

## **WIRRAL COUNCIL**

### **SCHOOLS FORUM – 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

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

### **SCHOOLS 2024-25 BUDGET UPDATE**

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#### **1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Schools Budget for 2024-25 for changes that have been made since it was reported to Schools Forum on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

#### **2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

- 2.1 The Schools Budget for 2024-25 covers Early Years, Maintained Schools, Academies, colleges, and providers and reflects the following views and formula proposals agreed at the January 2024 meeting:

- A Minimum Funding Guarantee of 0.5% for Wirral mainstream schools
- The Contributions to Combined Budgets reduced by 20% to £428,708.
- The deficit of High Needs funding of £10,916,561 is transferred to the DSG reserve.
- Headroom in schools funding after applying the National Funding Formula (NFF) to be transferred to a falling rolls/growth fund.

The Schools Budget for 2024-25 was agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2024 and by Council at its meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

#### **2.2 DSG Reserve**

The 2024-25 budget reflects an in-year deficit of £10,916,561 to be added to the High Needs deficit. The actual deficit brought forward at 31 March 2023 is £12,988,739 and this means that the DSG deficit reserve will be increased and around £23,905,300 at the end of 2024-25.

#### **3.0 BUDGET CHANGES**

- 3.1 The following changes have been made to the budget since that presented at the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024 meeting of the Forum:
- Primary and Secondary Budget have been adjusted based on the individual schools funding allocation and for the business rates.
  - Academy recoupmnt – this change has reduced both the Individual Schools Budget and Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) by £147,680,931. This includes two primary schools which converted in April and May 24.

- De-delegation – this change has transferred funding of £1,826,336 from Individual School Budgets to the de-delegated block.
- Falling rolls/growth fund – headroom of £168,660 has been identified following the application of the NFF. This amount is added to £17,674 which has been brought forward from 2023-24 as agreed at November 23 schools forum meeting.
- The DSG allocation for the Early Years block has been updated with the January 24 census and the budget is split into Individual Schools Budget and Central Schools Cost
- The DfE has confirmed the 24-25 license costs and the Licenses and Subscription line has been amended from £301,325 to £305,605 by reducing the contingency budget by £4,280.
- £0.5m budget is transferred from the independent special schools budget to the special schools budget to reflect the increases in the special schools place numbers as agreed March 24 Schools Forum meeting.

The table attached in Appendix 1 compares the original and revised 2024-25 budgets.

#### **4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 That the Schools Forum note this report.

**Elizabeth Hartley**

**Director of Children, Families and Education**

## Appendix 1 - Schools Budget 2024-25

	2024-25 Proposed Budget - January 2024	2024-25 Revised Budget - Jul 24
	£	£
<b>Individual Schools Budget</b>		
Primary	127,789,603	89,802,365
Secondary	134,707,578	25,404,554
Special	16,535,978	16,909,452
Wirral Hospitals School	1,872,428	1,867,228
SEN Bases	2,386,500	1,562,833
Sixth Form/Further Education	1,701,000	169,000
Early Years	0	36,137,235
Growth and Falling Rolls Fund	17,674	186,334
<b>Individual Schools Budget Total</b>	<b>285,010,761</b>	<b>172,039,001</b>
<b>Central School Costs</b>		
Early Years	36,182,760	830,000
Admissions	420,731	420,731
School Redundancy Costs	72,000	72,000
Licenses and subscriptions	301,325	305,605
Schools Forum	0	0
Contingency	51,198	46,918
Contribution to combined budgets	428,708	428,708
PFI Affordability Gap	2,589,553	2,589,553
Retained duties (ex-ESG)	747,700	747,700
<b>Costs delegated to/de-delegated from schools</b>		
Library Service	0	153,493
Insurances	0	12,063
School Specific contingencies	0	27,536
Special Staff Costs	0	709,698
Behaviour Support	0	135,006
School Improvement	0	426,901
Retained duties (ex-ESG)	0	493,367
<b>High Needs Pupils</b>		
Statements	14,680,084	14,680,084
SEN top-ups	21,523,882	21,523,882
High Needs contingency	687,205	687,205
Independent Special Schools	13,055,645	12,525,645
Home Tuition	364,166	364,166
Support for SEN	2,377,817	2,377,817
Special School Transport	58,200	58,200
<b>Non-school and school delegated Total</b>	<b>93,540,974</b>	<b>59,616,278</b>
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>378,551,735</b>	<b>231,655,279</b>
<b>Funding</b>		
Dedicated School Grant	(365,045,621)	(218,149,165)
Contribution to DSG Reserve (High Needs)	(10,916,561)	(10,916,561)
<b>Funding Total</b>	<b>(375,962,182)</b>	<b>(229,065,726)</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,589,553</b>	<b>2,589,553</b>