

## WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM 21<sup>st</sup> NOVEMBER 2023

### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

#### DE-DELEGATED BUDGETS - CONTINGENCY, SPECIAL STAFF, AND INSURANCE COSTS

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##### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to summarise the current provision for contingency, special staff, and insurance costs that are funded by de-delegated budget from Wirral's maintained primary and secondary schools.

##### 2.0 SCHOOL SPECIFIC CONTINGENCIES

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

2.2 Special schools access these services on a buy-back basis.

2.2 This budget is used to meet adjustments for Business Rates, where actual charges are greater than those estimated when setting the budget. Other costs met from this budget vary each year, but in the past have included:

- Support for schools in Key Stage 1 where a larger than usual reception class (above the published admission numbers) requires additional staff;
- In exceptional cases deficits arising from closing schools;
- Support for managed moves

2.3 At January 2023 Schools Forum it was agreed to de-delegate this budget for primary and secondary maintained schools at £1.13 and £2.15 per pupil, respectively.

2.4 The contingency budget for 2023-24 is as follows:

	<b>Budget</b>
	<b>£</b>
Primary Schools	22,483
Secondary Schools	<u>7,721</u>
<b>Gross budget</b>	<b><u>30,204</u></b>

##### 3.0 SPECIAL STAFF COSTS

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

- 3.2 Maternity costs make up approximately 87% of the overall spend. While a member of staff is on maternity their costs are held centrally, while the school meets the cost of any required supply cover. Costs can vary greatly from year to year depending on the number of maternity cases, and the salary costs of those staff.
- 3.3 This budget also meets paternity costs, by reimbursing the cost of supply cover for the statutory 2 weeks of paternity leave allowed.
- 3.4 The Trade Union Facilities time budget has regard to guidance which confirms that representatives are entitled to reasonable paid time off during working hours to undertake Trade Union duties and relevant training. Wirral like many LA's has a local facility agreement in place. The budget for facility time also includes non-teacher representation.
- 3.5 Special Schools access these services on a buyback basis and there is a separate SLA for Academy schools.
- 3.6 Then financial position for 2022-23 was as follows:

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Cost</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Maternity/Paternity	691,462	646,705
Trade Union Facilities	87,316	89,180
Insurance & Recharges	<u>6,700</u>	<u>6,700</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>785,478</u></b>	<b><u>742,584</u></b>

- 3.7 At January 2023 Schools Forum it was agreed to de-delegate this budget for primary and secondary maintained schools at £31.22 (staff £27.51 + TU £3.71) and £38.14 (staff £34.43 + TU £3.71), per pupil respectively.
- 3.8 The budget for special staff costs in 2023-24 is as follows:

	<b>Budget</b>
	<b>£</b>
Maternity, Paternity & Other Staff Costs	664,295
Trade Union Facilities	87,140
Insurance & Recharges	<u>6,700</u>
<b>Total budget</b>	<b><u>758,135</u></b>

#### **4.0 INSURANCE**

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

- 4.3 VA schools purchase the insurance and can then claim the cost back from the Authority. Spend in recent years from this budget is as follows:

	<b>Spend</b>
	<b>£</b>
2019-20	17,286
2020-21	10,931
2021-22	7,202
2022-23	11,000

- 4.4 It should be noted that even though the governing body need only insure 10% of its premises liabilities, it is essential that proper security measures are taken to protect the premises and appropriate risk management advice to minimise losses is accessed.
- 4.5 At January 2023 Schools Forum it was agreed to de-delegate this budget for primary schools at £1.19 per pupil and this has resulted in a budget for 2023-24 of £23,677

## **5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 That the Forum notes the report.

**Simone White**  
**Director for Children, Families and Education**