

APPENDIX ONE – SAVINGS AGREED AT FULL COUNCIL

Theme	Option	24/25 Saving (£m)	25/26 Saving (£m)	26/27 Saving (£m)	27/28 Saving (£m)	28/29 Saving (£m)
Committee: Adult Care & Public Health						
Changing how we fund or provide services	Review of Adult Social Care cost-effectiveness	-4.800	-5.040	-5.292	-5.557	-5.668
Committee: Children, Young People & Education						
Increasing Business Efficiencies	Reduction in teachers' pension liabilities	-0.200	-0.075	-0.050	0.000	0.000
	Kingsway PFI buy out	-0.500	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	Re-organisation of Early Help, Family Support and Social Care into locality teams.	-0.550	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Changing how we fund or provide services	Reduction in looked after children (LAC) numbers	-0.330	-0.439	-0.375	0.000	0.000
	Reducing High Cost Residential Care	-1.100	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	Promoting Independence	-0.300	-0.200	0.000	0.000	0.000
Committee: Economy, Regeneration & Housing						
Increasing Business Efficiencies	Implementation of Corporate Landlord model.	-0.050	-0.250	-0.120	0.000	0.000
Committee: Tourism, Communities Culture & Leisure						
Changing how we fund or provide services	Active Wirral Strategy	0.000	-1.000	-2.000	0.000	0.000
	Review library provision and location of Birkenhead and Wallasey libraries.	0.000	-0.250	0.000	0.000	0.000
	Floral Pavilion	-1.300	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Committee: Policy & Resources						
Increasing Income	Increase in Fees and Charges	-0.750	-0.600	-0.450	-0.450	-0.450
Increasing Business Efficiencies	Enabling Services	-2.160	-2.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	Cease subsidised traded services.	-0.350	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
TOTAL SAVINGS		-12.390	-9.854	-8.287	-6.007	-6.118

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Children, Young People and Education Committee Budget Details

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A.Introduction and 2024/25 Budget summary

Children, Young People and Education Committee 2024/25 Budgets

This Committee is responsible for education, social care services and health services to children and young people and exercises the functions of the Council as Local Education Authority. This means the Committee is directly responsible for £92.2m of Council funding and for overseeing school spending of £231.0m.

The tables below breakdown and explain the financial resources available to the Committee in 2024/25.

Revenue Budgets

Revenue Budgets are the monies the Council allocates for its day-to-day expenditure. It is the amount of money the Council requires to provide its services during the year.

Table 1 below, highlights how the Council funded revenue budgets that are allocated across the various Service Areas relevant to the Children, Young People & Education Committee.

TABLE 1 2024/25 Children, Young People & Education

Service Area	Budget £'000
Children and Families	60,476
Early Help, Prevention & Effectiveness	11,001
Effectiveness & Improvement	4,231
Education – Core	16,126
SEND - Statutory	2,883
Total Committee Budget	94,716

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B.Service area summary narratives

Children & Families

This area is made up of various teams which include:

- 5 Assessment teams
- 4 Court Teams
- 2 Child in Need/Contingency Teams
- 6 Children Looked After Permanence Teams
- Integrated Front Door (IFD)
- Emergency Duty Team

IFD is a service that investigates referrals of a child or young person at risk of harm or abuse.

The principal responsibility of the Emergency Duty Team is to respond to out of hours referrals where intervention from the local authority is required to safeguard a vulnerable child or adult, and where it would not be safe, appropriate, or lawful to delay that intervention to the next working day.

This area also includes Section 17 costs which provide support for children and families at times of crisis.

There are Fostering Teams which administer the fostering process and the payment of fostering allowances to Foster-carers.

The Adoption in Merseyside scheme is administered under this area and looks after the costs of setting up new adopters, this scheme is in participation with other Local authorities in the city region.

This will also include the costs of any children who are adopted out of area.

Adoption allowances, Special Guardianship allowances and Staying Put allowances are administered in this area.

The biggest budget area is Placements and Placement commissioning, which includes placement of children with independent care providers, independent foster carers and independent placements within Wirral.

The Willow-tree In House Residential and short breaks provision is also included within this service area.

This area covers the Children's Safeguarding and Quality Assurance unit, the Practice Improvement team and the Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

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Early Help, Prevention & Effectiveness

Family Help service consisting of School and Communities Service including:

Team around the School

Team around school is a partnership between schools and other agencies. Services can involve school nurses, social workers and after school activities.

Youth & Play

Consisting of Youth hubs across the borough

Early Childhood

Early Childhood consists of Children's centres around Wirral that bring together a range of services for families and children from pre-birth to five. Children's centres are designed to give children a fun and safe environment to learn, develop, make friends and play. They give parents the chance to meet other parents from the local area and establish friendships.

Family Matters

Family Matters support children and young people and their families in partnership with other agencies. The support provided includes:

- Positive relationships/friendships
- Self-esteem and confidence building
- Encourage engagement in positive activities as part of the whole family
- Safety in and out of the family home
- Internet Safety
- Support accessing other services (youth, school, health, early childhood services)
- Online safety
- Parenting and boundaries
- Mediation
- Employment
- Housing
- Debt management support

Supporting Families, Family Toolbox and Early Help Alliance

Domestic Abuse Services

This area consists of

- Family Safety Unit
- Early Intervention Team

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Family Safety Unit (FSU) is a team of Independent Domestic Violence Advocates. The FSU provides independent and impartial advice to any high risk victim / survivor of domestic abuse.

Contextual Safeguarding and Youth Offending

Safeguarding and Youth Offending consists of 4 teams,

- Contextual safeguarding
- Wirral Youth Justice Service
- Outreach Team
- Compass Team

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. Traditional approaches to protecting children/young people from harm have focussed on the risk of violence and abuse from inside the home, usually from a parent/carer or other trusted adult and do not always address the time that children/young people spend outside the home and the influence of peers on young people's development and safety. Contextual safeguarding recognises the impact of the public/social context on young people's lives, and consequently their safety. Contextual safeguarding seeks to identify and respond to harm and abuse posed to young people outside their home, either from adults or other young people. It is an approach that looks at how interventions can change the processes and environments, to make them safer for all young people, as opposed to focussing on an individual.

Wirral Youth Justice Service provides a service for young people aged 10 to 17 who have been involved in offending behaviour. It is a multi-agency service, made up of social workers, youth justice workers and staff from education, police, probation, and health. The service includes:

- Supervision of young people who have been referred by the police for out of court disposal and those sentenced by the Court.
- Support to parents and carers
- Out of Court Disposal (OCD) service for young people who have been arrested for less serious offences, admitted their guilt and it is agreed that diversion from the Criminal Justice Service is a more appropriate option.
- Prevention work

Youth Outreach teams provide early help across Wirral borough engaging with young people who are often vulnerable to exploitation and criminality. The team engage and build positive relationships with young people to ensure they get the right support to help build skills and promote resilience.

The Compass Team Child is a dedicated resource to tackle child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation. The team is multi-agency and takes a problem-solving approach to improving the lives of children and young people in Wirral. The Compass

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Team will provide expert advice and guidance to colleagues and practitioners, as well as working directly on cases with higher levels of need.

Effectiveness & Improvement

These two sections provide support to all the other services within Children's services including admin, partner contracts, service improvements and system support.

Education – Core

School Improvement

The school improvement service provides professional development and support to help schools develop their leadership, staff, and curriculum, so they can improve their results and performance.

The statutory functions of a LA in relation to school improvement are:

- moderating the teacher assessments carried out at the end of key stage 1 by schools (in reading, writing and mathematics) in at least 25% of maintained schools each school year and ensure that every school will be subject to moderation at least once every four years;
- appointing a person to complete the assessment moderations who has recent experience of provision of the National Curriculum in primary schools;
- having equivalent duties in respect of key stage 2.

In addition, there is the duty to:

- set up and carry out moderation arrangements in the Early Years in accordance with 2022 Early years foundation stage assessment and reporting arrangements
- monitor the administration of the phonics screening check in accordance with Key stage 2 tests and phonics screening check: monitoring visits - GOV.UK

Education for looked after children

This service is responsible for promoting educational achievement of looked-after children. This includes:

- children currently looked after
- children previously looked after
- care leavers

In delivering this service, Wirral appoints a 'virtual headteacher' who works at a strategic level, but not in a physical school building.

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Assisted Transport

This reflects the direct transportation costs resulting from the application of Wirral Council's Home to School Transport Policy. The policy reflects the statutory requirements placed on Local Authorities to provide financial assistance with home to school transport for 5-16 year olds including those that have special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) where eligibility criteria is met.

From 2024/25 the budget for the school transport escort costs and Adult social care transport cost have been added to the service area.

Careers Education Information and Guidance

This service is for eligible young people not in employment, education, or training. It aims to raise the aspirations of young people and support you into employment or learning. Career Connect delivers the service, providing face to face guidance as well as telephone support and online access to services.

Lifelong Learning & Apprenticeships for Care leavers

The Lifelong Learning service offers courses for adults (19+). The primary aim of the service is to help adults with few, low or no qualifications into the job market. The service offers a range of high quality and affordable qualification based and community learning courses, and shorter workshop sessions (2-3hours) as an introduction to our longer courses. The operational activities of this service are wholly grant funded.

Contractual obligations

In addition to service delivery budgets, contractual costs are also included in the schools – core overall budget as follows:

- Private Financing Initiative (PFI) – there are 9 PFI school sites in Wirral. This budget funds the affordability gap which is the difference between the cost of PFI and the funding from PFI Grant and school contributions.
- Teacher retirement Costs - the Council is responsible for the costs of the additional benefits awarded upon early retirement outside of the terms of the Teachers Pension Scheme.

SEND – Statutory

Educational Psychologists

Educational Psychologists use their training in psychology and knowledge of child development to assess difficulties children may be having with their learning. They provide advice and training on how schools might help children to learn and develop.

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They recommend methods, or develop strategies in partnership with schools, to help a child learn more effectively. Strategies may include teaching approaches, improvements to learning environments, advice on curriculum materials and behaviour support.

Educational psychologists also keep up-to-date with best practice, policy and research relating to how children learn and make sure this informs local policy and practice.

SEN Assessments

This SEN Assessments team deliver the process that supports young people aged up to 25 with special education needs. The key element of this service is the education, health, and care (EHC) plan process. EHC plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs.

A young person can request an assessment themselves if they are aged 16 to 25. A request can also be made by anyone else who thinks an assessment may be necessary, including doctors, health visitors, teachers, parents, and family friends.

C.Key Priorities for 2024/25

There are approximately 68,000 children and young people living in Wirral, for whom, the Children's Services directorate exists to ensure that they are safe, their welfare is promoted, and that they can access the education, support, information, and guidance they need for adulthood.

The Directorate has the following key priorities for 2024/25:

- Promoting opportunities for all children and young people in Wirral
- Doing the right thing for children and families
- Children who come into care are better off because of it
- Delivering improved practice and effective services

D. 2024/25 Subjective and Objective Budgets

TABLE 2 2024/25 Children, Young People & Education

Table 2, overleaf, highlights how the revenue budget is allocated across the various subjective, or types, of expenditure.

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Subjective	Budget (£'000)
Expenditure	
Employee	50,055
Non Pay	35,344
Cost of Care	31,738
Total Expenditure	117,136
Income	-22,420
Total Committee Budget	94,716

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Table 3 below, provide a further detailed breakdown of the service budgets.

TABLE 3: 2024/25 Children, Young People & Education – Service budgets (Objective and Subjective combined)

Service Area	Employee £'000	Non Pay £'000	Cost of Care £'000	Income £'000	Grand Total £'000
Children and Families					
Assessment & Intervention Service 1	9,493	631	0	-765	9,358
Assistant Director - Children and Families	935	301	0	-139	1,096
Fostering, Adoption and placement commissioning	6,017	5,605	31,738	-639	42,721
One off Pressures	0	-136	0	0	-136
Permanence Service	4,197	742	0	-78	4,861
Safeguarding QA and Practice Improvement	2,589	132	0	-146	2,575
Early Help, Prevention & Effectiveness					
Domestic Abuse	900	7	0	-171	737
Early Childhood	2,557	568	0	-230	2,896
Family Matters	3,616	127	0	-1,705	2,038
Safeguarding and Youth Offending	3,386	250	0	-1,139	2,497
Team around the School	1,617	1,255	0	-39	2,832
Effectiveness & Improvement					
Business Management Support	1,314	1,300	0	-254	2,359
Childrens Management	86	27	0	-7	107
Modernisation	1,048	265	0	0	1,314
Performance Improvement	531	19	0	-99	451
Education - Core					
Careers Education Information and Guidance	716	785	0	-378	1,123
Childrens Assisted Travel	2,861	7,608	0	-1,568	8,901
Education for looked after children	578	-104	0	-356	118
Educational Psychologists	887	32	0	-15	904

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Service Area	Employee £'000	Non Pay £'000	Cost of Care £'000	Income £'000	Grand Total £'000
Lifelong learning and apprenticeships for care leavers	1,008	292	0	-1,300	0
Private Financing Initiative	0	15,564	0	-12,096	3,469
School Improvement	648	429	0	-730	347
SEN Assessments	2,378	-399	0	0	1,978
Teacher Retirement Costs	2,175	0	0	0	2,175
Services to Schools (Traded)	519	43	0	-569	-6
Total Committee Budget	50,055	35,344	31,738	-22,420	94,716

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E.Dedicated Schools (DSG)

In addition to Council funding, the DSG is provided by the Department for Education (DFE) to support Wirral's schools' budget. DSG is a ring-fenced grant solely to be used to deliver education.

Table 4 below highlights the planned expenditure for each of the different funding blocks and the finding analysis.

TABLE 4 2024/25 Dedicated Schools Grant

	Budget £000
DSG Block costs:	
Schools Block	115,393
Schools de-delegated	1,958
Central Schools Costs	2,022
High Needs	72,726
Early Years	36,967
Total Expenditure	229,066
Funding:	
DSG Grant income	(219,149)
Use of DSG reserve	(10,917)
Total DSG Budget	0

Schools Block - the total budget for all maintained mainstream schools.

Schools De-delegated - funds deducted from school's budget share and held centrally to fund relevant services.

Central Schools Costs - central functions carried out on behalf of maintained schools and academies e.g., School Admissions.

High Needs Block – budget for pupils and students aged 0 to 24, with **high needs including the special schools**.

The Early Years – provision of early education to those 2 and 3/4-year-old children who are entitled to receive it free of charge. The 2024/25 budget includes the first two stages of rolling out of the EY Extended Entitlements announced in July 2023:

- From April 24 – 15 hours per week for all working parents of 2 year olds
- From September 24 – 15 hours per week for all working parents of children aged 9 months to 3 years.

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DSG Grant income – the 2024/25 allocation after Academy budget recoupment including two schools converted in April and May 2025.

Use of the DSG reserve - an anticipated in-year deficit balance of the High Needs block to be added to the cumulative deficit reserve balance at the end of the financial year. It should be noted, there is a risk that the deficit may have to be included in the Council's overall reserves as the statutory override that separated DSG deficits from the authority's wider finances is due to expire at the end of 2025/26

F.Approved Savings

Savings Title	Agreed Value
Reduction of Historic Teachers Pensions Costs	£0.20m
Kingsway PFI buy out	£0.50m
Reorganisation of Early Help, Family Support and Social Care into locality teams	£0.55m
Reduction in looked after children (LAC) numbers	£0.33m
Reducing High Cost Residential Care	£1.10m
Promoting Independence	£0.30m
TOTAL	£2.98m

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G.Capital Budgets

Capital budgets are the monies allocated for spend on providing or improving non-current assets, which include land, buildings, and equipment, which will be of use or benefit in providing services for more than one financial year.

TABLE 5 Children, Young People & Education – Capital Budgets

Capital Scheme	2024/25 Budget £000	2025/26 Budget £000	2026/27 Budg et £000	2027/28 Budg et £000	2028/29 Budg et £000
Children, Young People & Education					
Basic Needs	504	427	0	0	0
Child Care Capital Expansion Fund	604	0	0	0	0
Children's System Development	445	0	0	0	0
Condition/modernisation (SCA)	6,698	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Family support	157	0	0	0	0
High Needs Provision Capital	2,520	0	0	0	0
School Works - Department for Education Ringfenced Receipts	722	722	0	0	0
Transforming Care - Therapeutic Short Breaks	168	0	0	0	0
Total Children, Young People & Education	11,818	3,649	2,500	2,500	2,500