

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM – 20th OCTOBER 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

SCHOOLS BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2015/16

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 a projected over spend half way through the year which is currently estimated to be £250,000 over a number of school budgets that are managed at the Centre.

2.0 ANTICIPATED BUDGET VARIATIONS

2.1 The table attached compares the Schools Budget with the indicative spend for the year. The main variations are set out below.

2.2 Early Years Grant

There is an Early Years budget of £15.7m which includes the funding for 2, 3 and 4 year olds entitled to receive free Early Education and Early Years Pupil Premium. The Summer Term census has been used as the basis for projecting take up for 2 year olds for the rest of the year with an increase to 75% in Autumn and 85% in Spring. Overall this activity will reduce projected spend by £545,000, it is assumed that DSG is reduced by a matching amount. The trajectory funding of £0.5m brought forward from 2014/15 will be fully committed towards the expansion of the 2 year old provision.

2.3 Schools Forum

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

2.4 Contribution to Combined Budgets

The combined budgets of £2.1m are expected to be fully spent across the following areas:

	Budget
	£
School Improvement	359,900
Discretionary Rate Relief Top Up	106,600
LCSB contribution	30,000
Governors Forum	2,200
Wellbeing & School Staff Surveys	44,600
PFI Support Team	61,800
LACES	140,500
School Intervention	674,500
City Learning Centres	694,700
Total	2,114,800

2.5 School Specific Contingencies

At this stage there is no variation expected to the £104,300 budget which takes into account any specific costs that need to be met including the adjustments to High Needs Funding.

2.6 Special Staff Costs

The budget of £667,600 is expected to be fully committed in the following areas:

	£
Maternity, Paternity & Other Staff Costs	565,000
TU Facilities	95,700
Insurance & Recharges	6,900
Total	667,600

2.7 Special Education Needs Top Ups

A budget of £11.8m represents the Top Up High Needs funding. Independent non-maintained special schools currently show a forecast over spend of £250,000 largely attributable to pupils continuing into 6th form education where the cost of provision can range from £20k to £45k. In relation to the Emslie Morgan Top Ups the Summer Term census figures had 133 pupils resulting in extra costs of £140,000. Within the Post 16/FE area there is a small overspend expected of £30,000. Taking account of an uncommitted contingency balance of £140,000 there is a net projected overspend of £280,000 in this area.

2.8 Special Education Needs Statements/Plans

Numbers do fluctuate during the year. Exceptional Needs costs have increased and are projected to be £0.7m against a budget of £0.5m. There is a net potential overspend of £160,000 in this area.

2.9 Support for SEN

The under spend of £180,000 within Support for SEN and the Special Education Support Service is mainly due to uncommitted balances and is helping to offset pressures within High Needs and Statements.

3.0 DSG - £171,413,300

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2015/16 was published in July 2015 indicating that the allocation to Wirral will be £170,386,000. The budget also includes £894,900 of DSG carried forward from 2014/15. This report makes an assumption that the reported Early Years reduced spend is matched by a reduction in the DSG received.

4.0 LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHOOLS BENCHMARKING DATA 2015-16

4.1 At the end of September the EFA published comparative benchmarking data for the overall schools budget, central costs. This has been included as a table below for information.

Net £ per capita	Wirral	Statistical Neighbours (median)	England Average
	£	£	£
Individual Schools Budget (before academy recoupment)	4,157	4,408	4,407
De Delegated Items	45	30	32
High Needs Budget	282	271	302
Central Expenditure on Children Under 5	23	35	22
Contribution to Combined Budgets	41	3	22
School Admissions	7	5	8
PPM/PFI	58	17	11
Other	3	29	44
Total School Budget (before academy recoupment)	4,737	4,945	5,025

Note: Totals are not the sum of the reported items due to differences in population figures used. Schools budgets use population 0 – 19, whilst central items use pupils aged 3 – 19 in maintained schools only.

5.0 UPDATE ON SPECIFIC RESERVES

- 5.1 The final figure of DSG reserves carried forward into 2015/16 was £3.5m of which £0.9m has been applied to the 2015/16 budget as described above.
- 5.2 To date there are the following earmarked reserves in the accounts:

Job Evaluation and Pay Harmonisation Reserve - £0.7m

DSG Reserve - £1.3m

	£
DSG Carry Forward from 2014/15	2,057,500
Use of Reserve in 2015/16	(894,400)
Transfer Nursery Education unapplied funding	108,000
Transfer Schools AST Contingency Reserve	1,200
	1,272,300

Defibrillators Reserve - £0.04m

All schools have been equipped with defibrillators however there is £36,000 that remains which could fund any related costs i.e. training.

City Learning Centres - £0.12m

This reserve will be used to meet any large equipment failure/replacement costs or potential unfunded summer term costs.

High Needs MFG - £0.07m

Reserve to fund remaining academy MFG costs in 2015/16.

Early Years - 2 Year Old Funding - £0.5m

Reserve created to continue expanding the 2 year old provision in 2015/16.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Efforts are being made to contain the additional indicative budget costs; progress will be reported at the next meeting.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 That the Forum notes the report and estimated position of the Schools Budget for 2015/16.

Julia Hassall
Director of Children's Services

Appendix 1 – Budget Variations 2015/16

	Adjusted Budget 2015/16 £	Forecast Spend 2015/16 £	Variation 2015/16 £
Individual Schools Budget			
Primary Schools	93,028,400	93,028,400	0
Secondary Schools	26,045,600	26,045,600	0
Special Schools	8,733,400	8,733,400	0
SEN Bases	1,616,800	1,616,800	0
Wirral Hospital School	1,352,300	1,352,300	0
Early Years	15,750,000	15,205,000	(545,000)
Individual Schools Budget Total	146,526,500	145,981,500	(545,000)
Central School Costs			
Early Years	378,700	378,700	0
Admissions	341,800	341,800	0
School Closure / retirement costs	126,000	126,000	0
Licences & Subscriptions	254,000	254,000	0
Schools Forum	10,600	600	(10,000)
Contribution to Combined Budgets	2,114,800	2,114,800	0
PPM	249,000	249,000	0
PFI affordability gap	2,736,500	2,736,500	0
Costs De-Delegated from schools			
Library Service	191,700	191,700	0
Insurances	32,300	32,300	0
MEAS	244,600	244,600	0
School Specific Contingencies	104,300	104,300	0
Special Staff Costs	667,600	667,600	0
Milk & Meals	13,600	13,600	0
Behaviour Support	92,200	92,200	0
High Needs Pupils			
SEN Top Ups / Independent School Fees	11,803,100	12,083,100	280,000
Statements	4,458,800	4,618,800	160,000
Support for SEN	2,031,500	1,851,500	(180,000)
Home Tuition	308,900	308,900	0
Special School Transport	58,200	58,200	0
Non Delegated School Costs	26,218,200	26,468,200	250,000
Dedicated Schools Grant	(171,413,300)	(170,868,300)	545,000
DSG Carry forward from Reserves	(894,900)	(894,900)	0
Grand Total	436,500	686,500	250,000