =	£8,720.00
Nine units =	£9,810.00
Ten units =	£10,900.00
Eleven units =	£11,990.00
Twelve units =	£13,080.00

(c) Exceptional Needs Funding:

Exceptional Needs funding remains 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 seeking advice and information from the educational settings with exceptional needs on the:

- (i) impact of the support on the outcomes for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- (ii) outcomes and experiences of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Provision maps

Requests for Exceptional Needs Funding are evidenced through, amongst other things, individual costed Provision maps. Provision maps are an efficient way of showing all the provision that the school makes which is additional to and different from that which is offered through the school's curriculum. The use of provision maps can help SENCOs to maintain an overview of the programmes and interventions used with different groups of pupils and provide a basis for monitoring the levels of intervention.

Provision mapping takes into account the full scope of provision, including high quality, whole class teaching, guided and group work and individual interventions in order to identify and overcome potential barriers to learning and meet the needs of all pupils within and beyond the school setting.

- (d) 'Out of Borough' funding and sometimes 'joint' funding with health and social care
Requests for Out of Borough funding and joint funding arrangements are evidenced through individually costed provision, providers fees and joint funding arrangements with adults' social care, children's social care and health authority.

Individual Pupil Funding Agreements (IPFA)

Requests for Individual Pupil Funding Agreements (IPFA) are evidenced through, amongst other things, individual costed Provision maps. Provision maps are an efficient way of showing all the provision that the school makes which is additional to and different from that which is offered through the school's curriculum. The use of provision maps can help SENCOs to maintain an overview of the programmes and interventions used with different groups of pupils and provide a basis for monitoring the levels of intervention.

Early Years Funding Entitlement (EYFE) – Inclusive Practice Fund

Early Years Providers can apply for additional funding to support the inclusion of children with additional needs in early education and childcare. This fund is intended to support children in receipt of 2, 3 or 4-year-old funding to access their free entitlement. The Inclusive Practice Fund can be used to enhance staffing or allow staff to access Continued Professional Development (CPD) opportunities.

Option 2

Cost of providing any additional extra educational or training interventions, oversee by a qualified teacher, using individual provision map, (also known as Option 2)

The local authority is in preliminary discussions around changes to top-up funding for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) attending mainstream schools in Wirral.

There are no proposed changes to:

Element 1: Core education funding which is used to make general provisions for all pupils in the school including pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Element 2: The notional Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) budget – mainstream schools still need to provide for pupils with additional needs up to £6,000, beyond the basic entitlement level. This includes all high-level pupils' needs who are receiving Special Educational Needs Support and those with an Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan.

Proposals under discussion to Changes to Element 3 - Top-up funding for high needs

Additional funding can be accessed for pupils in mainstream settings with the most complex needs. Funding would be allocated with recommendation from Wirral's Local Area Panel (Headteachers). Discussions centre around from 1 September 2020; the current funding system being phased out. The replacement funding would be applications for top-ups should be based on the cost of providing any additional teaching interventions using a costed Provision Map. If the application is recommended to the local authority by the Local Area Panel, and subsequently agreed by the local authority, the school would receive the exact amount of money required to meet the child's needs. Pupils currently receiving top-ups which have been allocated in line with the current funding systems would move to the new arrangement at their next Annual Review.

Option 3

Funding Pupil Based Need – the 7 Ranges Model (also known as option 3)

The local authority is in preliminary discussions around changes to top-up funding for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) attending mainstream and special schools in Wirral.

The Wirral 7 Ranges Model, shown below, would be used to assign pupils into categories of need for funding purposes. Each range would have an applicable level of funding, and every pupil assigned to a range is allocated the set value of funding, regardless of setting. This Wirral 7 Ranges Model has been applied in the same way to both pre and post 16 students.

The local authority's intention using this Model would be to establish a single uniform framework for calculating 'Plus' funding. The authority's expectation is that this framework will categorise the vast majority of pupils and will thus ensure consistency in the approach to the funding of high needs in mainstream and specialist settings. It is accepted that there will be a small number of children or young people that will sit outside the Ranges framework; most of whom will be placed in specialist independent provisions.

The values of funding per pupil set for each range in 2020/2021 are, for illustrative purposes only:

Wirral 7 Ranges Model				
Plus Funding (annual value)				
Range	1	£0 illustrative amount only not actual	+	*Element 2 funding
Range	2	£0 illustrative amount only not actual	+	Element 2 funding
Range	3	£0 illustrative amount only not actual	+	Element 2 funding
Range	4A	£900 illustrative amount only not actual	+	Element 2 funding
Range	4B	£1,000 illustrative amount only not actual	+	Element 2 funding
Range	4C	£2,000 illustrative amount only not actual	+	Element 2 funding
Range	4D	£3,000 illustrative amount only not actual	+	Element 2 funding
Range	5	£4,000 illustrative amount only not actual	+	Element 2 funding
Range	6	£5,000 illustrative amount only not actual	+	Element 2 funding
Range	7	£6,000 illustrative amount only not actual	+	Element 2 funding

*mainstream maintained schools are funded at £6,000 per place for one element (sometimes referred to as element 2) of their high needs funding allocation.

HIGH NEEDS PROVISION: FUNDING CATEGORIES, BANDS & AMOUNTS 2020/2021 illustrative only *

Range 1	Range 2	Range 3
Place Funding	Place Funding	Place Funding
		£0
		MLD
mainstream	mainstream	mainstream

Range 4	Range 4	Range 4	Range 4	Range 5	Range 6	Range 7
Band A (16.5-21.5 hours)	Band B (22-27 hours)	Band C (27.5-34.5 hours)	Band D (35+ hours)			
Primary Need	Primary Need	Primary Need	Primary Need	Primary Need	Primary Need	Primary Need
Additional "Plus" Funding	Additional "Plus" Funding	Additional "Plus" Funding	Additional "Plus" Funding	Additional "Plus" Funding	Additional "Plus" Funding	Additional "Plus" Funding
£900 illustrative amount only not actual	£1,000 illustrative amount only not actual	£2,000 illustrative amount only not actual	£3,000 illustrative amount only not actual	£4,000 illustrative amount only not actual	£5,000 illustrative amount only not actual	£6,000 illustrative amount only not actual
		SLCN	ASD		ASD+	ASD++
MLD	MLD+	SLD	PMLD	SLD+	PMLD+	PMLD++
			PD		PD+	PD++
		HI/VI		HI+/VI+		
			SEMH		SEMH+	SEMH++
mainstream	mainstream	mainstream	mainstream	Specialist	Specialist	Specialist

Mainstream funding is within colour coded Bands (mainly range 4)

Funding is determined by actual Primary Need and is shown as text

* Values excluding any allocation of one off monies

NB: Bands & amounts 2020/2021 illustrative only not actual

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Forum Notes the Report and provides a steer on the which of the three options for High Needs Funding to progress.**

Tarun Ghosh

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

Paul Boyce

Corporate Director for Children

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM – 15th JANUARY 2020

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN SERVICES

SCHOOLS BUDGET 2020-21

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the Schools Budget for 2020-21 so that Forum can indicate their views on the proposals outlined. The report describes the financial changes to be considered by Schools Forum and Cabinet. The proposed budget totals £279,960,200 for Early Years, Maintained Schools, Academies, colleges, and providers for the upcoming year.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 The Schools Funding Allocations were issued by the Department for Education on 19th December 2019. The format of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is unchanged with Local Authority allocations determined by the National Funding Formula (NFF) for Schools and High Needs.

In summary the main changes to DSG in 2020-21 are as follows:

- a cash increase of £2.6 billion compared to 2019-20;
- every secondary school will be allocated at least £5,000 per pupil in 2020-21, with primary schools allocated £3,750 per pupil;
- local authorities will continue to set a Minimum Funding Guarantee in their local formulae, which in 2020-21 must be between +0.5% and +1.84%;
- teachers' pay grant and teachers' pension employer contributions grant will both continue to be paid separately from the NFF in 2020-21;
- core NFF formula factors will increase by up to 4% in 2020-21, apart from Free School Meals factors which will increase by 1.84% in line with inflation. Premises factors will be allocated to local authorities based on actual 2019-20 allocations, with the PFI factor increasing in line with the RPIX measure of inflation;
- the intention to introduce a 'hard' NFF whereby all schools in the country are funded on the same basis has been reaffirmed;
- the first step towards this is the use of the national minimum per pupil funding levels becoming compulsory in local formulae from 2020-21;
- Early Years hourly rates paid to local authorities will increase by £0.08 for both 2-year olds and 3&4-year olds (subject to previous protection arrangements);
- the Schools Block continues to be ring-fenced with limited flexibility to transfer up to 0.5% of the schools' block to High Needs with Schools Forum approval;

- The High Needs block will increase from £36.9m to £42.8m, an increase of £5.9m.

3.0 GRANT FUNDING

3.1 Pupil Premium

In addition to DSG, Pupil Premium provides funding targeted towards deprivation. It is expected to continue in 2020-21 for its tenth year, although at the time of writing the funding rates are to be confirmed. 2019-20 rates were as follows:

- For pupils who are or have previously been eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) in the last 6 years, rates are as follows:
 - Early Years £302.10 pa for 3 & 4-year-old children from low income families.
 - Primary school £1,320 pa
 - Secondary school £935 pa
- Looked After Child or child that has been adopted since December 2005 £2,300.
- Each child of a parent in the Armed Forces £300.

Final allocations are based on data collected in the January census for current numbers of FSM's (and those over the previous 5 years) and LAC Census data collected in March 2019.

3.2 Other Grant Funding

- The grant for Universal Infant Free School Meals is expected to continue, although this is still to be confirmed. For the 2019-20 academic year it was paid at a meal rate of £2.30 per meal.
- The funding for Primary PE and Sport Premium, Year 7 Catch-up Premium, and Extended Rights to Home to School Transport are expected to continue in 2020-21, although this is still to be confirmed.
- The ESFA have confirmed that for 2020-21 the teachers' pay grant and teachers' pension employer contributions grant will both continue to be paid separately from the NFF in 2020 to 2021. The pay grant rates will be announced in spring 2020.

3.3 Dedicated Schools Grant

- 3.3.1 From April 2018 DSG has been made up of 4 blocks including the Central Schools Services Block. There are now greater restrictions on moving funding between the blocks, as described above. The blocks indicate the level of expenditure anticipated in each budget area. The initial allocation for 2020-21 indicates a £14.8m increase (excluding Early Years) which is an overall increase of 6.1%. The budgets presented have not top sliced block allocations.
- 3.3.2 The allocations for the Schools and Central Schools Services funding blocks have been updated for changes in pupil numbers. Pupil numbers are those recorded in the October 2019 census, and have changed as follows:

Pupil Numbers	Primary	Secondary	Total
October 18 census	25,888	17,908	43,796
October 19 census	25,778	18,175	43,953
Increase / (Decrease)	(110)	267	157

3.3.3 Early Years funding is based on a combination of the census in January 2020 and January 2021. The dates for the Early Years Census mean that the exact DSG will not be finalised until July 2021. The grant used for the budget are based on the current indicative figures (using the January 2019 census) and any known or anticipated changes after this date e.g. for increasing take up of the 15-hour extended offer. This also includes the increased hourly rates outlined above.

3.3.4 The High Needs Block provides resources to fund high needs students aged 0 – 24, including the Hospital School. Additional funding has been provided to meet growing needs across all authorities. For Wirral an additional £5.9m has been included for this. Growth can be used flexibly to make adjustments locally to high needs places as well as to the top ups provided. Several changes are described later in this report.

3.3.5 The Blocks in their current format can be summarised as follows:

Block	2019-20 £	2020-21 Allocation £	Change £	Change %
Schools Block	202,890,500	211,908,000	9,017,500	4.44%
Early Years (est)	21,172,200	22,480,500	1,308,300	6.18%
High Needs	36,874,100	42,828,700	5,954,600	16.15%
Central Schools	2,295,000	2,139,200	(155,800)	(6.79%)
Total		279,356,400		

3.3.6 Schools Block £211.9m

This funding covers the delegated budgets to maintained primary and secondary schools and academies only. Funding previously included in the schools' block for budgets that are managed centrally on behalf of schools is now included in the Central Schools Services Block. In November 2019, Schools Forum supported this block being redistributed to maintained schools using the formula factor rates used in the National Funding Formula.

3.3.7 Early Years Block £22.5m

This Block funds the costs of Early Years Education for 2, 3 and 4-year-old children in schools, nurseries and private voluntary and independent providers for both the universal and extended entitlement. Most of this funding is directed through the Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF). This is allocated to

Local Authorities based on an hourly rate, which has increased from £5.22 to £5.30 for 2-year olds, and from £4.31 to £4.39 for 3 and 4-year olds.

There are small elements covering SEN costs and some central Early Years support costs. Amounts held centrally are within the nationally defined limits of 5%.

3.3.8 High Needs Block £42.8m

The make-up of this block is complex. It is based on the “place plus” funding system introduced by the DfE in April 2013 and includes:

- Special schools (pre and post 16), and non-maintained special schools, both of which receive a base level funding of £10,000 per place.
- School bases which receive £6,000 per place.
- Alternative Provision Bases funding of £10,000 per place.
- Place funding in Wirral’s FE provision at Wirral Met College and Birkenhead 6th Form College of £6,000 per place.
- Additional funding over and above that provided for places in the form of “top ups” provided on a per pupil basis. The top up, or “plus” element of funding, takes account of the agreed assessed needs of pupils and is paid by the “commissioner” responsible; this may be Wirral Children’s Services, a school or another Local Authority. Wirral’s top up system uses 5 bands to allocate funding across special schools, resourced bases and alternative provision. Non-maintained Special Schools also receive a top up.
- The costs of Top Ups for all education and training for post 16 specialist provision for Learners with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities (LLDD) in colleges and private providers.
- The Hospital Schools budget.
- The cost of placements in Independent Special Schools.
- The costs of Education, Health and Care Plans / Statements.
- The central provision of SEN support.

3.3.9 Central School Services Block £2.1m

This block provides funding for LAs to carry out central functions on behalf of pupils in state-funded maintained schools and academies in England. Funding previously allocated to LAs for Education Services Grant (ESG) retained duties is included within this block, together with funding for historic commitments.

Funding allocated to Local Authorities for historic commitments, which for Wirral are the contribution to combined budgets and schools retirement costs (school closure), has been reduced by 20% in line with the DfE’s expectation that these costs will unwind over time.

The funding for ongoing responsibilities includes:

- School Licenses
- Admissions
- Schools Forum
- Former ESG retained duties
- Capital Expenditure from Revenue (PFI costs)

The treatment of these budgets, which are considered in further detail later in this report, is in accordance with national guidance.

3.4 Academies

Currently there are 16 secondary academies and 12 primary academies (1 Alternative Provision Academy – Emslie Morgan – closed in August 2019). Academies are independent from the local authority and are funded directly from the ESFA, however Regulations require Wirral to continue to calculate their budgets which are then deducted from Wirral's DSG.

3.5 Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG)

Local Authorities have discretion over the level of MFG in their local formula as part of the 'soft' formula. In 2020-21 LAs can apply MFG of between plus 0.5% and plus 1.84% per pupil to protect schools from large formula changes, but giving Authorities the flexibility to move towards the National Funding Formula whilst reflecting local circumstances where necessary. Following a consultation with all primary, secondary and special schools, School Forum in November 2019 supported a plus 0.5% Minimum Funding Guarantee for the 2020-21 mainstream schools funding formula.

3.6 2020-21 Budget changes

3.6.1 Proposed 2020-21 Schools Budget savings

There are no specific budget savings proposed as part of this Schools Budget report. However, the Council continues to face significant pressures and will need to identify cost reductions totalling £115m by 2025.

The Council's budget for 2020-21 is now balanced and includes pressures totalling £34.9m. This has been balanced by savings which may have a bearing on the level of support and services across the Council and provided to schools. None however are directly funded by the Schools Budget. Planned reductions include a contracts review, and a new council wide structural modernisation model. Final decisions will be taken at Budget Cabinet on 17th February 2020.

3.6.2 Primary, Secondary and Academy Budgets £211.9m

The significant changes within this area are as follows:

- There is a net increase in school rolls, which results in an overall budget increase of £1.04m. There are 157 more pupils on roll in October 2019 compared to October 2018. Primary numbers have reduced by 110 from 25,888 to 25,778 (a 0.42% reduction) while Secondary numbers have increased by 267 from 17,908 to 18,175 (a 1.5% increase).
- There has been an increase in the estimated Business Rates payable of £40k resulting from inflation and the unwinding of transitional relief following the rates revaluation exercise in 2017.
- The PFI Affordability Gap delegated to schools has been increased by the estimated cost of inflation - £54,300 (this will be updated once the December 2019 RPI rate is published).

- There is Headroom within the budget, which arises from a difference in the pupil funding received in DSG and the funding allocated within the ISB. This totals £7.86m (3.9%) and has been split proportionately between primary and secondary budgets.

3.6.3 6th Form Funding

The Schools Budget includes funding for High Needs students in 6th Forms. All other post 16 funding is through the National Funding Formula for 6th Forms.

This is based on lagged learner numbers to which a national rate is applied for each student aged 16 to 17. This has not yet been announced for 2020-21 but was £4,000 in 2019-20. Formula Protection Funding (FPF), introduced in 2013-14 to protect institutions from significant decreases in funding resulting from the funding per student, will remain payable until 2020-21. The funding per student rate is weighted for student retention and study programme costs as well as the size of their study programme based on their planned hours. Additional programme cost weightings have been introduced for 2020-21, and there is an additional amount for disadvantage.

Maths and English GCSEs are considered essential qualifications for further or higher education and employment. As a condition of funding, students who have not achieved A*-C or equivalent in these subjects by age 16 will be expected to continue to study towards achieving them as part of their 16 to 19 study programme.

3.6.4 High Needs Places £15.8m

Places in specialist provision within Local Authority areas continue to be determined by each LA in consultation with schools and providers. There is flexibility to make adjustments so that places more broadly reflect take up by pupils and some place changes have been included in the budget, reducing the budget by £144,500. These include the increase in place numbers at 2 special schools which have been included in 2019-20 costs, and also includes the removal of place funding previously allocated to Emslie Morgan, following the closure of the school in August 2019.

Additional CLD places will be required from September 2020, although the number required at this stage is unknown. There are also more pupils due to leave primary special schools year 6 in August 2020 than will be leaving secondary special schools. Previously these additional pressures have been funded from the High Needs Contingency budget. However, for 2020-21 an amount equivalent to 40 places has been set aside for this purpose. A policy will be produced setting out the criteria for accessing this place funding when schools go over place numbers.

All changes have been reported to the ESFA where necessary and have been reflected in the budget as follows:

Full Year Effect of changes made in 2019-20

- Foxfield increase by 2 places to 140
- Townfield reduce by 1 place to 10

- Woodchurch High increase by 5 places to 20
- Oldershaw increase by 6 places to 26
- Emslie Morgan AP reduce by 20 places to 80
- Weatherhead reduce by 1 place to 0
- Wirral Met College increase by 14 places to 133

Changes from September 2019

- Elleray Park increase by 23 places to 151
- Gilbrook increase by 5 places to 60

Changes from April 2020

- Emslie Morgan AP reduce by 80 places to 0
- Additional places introduced – 40 places

3.6.5 Early Years £21.5m

Early Years funding for 2020-21 will be based on census counts in January 2020 (5/12ths) and January 2021 (7/12ths). The final allocation will not therefore be known until June/July 2021.

Latest DfE estimates (December 2018) indicate that 1,247 children (PTE) are eligible for 2-year-old funding in Wirral, with an estimated take-up of 90% in 2020-21. Estimated DSG and expenditure budgets are therefore based on these numbers.

The January 19 census showed a falling roll for universal 3&4-years olds compared to the January 18 census, mirroring a drop in birth rates for the related period. A further drop in numbers has been predicted for the January 2020 census, although this will be kept under review.

The extended offer of an additional 15 hours for working parents was introduced from autumn 2017, with the DfE's expectation being that extended hours claimed would eventually be around 60% of universal hours. 2019-20 budget was set assuming extended hours claimed would be 50% of universal hours by Spring 2020, with the Autumn 2019 assumption being 48.5%. This was actually 48.1% in Autumn 19. Estimated DSG and expenditure budgets for 2020-21 estimate that this will be 50% in spring 2020, rising to 55% in spring 2021.

Pupil numbers	January 2018	January 2019	Change
2-year olds (PTE)	1,106	1,055	(51)
3/4-year olds (universal PTE)	4,878	4,814	(64)
3/4-year olds (extended PTE)	2,012	2,204	192

As outlined above in paragraph 3.3.7 the hourly rates paid by DfE to Wirral will increase by £0.08, rising from £5.22 to £5.30 for the 2-year-old rate, and from £4.31 to £4.39 for the 3&4-year-old rate.

A consultation was conducted during December 2019 to seek views on how the additional funding should be allocated across the Early Years funding formula. The consultation was issued to around 400 Early Years Providers, including approximately 250 funded providers. There were 62 responses (all from funded providers), with 77.42% supporting adding all additional funding to the base rate,

rather than the supplements. Both the 2-year-old rate paid to providers, and the base rate of the 3&4-year-old formula will therefore increase by £0.08 from April 2020.

3.6.6 SEN Top-ups £24.5m

The proposed budget for SEN Top-ups is £24.5m, an increase of £2.8m from 2019-20. As well as the changes to place numbers outlined above, top-up budgets have been increased as follows:

- **Statements £6.2m** – a net increase of £0.52m reflecting the increased number/cost of EHCPs/IPFAs, particularly for Primary pupils. This includes an estimate of additional awards being made during 2020 to March 2021.
- **Special Schools £8.31m** – special school top-ups budgets are under increasing pressure, with increased complexity of need being reflected in the higher costing top-up bands. The budget also assumes all special schools are full throughout the year. The inclusion element (reported to Forum in September 2019) has been reduced by £119.5k due to the removal of ‘Specialist School’ funding from Clare Mount Special School from April 2020 as reported elsewhere on the agenda. This has been reallocated to the SEN Support Services budget to fund a fixed-term post to undertake a review of inclusion funding and its impact. An element is also included to enable the local authority to ‘purchase’ additional EHCP places at Wirral Hospital School.
- **Alternative Provision £1.38m** – the budget has increased by £883,300, which has been transferred from the AP (Emslie Morgan) Places budget to fund alternative AP initiatives with Progress School as reported to Forum in June 2019.
- **Exceptional Need £782k** – although a review of all Exceptional Needs cases is currently being carried out, this budget has been increased by £278k to reflect funding currently committed for 2020-21. Exceptional Needs awards process is also being reviewed as described elsewhere on the agenda.
- **Nursing Support £160k** – an increase of £53k reflects funding currently committed for 9 children.
- **Independent Special Schools £4.1m** – there has been an increase of £434k in this budget which reflects the funding currently committed resulting from increase in demand, as well as an estimate of further placements made during 2020-21.
- **Home Tuition £401k** – the budget for the Home Tuition service remains unchanged for 2020-21, despite projected overspends in 2019-20. This is due to a planned review of the service during 2020.
- **Contingency £360k** – this budget has been increased by £50k and covers the potential cost of:
 - The 90% guarantee to maintained mainstream schools to limit the demands on low cost high incidence SEN budgets used to support statements (£200k).
 - Any unforeseen consequences arising from top-ups, places, or exceptional cases (£60k).
 - Potential additional funding (£100k) for a base at The Oldershaw Academy agreed by the former interim Head of SEN. Discussions are currently ongoing with the school as to what support has been agreed and the level of funding.

These changes are summarised in the table below, and together with the place changes outlined in 3.6.4 mean that the pressures estimated on the High Needs budget total £2.79m. The top-up model for both Special Schools and SEN Units/Resource Bases will be reviewed during 2020.

	2019-20 budget £	2020-21 budget £	Change £
Statements (£6,237,000)			
Early Years	450,000	450,000	0
Primary	2,730,600	3,243,600	513,000
Secondary (including 6 th Forms)	2,314,700	2,323,600	8,900
Personal Budgets	108,700	108,700	0
Other	111,100	111,100	0
Top-ups (£18,254,800)			
Special Schools (& 6 th Forms / Hospital)	7,708,600	8,308,400	599,800
SEN Units (resourced & AP)	1,038,200	1,048,600	10,400
Alternative Provision	494,900	1,378,200	883,300
Further Education (6 th form college & providers)	1,700,000	1,683,200	(16,800)
Exceptional Need	504,100	782,000	277,900
Nursing Support	106,600	159,900	53,300
Contingency	310,000	360,000	50,000
Independent Non-maintained Special Schools	3,700,000	4,134,000	434,000
Home Tuition	400,500	400,500	0
Total	21,678,000	24,491,800	2,813,800

3.6.7 Use of Reserves

DSG reserves held total £2.2m, and were agreed as part of the year end accounts for 2018-19. £0.65m of this reserved for the costs of pay harmonisation, with small amounts being held for Early Years and the remaining final closure / school re-use costs of the former City Learning Centres.

The Schools Budget for 2019-20 is likely to use £3.57m of these, leaving the overall DSG reserve with a £1.4m deficit (with some of this being ringfenced for specific activities as previously agreed).

4.0 CENTRAL SCHOOL SERVICES

- 4.1 As in previous years the budgets held for Contingency, Special Staff (maternity, paternity and trade union duties), the School Library Service, Insurance (Governors Aided), and Behaviour Support have been delegated to schools, and a decision will be required for any de-delegation from existing school budgets for these services. A decision will also be required for de-delegation of costs associated with former General Duties of the Education Services Grant and School Improvement.

- 4.2 The centrally held budgets for 2020-21, mainly funded by the Central Schools Services Block of DSG, include:
- The continuing premature retirement of teachers and staff that have arisen from closing schools (£81,000, an increase of £21,000 due to overspends in previous years).
 - The cost of licenses for copyright and music in all schools and academies resulting from a national agreement (£244,900, a reduction of £1,700 to reflect the actual cost published by DfE on 19th December 2019).
 - School Admissions (£372,200, unchanged from 2019-20).
 - Contributions to combined budgets (£700,500, a reduction of £175,100 reflecting the 20% reduction in funding from DfE for 'historic commitments' as per paragraph 3.3.9 above).
 - Schools Forum (£10,600, unchanged from 2019-20).
 - Early Years (£518,700, funded from the Early Years block and unchanged from 2019-20).
 - Retained duties of the former Education Services Grant (ESG) (£730,000, unchanged from 2019-20).
 - The Authority's contribution to the PFI Affordability Gap (£1,247,700, an increase of £129,300, funded by the LA and subject to change based on the December 2019 RPI rate).

4.3 **School Admissions (£372,200)**

This budget is required to meet the costs of supporting and administering the authority's school admissions process including the 11 plus.

4.4 **School Copyright licenses (£244,900)**

The DfE purchases a single national licence for all state funded schools. Licences cover areas such as the Copyright Licence Agency, the Education Recording Agency, the Mechanical Copyright Protection Society, and a School Printed Music Licence.

4.5 **Contributions to combined budgets (£700,500, a £175,100 reduction)**

School Funding Regulations continue to allow contributions to support services that would otherwise fall outside the Schools Budget. These budgets combine with other council resources for the educational benefit of children.

There must be no new commitments or increases in expenditure from that agreed in 2012-13, and DfE expect that these costs will unwind over time. For this reason, funding from DfE has been reduced by 20% for 2020-21. These contributions are as follows:

- **Discretionary Rate Relief (£106,600, a £21,300 reduction)**

This budget funds continuing costs for Discretionary Rate Relief in Voluntary Aided schools.

- **School Improvement (£330,000, a £66,000 reduction)**

This budget supports the continued funding for School Improvement staff with permanent contracts.

- Local Safeguarding Children’s Board (£24,000, a £6,000 reduction)

The LSCB provides governance of child protection arrangements, undertakes serious case reviews, training and employs a Designated Officer for Allegations. The Board is funded from partner organisations including Social Care, Schools, Police, Health and Probation. The £24,000 contribution from the Central Schools Budget is similar to the contribution received from Health. There is also a £10,000 contribution similar to this from the High Needs Budget.

- School Intervention (£108,800, a £27,200 reduction)

This budget supports the continuing funding for the consultant Headteacher role supporting primary and secondary schools.

- PFI – City Learning Centres (£54,800, a £13,700 reduction)

The 3 City Learning Centres closed in summer 2016 after which budgets for running costs were delegated to schools. There is an ongoing requirement to fund PFI costs for 2 of the 3 buildings. Provision has been made within the council for some costs (£118,400) and the Home Tuition Service (£40,000). This residual budget is required until a more lasting solution is found.

- PFI Support (£49,400, a £12,400 reduction)

A small team within Asset Management manages the PFI contract on behalf of the Council and provides support / advice to PFI schools. This budget provides part of the funding needed to support the ongoing contract management.

- LACES (£112,400, a £28,100 reduction)

The service reviews the educational progress of Looked After Children, provides training to staff and some direct support to pupils.

Combined budget summary	£
Discretionary Rate Relief	85,300
School Improvement	264,000
LSCB	24,000
School Intervention	108,800
PFI – CLCs	54,800
LACES	112,400
PFI Support Team	49,400
Governors Forum	1,800
Total	700,500

4.6 Education Services Grant

In 2018-19 and 2019-20 Forum agreed to de-delegate £500,000 on behalf of Maintained Primary, Secondary and Special Schools towards the full year costs of ESG General Duties. This is to contribute to the cost of functions such as Internal Audit, some Asset Management costs, school redundancies, and other statutory duties. This is considered as part of the De-delegation report elsewhere on the agenda. If agreed, the estimated costs of these services per the 2019-20 Section 251 Budget Return are as follows:

Estimated cost of ESG services	£
Education Welfare	454,800
Asset Management	152,600
Statutory/Regulatory duties	998,600
Premature retirement/redundancy	128,300
Monitoring national curriculum assessment	65,000
Total	1,799,300
Funded by:	
School budget retained duties	730,000
General duties (de-delegation)	500,000
Council funded	569,300
Total	1,799,300

5.0 INFLATION

5.1 Although the mainstream schools' budget has received increased funding, there is no specific provision in the budget for pay awards. A pay award of 2.75% from September 2019 was announced, with a corresponding Teachers Pay Grant allocation of 0.75%. This is in addition to the 2% grant awarded to cover the previous years' teachers' pay increase of up to 3.5%. A 2% pay award for support staff was also agreed from April 2019. Any additional cost over and above any increase in budget allocations and Teachers Pay Grant will need to be met from existing budgets.

An increase in employers' Teachers' Pension contributions from 16.48% to 23.68% took effect from September 2019, although DfE have indicated this will be funded in 2020-21. As per paragraph 3.2 above, both the Teachers Pay Grant and Teachers Pension Employers Contribution Grant will continue to be paid separately from the NFF in 2020-21.

There is no general provision for price inflation, although costs for school rates and PFI continue to reflect RPI increases.

6.0 BUDGET TIMETABLE

6.1 The Schools Budget and advice from Forum will be considered by Cabinet at its budget meeting on 17th February 2020.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The budget for 2020-21 is compiled from the base budget for 2019-20 approved by Council on 4th March 2019 and updated for any issues identified in this report. The projected budget (DSG, reserves and council contribution) is £279,960,200 and is shown in Appendix 1.

7.2 As described in paragraph 3.6.7, the DSG reserve is expected to end 2019-20 with a deficit of £1.4m. The High Needs block of the DSG grant has increased by £5.9m for 2020-21 (paragraph 3.3.5), and the budget changes described in this report result in surplus High Needs funding of £643,900 for 2020-21. It is proposed that this is transferred to the DSG reserve to partially offset the deficit.

7.3 Wirral Council commissioned independent advisors (Premier Advisory Group) to carry out an in-depth review of SEN provision, with the objective of reallocating DSG resources to meet need and to prevent future overspends. A final report was not received until December 2019, and as such no changes that may result from their findings are reflected in this report and will not impact the budget until 2021-22.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That the views of Schools Forum are sought on the Schools Budget for 2020-21 including the changes within SEN and Central costs.

8.2 That in accordance with ESFA guidelines the Forum approves the reduced Contributions to Combined Budgets of £700,500 in 2020-21 for:

- Discretionary Rate Relief top-ups
- School Improvement
- LCSB contribution
- School Intervention
- PFI CLCs
- LACES
- Governors Forum
- PFI Support Team

8.3 That £643,900 of surplus High Needs funding for 2020-21 be transferred to the DSG reserve to partially offset the deficit position.

8.4 That the Schools Budget and views of the Schools Forum be referred to the budget meeting of the Cabinet on 17th February 2020.

Paul Boyce
Corporate Director for Children Services

Appendix 1 - Schools Budget changes 2020-21

	£'000
Dedicated Schools Grant	279,356
Contribution to reserve	(644)
Total Grant Funding	278,713
Schools adj base budget	171,762
Add back 19-20 Academy & High Needs	95,110
	266,872
Change in ISB costs	
Net rising rolls	1,042
Rates and rents	59
PFI affordability gap increase	54
Headroom	7,862
High Needs places	(145)
Early Years DAF increase	(9)
Early Years pupil numbers (3/4s)	679
Early Years rate increase (3/4s)	324
Early Years pupil numbers (2s)	264
Early Years rate increase (2s)	51
	10,181
Changes in SEN / High Needs	
High Needs Contingency increase	50
Exceptional Need	278
Nursing support	53
End of specialist school funding (CM)	(120)
Independent Special Schools demand increase	434
Additional of post to oversee Outreach provision	120
EHCPs / IPFAs - additional needs	522
Top-up numbers/bands:	
AP / Hospital	1,007
Bases	10
Special Schools	596
Further Education & Sixth Form	(17)
	2,933
Other changes in central costs	
Increase PFI contracts (inflation)	129
Reduce Contribution to Combined budgets	(175)
Reduce licence and subscription charges	(2)
Increase school retirement costs	21
	(27)
Total Schools Expenditure	279,960
Net Schools Budget 2020-21 (LA Funded)	1,248

Appendix 2 - Schools Budget 2020-21

	Adj Estimate 2019-20	Base Estimate 2020-21
	£	£
Individual Schools Budget		
Primary	85,814,000	107,149,400
Secondary	23,481,600	104,962,600
Special	10,328,600	11,440,000
Wirral Hospital Schools	1,354,300	1,359,100
SEN Bases	1,108,000	1,672,000
Alternative Provision	0	0
6th Form / Further Education	0	1,140,000
Early Years	20,203,500	21,511,800
Individual Schools Budget Total	142,290,000	249,234,900
Central School Costs		
Early Years	518,700	518,700
Admissions	372,200	372,200
School Closure / Retirement Costs	60,000	81,000
Licenses and subscriptions	246,600	244,900
Schools Forum	10,600	10,600
Contribution to combined budgets	875,600	700,500
PFI Affordability Gap	1,118,400	1,247,700
Retained duties (ex-ESG)	730,000	730,000
Costs delegated to / de-delegated from schools		
Library service	170,100	0
Insurances	25,900	0
School Specific contingencies	91,100	0
Special Staff costs	627,600	0
Behaviour Support	86,000	0
School Improvement	159,100	0
General duties (ex-ESG)	493,900	0
High Needs pupils		
Statements	5,715,100	6,237,000
SEN top-ups	11,552,400	13,360,300
High Needs contingency	310,000	360,000
Independent Special Schools	3,700,000	4,134,000
Home Tuition	400,500	400,500
Support for SEN	2,150,200	2,269,700
Special School Transport	58,200	58,200
Non-delegated school costs total	29,472,200	30,725,300
Total School and Central costs	171,762,200	279,960,200
Dedicated Schools Grant	(168,300,700)	(279,356,400)
Contribution to / (from) DSG reserve (High Needs deficit)	(2,343,200)	643,900
Grand Total	1,118,300	1,247,700

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM 15 JANUARY 2020

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN

De-Delegation of School Budgets

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks a decision by Forum representatives of maintained schools on the possible de-delegation of a number of services to schools, where there is a preference to continue a central service.

2. BACKGROUND

In 2013-14 following DfE regulations a number of services were delegated to schools that were previously provided centrally by the LA. There are some of these service areas where Schools Forum members, in their relevant phase, are able to decide, on behalf of their schools, that funding should be de-delegated and taken out of formula budgets before schools receive them. These amounts would then continue to be held centrally to fund specific services for schools. Regulations provide for different decisions being made for each phase. The members eligible to vote are shown on the attached table.

3. BUDGETS FOR DE-DELEGATION

- **Contingency**

The budget for exceptional/unforeseen costs that it would be unreasonable for governing bodies to meet. This has been amended to move £56,000 for vulnerable children to the Behaviour Support budget below, with a small increase on the remainder.

- **Special Staff Costs**

Teacher maternity, paternity and trade union facility costs for both teaching and non-teaching staff.

With regard to Trade Union Facility Time, guidance confirms that representatives are entitled to reasonable paid time off during working hours to undertake Trade Union duties and relevant training. Wirral like many LAs has a local agreement in place. The budget for facility time includes non-teacher representation. Where funding is not de-delegated schools manage their own budget and make their own facility time arrangements. For 2020-21 a small increase is included to allow for increases to teachers pay and employer pension contributions whilst maintaining the current level of support, as agreed by Forum in January 2019.

The maternity / paternity rate is also increased for 2020-21 due to an increase in cases in recent years resulting in an overspend on this budget.

- **School Library Service**
The provision of learning resources to schools, such as books, artefacts, posters and DVDs.
The School Library Service has requested an increase in the per pupil rate for the first time in several years to enable them to retain their current book fund which has significantly reduced as a result of cost and inflation pressures. This will enable them to maintain current levels of service and resources.
- **Insurance**
The cost of governor's liability insurance for Aided schools.
- **Behaviour Support**
The cost of a small team working with Wirral's Primary, Secondary and Special schools. As referred to above, this also includes £56,000 for vulnerable children transferred from Contingency.
- **School Improvement**
School Improvement was included as a de-delegated service from September 2017 following the withdrawal of ESG. The budget supports the improvement / intervention programme with schools.
- **Former ESG General Duties**
These are the cost of education services previously funded from Education Services Grant (ESG) to support maintained schools, including asset management (landlord) responsibilities, some premature retirement costs and statutory / regulatory costs around, finance, LMS and internal audit.

4. DECISIONS TAKEN IN 2019-20

In the January 2019 meeting members of the forum made the following decisions:-

- The Primary Forum Representatives agreed to de-delegate all of the budget areas, apart from Free School Meals.
- The Primary Forum Representatives agreed a contribution to former ESG costs for General Duties of £363,256.
- The Secondary Forum Representatives agreed to de-delegate all of the budget areas, apart from Free School Meals.
- The Secondary Forum Representatives agreed a contribution to former ESG costs for General Duties of £65,373.
- The Special schools forum Representatives agreed a contribution to former ESG costs for General Duties of £71,101.

5. SUMMARY OF BUDGETS FOR DE-DELEGATION

The tables below identify the budget for primary and secondary schools, how the budget is allocated through the formula and the amount per pupil to be deducted if it is de-delegated.

Primary Budget	Amount Delegated £	Method of Delegation	Amount per Pupil £	Average per School £ (300 pupils)
Contingency	71,137	Pupil	2.76	828
Special Staff Costs (Maternity/Paternity)	618,812	Pupil	23.98	7,194
Special Staff Costs (Trade Union)	91,099	Pupil	3.53	1,059
School Library Service	226,585	Pupil	8.78	2,634
Insurance	30,753	Pupil	1.19	357
Behaviour Support	92,150	SEN PA	11.98	3,594
School Improvement	150,507	Pupil	5.83	1,749
Total	1,281,043			17,415

Secondary Budget	Amount Delegated £	Method of Delegation	Amount per Pupil £	Average per School £ (1,000 pupils)
Contingency	39,091	Pupil	2.15	2,150
Special Staff Costs (Maternity/Paternity)	561,588	Pupil	30.90	30,900
Special Staff Costs (Trade Union)	64,158	Pupil	3.53	3,530
Behaviour Support	114,449	SEN PA	29.04	29,040
School Improvement	143,993	Pupil	7.92	7,920
Total	923,279			73,540

Ex Education Services Grant (ESG) - General Duties

Primary and Secondary Budget	Amount	Method	Amount per Pupil £	Primary Average £ (300 pupils)	Secondary Average £ (1000 pupils)
ESG General Duties	428,240	Pupil-Maintained Schools only	17.35	5,205	17,350
ESG General Duties- Special School Contribution	71,760				
Total	500,000				

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Primary Forum Representatives agree to de-delegate each of the following budgets for the financial year 2020-21:-
 - a. Contingency
 - b. Special Staff Costs, including TU Facilities Time
 - c. School Library Service
 - d. Insurance
 - e. School Improvement
 - f. Behaviour support
2. The Primary Forum Representatives agree a contribution to former Education Services Grant costs of **£371,973**.
3. The Secondary Forum Representatives agree to de-delegate each of the following budgets for the financial year 2020-21:-
 - a. Contingency
 - b. Special Staff Costs, including TU Facilities Time
 - c. School Improvement
 - d. Behaviour support
4. The Secondary Forum Representatives agree a contribution to former Education Services Grant costs of **£56,267**.
5. The Special School Forum Representatives agree a contribution to former Education Services Grant costs of **£71,760**.

Paul Boyce
Corporate Director for Children

Forum Members eligible to Vote**Primary Representatives**

Rebecca Bridges	Primary Headteacher (Birkenhead S)
Nikki Lightwing	Primary Headteacher (Birkenhead N)
Emily Morris	Primary Headteacher (Wallasey)
Kate Brown	Primary Headteacher (Deeside)
Liz Davidson	Primary Headteacher (Beb/Brom)
Dave Spencer	Primary Governor
Roy Wood	Primary Governor
Tim Kelly	Primary Governor
Cllr Tony Norbury	Primary Governor

Secondary Representatives

Tony Taylor	Secondary Headteacher
-------------	-----------------------

Special Representatives

Margaret Morris	Special Headteacher
John Weise	Special Governor

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM – 15th JANUARY 2020

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 £1.230m, mainly 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 autumn term claims and payments are currently being reconciled. It is expected any variation against the budget will be met by a corresponding grant adjustment.

2.5 **Central Early Years Budget – projected £55,000 favourable variance**

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

2.6 **Admissions – projected £19,000 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 £120,000 adverse variance

An adverse variance is currently expected due to an increase in primary school and special school maternity cases. This overspend has been reflected in the increased pupil rate in the de-delegation report elsewhere on the agenda.

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 provision for further awards in the remainder of the year) 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 £60k provision for further awards made during the remainder of the financial year.

2.13 Special Education Needs Top Ups – projected £332,100 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 46 members 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 £329,700. 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 £444k 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, all awards as well as the award process for Exceptional Needs funding are 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	1,370,300	329,700
Additional Nursing Support	106,600	136,200	(29,600)
Exceptional Needs	504,100	948,500	(444,400)
Total	11,492,400	11,824,500	(332,100)

2.14 Independent Special Schools – projected £200,000 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.

As reported to Forum in November 2019, there were approximately £460k of 2018-19 commitments which remained unpaid/invoiced. £195k of these have been found to have been overstated and therefore result in a one-off saving in 2019-20. Investigations into the remaining amounts are ongoing.

2.15 Home Tuition – projected £102,700 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 £103k. This service provision will be reviewed during 2020.

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.

There is potentially some additional costs to be included here due to an agreement by the former interim Head of SEN to fund an additional base at The Oldershaw Academy from September 2019. Discussions are underway between the service and the school to determine what has been agreed and the resultant cost.

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

3.0 **UPDATE ON SPECIFIC RESERVES**

3.1 The final figure of DSG reserves carried forward into 2019/20 was £2.2m as follows, but will end 2019/20 with a total deficit of £1.8m should estimated costs be realised:

- 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 – paid out	(173,200)
Final 2018-19 DSG adjustment (Jan-19 EY census)	7,800
Budgeted use of reserve in 2019/20	(2,343,200)
Projected 2019/20 overspend	(1,230,400)
Projected balance (deficit)	(2,620,000)

- 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 – 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
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	463,700	55,000
Admissions	372,200	391,200	(19,000)
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	747,600	(120,000)
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	11,824,500	(332,100)
High Needs contingency	310,000	418,500	(108,500)
Independent Special Schools	3,700,000	3,900,000	(200,000)
Home Tuition	400,500	503,200	(102,700)
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	30,702,600	(1,230,400)
Total School and Central costs	171,762,300	167,123,800	4,638,500
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	2,348,700	(1,230,400)

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM 15th January 2020

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN

School Budgets and Indicative Deficits Balances

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is a regular report presented to Schools Forum describing the current and projected financial position for schools together with action that is being taken. The position remains challenging.

2. BACKGROUND

There are ongoing cost pressures in schools arising from pay awards and pension increases, other inflationary pressures and changes in pupil numbers. School budgets have been held at flat cash for a number of years, however, there has been small increase recently to offset some of these costs. This report does not take into consideration the extra funding that will be allocated to the 2020-21 school budgets.

3. Indicative Balances

Indicative school balances have been updated after monitoring at period 6 and are detailed below. They indicate that the school balances will continue to fall year on year. The balances for the school that has converted to Academy since March 2019 have been separated from the March balance so an accurate comparison can be made.

In March 2020 the expected balances are £5.9m, slightly worse than the position reported in September (£5.6m), but with a further reduction of £7m by March 2021, however this does not include the extra funding due in 2020-21 financial year.

Table 1 – Position at Period 6 Monitoring

	Actual Balances at Mar 2019	Expected Balance at 31st Mar 2020	Expected balances at 31st Mar 2021
Nursery	188,833	229,993	-34,639
Primary	7,004,918	5,111,100	118,555
Secondary	-232,118	-316,433	-445,807
Special	1,711,265	920,548	-778,671
Total	8,672,898	£5,945,208	£-1,140,562
Academy Conversions since Mar 19	216,914		
Total	£8,889,812		

1. Individual School Deficits

There are currently 5 schools with licenced deficits and agreed budget plans. In addition there are 7 schools with a Notice of Concern.

Based on table 1 the number of schools who may have a deficit budget as at March 2021 would increase to 46 (15 in March 2019), each school with an average deficit of £130k.

Table 2 – expected deficits in March 2021

	Number of schools	Expected number of schools with a deficit	% schools with a deficit
Nursery	3	1	33%
Primary	78	37	47%
Secondary	4	2	50%
Special	11	6	55%
	96	46	48%

2. Action Taken to Date

- A Notice of Concern is in place at 7 schools.
- LMS and HR continue to work with schools to balance budgets and plan any reduction in staff numbers or hours. Where schools are reviewing staffing levels this is in a number of cases leading to a consideration of redundancies.
- There are briefings and discussions with Headteachers and school finance staff.
- School Bursars continue to support Headteachers and governors with more detailed projections.
- The Teacher’s Pension Employers Contribution Grant and Teachers Pay Grant have been budgeted for the financial year 2020-2021 as they will continue to be grants until March 2021 when they are likely to be built into the DSG.

3. Future Action

- Review of financial plans to ensure they are sustainable as part of budget monitoring.
- Write to schools with projected deficits in 2019-20 to request further details of how they plan to keep their budgets in credit.
- Schools requesting a licenced deficit are required to demonstrate how the budget will come back into balance within 3 years (4 years in exceptional circumstances).
- Where agreement cannot be reached a Notice of Concern will be issued, requiring an immediate action plan to be agreed by governors.
- Consider the effect of the additional funding on school balances for the financial year 2020-21
- Consider the potential impact of the change from the Wirral funding formula to the National Funding Formula elements with effect from April 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The report is noted and there is a further report to the next meeting.

Paul Boyce
Corporate Director for Children

**WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM – 15th January 2020
WORK PLAN**

Meeting Date	13th May 2020	1st July 2020	September 2020	November 2020	January 2020
			Elect chair & vice chair		
Budget	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		Budget Monitoring Schools Budget 2019-20 De-delegation of budgets 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 Forum Membership	DfE Operational Guide Schools Forum Constitution Scheme for Financing Schools – Directed updates	DfE Operational Guide Schools Forum Constitution	School Finance Regulations Schools Forum Structure (identifies voting rights) Scheme for Financing Schools – Directed updates
Working Groups	School Formula High Needs Early Years	High Needs Early Years	School Formula High Needs Early Years		School Formula High Needs Early Years
Other	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 	MEAs Update

This page is intentionally left blank