

## Notice of Meeting

### Schools Forum

Stuart Matthews (Academy School Representative) (Chair)  
Elizabeth Savage, Academy School Representative (Vice-Chair)  
Jenny Baker, Special School Representative  
Stuart Bevan, Primary School Representative (Headteacher)  
Sue Butler, Early Years PVI Provider  
Simon Cope, Primary School Representative (Headteacher)  
Juanita Dunlop, Primary School Representative (Headteacher)  
Keith Grainger, Secondary School Representative (Headteacher)  
Tim Griffith, Academy School Representative  
Roger Prew, Primary School Representative (Governor)  
Trudi Sammons, Primary School Representative (Headteacher)  
Debbie Smith, Academy School Representative  
Grant Strudley, Academy School Representative  
Paul Tatum, Trades Union Representative



### Also Invited:

Councillor Roy Bailey, Executive Member for Children, Young People & Learning

**Thursday 22 June 2023, 4.30 pm**  
**Zoom Meeting**

### Agenda

*All councillors at this meeting have adopted the Mayor's Charter which fosters constructive and respectful debate.*

| Item | Description   | Page |
|------|---|------|
| 1.   | <b>Apologies for Absence/Substitute Members</b>   |      |
|      | To receive apologies for absence and to note the attendance of any substitute members.<br><b>Reporting: ALL</b>   |      |
| 2.   | <b>Declarations of Interest</b>   |      |
|      | Members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary or affected interests in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.<br><br>Any Member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter should withdraw from the meeting when the matter is under consideration and should notify the Democratic Services Officer in attendance that they are withdrawing as they have such an interest. If the Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is not entered on the register of Members interests the Monitoring Officer must be notified of the interest within 28 days.<br><br>Any Member with an affected Interest in a matter must disclose the interest to the meeting. There is no requirement to withdraw from the meeting when the interest is only an affected interest, but the Monitoring Officer should be notified of the interest, if not previously notified of it, within 28 days of the meeting.<br><b>Reporting: ALL</b> |      |

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| 3. | <b>Minutes and Matters Arising</b>   | 5 - 10   |
|    | To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of<br><b>Reporting:</b> ALL  |          |
| 4. | <b>Changes to the Early Years' Free Entitlements</b>   | 11 - 18  |
|    | To seek agreement on the principles for allocating the announced increase in funding to the elements of the Early Years Block Budget; to ratify the process for supporting business development to secure sufficient sustainable Early Years and Childcare provision and to update on the potential impact of the expansion of early years free entitlements included in the Government's budget announcement of 15 March 2023.<br><b>Reporting:</b> Cherry Hall |          |
| 5. | <b>Delivering Better Value in SEND Update</b>  | 19 - 34  |
|    | To provide an update on the progress of the Delivering Better Value in SEND activity.<br><b>Reporting:</b> Chris Kiernan   |          |
| 6. | <b>Update on College Hall Pupil Referral Unit</b>  | 35 - 44  |
|    | To provide an update to the Schools Forum on the 2023-24 budget decisions made regarding College Hall Pupil Referral Unit (the PRU), including the approach to management of the £0.384m 2022-23 deficit.<br><b>Reporting:</b> Cheryl Eyre   |          |
| 7. | <b>2022-23 Provisional Outturn on the Schools Budget and other Financial Matters</b>   | 45 - 58  |
|    | To inform members of the provisional outturn on the 2022-23 Schools Budget, including the allocation of balances and use of Earmarked Reserves. There is also a brief update on the financial consultation with schools planned for the autumn term to help with initial preparations of the 2024-25 Schools Budget.<br><b>Reporting:</b> Paul Clark   |          |
| 8. | <b>2022-23 Balances held by Maintained Schools</b>   | 59 - 80  |
|    | To update members on the level of balances held by maintained schools as at 31 March 2023, how these compare to the previous financial year, and to consider whether any significant surplus balances should be subject to claw-back and re-invested within the overall Schools Budget.<br><b>Reporting:</b> Paul Clark  |          |
| 9. | <b>2022-23 Funding Allocations to Mainstream Schools from Budgets Centrally Managed by the Council</b>   | 81 - 102 |
|    | To present information on the in-year allocation of funds to mainstream  |          |

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|     | <p>schools through School Specific Contingencies and other budgets that are funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant and in the first instance centrally managed by the council. It also presents the opportunity to amend existing funding policies. These funds relate only to mainstream schools.</p> <p><b>Reporting:</b> Paul Clark</p> |  |
| 10. | <p><b>Dates of Future Meetings</b></p>  |  |
|     | <p>The next meeting of the Forum will be held at 4.30pm on Thursday 14 September 2023.</p> <p><b>Reporting:</b> Joanna Gibbons</p>  |  |

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Published: 13 June 2023

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**SCHOOLS FORUM  
9 MARCH 2023  
4.30 - 5.55 PM**

**Present:**

Stuart Matthews, Academy School Representative (Chair)  
Elizabeth Savage, Academy School Representative (Vice-Chair)  
Jenny Baker, Special School Representative  
Stuart Bevan, Primary School Representative (Headteacher)  
Sue Butler, Early Years PVI Provider  
Simon Cope, Primary School Representative (Headteacher)  
Juanita Dunlop, Primary School Representative (Headteacher)  
Roger Prew, Primary School Representative (Governor)  
Trudi Sammons, Primary School Representative (Headteacher)  
Debbie Smith, Academy School Representative  
Grant Strudley, Academy School Representative  
Paul Tatum, Trades Union Representative

**Observer:**

Councillor Dr Gareth Barnard, Executive Member for Children, Young People & Learning (Observer)

**Apologies for absence were received from:**

Keith Grainger, Secondary School Representative (Headteacher)  
Tim Griffith, Academy School Representative

**276. Apologies for Absence/Substitute Members**

The Chair welcomed Trudi Sammons to the meeting as a new member of the Forum.

**277. Declarations of Interest**

The Chair noted that any representatives from Kennel Lane School and Owlsmoor School may need to declare an affected interest for Item 8 (Final proposals for the 2023-24 High Needs Block Budget).

**278. Minutes and Matters Arising**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Forum on 12 January 2023 be approved as a correct record.

Arising from minute 273, an update on Special Resource Provision (SRP) places at King's Academy Binfield would be provided under Item 6 (Update on Special Resource Provisions).

**279. Schools Forum - Constitution & Membership**

The Forum considered a report which sought endorsement to minor changes to the Schools Forum's Constitution and Membership.

The Chair noted that the membership had changed to reflect the increase of academies in the borough. Paul Clark added that there would only be one governor from maintained schools going forward as the council had difficulty recruiting to those vacancies. There were two vacancies for the additional academy representatives and one vacancy for the 16-19 Provider representative. Next steps would be confirmed following endorsement of the Constitution and Membership.

**Action: Paul Clark**

**RESOLVED** that the Schools Forum Constitution and Membership be endorsed.

280. **Early Years Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022**

The Forum considered a report which updated on the 2022 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) which was due to be submitted to the Executive Member and subsequently published on the Bracknell Forest Council website, as required by the authority's statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare.

Cherry Hall explained that the data was based on summer 2022 attendance and capacity. However, the picture had significantly changed since the report was completed, potentially losing two settings at the end of the academic year, meaning that around 50-60 part-time places for 2-, 3- and 4-year-olds would be lost. The council was also working with a further three providers on their business models to support them to make changes to remain sustainable.

It had been a difficult time for the sector with significant issues impacting sustainability including recruitment and retention issues. Part of the problem had been around funding and the increases had not been enough to meet the outgoings, so providers had not been able to attract high quality staff.

The report still needed to be published as it was accurate at the time it was written. There had been an increase in the numbers of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and, when the Family Information Service had been doing brokerage for childcare, they have not been able to meet all the requests currently.

Sue Butler was invited to comment as an Early Years provider. Sue felt that if the current challenging conditions in Early Years were to continue, there would be concerns relating to the sustainability of the private provider. Sue also commented that there has been a constant turnover of staff and outcomes for children had been impacted. Cherry added that it was a national issue. If Bracknell Forest lost lots of private and voluntary settings, it was unclear how it would meet childcare sufficiency needs.

The Forum noted the statutory duty for the LA to secure sufficient childcare and to submit a report to council members on how it was meeting that duty. The Forum enquired whether the suggestion was that Bracknell was not going to be able to deliver sufficient childcare. Cherry replied that, when the report was written, the team was confident that there was sufficient childcare, but they were now looking at what needed to happen to maintain sustainability given the recent developments. There had been an overall decline in child numbers, but more families had been taking up the 30-hour places. The team had been doing more surveys with providers to understand the pressures.

The Forum asked whether there were any other solutions. Cherry explained that she had been working with another organisation on the rent that they were charging. One of the providers wanted to increase their hours and the council were negotiating with the owner of the building for a reduced rate until the provider built up numbers. Recruitment was the biggest difficulty and there were no quick fixes, but it had been part of the discussions with the Local Government Association (LGA) as well. Councillor Barnard added that this was a high priority, and he would continue to raise it with the MP and with the LGA.

**RESOLVED** to NOTE the CSA. The Forum also noted its concerns about childcare sufficiency and sustainability going forward.

## 281. **Update on Special Resource Provisions**

The Forum considered a report which updated on the development and work associated with primary and secondary SRPs within Bracknell Forest and the development and implementation of a Banding Tool.

### Secondary SRP Development

Nathan Jones explained that there would be no capital investment required from SEND capital funds for the SRP at King's Academy Binfield. The school had committed to developing 40 places: 14 places in primary and 26 places in secondary. Only one place had been secured so far but it was expected that all 40 places would be brought online within the next three years, with 10 young people already having been identified as suitable for accessing the secondary places in September 2023. The school had committed to increase its knowledge base to meet those needs.

### New Secondary ASC SRP Provision and Further Secondary Development

Three secondary schools had expressed an interest in hosting SRPs for children with ASC. Two of those schools would require substantial capital spend and the other would require moderate capital spend. A more formal procurement process was needed to bring the places to fruition.

Development of a secondary cognition and learning SRP had been identified as a way to support effective transition from the Owlsmoor primary SRP. This would also require a significant level of capital and revenue funding.

The LA was developing a capital strategy group to have oversight on capital spending and the SEND Team had put forward a plan to the group detailing all the activity that would be involved in bringing SRP places online. The team was confident that places would be made available by 2024.

The Forum thanked Nathan and the team for all the work done so far. The Forum offered to do whatever it could to help speed the process. Cheryl Eyre advised that a Capital Board was being set up within the People directorate and she would welcome having members of the Forum and other stakeholders on the Board. The Board would be working to develop the SRP plan, and this would provide an opportunity for the Forum to challenge from within, but they would still report to the Forum.

The Forum noted that there was already one Year 7 pupil in a primary school unit and two further Year 6 pupils who did not yet have a secondary school to go to. Therefore, it was imperative for the SRP project to move at pace.

The Forum asked how much funding was available for SEND capital projects. Cheryl replied that there was approximately £4.8m available in total for SEND capital builds.

There was a complex sign-off process to access those funds. The Forum noted that this was a significant amount of money that could make a real difference to SEND students in the borough.

#### Primary SRP Update

The Speech, Language & Communication Needs (SLCN) unit at Meadowvale had been running at 20% occupancy and the school had served notice of closure. Nathan had been working closely with the Headteacher and the SEND Team to plan the moving of the children impacted by the closure. Only four children had been accessing the unit and two of those were expected to remain at Meadowvale, so the closure of the SRP was unlikely to have a significant impact.

In November 2022 officers were contacted by the Headteacher at Harmans Water as the lead teacher had decided to leave due to the level of challenge they were dealing with on a daily basis. This was followed by two other key members of staff leaving. Officers had sought to secure places for two children who had been inappropriately placed in that provision and had consulted with 15-20 schools to try to find appropriate provision. Officers were also developing mutually understood entry criteria to understand the nature and needs of children to be placed in those provisions.

The Headteacher at Owlsmoor Primary had proposed adding 8 further places to their SRP unit, catering for two distinct cohorts: one for children that could access some aspects of the mainstream curriculum, and the other for children with more complex needs.

#### Banding Tool Update

Following the banding tool update held at the end of 2022, data had been received from 13 settings which had moderated a number of children through the tool. It was noted that some schools were identifying a need for £40,000 funding for children currently getting around £7,000. The department had accepted that there would be situations where more funding was going in to maintain provision in mainstream, but it was expected that there would be an overall reduction in costs. A project was underway to run new EHCPs through the banding tool. It was noted that there was disparity around the landscape in the current model. Ultimately, whatever tool was used, there was a need for guidance, support and a suite of documents to ensure consistency. The draft documents had been shared with the working group.

The Forum welcomed that schools may receive additional funding but expressed concern about where similar tools used in other LAs had had a depressing effect on funding and been used as a blunt instrument. The Forum asked whether there would be a mechanism for challenge and when the tool was likely to come into place. Nathan replied that it needed to be modelled much more effectively than it had done. Nathan felt it was helpful to present the impact based on current data but was clear that this was not the final position. The department was not advocating an LA-driven model and would like it to be done between the school and parents initially. There was a need to ensure a robust and commonly accepted way of schools challenging the banding allocation which required transparency in the system. Care was needed to ensure the tool did not take out substantial funding, but nor could it be used to give substantial additional funding where the child's needs were not showing that level of funding. It was likely that the tool would be stair-cased in over a number of years, but there would be ongoing conversations with Forum and HNB colleagues about pace.

The Forum expressed concerns that the current administration of HNB was not working and asked for assurance that some things would be fixed in the meantime while waiting for the new tool to come in place. Nathan replied that a national



banding tool had been included within a central government green paper and it would be helpful if more details were available. There was a risk that the LA could invest a huge amount of time over the next two years developing its own tool but then have to use the national banding tool, although it was acknowledged that there was a need to do something.

#### Free School Application Update

Cheryl Eyre explained that the LA had submitted applications for two Free Schools: one for an ASD school and one for a Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) school. ASD had been the biggest need in Bracknell Forest. Both applications were well received by the DfE, but the DfE said they were looking at applications from neighbouring LAs and asked how Bracknell Forest was intending to link up with those. Only 33 schools across England had been agreed overall by the DfE, including our ASD school. SEMH schools had been agreed for Wokingham, Windsor, and Surrey, and Bracknell Forest would be working with them to access places in those schools. Cheryl highlighted that council members including Councillor Barnard had been very supportive of this project. There was a great deal to be done within the next 12 months to progress this and the foundations needed to be laid by 2025 but it was hoped that it would be before then.

**RESOLVED** to NOTE the activity around SRP:

1. the drive to bring online the 40 ASC SRP places at King's Academy Binfield across primary and secondary education stages;
2. the development of the Capital Board to oversee the utilisation of the borough's SEND capital;
3. the plan to undertake procurement to establish an additional 30 secondary ASC SRP places;
4. the ongoing support of Harmans Water SEMH SRP
5. the ongoing development of Owlsmoor Cognition and Learning SRP with the creation of an additional 8 places; and
6. the work related to the implementation of a new banding tool for the allocation of top up funding and the need to ensure this did not create additional pressure on the high needs block budget, supported through modelling.

#### 282. **Delivering Better Value Project Update**

The Forum considered a report which briefed on the agreed areas of work as detailed in the Delivering Better Value submission to the DfE.

Cheryl Eyre explained that the council's bid to the DfE was successful and had been awarded £1m to be allocated across three projects: establishment of a new transitions support team, ASD training for teachers, and Kennel Lane outreach support to improve provision for SEND children in mainstream settings. Certain parts of each workstream had already started and regular updates would be provided to the Forum.

The Forum thanked officers who were involved in the bid and establishing the programme.

**RESOLVED** to NOTE the contents of the report.

#### 283. **Final proposals for the 2023-24 High Needs Block Budget**

The Forum considered a report which sought comments on the detailed budget proposals for the High Needs Block (HNB) element of the Schools Budget that were

being presented now by the Council. In line with the statutory funding framework, there were also a small number of decisions for the Forum to take.

Grant Strudley raised questions around the current assumptions being made. For example, the Teaching Assistant hours did not reflect the actual cost to the school and the number of weeks that Teaching Assistants were actually paid for. Cheryl added that she had received Grant's email, and this was being followed up and had been noted.

The Chair noted that the PRU was running a deficit and asked whether that was reflected in the budget and if there had been an adequate settlement. Paul Clark replied that he was aware of the deficit, and it had been built into the 2022-23 forecasts. Discussions with the College Hall management committee were currently underway to determine any long term impact that may need to be considered for next year, but this remained work in progress. The Forum asked whether part of the £4.8m funding could be used for College Hall. Paul Clark explained that was capital funding so could only be used for capital related expenditure and not for day-to-day costs. Cheryl added that the site needed to be reviewed and there may be capital spend required which would need to be considered at the capital board.

#### **RESOLVED**

1. whilst NOTING concern around the level of deficit which was due to fall on the LA in the future and the associated risks when the deficit was owned by the LA, to AGREE that the Executive Member:
  - i. sets the total HNB Dedicated Schools Grant retained budget at £23.740m
  - ii. releases £0.175m of funds from the SEN Resource Development Reserve to finance ongoing diseconomy costs at the new Special Resource Provisions; and
  - iii. confirms the changes set out in the supporting information (summarised in Table 1 and Annex 2 of the report) and relevant budgets are updated accordingly; and
2. that the Forum was of the view that appropriate arrangements were NOT yet in place for:
  - i. the education of pupils with SEN (paragraph 6.17 of the report) although positive steps for the future were being taken and improvements were being seen; and
  - ii. the use of pupil referral units (paragraph 6.17 of the report). In respect of arrangements for the education of children otherwise than at school, some parts of the service were operating effectively but others were not yet there. It was agreed for Stuart and Paul to discuss this outside the meeting (**Action: Paul Clark and Stuart Matthews**); and
3. to NOTE the updated forecast financial position of the HNB Budget at Table 1 of the report, which showed a forecast £7.365m overspending in 2023-24 and a £43.396m cumulative deficit on the High Needs Block as at the end of March 2026.

#### **284. Dates of Future Meetings**

The next meeting of the Forum would be held at 4.30pm on Thursday 22 June 2023.

**CHAIRMAN**

To: **Schools Forum**  
**22 June 2023**

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## **Changes to the early years free entitlements Director of People**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. To seek agreement from Schools Forum on the principles for allocating the announced increase in funding to the elements of the Early Years Block Budget
- 1.2. To ratify the process for supporting business development to secure sufficient sustainable Early Years and Childcare provision.
- 1.3. To update Schools Forum on the potential impact of the expansion of early years free entitlements included in the governments budget announcement of 15 March 2023.

### **2. Recommendation(s)**

**To AGREE that in accordance with the views of the Early Years Forum:**

- 2.1. **The announced increase in Early Years Block funding is allocated in accordance with the principles set out in paragraph 5.4 and 5.5**
- 2.2. **The process for supporting business development to secure sufficient sustainable Early Years and Childcare provision as set out in paragraph 5.10 to 5.14 is ratified.**

**To Note:**

- 2.3. **The potential impact of the expansion to the early years free entitlements on early years provision in Bracknell Forest as set out in paragraph 5.6 to 5.9.**
- 2.4. **Revisions to the 2023-24 Early Years Block Budget proposals and funding rates to be allocated to the Early Years Funding Formula will be presented for comment in September**

### **3. Reasons for Recommendation(S)**

- 3.1. The proposals set out in the paper are in line with the information currently available to the Council regarding the financial settlement for 2023-24, statutory guidance, local priorities, and the views of the Early Years Forum

### **4. Alternative Options Considered**

- 4.1. Alternative options are detailed in the supporting information

### **5. Supporting Information**

Early years block funding

- 5.1. On 12 January 2023 School Forum agreed arrangements for the Early Years Block element of Dedicated Schools Grant that the Department for Education

allocates to Local Authorities to fund provisions and support for children up to the age of 5.

- 5.2. In the Spring budget published on 15 March 2023, the Government announced changes to early years and childcare entitlements to support working parents. The intention is to roll out the changes in stages from Autumn 2023 to September 2026.

The changes include:

- **Entitlements:** Working parents in England will be able to access 30 hours of free childcare per week, for 38 weeks of the year, from when their child is 9 months old to when they start school. The hourly rate will also increase for providers and support the workforce.
- **Wraparound:** The government will invest £289m over two academic years, from Sept 2024, to enable schools and local areas to set up wraparound childcare provision.
- **Market reforms:** including more choice for childminders and changes to the EYFS requirements, to improve flexibility for providers and support the workforce.
- **Changing staff:child ratios** from 1:4 to 1:5 for two-year-olds in England to align with Scotland and provide greater flexibility for providers.
- **Childminder grants:** to attract people to childminding, with £1200 for those who register with a childminder agency and £600 for those who register with OFSTED.
- **Universal Credit reforms** will pay childcare support up-front when parents move into work or increase their hours and increase the monthly re-imbursment caps.

Timescales at present are:

**Autumn 2023:**

- Childminder grants become available
- Increase in 2/3/4 year old funding rates
- Staff:Child 2 year old ratio change

**April 2024:**

- Introduction of 15 hours for working parents of 2 year olds
- Increase of funding rates for 2/3/4 year olds

**September 2024:**

- National wraparound support begins
- Introduction of 15 hours for working parents of children 9 months plus

**September 2025:**

- Introduction of 30 hours for all working parents of children from 9 months to primary

**September 2026:**

- All schools to offer 8am-6pm wraparound on their own or in partnership

- 5.3. Included in the budget announcement was an additional £204 million in funding for free entitlement places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds from September 2023. This

funding increase will require a revision of the agreed 2023-24 Early Years Block budget and the funding rates allocated in the Early Years Funding Formula. To date the Department for Education has not confirmed the change in funding rates to Councils for 2023-24, however an announcement is expected by the end of the summer term.

- 5.4. Despite the absence of key funding information for 2023-24, it is important to commence budget planning now and the proposals presented directly below are informed by feedback from the Early Years Forum:
- a) The components of the Early Years Funding Formula for 2023-24 as previously agreed will be retained.
  - b) The Early Years Block Budget for 2023-24 will be allocated using the following principles:
    - i) 95% of total income allocated to providers via the Early Years Funding Formula
    - ii) The increase in the Early Years Block budget is allocated to providers via the uniform base rate
    - iii) 5% of total income managed centrally by the council
- 5.5. Subject to the release of relevant information by the DfE, the revised 2023-24 Early Years Block Budget and funding rates to be allocated to the Early Years Funding Formula, together with highlight changes to provider funding rates will be presented to Schools Forum for comment in September.

#### Impact of the expansion to the free entitlements

- 5.6. The Spring budget announcement included an expansion of the early years free entitlements to working parents of children from 9 months. Data from the National Online Manpower Information System (NOMIS) indicates that approximately 78% of Bracknell Forest residents aged 16-64 are employed. This does not however indicate how many of these residents have children who are eligible for the current entitlements or the proposed extension.
- 5.7. The DfE has not provided details regarding the administration of the expanded entitlements and how eligibility for these entitlements will be determined. The expectation is that these will be similar to the arrangements currently in place for the extended entitlements for 3 and 4 year olds.
- 5.8. The DfE has not announced details of the increases in funding for Councils for 2, 3 and 4 year olds from September 2023, April 2024 or for the expanded entitlements.
- 5.9. In preparing for the expansion of the free entitlements the Council is considering the following potential impacts on early years provision in Bracknell Forest:
- a) Insufficient capacity in the early years market to meet the additional demand for free places.
    - i) Excess capacity in the early years sector is currently low
    - ii) It is anticipated that additional capacity will be required to meet the demand for the expanded entitlements
    - iii) It is not clear if funding will be available to support expansion in the market.
    - iv) The Council is aware of early years settings that will close at the end of the summer term 2023 due to financial sustainability and staffing issues.

It is not yet known if these settings will be replaced. The impact of these closure on available early years places in Bracknell Forest is therefore unclear.

- b) Financial sustainability of early years providers
  - i) Financial sustainability of early years providers is a concern with the current arrangements for free entitlements.
  - ii) Expanding free places will reduce fee paying hours available to providers, reducing income from fees which are used to offset the difference between the cost of providing free places and the funding received for those places.
  - iii) We do not know if funding rates for the expanded entitlements will be sufficient to cover the cost of provision.
- c) Capacity in the Early Years team to administer the free entitlements, with the expansion in the entitlements expected to impact on:
  - i) administration process for payments
  - ii) support required by providers
  - iii) queries from parents and carers
  - iv) ensuring compliance with the statutory guidance
- d) Capita ONE, the software used to administer payment of the free entitlements will require updating
  - i) Bracknell Forest Council is dependent on Capita to implement the necessary updates
  - ii) Initial discussion indicated that Capita had not received information from the DfE regarding the required update
  - iii) Testing updates of this size will impact significantly on the capacity of the Early Years Team
  - iv) The deadline for implementing updates is February 2024 to ensure funding for the summer term 2024 is paid within published deadline.
  - v) No change to Capita ONE software is required for the September 2023 funding increase

#### Supporting business development

- 5.10. Early years funding data and feedback from providers, parents & carers evidences a change in demand for early years and childcare locally since the pandemic. These changes include increases in:
  - a) Demand for flexible packages of care
  - b) Parents accessing the extended entitlement
  - c) Families travelling further to access the childcare they need
- 5.11. Settings are struggling financially, with some needing to make a change to their business model in order to meet the changes in the market and remain sustainable. However, with limited reserves and resources, settings are unable to implement the necessary changes without support and reassurance from the Council.
- 5.12. The Council has a duty to ensure parents are able to work because childcare places are available, accessible and affordable and are delivered flexibly in a range of high quality settings. (*Childcare Act 2006 and Childcare Act 2016*)
- 5.13. In line with these duties and in response to the changes in the local market the Council introduced a policy to support providers to develop their business where

this was in line with the Councils duty to secure sufficient sustainable early years and childcare provision. The policy is attached as Annex A

- 5.14. As it was necessary to provide support ahead of the June 2023 Schools Forum meeting, the policy was provisionally agreed by the Schools Forum Chair, Vice Chair and Early Years PVI representative. Ratification of the policy is now sought from the full School Forum.
- 5.15. To date the Council has worked with two providers and agreed £43,000 in additional financial support, although actual expenditure is forecast to be less than the total agreed. A total of £103k has been allocated to support providers in 2023/24.

**6. Consultation and Other Considerations**

Legal Advice

- 6.1. The relevant legal provisions are contained within the body of the report

Executive Director: Resources

- 6.2. The Executive Director: Resources is satisfied that the proposals within the report for managing the expanded Early Years offer can be met from within the additional funding to be allocated by the DfE. The proposals to support providers in financial difficulty are considered appropriate. The cost of support provided is likely to vary considerably year on year depending on market conditions.

Other Consultation Responses

- 6.3. The Early Years forum met on 17 May 2023 and agreed the principles for allocating the announced increase in funding to the elements of the Early Years Block Budget and the process for supporting business development to secure sufficient sustainable Early Years and Childcare provision.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4. No Equalities Impact Assessment is required as the proposed changes implement statutory guidance which includes eligibility criteria

Strategic Risk Management Issues

| <b>Risk</b>  | <b>Level of risk</b> | <b>Impact</b>  | <b>Mitigation</b>  |
|--|----------------------|--|--|
| Unable to predict additional childcare places required and/or secure sufficient places |                      | Parents are unable to secure the childcare they need and are entitled to | Work with existing and potential providers to develop business models so supply meets demand |
| Capita One not updated to manage additional requirements                               |                      | Business continuity will be threatened                                   | Ongoing communication with Capita to ensure systems are updated and fit for purpose          |

|   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| Business team unable to process additional queries/payments due to capacity   |  | Providers do not receive their payments causing financial hardship                               | Recruit additional staff to meet demand   |
| Changes result in further closures due to financial constraints   |  | BFC fails in its duty to ensure sufficient childcare places to meet the needs of working parents | Early support for providers struggling financially to support business planning, marketing and promotion of the service |
| In trying to remain sustainable, providers do not adhere to the statutory guidance and local provider conditions of funding |  | Parental complaints to Ombudsman due to lack of provider compliance                              | Frequent compliance checks are completed but further capacity within the team would be required                         |

#### Climate Change Implications

- 6.5. The recommendations in Section 2 above are expected to have no impact on emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>.

#### Background Papers

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/718179/Early\\_education\\_and\\_childcare-statutory\\_guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718179/Early_education_and_childcare-statutory_guidance.pdf)

Early education and childcare statutory guidance for local authorities - June 2018

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2023/03/16/budget-2023-everything-you-need-to-know-about-childcare-support/>

Budget 2023: Everything you need to know about childcare support

#### Contact for further information

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[Cherry.hall@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:Cherry.hall@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

David Allais, Early Years Business & Family Information Manager: 01344 354027

[David.allais@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:David.allais@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)



## Supporting business development to secure sufficient sustainable Early Years and Childcare provision

### Statute:

#### **Childcare Act 2006. Section 6**

Duty to secure sufficient childcare for working parents (or parents in education/training)  
*To require local authorities to ensure there is childcare available to enable parents to take up or remain in work or to undertake education or training to assist them in obtaining work.*

#### **Childcare Act 2006 Section 7, as amended by Education Act 2011 Section 1**

Duty to secure prescribed early years provision free of charge  
*To ensure that all children under school age, as described in regulations or in guidance from the Secretary of State, can access free nursery education.*

#### **Childcare Act 2006 Section 11**

Duty to assess childcare provision  
*To ensure local authorities undertake an assessment to childcare provision in their area to enable them to meet their duty to secure sufficient childcare for working parents (s6 Childcare Act 2006)*

#### **Childcare Act 2006 Section 13**

Duty to provide information, advice and training to childcare providers, and prospective providers.  
*To ensure that local authorities give local childcare providers and would-be providers in their area the necessary support to help deliver sustainable affordable and high quality childcare that meets the needs of the community.*

[Early education and childcare \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

### Part B- Securing sufficient childcare

Outcome: parents are able to work because childcare places are available, accessible and affordable and are delivered flexibly in a range of high quality settings.

To secure sufficient childcare places, local authorities are required by legislation to:

B.1 Secure sufficient childcare, so far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-14 (or up to 18 for disabled children).

### **Current situation:**

- There has been a change in demand for early years and childcare locally since the pandemic
- Families are requiring flexible packages of care
- There has been an increase in parents accessing the extended entitlement
- Families are travelling to access appropriate childcare where local flexible childcare is not available
- Settings are struggling financially and unable to take a leap to change their business model without some support and reassurance from the LA.

### Proposal:

- Potential for financial support for settings where some or all of the below can be evidenced:
  - There is a real concern that the setting may close if the business model does not change. Financial hardship evaluated through an 'open book' process that includes completion of a Sustainability Funding Claim Form and providing copies of current bank statements.
  - There is evidence that there is a need for a different model of early years and childcare in the local area
  - The provider is working in partnership with the LA to secure sufficient free entitlement early years and childcare places
  - There is evidence that families are unable to access the entitlements without looking outside their local area
  - The provider produces a business plan, indicating break even point, how they are going to advertise, details of current financial situation and why support may be required
  - Sufficiency data indicates there is insufficient good quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of working parents within reasonable walking distance of the provider (maximum 1km)
  -

### Process:

- Provider will have been working with the Early Years team to explore options and determine local need.
- LA and provider determine the business plan change is appropriate
- Provider submits application
- Early Years team assess the application and allocate costs to free entitlement and fee paying children
- Early Years team assess level of support to develop and/or secure free entitlement places and support the LA's delivery of the duties detailed above
- Sufficiency data indicates that should the provider cease to operate the LA would be unlikely to meet the duty to secure sufficient local free entitlement places
- Early Years consider the application and raise any further questions with the provider
- Consideration will be given to the 'gaps identified in the business plan and that providing financial support will support the setting to become sustainable and the LA to have sufficient free entitlement places
- Support is agreed by AD for Education and Learning
- Clear and transparent monitoring arrangements are put in place with the provider
- 6 weekly meetings are convened to review progress and reassess level of support required, including leadership support to promote the setting and maximise income
- The agreement is transparent and time limited (maximum of 3 terms or until breakeven point is reached, whichever is sooner) the council will determine the maximum support available prior to any agreement with the setting, based on the business model and amount of change required to develop a sustainable model.

To: **Schools Forum**  
**22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023**

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## **Delivering Better Value in SEND update**

### **People Directorate: Education and Learning**

#### **1 Purpose of report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of the Delivering Better Value (DBV) in SEND activity.
- 1.2 A project management resource has been identified and members of staff have been recruited into key leadership positions within SEND. The first board meeting for DBV took place on 6 June 2023. At the meeting the terms of the board were outlined, risks reviewed and the membership of working groups (which will begin imminently) agreed.
- 1.3 The project manager is aware of the tight timelines for delivery. There is a key focus on the work that needs to be achieved before the summer holidays, which includes:
  - identifying Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC) training course provision; and
  - the decision about a suitable site for Kennel Lane outreach hub and recruitment of staff – note that council officers to ensure this work can be delivered at pace.

#### **2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 We invite comments and thoughts on any of the activity so far and upcoming activity for Delivering Better Value

#### **3 Reasons for recommendation**

- 3.1 There are no recommendations. This item is for consideration and update only

#### **4 Alternative options considered**

- 4.1 N/A

#### **5 Supporting Information**

- 5.1 Bracknell Forest Council applied to the Department of Education (DfE) to participate in the Delivering Better Value initiative, which focuses on the high needs block funding and considers how local authorities can ensure best value for money and efficiencies in the deployment of the funding.
- 5.2 Over 50 local authorities participated in the first wave alongside Bracknell Forest. Extensive analysis of caseloads, data and projects were reviewed, and a direction of travel identified. The DfE required all local authorities to submit projects that would improve SEND delivery and provision, based on the agreed data and assumptions made in the modular assessments.
- 5.3 Three project areas were agreed and developed with stakeholders and the DfE partner organisation, Newton Europe. These are:
  - training for schools and teachers around ASDC including backfill for staff to attend - £96,000;
  - Kennel Lane outreach hub to increase chances of CYP thriving in mainstream settings - £370,000;
  - establishment of a new in-house transitions support team - £416,000; and
  - project management - £118,000.

5.4 The application was submitted to the DfE 17 January 2023 and the DfE panel agreed and notified Bracknell Forest that they were successful in early February 2023.

5.5 Please see more information regarding DBV in the attached annex.

## **6 Consultation and other considerations**

### **Borough Solicitor**

6.1 The relevant legal issues are addressed within the main body of the report.

### **Financial advice**

6.2 The DBV delivery programme will be financed from the successful £1m grant funding bid that the council made to the DfE. The workstreams will compliment other initiatives underway within the High Needs Block

### **Other consultation responses**

6.3 N/A

### **Equalities impact assessment**

6.4 An initial equalities impact assessment for the Delivering Better Value projects is being drafted and will be shared with relevant team members for further discussion.

### **Strategic risk management issues**

6.5 None identified.

### **Climate change implications**

6.6 There are no recommendations in Section 2 above, and therefore no climate change implications.

### **Health and wellbeing considerations**

6.7 Collaboration with health and wellbeing will occur through the project board.

### **Background papers**

Please see slides (attached)

### **Contact for further information**

Chris Kiernan, Interim AD Education and Learning - 01344 351794

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# Schools Forum

## Delivering Better Value in SEND update

June 2023

1. DBV Overview
2. Governance for DBV
3. Programme health card
4. Project status summaries
5. Risks and issues

# What is DBV?

There have been challenges nationally and locally with the unsustainable nature of spending in SEND (High needs block). DfE have set out to work with councils who have a significant deficit to use a data-led approach to isolate unsustainable areas within SEND. Part of this work is the Delivering Better Value Programme, which Bracknell Forest Council was invited to take part in.

The analysis work in late 2022 identified that over the next 5 years, the unmitigated deficit position is forecast to increase to **£81.2m** in 2027/28. Key areas identified are

- An increase in spend in mainstream and INMSS settings.
- The number of children with EHCPs has been growing year on year, with new EHCPs being increasingly issued to young children (under 6) with ASC and SLCN needs.
- During case reviews, practitioners and professionals identified that in 29% of cases an EHCP being issued was not required to meet the CYP's needs, and CYP in specialist placements achieved a non-ideal outcome 74% of the time.
- Lack of parental/carer confidence in mainstream settings, and variation in how mainstream schools are supporting CYP with SEND, resulting in 24 non-ideal setting starts per year
- Increasing number of schools applying for EHCPs, especially for CYP with ASC, resulting in 13 non-ideal plans being issued each year

The council designed three sustainability projects to negate the deficit position forecast and improve services for CYP with SEND and submitted a bid for £1mil grant from DfE, which was successful.

# 3 workstreams

This slide includes further detail about the 3 sustainability projects designed by the DBV team. These projects encompass the 3 workstreams that will be going ahead over the next 2 years.

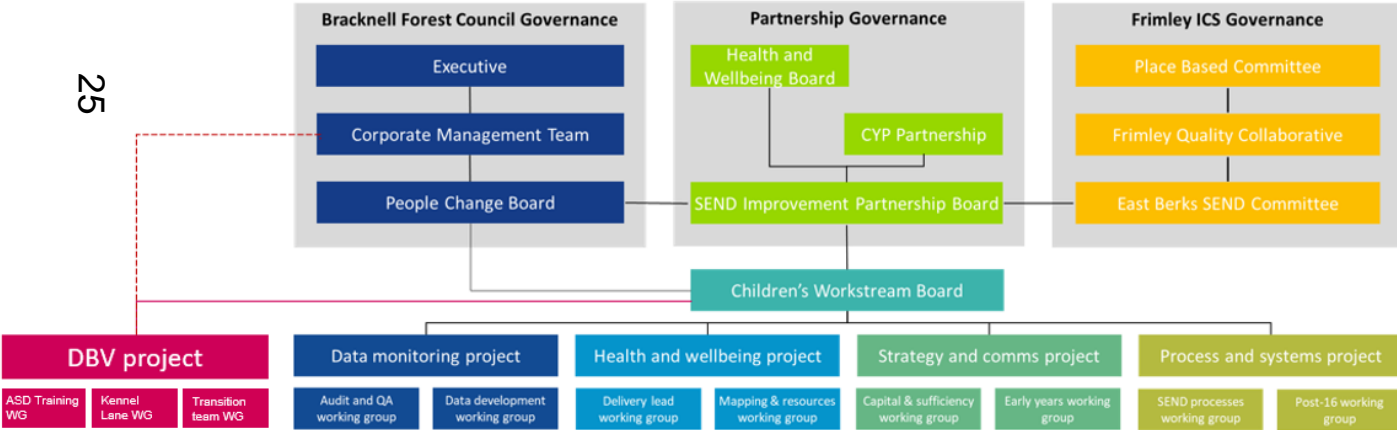
| Workstream Name                 | Description  | Workstream Lead |
|---------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| <b>ASC Training</b><br><br>24   | <p>This workstream aims to improve inclusion of CYP with ASC through providing training in inclusivity at mainstream schools.</p> <p>This training will be targeted at both primaries and secondaries, and support teachers and SENCOs with material on how best to include students with ASC. A train the trainer model will be utilised to ensure sustainable knowledge retention, and schools will have funded backfill to ensure staff can attend. The aim is to ensure that schools can adequately support children with ASC, and reduce the need for EHCNAs and formal plans</p> | Oliver May      |
| <b>Kennel Lane Outreach Hub</b> | <p>This workstream aims to improve inclusion in mainstream schools by building an outreach offer from the one-in-authority special school, Kennel Lane, helping children to maintain their placements in mainstream secondary schools. Learners would be identified through observations and referrals and would be partially educated in the outreach centre, whilst simultaneously upskilling support staff in the mainstream setting. Learners would visit for 6 weeks, have a 6 week break, and then re-visit, allowing for modelling, embedding and follow-up.</p>                | Jenny Baker     |
| <b>In-house Transition Team</b> | <p>This workstream aims to increase the chances of CYP being able to stay in a mainstream setting as they transition from primary to secondary.</p> <p>A LA-funded member of staff will be allocated per secondary, who will then visit the secondary school and feeder primary schools to work closely with the groups who will be transitioning in the near future, to ensure their needs can be met and they are supported during and after the transition.</p>   | Oliver May      |



# Governance for DBV

The Delivering Better Value projects sits under the SEND WSOA programme; therefore, it will follow the same governance route as the other projects under that programme.

The DBV project will have a project board meeting – chaired by Chirs Kiernan (Interim AD Education and Learning), and 3 working groups for each of the projects outlined in the previous slide.



# DBV programme health card

Overall programme status is **AMBER**

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <p><b>Rationale</b><br/>Value proposition still holds true?</p>       |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DBV bid approved March 2023</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Engagement</b><br/>Stakeholders bought in?</p>                  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work has been ongoing to set up the governance structure of DBV.</li> <li>• Several leadership changes in the SEND team have resulted in slight delays regarding who would sit as project sponsor, however it has now been agreed and the inaugural board meeting is scheduled for 6/6/23. Following this, working groups will be set up which will improve engagement.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Progress / Schedule</b><br/>Delivery on target?</p>             |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are tight timelines for delivery – work before summer holidays to identify ASC training course and suitable site for Kennel Lane outreach hub and recruitment for staff needs to be a key focus.</li> <li>• Viewed a potential site which could be renovated for the Kennel Lane Hub. Renovating this site would be more sustainable than renting a site as suggested in the bid. Decisions need to be made regarding this site to inform future planning (recruitment, transport costs etc)</li> <li>• In-house transition staff posts have been through job evaluation and the job descriptions are approved for recruitment in October</li> <li>• Ongoing work on setting up the documentation of the project to ensure we have a robust plan in place now a project manager is in post.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Resource</b><br/>Secured and able to deliver?</p>               |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interim SEND leadership roles are now all filled (AD, Head of Service and x2 strategic leads)</li> <li>• Recruitment to substantive posts is proving challenging</li> <li>• DBV is an additional requirement on top of BAU and WSOA activity for staff and partners that are already engaged in other pieces of work, which may impact ability to deliver</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Outcomes</b><br/>Confidence in target value being achieved?</p> |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversations to be had at the first working group meetings to identify how we will measure impact</li> <li>• DBV Phase 1 model used for financial tracking</li> <li>• DBV planning meeting at the start of June to outline quarterly reporting requirements to DfE</li> </ul>   |

# DBV workstream updates

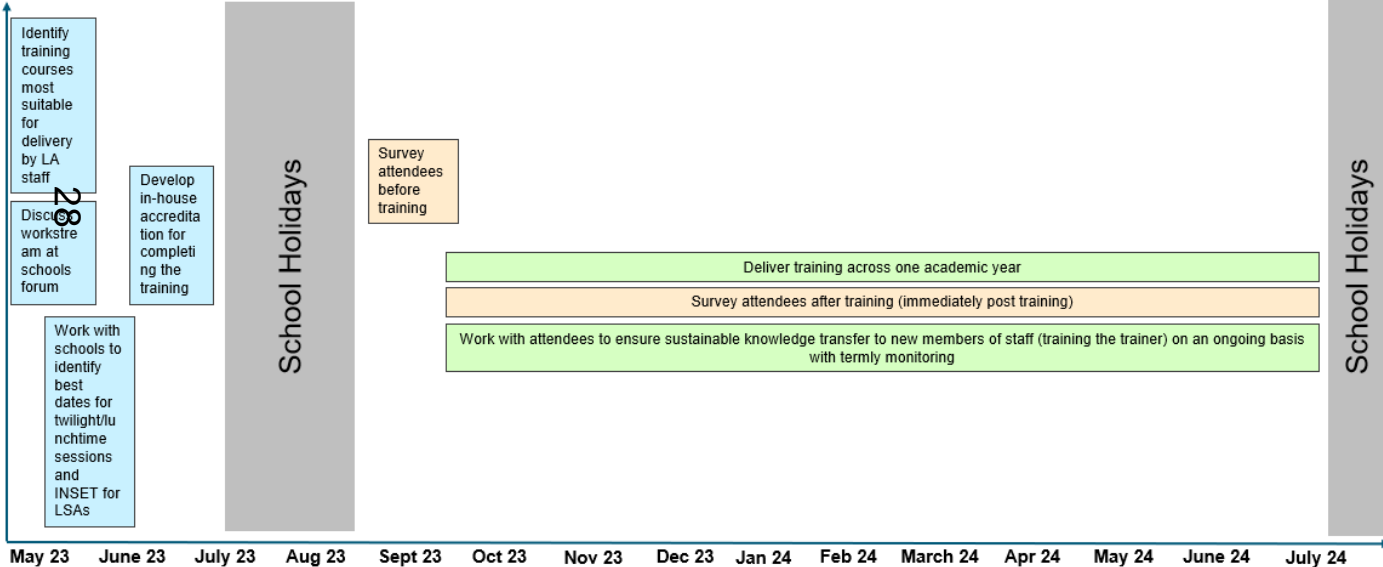
Project sponsor – Chris Kiernan / Workstream lead – Oliver May

| Project   | RAG | • Key progress   | Forward look  |
|---|-----|--|---|
| ASC Training<br><br><div style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">27</div> |     | Project manager resource has joined – PID produced, project plan drafted which will be reviewed by working groups, risk and issues log drafted, and schedule, membership and terms of reference set up for board meetings. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Working group set up</b> – the membership will be agreed at board meeting on 6/6/23, and meeting will be set up ASAP to run monthly</li> <li>▪ <b>Identify training courses most suitable for delivery by LA staff.</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Work with schools to identify best dates for twilight/lunchtime sessions</b></li> </ul> |

# ASC Training High Level Roadmap

Project sponsor – Chris Kiernan / Workstream lead – Oliver May

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| Planning |  |
| Delivery |  |
| Review   |  |



# DBV workstream updates

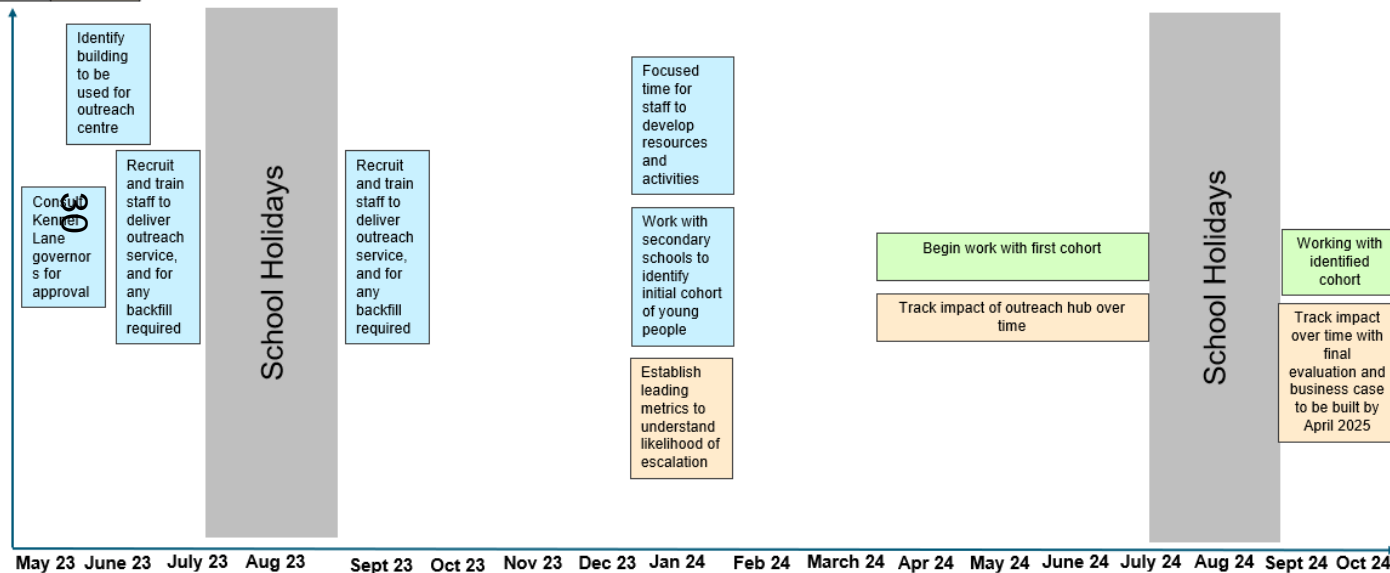
Project sponsor – Chris Kiernan / Workstream lead – Jenny Baker

| Project   | RAG | Key progress  | Forward look   |
|---|-----|---|--|
| Kennel Lane Outreach Hub<br><br><div style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">29</div> |     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project manager resource has joined – PID produced, project plan drafted which will be reviewed by working groups, risk and issues log drafted, and schedule, membership and terms of reference set up for board meetings.</li> <li>Met with Kennel Lane Head at a potential site to view and discuss the potential site for Kennel Lane outreach hub</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Working group set up</b> – the membership will be agreed at board meeting on 6/6/23, and meeting will be set up ASAP to run monthly</li> <li><b>Finalise decision with potential site</b></li> <li><b>Recruit staff for hub</b></li> </ul> |

# Kennel Lane Outreach Hub High Level Roadmap

Project sponsor – Chris Kiernan / Workstream lead – Jenny Baker

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| Planning |  |
| Delivery |  |
| Review   |  |



# DBV workstream updates

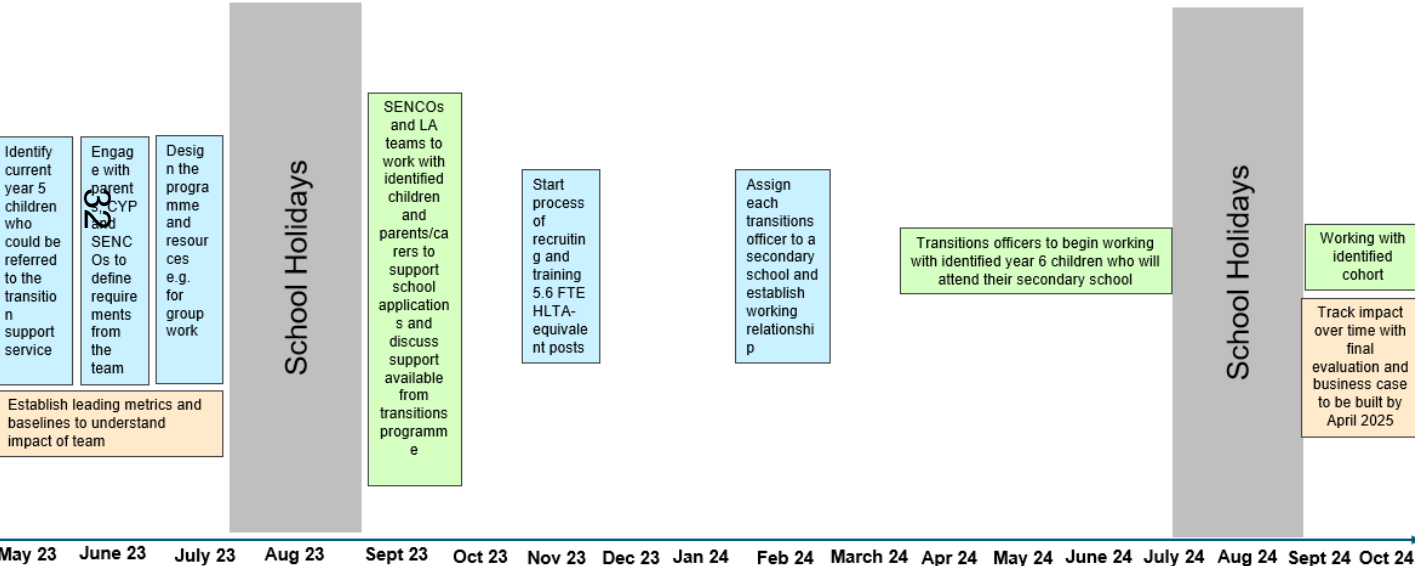
Project sponsor – Chris Kiernan / Workstream lead – Oliver May

| Project   | RAG | Key progress   | Forward look   |
|---|-----|--|--|
| In-House Transition Team<br><br><div style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">31</div> |     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project manager resource has joined – PID produced, project plan drafted which will be reviewed by working groups, risk and issues log drafted, and schedule, membership and terms of reference set up for board meetings.</li> <li>JD and JE process complete for the HLTA roles as part of the in-house transition team. Timelines for recruitment finalised and communicated to schools</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Working group set up</b> – the membership will be agreed at board meeting on 6/6/23, and meeting will be set up ASAP to run monthly</li> <li><b>Engage with parents, CYP and SENCOs to define requirements for team</b></li> <li><b>Identify current year 5 cohort who could be referred to the transition team</b></li> </ul> |

# In-House Transition Team High Level Roadmap

Project sponsor – Chris Kiernan / Workstream lead – Oliver May

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| Planning |  |
| Delivery |  |
| Review   |  |





| Risk or Issue | Workstream               | Description  | RAG Pre | Mitigation   | RAG post |
|---------------|--------------------------|--|---------|--|----------|
| Risk          | All workstreams          | Variation of engagement with/from schools could limit the scale of improvement across Bracknell Forest.            | Orange  | Listening to and including the Schools Forum in development of plans, to own and input<br>Ensuring headteachers involved in design teams as 'champions' of work to facilitate engagement from other schools<br>Ongoing monitoring of training provided by 'trained trainers'   | Green    |
| Issue         | All workstreams          | Staffing and leadership changes in Education and Learning  | Orange  | Posts that do not have permanent members in post are out to advert/interviews. Recruitment is a key priority and is actively being monitored as part of the wider SEND programme and BAU   | Orange   |
| Risk          | All workstreams          | Capacity for schools and LA due to multiple demands/limitations on time  | Orange  | For schools –<br>Project will provide funding to schools for additional hours / backfill<br>LA to align requests to schools and prioritise this programme of work<br>For LA staff –<br>Small amount of grant funding (£9,500) to be used to provide additional capacity within Inclusion teams<br>Managers to ensure this activity is prioritised within team capacity | Green    |
| Risk          | Kennel Lane Outreach Hub | Finding suitable accommodation for Kennel Lane outreach hub, which ideally should be aligned to a secondary school | Orange  | There are secondary schools within the borough who are below PAN and have vacant accommodation that could be utilised. Discussions are underway. Site may be suitable - now need to have further conversations. Timeline on September 2023, is that realistic?   | Green    |
| Risk          | In-House Transition Team | Challenges recruiting to HLTA posts  | Red     | Roles will be recruited by LA rather than schools and BFC has strong employer value proposition<br>Secondment opportunity  | Orange   |
| Risk          | In-House Transition Team | Parental confidence regarding mainstream secondary settings ability to support CYP with SEND/EHCP                  | Red     | The early engagement of parents will be a key focus of this workstream. Phase transfer consultations will begin earlier.   | Orange   |

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To: **Schools Forum**  
**22 June 2023**

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**Update on College Hall Pupil Referral Unit**  
**Executive Director: People**  
**Executive Director: Resources**

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 To provide an update to the Schools Forum on the 2023-24 budget decisions made regarding College Hall Pupil Referral Unit (the PRU), including the approach to management of the £0.384m 2022-23 deficit. Due to the urgent nature of these proposals, a wider programme of engagement was not possible, but consultation did take place with the Chair of Schools Forum.

## **2 Supporting Information**

- 2.1. College Hall supports secondary aged pupils outside of mainstream education. It encompasses a main building and separate cottage building on the main site, with other off-site locations also used and has capacity for 56 students. It is part of the High Needs Block Budget (HNB) that is funded by grant from the Department for Education (DfE) and whilst funding decisions are the responsibility of the Executive Member, up to the overall level of budget approved by the Executive.
- 2.2. Whilst the HNB budget 2023-24 was approved in March, the Forum was aware of operational and funding difficulties being experienced which would necessitate further work and this has now been completed. The separate agenda item on tonight's meeting relating to the 2022-23 Provisional Outturn on the Schools Budget identifies a £0.384m overspending at College Hall in that year.
- 2.3. In summary, the following factors have contributed to the need to review the budget:
- The needs of the pupils currently accessing College Hall are significantly more complex than in the past, with safeguarding related concerns being a key feature. College Hall staff are increasingly having to teach individual children separately from other students as a result of safeguarding concerns/risk assessments, and ensuring effective safeguarding requires greater capacity than has historically been the case.
  - Pupils recently admitted to College Hall have frequently had undiagnosed SEND needs or arrive without assessments, and staff at College Hall are increasingly having to undertake these assessments.
  - The complex needs of the pupils has led to increased use of satellite sites and also additional personalised provisions. This has led to increased costs in terms of these additional provisions, but also significant transport costs as the site is on a busy main road with no safe access.
  - Recruitment and retention of staff to alternative provision nationally is very challenging. Additional capacity is needed to provide increased support and training to less experienced or unqualified staff in order to build capacity from within.
  - Due to the challenges surrounding College Hall over the past three years, including during the pandemic, work to upskill staff has been less extensive

than would otherwise have been expected, meaning that there are legacy areas where more training is needed.

- Plans are in place to ensure that the function of College Hall is in keeping with current best practice regarding AP, including close joint working with mainstream schools and higher levels of reintegration to mainstream, leading to improved outcomes for vulnerable pupils. This will require additional staff capacity to ensure pupils are effectively supported back to mainstream.
- The removal of the Outreach and Tuition Service from College Hall has limited some economies of scale from which they were previously able to benefit.
- Although not a new factor, it should be noted that the site on which the main provision is housed is not fit for purpose, and the building itself means that higher staffing ratios are required in order to keep pupils safe and engaged.

College Hall is on an improvement journey, and as a result low level business efficiencies are expected over the next three years.

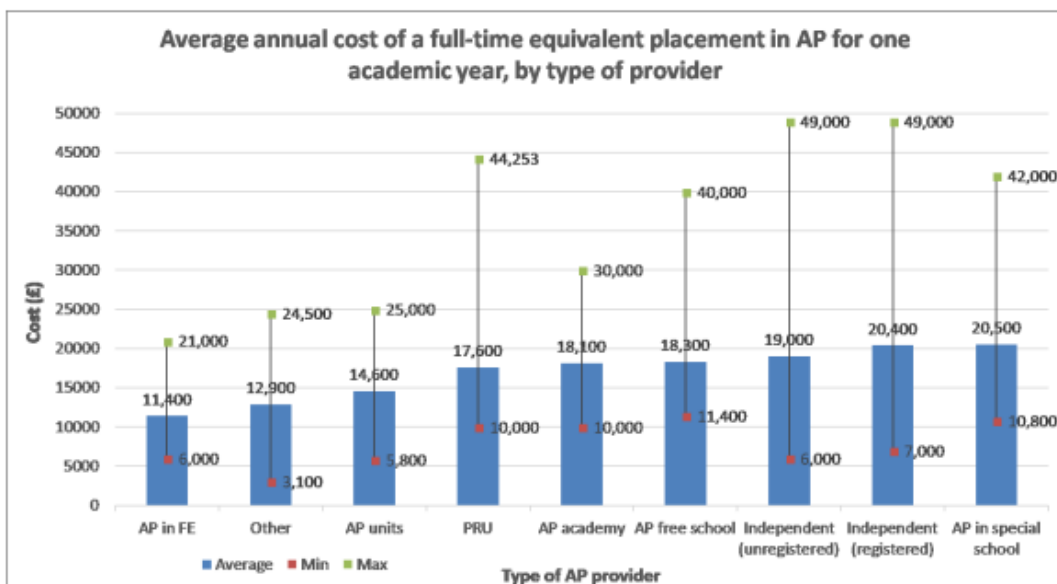
- 2.4. A review of the significant 2022-23 variances has identified that a majority of the additional expenditure was exceptional in nature, reflecting the challenges faced and responding to advice from the LA. This includes: the procurement of alternative provision for a number of students (£0.178m) during the autumn term 2022 to facilitate a “re-set”; the appropriate decision by the Management Committee to surrender managing the Home Tuition and Outreach Services SLA due to insufficient staffing capacity to manage the PRU on a day today basis (£0.075m loss of income); senior consultancy support during headteacher and other SLT absences (£0.074m); and outstanding EHCP funding (£0.030m).
- 2.5. This indicates that around £0.368m of the deficit is exceptional, and could be met from the general HNB, with the remaining circa £0.016m over spending arising from normal activities and could be a deficit to roll forward into 2023-24 for the PRU to fund. Carrying forward a significant deficit for the PRU to manage is not considered realistic in terms of the likely level of funding available. Without the specialist agency support for leadership, and the external AP commissioned by College Hall during autumn 2022, College Hall would have had to close, leading to significantly higher cost implications for the HNB and mainstream secondary schools.

Annex A sets out more details on the significant 2022-23 budget variances and the treatment of the deficit.

- 2.6. Staff in Education and Learning and Finance have therefore worked with College Hall Management Committee and the Consultant Headteacher on the development and costing of budget proposals that mitigates against the challenges and aims to address key areas for improvement:
- To recruit to a full staffing structure and secure an effective leadership team.
  - To ensure that safeguarding processes are highly effective and that there is a consistent culture of vigilance.
  - To provide high quality training and support for all staff in order to ensure consistently good teaching.
  - To implement a curriculum that is fit for purpose.
  - To implement effective review processes with mainstream schools and increase reintegration.

- To ensure a fit for purpose behaviour policy which staff are trained to deliver effectively.
  - To improve attendance.
  - To improve joint working with external partners.
  - To develop effective careers advice and support for transitions Post-16.
- 2.7. At the time the 2023-24 budget decision paper was completed, whilst the funding requirement for the PRU was not known, a cost pressure was anticipated, and therefore a growth amount of £0.250m was included under the high-level Education Otherwise than at School (EOTAS) budget line
- 2.8. Budget discussions with the PRU resulted in 3 options being presented:
- a) Option 1: a staffing structure that works to a broadly 1:6 pupil teacher ratio.
  - b) Option 2: a staffing structure that works to a broadly 1:7 pupil teacher ratio
  - c) Option 3: a staffing structure that works to a broadly 1:8 pupil teacher ratio
- Changes in budget requirement through the 3 options are in general restricted to staffing costs with all other costs broadly similar in both proposals. Any changes made are expected to be implemented from September 2023.
- 2.9. After adding the £0.250m EOTAS budget to funding available to College Hall, all 3 options resulted in an overspending as follows:
- a) Option 1 with a 1:6 pupil teacher ratio indicated a maximum £0.220m deficit.
  - b) Option 2 with a 1:7 pupil teacher ratio indicated a maximum £0.197m deficit.
  - c) Option 3 with a 1:8 pupil teacher ratio indicated a maximum £0.082m deficit
- 2.10. College Hall has historically been staffed on a roughly 1:8 ratio, but the current cohort has presented with higher levels of need than in the past. It is the view of staff within Education and Learning that the Option 3 proposal (based on a broadly 1:8 pupil teacher ratio, and supplemented with HLTAs, ELSA support, and additional alternative provisions mapped in to personalised timetables) would be sufficient to provide a good quality of education, once College Hall is operating within a 'business as usual' context. In the interim, it is likely that College Hall will need additional one-off financial support during 2023-24 in order to respond to the recommendations of the Standards Monitoring Board to support their rapid improvement journey.
- 2.11. It is expected that the indicated £0.082m over spending in 2023-24 can be financed from other HNB budgets, where based on an improved 2022-23 outturn position of £0.761m compared to that expected when the 2023-24 budget was set, should provide sufficient scope to achieve this. Identifying funds that can finance the £0.082m gap in 2023-24 and be vired on a permanent basis will ensure that sufficient funds are in place to finance the estimated budget requirement. This will be actioned later on in the financial year once more certainty is available on actual expenditure.
- 2.12. Option 3 would result is around a £28k per pupil cost when at capacity compared to £21k funding allocated in 2022-23.
- 2.13. Research into benchmarks for PRUs has not identified any reliable data from which to make comparisons. The DfE's 'Alternative provision market analysis report' October 2018, states that the average cost for a full-time placement in a PRU in the year 2017-18 was £17,600, but that there were high levels of variation, with LAs reporting figures ranging from £10,000\* to £44,000.

This is highlighted in the following table.



\*It is likely that where LAs have quoted a figure of £10,000 they were just paying the place-led element.

It should be noted that these figures are five years old. Once inflationary pressures and pay awards over this five-year period are applied, the equivalent figure for 2023-24 is more likely to be in the region of £22,800<sup>1</sup>.

2.14. A summary of the financial actions taken is as follows:

1. Of the £0.384m deficit recorded for 2022-23, £0.368m has been charged to the general HNB budget, with £0.016m carried forward into 2023-24 for College Hall to manage
2. A HNB funded budget for 2023-24 set at £1.554m, comprising £1.149m from the 2022-23 rolled forward budget, together with the following increases added:
  - a. £0.073m for general inflationary increases, in accordance with the budget setting strategy
  - b. the £0.250m additional funding agreed in the budget for EOTAS but not specifically allocated to be applied to College Hall
  - c. £0.082m to meet the balance of required spending, to be vired from another HNB budget that is expected to under spend

### 3 Equalities Impact Assessment

3.1 All pupils at College Hall have been identified as being vulnerable, due to the difficulties they have experienced in remaining in mainstream education. There is also a higher proportion of pupils with certain protected characteristics than is typical in Bracknell Forest schools, e.g. free school meal eligibility, race, gender identity different to sex at birth, and sexual orientation. The proposals set out above are intended to improve provision and outcomes at College Hall, and therefore are likely to have a positive impact on those young people at College Hall with a protected characteristic, or those from a low-income family.

<sup>1</sup> Based on Bank of England inflation calculator using the Consumer Price Index.

## 4 Strategic Risk Management Issues

4.1 Key strategic management issues identified at this stage are:

- Failure to provide an effect provision would result in poor outcomes for pupils; negative inspection outcomes; reputational damage to the council; an expectation of additional overall costs for the requirement to purchase external specialist support.

### Background Papers

None.

### Contact for further information

|                                      |              |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| Cheryl Eyre, Assistant Director: E&L | 01344 351492 |
| Zoe Livingstone, Head of Standards   | 01344 354192 |
| Paul Clark, Finance Business Partner | 01344 354054 |

## Treatment of 2022-23 forecast PRU deficit

| <b><u>2022-23 Significant variances</u></b>          | <b>Amount</b>   | <b>Column 1<br/>PRU liability</b> | <b>Column 2<br/>HNB liability</b> |
|--|-----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Staff on suspension (gross before insurance refunds) | £194,000        | £194,000                          |                                   |
| Staff acting up to cover vacant posts                | £26,000         | £26,000                           |                                   |
| Savings from vacant posts                            | -£162,000       | -£162,000                         |                                   |
| Specialist Agency support                            |                 |                                   |                                   |
| Maiden Erleigh Trust - Simon Lovelock                | £42,000         |                                   | £42,000                           |
| Support to Management Committee                      | £7,000          |                                   | £7,000                            |
| MW Education   | £6,000          |                                   | £6,000                            |
| Number One Park Lane Consulting (                    | £19,000         |                                   | £19,000                           |
| Additional premises costs                            | £31,000         | £31,000                           |                                   |
| External AP during autumn 2022, spring 2023 "reset"  | £178,000        |                                   | £178,000                          |
| Loss of SLA income re Home Tuition / Outreach        | £75,000         |                                   | £75,000                           |
| Loss of other income                                 | £8,000          | £8,000                            |                                   |
| Support to EHCP pupils - funding not yet received    | £30,000         |                                   | £30,000                           |
| Staff absence insurance refunds                      | -£71,000        | -£71,000                          |                                   |
| Other  | 1,000           | -£10,000                          | £11,000                           |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>£384,000</b> | <b>£16,000</b>                    | <b>£368,000</b>                   |

**Rationale for carry forward liability:**

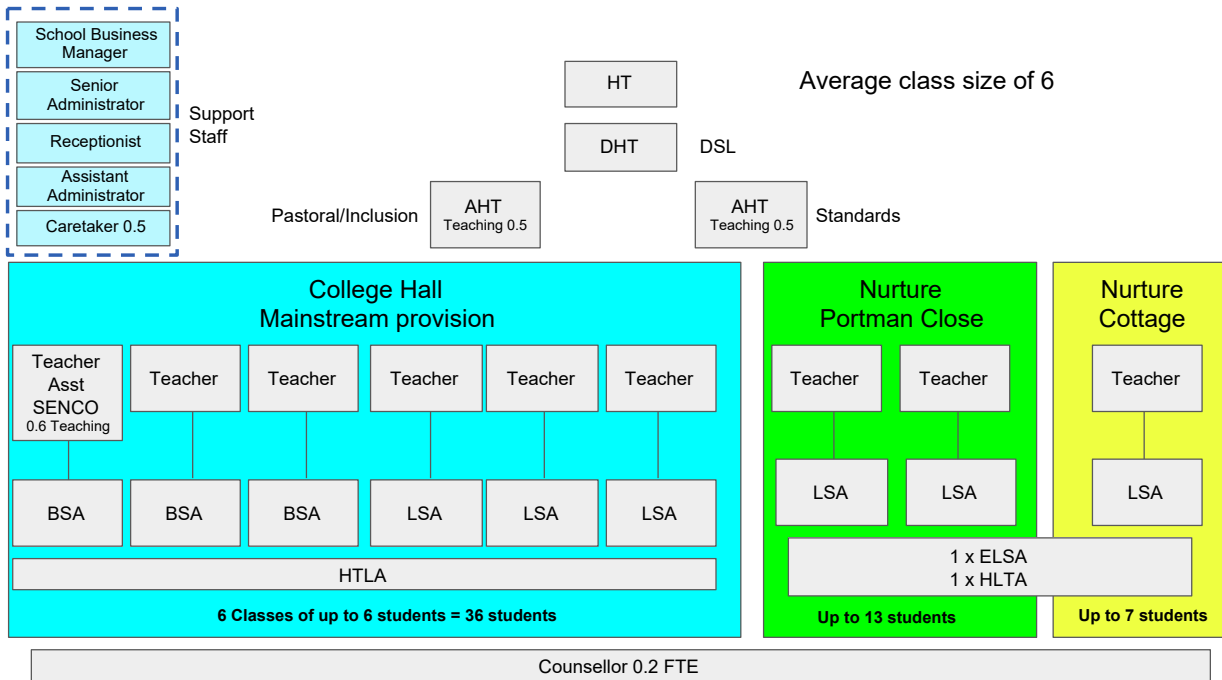
PRU: normal costs of PRU operation

HNB: extraordinary costs, primarily related to moving pupils off-site following "re-set" period, additional consultancy support to SLT and surrender of SLA duties to prioritise stability of core services



**Proposed structure and funding requirement for the PRU on a broadly 1:6 pupil teacher ratio**

**Structure: Option 1**

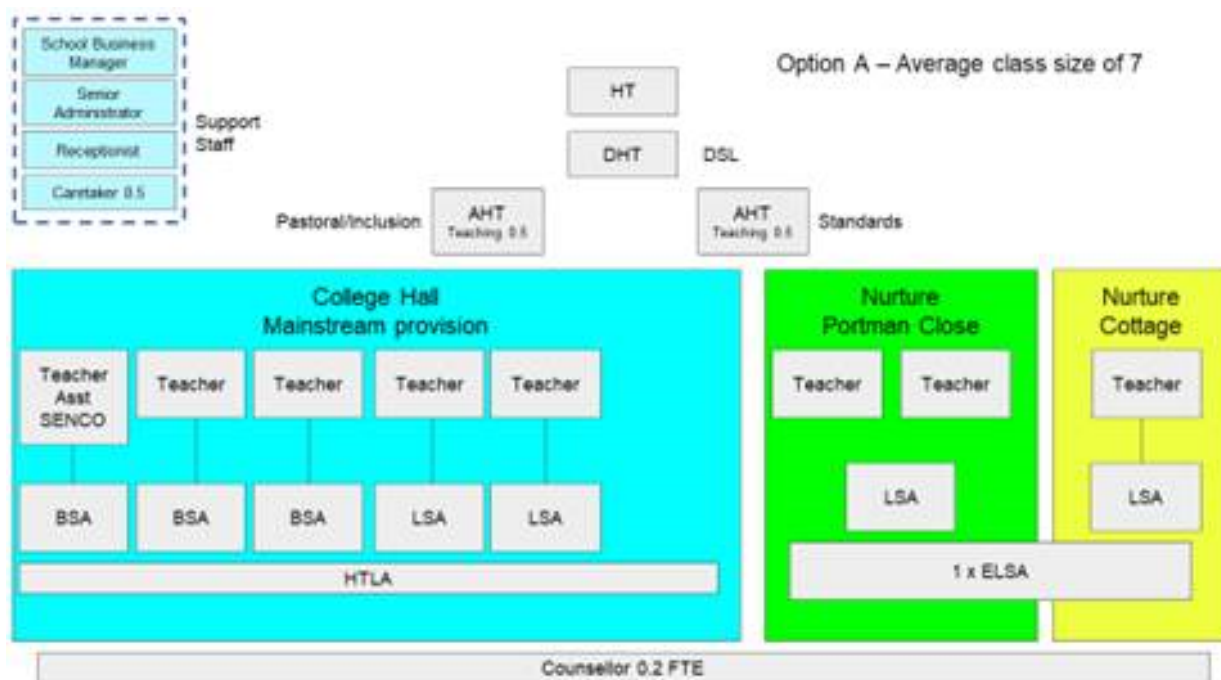


**Forecast budget requirement:**

|   | 2023-24 price base |                   |                    |                   |                   |
|---|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|   | 2020-21 actual     | 2021-22 actual    | 2022-23 Est actual | 2023-24 proposed  | 2024-25 proposed  |
| Employees   | £890,780           | £1,070,280        | £1,162,060         | £1,273,750        | £1,353,690        |
| Premises  | £112,900           | £103,690          | £149,150           | £154,070          | £154,070          |
| Transport   | £16,420            | £16,210           | £26,050            | £28,720           | £28,720           |
| Supplies and services                                     | £83,920            | £114,800          | £107,760           | £177,660          | £149,160          |
| One-off exceptional costs                                 | £0                 | £0                | £252,000           | £0                | £0                |
| BFC SLA purchases etc                                     | £29,420            | £34,780           | £35,020            | £36,900           | £36,900           |
| HTS & Outreach SLA income                                 | -£67,210           | -£102,440         | £0                 | £0                | £0                |
| DfE specific school grants                                | -£107,470          | -£39,800          | -£26,640           | -£30,120          | -£30,100          |
| Other Income  | -£15,290           | -£20,220          | -£75,970           | £0                | £0                |
| <b>Net spend</b>  | <b>£943,470</b>    | <b>£1,177,300</b> | <b>£1,629,430</b>  | <b>£1,640,980</b> | <b>£1,692,440</b> |
| Indicative core funding from BFC (excludes b/fwd)         |                    |                   | £1,148,890         | £1,148,890        | £1,148,890        |
| Estimated inflation to 2023-24 prices                     |                    |                   |                    | £73,600           | £73,600           |
| Estimated brought forward balance (surplus + / deficit -) |                    |                   | £48,000            | -£26,000          |                   |
| <b>Deficit for the year:</b>                              |                    |                   | <b>£432,540</b>    | <b>£444,490</b>   | <b>£469,950</b>   |
| Maximum additional funding                                |                    |                   |                    | £250,000          | £250,000          |
| Savings to be identified                                  |                    |                   |                    | -£194,490         | -£219,950         |

## Proposed structure and funding requirement for the PRU on a broadly 1:7 pupil teacher ratio

### Structure: (Option 2)

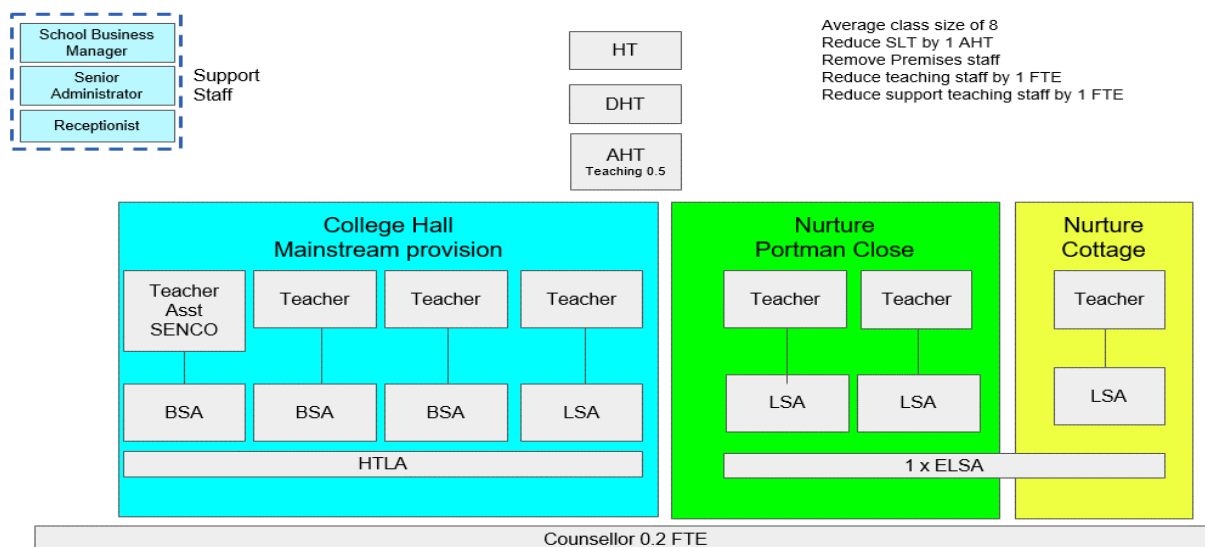


### Forecast cost:

|   | 2020-21<br>actual | 2021-22<br>actual | 2022-23<br>Est actual | 2023-24 price base  |                     |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
|   |                   |                   |                       | 2023-24<br>proposed | 2024-25<br>proposed |
| Employees   | £890,780          | £1,070,280        | £1,162,060            | £1,248,230          | £1,331,180          |
| Premises  | £112,900          | £103,690          | £149,150              | £154,070            | £154,070            |
| Transport   | £16,420           | £16,210           | £26,050               | £28,720             | £28,720             |
| Supplies and services                                     | £83,920           | £114,800          | £107,760              | £177,660            | £149,160            |
| One-off exceptional costs                                 | £0                | £0                | £252,000              | £0                  | £0                  |
| BFC SLA purchases etc                                     | £29,420           | £34,780           | £35,020               | £36,900             | £36,900             |
| HTS & Outreach SLA income                                 | -£67,210          | -£102,440         | £0                    | £0                  | £0                  |
| DfE specific school grants                                | -£107,470         | -£39,800          | -£26,640              | -£30,120            | -£30,100            |
| Other Income  | -£15,290          | -£20,220          | -£75,970              | £0                  | £0                  |
| <b>Net spend</b>  | <b>£943,470</b>   | <b>£1,177,300</b> | <b>£1,629,430</b>     | <b>£1,615,460</b>   | <b>£1,669,930</b>   |
| Indicative core funding from BFC (excludes b/fwd)         |                   |                   | £1,148,890            | £1,148,890          | £1,148,890          |
| Estimated inflation to 2023-24 prices                     |                   |                   |                       | £73,600             | £73,600             |
| Estimated brought forward balance (surplus + / deficit -) |                   |                   | £48,000               | -£26,000            |                     |
| <b>Deficit for the year:</b>                              |                   |                   | <b>£432,540</b>       | <b>£418,970</b>     | <b>£447,440</b>     |
| Maximum additional funding                                |                   |                   |                       | £250,000            | £250,000            |
| Savings to be identified                                  |                   |                   |                       | -£168,970           | -£197,440           |

## Proposed structure and funding requirement for the PRU on a broadly 1:8 pupil teacher ratio

### Structure: (Option 3)



### Forecast cost:

|   | 2023-24 price base |                   |                   |                   |                   |
|---|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|   | 2020-21            | 2021-22           | 2022-23           | 2023-24           | 2024-25           |
|   | actual             | actual            | Est actual        | proposed          | proposed          |
| Employees   | £890,780           | £1,070,280        | £1,162,060        | £1,161,620        | £1,139,530        |
| Premises  | £112,900           | £103,690          | £149,150          | £154,070          | £157,780          |
| Transport   | £16,420            | £16,210           | £26,050           | £28,720           | £28,720           |
| Supplies and services                                     | £83,920            | £114,800          | £107,760          | £177,660          | £156,520          |
| One-off exceptional costs                                 | £0                 | £0                | £252,000          | £0                | £0                |
| BFC SLA purchases etc                                     | £29,420            | £34,780           | £35,020           | £36,900           | £36,900           |
| HTS & Outreach SLA income                                 | -£67,210           | -£102,440         | £0                | £0                | £0                |
| DfE specific school grants                                | -£107,470          | -£39,800          | -£26,640          | -£30,120          | -£30,120          |
| Other Income  | -£15,290           | -£20,220          | -£75,970          | £0                | £0                |
| <b>Net spend</b>  | <b>£943,470</b>    | <b>£1,177,300</b> | <b>£1,629,430</b> | <b>£1,528,850</b> | <b>£1,489,330</b> |
| Indicative core funding from BFC (excludes b/fwd)         |                    |                   | £1,148,890        | £1,148,890        | £1,148,890        |
| Estimated inflation to 2023-24 prices                     |                    |                   |                   | £73,600           | £73,600           |
| Estimated brought forward balance (surplus + / deficit -) |                    |                   | £48,000           | -£26,000          |                   |
| Deficit for the year:                                     |                    |                   | £432,540          | £332,360          | £266,840          |
| Maximum additional funding                                |                    |                   |                   | £250,000          | £250,000          |
| Savings to be identified                                  |                    |                   |                   | -£82,360          | -£16,840          |

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**T0: Schools Forum**

**Date: 22 June 2023**

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**2022-23 Provisional Outturn on the Schools Budget and other  
Financial matters  
Executive Director - People**

**1 Purpose of report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform members of the Schools Forum of the provisional outturn on the 2022-23 Schools Budget, including the allocation of balances and use of Earmarked Reserves. These funds are ring-fenced for the support of schools and pupils.
- 1.2 There is also a brief update on the financial consultation with schools planned for the autumn term to help with initial preparations of the 2024-25 Schools Budget.

**2 Executive summary**

- 2.1 The 2022-23 draft accounts confirm that whilst there has been an improvement in financial performance compared to 2021-22, a significant overspending again occurred with the whole Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) overspending by £6.006m (was £6.595m). As expected, the most significant overspending occurred on the High Needs Block (HNB) at £6.294m (£7.143m over spend in 2021-22).
- 2.2 The over spending on the HNB is consistent with the experience of many LAs across the county for the last few years. Whilst this pressure has been recognised by the government with additional funding being provided to all LAs, this is still insufficient to finance the pressures. With a further £7.365m deficit projected when the 2023-24 HNB budget was considered, this represents a significant financial challenge.
- 2.3 Whilst the current legal framework requires accumulated HNB deficits to remain within the LA's Schools Budget, the financial responsibility of the debt remains with the Department for Education (DfE) to 31 March 2026. Responsibility for any accumulated debt after this point is expected to revert to LAs, creating a significant financial risk to BFC and many other councils at that time. The Council's participation in the Delivering Better Value in SEND programme has enabled one-off funding to be secured from the DfE to fund a programme of activities, aimed at helping to mitigate the cost pressures over time.
- 2.4 Therefore day to day operational decisions continue to rest with LAs and as with all decisions around spending of public money in BF, these are taken in accordance with the normal rules and professional financial management standards required by the Council in the Financial Regulations and other Financial Procedure documents.
- 2.5 The overall balances currently held in the Schools Budget amount to a £13.170m deficit (was £6.435m deficit in 2021-22). This increases to a deficit of £15.477m once the earmarked surplus balances held by schools of £2.307m. When an LA has a deficit balance on its DSG account, it must be separately held in an unusable DSG Adjustment Account.

### **3 Recommendations**

**That the Schools Forum notes:**

- 3.1 that the outturn expenditure for 2022-23, subject to audit, shows an over spending of £6.006m (paragraph 6.6);**
- 3.2 the main reasons for budget variances (paragraph 6.8);**
- 3.3 the cumulative £15.477m deficit balance held in the unusable DSG Adjustment Account, responsibility for which currently rests with the Department for Education to 31 March 2026 (paragraph 6.12);**
- 3.4 the in-year funding transfers to and from Earmarked Reserves made in accordance with the relevant policies (paragraph 6.12).**
- 3.5 the questions expected to be included on the autumn term 2023 financial consultation with schools and provides feedback.**

**That the Forum agrees:**

- 3.6 the formal policy wording associated with the new Early Years Disability Access Reserve as set out in Annex B.**

### **4 Reasons for recommendations**

- 4.1 The recommendations are intended to inform the Schools Forum of financial performance against budget in the 2022-23 financial year including the year end transfers to and from balances and Earmarked Reserves.

### **5 Alternative options considered**

- 5.1 Not appropriate.

### **6 Supporting information**

#### 2022-23 Schools Budget Revenue Expenditure and Funding

- 6.1 Based on recommendations of the Schools Forum, the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning approved the initial Schools Budget for 2022-23 with £121.694m of grant funding. This comprised the estimated amount of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) income that would be received from the DfE at £114.780m, anticipated income of £1.689m to reflect sixth form grant income from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), £2.078m from the Pupil Premium grant, £1.389m from the new School Supplementary Grant, £1.198m from the Universal Infant Free School Meal grant, £0.438m from the Primary PE and Sports grant and £0.122m from Teachers' Pay and Pension Grants. In addition to grant funding, there is also a budget of £0.126m for other receipts making total income of £121.820m.
- 6.2 Subsequent to this decision, anticipated DSG income has been updated to reflect revised grant notifications from the DfE, including reductions arising from academy schools where the amount due from the BF Funding Formula for Schools is recouped from the council for the ESFA to directly fund relevant schools. After making the following adjustments, the final DSG allocation amounted to £78.808m:

- £39.267m deduction for academy schools.
- £0.141m increase to HNB spending power following changes to the original allocation by the ESFA where final data indicated fewer places purchased from providers directly funded by the ESFA compared to the estimate included in the original budget
- £0.155m increase to the Early Years Block, essentially to finance the cost of the free entitlement to early education and childcare. This reflects the in-year recalculation of funding by the ESFA.

6.3 There are further budget adjustments to report:

- As part of the council's commitment to provide an additional £1m to schools to help mitigate the additional costs arising from new schools, the council added a further £0.182m to school budgets. The full £1m additional funding has now been allocated to schools.
- As part of a joint funding strategy for financing the costs arising from new schools, the Schools Forum agreed the addition of £0.174m from the DSG funded New school start-up / diseconomies Reserve
- In accordance with Local Government Accounting code of practice, where schools use their revenue funding for capital related expenditure, both the funding and spend need to be transferred to the capital accounts. The Council was notified by schools that of a total of £0.408m of funding needed to be converted to capital through a transfer from revenue. There is a net nil effect on school budgets from this as both the funding and costs are transferred out of delegated budgets.

6.4 The net effect of the budget changes set out above is that the final net Schools Budget totalled -£0.052mm, with an income budget of £82.847m, and an overall gross budget of £82.795m.

6.5 In accordance with DfE Funding Regulations, a number of self-balancing budget adjustments have also been made during the year to reflect the transfer of funds from centrally managed budgets to schools where they have met qualifying criteria or original estimates are revised following verified data. The most significant adjustments reflect funding for the free entitlement to early years education and childcare, changes in SEN funding for named pupils i.e. Element 3 top up funding, allocations from the Growth Fund, mainly in respect of managing the financial impact of Key Stage 1 Class Size Regulations, and support to schools in financial difficulty.

Provisional Outturn Position

6.6 The provisional final accounts for the Schools Budget, as summarised at Annex A, shows an over spending of £6.006m. These figures remain subject to change, pending external audit, although no significant movement is anticipated.

6.7 Some expenditure in the Schools Budget is ultimately financed from accumulated balances and earmarked reserves. Annex A sets out the transfers required as part of the accounts closedown process which is explained in more detail in paragraphs 6.9 to 6.12.

6.8 An explanation of the main changes (+/- £0.050m) from the approved budget plan, after transfers to or from reserves and balances are as follows.

## **LA Managed Budgets:**

### **Schools Block: -£0.204m under spend:**

- i. **Official staff absences. -£0.067m under spend.** The incidence and cost of maternity leave absence for classroom staff was lower than expected
- ii. **Under spend returned to schools. +£0.104m over spend.** Where there is an aggregate underspending on de-delegated these budgets, it is returned to maintained schools that initially funded the services through a budget top slice.
- iii. **Other Schools Block provisions and support services.-£0.169m under spend.** There was a net under spending of £0.116m in the Growth Fund in respect of funding allocations to schools experiencing additional teaching costs as a result of *Key Stage 1 maximum class size regulations* and which reflects fewer schools having numbers on roll significantly outside of the 30 per class limit. Additionally, there was a £0.050m under spending on boarding fees for children looked after in residential settings where the virtual school applied pupil premium funding.

### **High Needs Block. +£6.294m over spend:**

Members of the Forum will be aware that budget items directly below represent the most unpredictable and volatile education budgets that the council manages. Placement requirements can change at short notice and new pressures can emerge that can together result in large movements in costs.

It is also well known that significant cost pressures are being experienced, which is a national issue, and not just limited to BF, with the number of pupils with a statement or Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) <sup>1</sup> having increased in 13.4% between January 2022 and January 2023 (provisional) and by 24.4% in the last 2 years <sup>2</sup>.

Additionally, there is a relatively high proportion of external placements which tend to be the most expensive provisions.

These factors are the main contributors to the significant overspending being experienced.

- iv. **Delegated Special School budgets. +£0.052m over spend.** Increase in funding to Kennel Lane Special school mainly as a result in change in the level of support needs with numbers on roll of BF resident pupils remaining stable at around 160.
- v. **Maintained schools and academies. -£0.646m under spend.** This relates to the cost of additional Element 3 top up support i.e. individual support needs above £0.010m where these have been determined by assessment. This includes payments to BF and other LA schools including Special Resource Provisions.

Support provided to BF schools over spent by £0.120m and is as a consequence of more pupils than anticipated in the budget remaining in a BF mainstream setting

For non-BF schools, there were fewer pupil placements than assumed in the budget, with a net reduction of 16 placements (-£0.326m). The budget had assumed 15 additional placements which therefore under spent (-£0.310m). Furthermore, average placement costs were expected to increase (-£0.169m) when prices remained stable.

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<sup>1</sup> An EHCP is a legal document that describes a child or young person's special educational, health and social care needs. It explains the extra help that will be given to meet those needs and how that help will support the child or young person.

<sup>2</sup> DfE SEN statistic at relevant January from: [Create your own tables online, Table Tool – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/create-your-own-tables-online-table-tool-exploring-education-statistics)



- vi. **Non-Maintained Special Schools and Colleges (NMSS). -£0.944m under spend.** The ESFA generally pay the £0.010m place cost at these institutions, with LAs paying individual support needs above this level and which reflects the support arrangements agreed for schools plus £0.010m for any additional places that are needed and have not been pre-purchased.  
Whilst the original budget proposals assumed a reduction in placements of 16, the actual number was 39, 23 greater than expected. At an average placement cost of £0.039m, this resulted in a -£0.897m underspending.  
Within the overall number of placements, an increase in placements in post 16 FE institutions was expected, but the 44 actual increase was greater than anticipated. With placements in FE institutions averaging around £0.008m, this change in placement profile resulted in an overall reduction in average placement costs in NMSS and colleges of £4,207.
- vii. **Education out of school. +£0.576m over spend.** A separate agenda item on tonight's meeting provides a detailed update on EOTAS and for College Hall Pupil Referral Unit in particular which overspent by £0.384m primarily from a combination of additional management capacity, external placements for pupils and reduced income from SLAs with BFC for management of complimentary services. The Home Tuition Service over spent by £0.303m through additional placements and higher cost agency workers.
- viii. **Other SEN provisions and support services. -£0.244m under spend.** The main area of overspending amounts to £0.063m on additional support for pupils with medical needs. This is offset by a number of savings primarily arising from staff vacancies in the new inclusion service which commenced part way through the year (£0.074m), the range of specialist therapies as a result of staff shortages (-£0.119m), and a number of relatively small under spendings.
- ix. **Forecast overspend in Executive approved budget. +£7.500m overspend.** In setting the budget for 2022-23, the Executive of the Council recognised a significant over spending was unavoidable and agreed to set the budget £7.5m above available DSG income. This is shown as a negative amount as it has been added to the specific budget lines expected to overspend to ensure a realistic budget is reported against all services.

**Early Years Block. -£0.084m under spend:**

There are no significant budget variances to report against Early Years.

**Net over spending for the year. +£6.006m:**

- x. The final outturn for the year was a £6.006m overspend which represents a significant improvement of £1.494m compared to the £7.500m deficit expected when the budget was set.

Annex A sets out the full Schools Budget at a summary level, with the above notes referencing to the appropriate lines with budget variances.

**Balances and reserves**

- 6.9 As part of the financial planning process, there is the opportunity to establish and maintain reserves and balances. Earmarked Reserves are sums of money which have been set aside for specific purposes and the Schools Forum has agreed a number of Schools Budget reserves should be created. Each year these reserves can have funds added or deducted depending on financial performance and the purposes for which they were created. Balances reflect year end unspent funds and can be held separately as an unring-fenced amount or are transferred to Earmarked Reserves.

- 6.10 In order to align with DSG grant conditions, the Forum agreed that one new reserve should be created in 2022-23 which is required to identify any unspent balance on the Early Years Disability Access Fund as these funds must be used to finance support for children in receipt of Disability Living Allowance attending Early Years settings.
- 6.11 The relevant School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations and Regulation 30L of The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations (the 2003 Regulations) determine the accounting treatment to be adopted by LAs with deficit balances on their Schools budget. This affects BFC and requires the establishment of a statutorily ring-fenced unusable reserve – the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account. The new accounting practice has the effect of separating schools budget deficits from the LAs general fund to confirm no liability on LAs. This arrangement has been put in place by the government for an initial period to 31 March 2026.
- 6.12 Table 1 below provides a summary of movements last year together with current balances on the earmarked reserves of which column 3 shows a total deficit of funds at 31 March 2023 of £13.170m, an increase of £6.735m compared to 2021-22 (column 2). As balances held by schools are ring-fenced for future use by schools, these are outside the DSG Adjustment Account which shows only the debt, the responsibility of which currently resides with the government. The final row of Table 1 shows the debt in the DSG Adjustment Account at 31 March 2023 at £15.477m.
- 6.13 Annex B provides a summary of the purpose and policy of each element of the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account together with recent levels of funds.

Table 1: Earmarked reserves and balances related to the Schools Budget

| Reserve                                       | Balance<br>B/Forward<br>01-Apr-22<br>(1)<br>£ 000 | Year end<br>Transfers<br>(2)<br>£ 000 | Final<br>Balance<br>31-Mar-2023<br>(3)<br>£ 000 |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| <u>School Balances - Earmarked:</u>           |   |                                       |   |
| Primary                                       | -1,933  | 571                                   | -1,362  |
| Secondary                                     | -699  | 43                                    | -656  |
| Special                                       | -226  | -79                                   | -306  |
| College Hall PRU                              | -47   | 63                                    | 16  |
| <b>(a)</b>                                    | -2,905  | 599                                   | -2,307  |
| <u>Earmarked Reserves</u>                     |   |                                       |   |
| SEN Resource Provision Reserve                | -401  | 0                                     | -401  |
| New school start-up / diseconomies <b>(b)</b> | -746  | 174                                   | -572  |
| School Expansion Rates Reserve <b>(c)</b>     | -419  | -113                                  | -532  |
| SEN Strategy Reserve <b>(d)</b>               | -192  | 70                                    | -1,628  |
| EY Disability Access <b>(e)</b>               | 0   | -17                                   | -17   |
|   | -1,758  | 113                                   | -1,645  |
| <u>Schools Budget General Reserve</u>         |   |                                       |   |
| Brought forward balance                       | 11,098  | 0                                     | 11,098  |
| 2022-23 in-year over spend <b>(f)</b>         | 0   | 6,023                                 | 6,023   |
|   | 11,098  | 6,023                                 | 17,121  |
| Total reserves                                | 6,435   | 6,735                                 | 13,170  |
| Memo item: DSG Adjustment Account             | 9,340   | 6,137                                 | 15,477  |

Note: some rows and columns may cross tally due to rounding errors.

A number of year-end transfers, as set out in column 2 of Table 1 have been processed in accordance with the accounts closedown arrangements:

- Note a: School balances: Statutory Regulations require balances on school budgets to be earmarked to individual schools for use in a future financial year. There was an aggregate £0.599m transfer from balances during the year, the most significant element of which was the £0.416m transferred to schools that converted in-year to academies and were therefore removed from BFC accounts. Schools that remained maintained for the whole year withdrew a cumulative £0.183m during the year. A separate item on tonight's agenda provides further detail on school balances.
- Note b: New school start-up / diseconomies Reserve. The purpose of this reserve is to help fund the additional costs occurring in new schools as they build up pupil numbers to sustainable levels. As part of the 2022-23 budget setting process, the Forum agreed the withdrawal of £0.174m for this purpose.
- Note c: School Expansion Rates Reserve: the annual review of liabilities reflects the latest in-year school rates revaluations. A number of new revaluations were completed that aggregated to reduced costs of -£0.113m.
- Note d: SEN Strategy Reserve: the Forum has previously agreed that this reserve would be used to finance the costs of short term support for pupils, including those that may not have an EHCP, to aid integration into mainstream education. Funding allocations of £0.070m were agreed in 2022-23.
- Note e Early Years Disability Access Reserve: this is a new reserve created to capture specific financing to support children with disabilities attending Early Years provisions.
- Note e: Schools Budget General Reserve: the aggregate in-year over spending on centrally managed budgets of £6.023m has been charged here.

#### Financial consultation with schools

- 6.14 Each autumn term, in advance of the new financial year, the council undertakes a financial consultation with schools to set out the current budget position following the announcement of DfE funding and regulatory decisions (these are usually made at the end of July) to gather relevant information for budget planning. This also includes seeking school views on the areas of budget decision making process that are the responsibility of the Schools Forum.
- 6.15 At this stage, the consultation is expected to seek views on the usual areas:
1. Should we aim to set the minimum per pupil funding increase from 2023-24 at the highest permitted rate for all school types i.e. mainstream and special?
  2. Should schools receiving the highest increases in per pupil funding finance the cost of ensuring all schools receive a minimum increase in per pupil funding from 2023-24?
  3. Should funds from maintained mainstream schools continue to be "de-delegated" back to the council on permitted budgets where there are strategic, risk sharing or cost-effective benefits to gain?
  4. Should maintained schools continue to make a financial contribution to the education related statutory and regulatory duties required of the council that are no longer financed through a grant from the DfE?

6.16 Additionally for 2023, the following areas are also expected to be included and views are now being sought:

- 5 An update to the calculation of notional SEN Funding. Notional SEN Funding is included in the main school budget and is intended to finance additional support needs of up to £6,000 for pupils prior to receiving an Education Healthcare Plan. There is no mandatory calculation that must be applied, and the BF calculation is to be reviewed to reflect current circumstances.
- 6 A request for schools to make a financial contribution to the High Needs Block, to help finance the annual deficit. Where agreed by the local Schools Forum, LAs are permitted to transfer up to 0.5% of their Schools Block DSG income. This would amount to around £0.450m at 2023-24 prices.

## **7 Advice received from statutory and other officers**

### Borough Solicitor

7.1 The relevant legal provisions are contained within the body of the report.

### Executive Director of Resources: Finance

7.2 The financial implications arising from this report are set out in the supporting information. The budget variances were reviewed during the year and where appropriate, have been built into the 2023-24 budget, most notably relating to the increasing pressure on High Needs Budgets.

7.3 Whilst liability for the £15.477 deficit balance on the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account rests with the DfE, it is important that the council continues to work on strategies to reduce costs whilst maintaining appropriate support levels to children and young people as the liability is expected to eventually pass on to the council.

### Equalities Impact Assessment

7.4 There are no specific impacts arising from this report.

### Strategic Risk Management Issues

7.5 There is a risk to the Schools Budget from not having sufficient reserves to manage unforeseen in-year cost pressures. This is mitigated by holding funds in earmarked reserves and other reserves, although these are now diminishing.

7.6 The £15.477m deficit balance on the DSG Adjustment Account is expected to continue to rise significantly in the medium term and whilst there is government support to cover this liability in the medium term, should the debt ultimately transfer to the council it will represent a significant risk.

### Climate Change Implications

7.7 The recommendations from this report will have no impact on emissions of carbon dioxide as they generally relate to on activities already undertaken.

### Health and wellbeing considerations

- 7.8 The recommendations from this report will have no impact on health and wellbeing as they report on activities already undertaken.

## **8 Consultation**

- 8.1 Not applicable.

### Background Papers

None

### Contact for further information

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### Doc. Ref

[https://bfcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/fina/bpm/FIBPSCB-FIN9.6/Schools Forum/\(117\) 220623/2022-23 Schools Budget outturn etc.docx](https://bfcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/fina/bpm/FIBPSCB-FIN9.6/Schools%20Forum/(117)%20220623/2022-23%20Schools%20Budget%20outturn%20etc.docx)

## 2022-23 PROVISIONAL BUDGET MONITORING OUTTURN STATEMENT FOR THE SCHOOLS BUDGET

| Service Area   | Budget before year end transfers |               |               | Outturn<br>Net Spend | Estimated Variance |                   |                 | Transfer<br>to (+) / from (-)<br>reserves | Final<br>Budget | Final<br>variance | Note |
|--|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---|-----------------|-------------------|------|
|  | Spend                            | Income        | Net           |                      | Over<br>spending   | Under<br>spending | Net<br>variance |   |                 |                   |      |
|  | £000                             | £000          | £000          |                      | £000               | £000              | £000            | £000                                      | £000            | £000              |      |
| <b>Schools Block</b>                                     |                                  |               |               |                      |                    |                   |                 |   |                 |                   |      |
| <u>Delegated and devolved funding:</u>                   |                                  |               |               |                      |                    |                   |                 |   |                 |                   |      |
| Delegated Mainstream School Budgets                      | 48,652                           | 0             | 48,652        | 49,266               | 614                | 0                 | 614             | -614                                      | 49,266          | 0                 |      |
| School Grant income                                      | 6,914                            | -6,914        | 0             | -3                   | 5                  | -8                | -3              | 0   | 0               | -3                |      |
| <b>Schools Block</b>                                     | <b>55,566</b>                    | <b>-6,914</b> | <b>48,652</b> | <b>49,263</b>        | <b>619</b>         | <b>-8</b>         | <b>611</b>      | <b>-614</b>                               | <b>49,266</b>   | <b>-3</b>         |      |
| <u>LA managed items:</u>                                 |                                  |               |               |                      |                    |                   |                 |   |                 |                   |      |
| Retained de-delegated Budgets:                           |                                  |               |               |                      |                    |                   |                 |   |                 |                   |      |
| <i>Behaviour</i>   | 256                              | -7            | 249           | 220                  | 14                 | -42               | -28             | 0   | 249             | -29               |      |
| <i>Schools in Financial Difficulty</i>                   | 73                               | 0             | 73            | 60                   | 0                  | -12               | -12             | 0   | 73              | -13               |      |
| <i>Official Staff Absences</i>                           | 328                              | 0             | 328           | 261                  | 0                  | -67               | -67             | 0   | 328             | -67               | i    |
| <i>English as an Additional Language</i>                 | 111                              | 0             | 111           | 111                  | 0                  | 1                 | 1               | 0   | 111             | 0                 |      |
| <i>PRC / Licence Fees / FSM checking</i>                 | 57                               | 0             | 57            | 62                   | 2                  | 0                 | 2               | 0   | 57              | 5                 |      |
| <i>Under spend returned to maintained schools</i>        | 0                                | 0             | 0             | 104                  | 104                | 0                 | 104             | 0   | 0               | 104               | ii   |
| Combined Service Budgets:                                |                                  |               |               |                      |                    |                   |                 |   |                 |                   |      |
| <i>Education Attainment and School Transport for CLA</i> | 176                              | 0             | 176           | 162                  | 0                  | -15               | -15             | 0   | 176             | -14               |      |
| <i>Family Intervention Project / Domestic Abuse</i>      | 102                              | 0             | 102           | 102                  | 0                  | 0                 | 0               | 0   | 102             | 0                 |      |
| <i>CAF Co-ordinator</i>                                  | 42                               | 0             | 42            | 41                   | 0                  | 0                 | 0               | 0   | 42              | -1                |      |
| <i>SEN Contract Management</i>                           | 33                               | 0             | 33            | 33                   | 0                  | 0                 | 0               | 0   | 33              | 0                 |      |
| Statutory and Regulatory Duties                          | 507                              | 0             | 507           | 490                  | 2                  | -19               | -17             | 0   | 507             | -17               |      |
| Other Schools Block provisions and support services      | 538                              | 0             | 538           | 256                  | 30                 | -312              | -282            | 113                                       | 425             | -169              | iii  |
| <b>LA managed items:</b>                                 | <b>2,223</b>                     | <b>-7</b>     | <b>2,216</b>  | <b>1,902</b>         | <b>152</b>         | <b>-466</b>       | <b>-314</b>     | <b>113</b>                                | <b>2,103</b>    | <b>-201</b>       |      |
| <b>Sub total Schools Block</b>                           | <b>57,789</b>                    | <b>-6,921</b> | <b>50,868</b> | <b>51,165</b>        | <b>771</b>         | <b>-474</b>       | <b>297</b>      | <b>-501</b>                               | <b>51,369</b>   | <b>-204</b>       |      |

**2022-23 PROVISIONAL BUDGET MONITORING  
OUTTURN STATEMENT FOR THE SCHOOLS BUDGET**

| Service Area                                      | Budget before year end transfers |                |                | Outturn<br>Net Spend | Estimated Variance |                   |                 | Transfer<br>to (+) / from (-)<br>reserves | Final<br>Budget | Final<br>variance | Note |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---|-----------------|-------------------|------|
|   | Spend                            | Income         | Net            |                      | Over<br>spending   | Under<br>spending | Net<br>variance |   |                 |                   |      |
|   | £000                             | £000           | £000           |                      | £000               | £000              | £000            | £000                                      | £000            | £000              |      |
| <b>High Needs Block</b>                           |                                  |                |                |                      |                    |                   |                 |   |                 |                   |      |
| Delegated Special Schools Budgets                 | 5,152                            | -7             | 5,145          | 5,125                | 52                 | -79               | -27             | 79  | 5,066           | 52                | iv   |
| Maintained schools and academies                  | 4,935                            | -39            | 4,896          | 4,321                | 1,134              | -1,710            | -576            | -70                                       | 4,966           | -646              | v    |
| Non Maintained Special Schools and Colleges       | 11,403                           | 0              | 11,403         | 10,446               | 39                 | -983              | -944            | 0   | 11,403          | -944              | vi   |
| Education out of school                           | 2,179                            | -3             | 2,176          | 2,819                | 768                | -129              | 639             | -63                                       | 2,239           | 576               | vii  |
| Other SEN provisions and support services         | 2,384                            | -68            | 2,316          | 2,073                | 195                | -439              | -244            | 0   | 2,316           | -244              | viii |
| Overspending anticipated in original budget       | -7,500                           | 0              | -7,500         | 0                    | 7,500              | 0                 | 7,500           | 0   | -7,500          | 7,500             | ix   |
| <b>Sub total High Needs Block</b>                 | <b>18,553</b>                    | <b>-117</b>    | <b>18,436</b>  | <b>24,784</b>        | <b>9,688</b>       | <b>-3,340</b>     | <b>6,348</b>    | <b>-54</b>                                | <b>18,490</b>   | <b>6,294</b>      |      |
| <b>Early Years Block</b>                          |                                  |                |                |                      |                    |                   |                 |   |                 |                   |      |
| Free entitlement to early years education         | 6,058                            | -2             | 6,056          | 6,124                | -42                | 0                 | -42             | 0   | 6,056           | -42               |      |
| Other Early Years provisions and support services | 395                              | 0              | 395            | 354                  | 0                  | -42               | -42             | 0   | 395             | -42               |      |
| <b>Sub total Early Years Block</b>                | <b>6,453</b>                     | <b>-2</b>      | <b>6,451</b>   | <b>6,478</b>         | <b>-42</b>         | <b>-42</b>        | <b>-84</b>      | <b>0</b>                                  | <b>6,451</b>    | <b>-84</b>        |      |
| <b>Dedicated Schools Grant</b>                    | <b>0</b>                         | <b>-75,807</b> | <b>-75,807</b> | <b>-75,918</b>       | <b>0</b>           | <b>0</b>          | <b>0</b>        | <b>0</b>                                  | <b>-75,807</b>  | <b>0</b>          |      |
| <b>TOTAL - Schools Budget</b>                     | <b>82,795</b>                    | <b>-82,847</b> | <b>-52</b>     | <b>6,509</b>         | <b>10,417</b>      | <b>-3,856</b>     | <b>6,561</b>    | <b>-555</b>                               | <b>503</b>      | <b>6,006</b>      | x    |

**Note on Unallocated Schools Budget balance:**

|  |             |   |               |
|--|-------------|---|---------------|
| Diseconomy funding for new schools - BFC                     | 182         | Forecast overspend in Executive approved budget | 7,500         |
| Diseconomy funding for new schools - DSG balances            | 174         | 2022-23 in-year net variance                    | 6,006         |
| Revenue expenditure required to be treated as capital (RCCO) | <b>-408</b> |   |               |
| <b>Net over spend for the year</b>                           | <b>-52</b>  |   | <b>-1,494</b> |

See paragraph 6.8 for an explanation to the notes to variances. Note roundings may result in totals not cross checking

### Breakdown of balances arising from the Dedicated Schools Grant

#### DSG adjustment account: £15.477m deficit

| Internal Reserve                   | Purpose  | Policy   | Year-end value   |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| SEN Resource Units                 | To set aside in a reserve for building adaptations to allow for the creation of SEN resource units on school sites.              | To finance capital expenditure to assist with the development of local, cost effective provisions to support pupils with SEN.                                | March 19 £0.459m<br>March 20 £0.459m<br>March 21 £0.459m<br>March 22 £0.401m<br>March 23 £0.401m |
| New school start-up / diseconomies | To set aside an earmarked reserve to support the additional costs that will arise from the new school places building programme. | To help finance the diseconomy costs that will arise from new schools that will open with relatively low numbers of pupils as housing developments progress. | March 19 £1.000m<br>March 20 £0.746m<br>March 21 £0.746m<br>March 22 £0.746m<br>March 23 £0.572m |
| School Meals Re-Tender Reserve     | To set aside an earmarked reserve for the School Meals Catering Re-tendering exercise  | To help finance costs arising from future Schools Meals Catering tendering exercises.  | March 19 £0.040m<br>March 20 £0.040m<br>March 21 Nil<br>March 22 Nil<br>March 23 Nil             |
| Schools Expansion Rates Reserve    | To set aside an earmarked reserve for the rates costs associated with school expansions.   | To help finance costs arising from the school expansion programme.   | March 19 £1.092m<br>March 20 £0.364m<br>March 21 £0.435m<br>March 22 £0.419m<br>March 23 £0.532m |



| <b>Reserve</b>                           | <b>Purpose</b>  | <b>Policy</b>   | <b>Year-end value</b>  |
|--|---|---|--|
| SEN Strategic Reserve                    | To set aside funding to contribution to costs arising from implementation of the SEN Strategy, assisting with the early implementation of change to improve the outcomes of children.   | To help finance start-up and one-off initiatives arising from the SEN Strategy.   | March 19 £0.439m<br>March 20 £0.356m<br>March 21 £0.256m<br>March 22 £0.192m<br>March 23 £0.122m       |
| <b>NEW: EY Disability Access Reserve</b> | To set aside in a reserve any unspent EY Disability Access funding to facilitate use in a future year   | To comply with grant conditions which require help finance disability access improvements at providers to support eligible early years pupils.                                | March 23 £0.017m   |
| Grants unapplied Reserve                 | To set aside in a reserve for unspent Schools Budget related grants where there are no restrictions applied to the spending from the grant awarding body.   | To facilitate the transfer of unspent grant balances between financial years.   | March 18 £0.003m<br>March 19 £0.003m<br>March 20 £0.003m<br>March 21 £0.003m<br>March 22 £0.003m       |
| Schools Budget General Reserve           | The Schools Budget is a ring-fenced account, fully funded by external grants, the most significant of which is the Dedicated Schools Grant. Any under or overspending remaining at the end of the financial year must be carried forward to the next year's Schools Budget. | This reserve is held for specific accounting reasons. The funds in this reserve are ring fenced and cannot be used for any other purpose than a future years' Schools Budget. | March 19 £1.577m<br>March 20 -£0.141m<br>March 21 -£4.503m<br>March 22 -£11.098m<br>March 23 -£17.122m |

**Earmarked school balances:**

| <b>Internal Reserve</b> | <b>Purpose</b>   | <b>Policy</b>   | <b>Year-end value</b>  |
|-------------------------|--|---|--|
| School Balances         | These funds are used to support future expenditure within the Schools Budget relating to individual school balances. | Balances are permitted to be retained by Schools under the Schools Standards & Framework Act 1998. Policies are set and the reserves are managed by schools and the LA has no practical control over the level of balances. | March 19 £1.610m<br>March 20 £1.038m<br>March 21 £2.123m<br>March 22 £2.905m<br>March 23 £2.307m |



**To: Schools Forum**  
**Date 22 June 2023**

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## **2022-23 Balances held by maintained schools Executive Director - People**

### **1 Purpose of report**

- 1.1 This is an annual report, the purpose of which is to update members of the Schools Forum on the level of balances held by maintained schools as at 31 March 2023, how these compare to the previous financial year, and to consider whether any significant surplus balances should be subject to claw-back and re-invested within the overall Schools Budget.
- 1.2 Balances held by academy schools are not part of the council's accounts and are therefore excluded from this report. With Easthampstead Park Secondary and Sandy Lane Primary schools converting to an academy during the financial year, relevant funds have been excluded from this report to ensure an appropriate comparison can be made to the previous financial year.

### **2 Executive summary**

- 2.1 Overall, there was a deterioration in school balances during 2022-23 where cumulative surplus balances reduced by £0.182m to £2.307m (down 7%). At 4.4% of annual income, average surplus balances are above the minimum 3% level recommended to be able to safely manage unforeseen in-year pressures.
- 2.2 Within this, a number of schools are holding significant surplus balances, all of which have provided explanations to indicate suitable plans are in place to ensure resources are being spent in a timely manner to support current pupils.
- 2.3 One school registered a surplus balance above the permitted limit and is therefore subject to claw-back. In accordance with the policy, the governors have requested that the claw-back is waived, for which Forum members will need to make a decision.
- 2.4 There are also a number of schools with deficit balances, which have in total increased by £0.085m to £0.603m. The council and Schools Forum support schools facing financial difficulties through licensed deficit arrangements that set out medium to long term recovery plans that demonstrate that a temporarily short term over spend of annual income is recovered and a return to a surplus is achieved. An update on school licensed deficit proposals will be presented to the Forum in September.
- 2.5 The Department for Education (DfE) also monitors schools with deficit balances and collects High-level Action Plans each year from local authorities where the number or proportion of schools with revenue balance deficits is above a certain level. Three BF schools have been identified as in scope of DfE interest and a response is being produced which will be shared with the Forum in September.
- 2.6 Schools are also permitted to retain unspent balances arising from capital related budgets. They receive small annual budgets for capital and often need to accumulate funding from a number of years in order to fully finance projects. In December 2022, the DfE provided additional funding for schools at approximately double the initial allocation to implement new energy efficiency measures before the end of the financial year.

Whilst a significant portion of the additional funding as spent, overall capital balances increased by £0.253m (up 79%). Capital budgets are directly funded by DfE grant and are outside the local claw-back scheme. DfE have the discretion to remove any unspent balances that remain 3 years and 1 month after allocation.

### **3 Recommendations**

**That the Schools Forum notes:**

#### **3.1 The key performance information on school balances, as set out in paragraph 6.3, and in particular;**

- i. Aggregate surplus balances have decreased by £0.182m to £2.306m (-7%);**
- ii. The value of surplus balances has decreased by £0.097m to £2.910m;**
- iii. The value of deficit balances has increased by £0.085m to £0.603m which continues to require careful monitoring;**
- iv. Significant surplus school balances have increased by £0.024m to £0.596m (+4%);**
- v. At 4.4%, average balances are considered to be above the minimum level required for working balances to safely cover unforeseen circumstances.**

#### **3.2 The requirement to complete an Action Plan for the Department for Education in respect of schools with deficits in excess of 5% of income, based on 2021-22 accounts (paragraph 6.19).**

**That the Schools Forum agrees:**

#### **3.3 That the entire significant surplus balances held by schools up to the cap permitted in the claw-back scheme has been assigned for relevant purposes as set out in the approved scheme and should not be subject to claw-back (paragraph 6.12).**

#### **3.4 What amount, if any of the significant surplus balance above the cap permitted in the claw-back scheme should be removed from Crowthorne Primary School (paragraph 6.16).**

### **4 Reasons for recommendations**

#### **4.1 It is appropriate for the Schools Forum to be aware of, and where relevant, comment on these financial matters.**

### **5 Alternative options considered**

#### **5.1 Not applicable.**

## 6 Supporting information

### Calculating Statutory School Balances

- 6.1 The School Funding Framework provides a statutory requirement for the balance of expenditure made by each school compared to its budget share to be carried forward for use by individual governing bodies in the next financial year. This requirement is confirmed in the Scheme for Financing Schools which applies to both surplus and deficit balances and relates to all revenue funds held by schools in local authority accounts.
- 6.2 Attached at Annex A is a list of individual school balances as at 31 March 2023. Carry forward balances are calculated by deducting total net expenditure from new year funding and any accumulated balance, as measured through national school benchmarking data held in the Consistent Financial Reporting (CFR) framework. The percentage of carry forward is calculated against new year funding only to ensure any potential claw-back focuses on the use of new year funding only. Annex B provides a summary profile of deficit and surplus balances and movements compared to last year.

### General comments on school balances

- 6.3 Some comments on the analysis are set out below. However, with one remaining maintained secondary school, little useful comparable information is available, and therefore most references relate to primary schools.
1. Aggregate surplus balances have decreased by -£0.182m, from £2.489m to £3.308m (reduction of -7%). This indicates a substantial transfer of one-off funds to schools to finance their spending.
  2. There has been a -£0.438m decrease in aggregate surplus balances in the primary and PRU sectors (-25%) with balances held by secondary and special sectors increasing by +£0.256m (+36%). The difficulties experienced by primary schools in particular arise from the impact of reducing pupil numbers and rising costs that have exceeded the increase in funding provided by the government.
  3. On average, at 4.4% of total budget (was 4.9%), average reserves are above the 3% minimum level considered appropriate for sufficient working balances to cover unforeseen circumstances. However, the primary average balance is 3.6% (was 4.9%), which is approaching the minimum appropriate level.
  4. Within the headline average surplus balance, there are 7 schools with a deficit (was 4) and 4 schools with surpluses below the 3% (was 4) level and which may therefore struggle to manage unforeseen cost increases.
  5. The average surplus balance for a primary school is -£0.062m (3.8% of budget) down from -£0.084m last year.
  6. The aggregate surplus balance of -£2.307m comprises -£2.910m from surpluses (was -£3.007m) and +£0.603m in deficits (was +£0.518m).
  7. The largest surplus balance held by a primary school is -£0.379m (was -£0.353m) and -£0.656m for a secondary (was -£0.479m).
  8. The largest surplus balance as a percentage of budget is -20.0% (was -18.7%) and the greatest deficit is +18.6% (was +16.5%).
- More information on the significant surplus balances held by schools is set out below from paragraph 6.4.

9. An update on deficit budgets and their management will be presented to the Forum in September. All schools with a deficit at the end of 2022-23 as well as any schools indicating a potential deficit for the first time in 2023-24 have budget planning meetings with the council in June.

#### Significant surplus balances

- 6.4 Following consultation with schools, the Forum agreed that where significant balances are not being held for a valid purpose a claw-back scheme would be applied to remove relevant amounts for re-distribution within the Schools Budget. This was based on the position at that time where up to 40% of annual income was being held within individual school balances when in principle there is an expectation that the significant majority of annual funding should be spent on pupils in school that year and not held back unnecessarily.
- 6.5 Whilst there is no desire to claw-back money from schools, and that has been the case to date, there is still a responsibility to challenge those with significant surpluses as to why more is not being spent on the educational needs of pupils currently in schools. However, it does also need to be recognised that there will be circumstances that support schools building up significant surplus balances to manage future events.
- 6.6 Members of the Forum will recall that the main principle of the claw-back scheme is that balances in excess of 5% for secondary and 8% for primary and special schools or PRUs have been defined as significant and schools should provide information of intended use where balances exceed these levels. No explanation is required on surpluses below these thresholds.
- 6.7 A range of valid purposes have been agreed that permit schools to retain significant surplus balances above these threshold levels. If funds are not being held for a valid reason, then they are subject to claw-back. Furthermore, there is an absolute cap as to what can be retained, even where it relates to a valid reason. The maximum thresholds are 10% for secondary and 16% for primary and special schools or PRUs although schools can make a request to the Forum to exceed the limit, which if not agreed can be appealed to the Executive Director - People.

Annex C sets out the agreed policy for the scheme to claw-back significant surplus balances with Annex D providing specific, school by school information.

- 6.8 Using initial CFR data, seven schools were identified as holding a significant surplus, which is unchanged from the number at the end of 2021-22. The aggregate level of significant surplus balances amounts to -£0.597m, an increase of -£0.024m (-4.1%). Reflecting on the overall reduction in aggregate surplus balances, an increase in significant surplus balances is a surprise.
- 6.9 As schools may be holding funds in trust and outside the main school budget, the Forum agreed that the surplus calculation can exclude any such funds where they are held in respect of an activity that supports a number of other BF schools, such as one operating a school improvement and CPD programme. Uplands Primary is the only school to request such an adjustment which has been reported at £148,223. The impact from this is that the £0.068m significant surplus balance attributed to Uplands is removed meaning six schools are deemed as holding surplus balances below the permitted cap, to a value of -£0.492m.
- 6.10 Relevant schools holding significant surplus balances have provided headteacher certified statements that confirm that these funds are being held for valid reasons, as

set out in the scheme, with around 66% profiled to be spent in the current year and 34% in future years.

- 6.11 In terms of the likelihood of schools completing the spend to schedule, plans have been categorised between uncommitted if governors have yet to agree the project, approved, once formally signed off by governors, and complete where spend has now been incurred. All proposed spending plans have been approved by governors.
- 6.12 Based on these returns, the Forum is therefore recommended to agree that no claw-back should be applied. A summary of intended use of the significant surpluses is as follows:
1. £0.291m to finance additional staff costs as schools transition to re-structures and cost reductions (55%)
  2. £0.150m for capital buildings, construction and refurbishment (28%)
  3. £0.054m on ICT, equipment, furniture and learning resources (10%)
  4. £0.040m on other areas, including unspent external income and funds to finance future cost increases (7%)

Note: relevant schools have indicated that £0.042m more will be spent on these items than is held on significant surpluses, with the excess being financed from within surpluses not categorised as significant.

Annex E sets out outline information on the spending intentions of schools with significant surplus balances.

- 6.13 Forum members have previously requested more information on the frequency that individual schools generate a significant surplus together with an update from those with a significant surplus in 2020-21 to confirm whether actual spending plans were completed as indicated. Annex E shows that 2 schools have achieved a significant surplus balance in each of the last 5 years and another for 3 consecutive years. Over the last 5 years, 13 of the 25 maintained schools have reported significant surplus balances.
- 6.14 In terms of updating the Forum on whether the 7 schools with significant surplus balances at the end of 2020-21 were spent as intended, headteachers from all relevant schools have confirmed this to be the case. At 2 of the schools, surpluses have reduced to below the significance threshold that requires an explanation.

#### Significant surplus balances above the maximum cap

- 6.15 As set out above in paragraph 6.4, schools have previously agreed through consultation that an absolute cap should be set on significant surplus balances at which point even if the funds are being held for a valid purpose, they would ordinarily be deducted. Relevant schools could make a case to the Forum to retain any surplus above the maximum cap.

6.16 The head teacher of Crowthorne Primary school has made such a request to retain the £0.038m of surplus above the maximum cap which is set out in Annex G. The letter includes 6 areas of underspending as summarised below:

1. £15,000 is part of a project to accrue funds to cover the cost of adding an additional toilet for staff. This is required as the existing staff facilities were reduced due to adaptations being required for a pupil who needs a hoist, self-cleaning toilet and other equipment due to their disability (reducing staff facilities to only one). The quote for the work was £22,000 which was higher than expected requiring more funds to be secured and so a delay to implementation.
2. £2,290 for health and safety related tree work delayed by tree surgeon. **BFC note:** The work was completed in 2022-23 but not paid until 2023-24. If the school had followed correct accounting practice, a creditor provision would have been raised this ensuring the charge was recorded in 2022-23 in which case this budget would not have under spent.
3. £1,500 for a contribution to a deferred boiler replacement which will now take place in 2023-24.
4. £1,135 for building repairs. **BFC note:** The work was completed in 2022-23 but not paid until 2023-24. If the school had followed correct accounting practice, a creditor provision would have been raised this ensuring the charge was recorded in 2022-23 in which case this budget would not have under spent.
5. £17,800 remaining grant allocation from Wellington College for building adaptations that will complete in summer 2023. **BFC note:** The work is financed from external income. If the school had followed correct accounting practice, an income in advance provision of £17,800 would have been raised to roll unspent income into 2023-24 to apply against the spend as it occurred ensuring this budget would not have under spent.
6. £190 income received in error. **BFC note:** This is external income. If the school had followed correct accounting practice, an income in advance provision of £190 would have been raised to roll the erroneous income into 2023-24 to repay to the debtor, ensuring no under spend in 2022-23.

In total, £21,415 of the surplus balance above the cap would have been avoided if the correct accounting arrangements had been used. Excluding these items reduces the surplus above the cap to £16,416.

The Schools Forum is requested to consider whether all or any of the income above the policy cap should be retained by the school or clawed-back. Should any claw-back be applied, the school governors can make a final appeal for a decision by the Executive Director.

#### Deficit Recovery Plans

- 6.17 As part of the DfE programme to support financial management in schools, where a deficit is greater than 5%, relevant schools need to submit a recovery plan to their LA. Annex A identifies 3 such schools, all of which are in discussion with council relating to their medium-term plans. An update on these plans will be presented to the Forum in September.
- 6.18 Furthermore, the DfE are collecting High-level Action Plans each year from local authorities where the number or proportion of schools with revenue balance deficits is above a certain level.
- 6.19 For this year the threshold for requiring Action Plans is from LAs with more than 10 schools, or more than 10% of schools, with revenue balance deficits of 5% or more. The revenue balance deficit threshold has reduced from 7% to bring it in line with the



recommendation from the Financial Transparency consultation. According to the CFR data for 2021-22, Bracknell Forest LA had 3 out of 25 schools (12% of schools) with a revenue balance deficit of 5% or more as of 31 March 2022.

- 6.20 All 3 schools identified by the DfE are within the current programme of licensed deficit support to schools to manage financial difficulties over the medium term, with plans progressing well with all 3 schools.
- 6.21 The deadline for submission of the Action Plan is 14 July and more information will be presented to the Forum in September when the annual report on support to schools in financial difficulties is presented.

### Capital Funding

- 6.22 Schools receive direct funding for capital projects through the DfE Devolved Formula Capital Grant (DFC).
- 6.23 DFC is provided in response to the continuing need for additional resources and must be spent on improving the condition and suitability of school accommodation as well as ICT hardware. Individual projects need to be at least £2,000 to qualify as capital related expenditure with buildings related projects needing to be approved by the council before they can proceed for reasons of health and safety. Schools can pool their funding amongst each other or add it as a contribution to projects undertaken by the Council. Funding must be spent on eligible expenditure within 3 years and one term of receipt or be returned to the DfE.
- 6.24 DFC is allocated as a specific grant through a national formula, paying a fixed lump sum of £4,000 for all schools and £11.25 per pupil for primary aged pupils, £16.88 for secondary pupils up to 15 years of age, £22.50 for post 16 aged pupils and £33.75 for those in special schools.
- 6.25 In December, the DfE announced that all schools would receive an additional £10,000 plus £20.06 per weighted pupil. In general, this new allocation is approximately twice the size of the original allocation meaning an initial funding allocation of say £10,000 would be increased to a total new allocation for the year of around £30,000.
- 6.26 The DfE expected this funding to be spent in 2022-23 financial year and that it will be “prioritising works to improve energy efficiency” which would benefit future years revenue spending requirements. However, grant conditions remain unchanged from those summarised in paragraph 6.23. To compliment this initiative, the DfE also published guidance on energy efficiency projects.
- 6.27 Taking account of both allocations, new year funding amounted to £0.618m (£0.221m initial allocation, £0.417m in-year addition) with the average allocation to a primary school at £25,958 and £86,334 for a secondary school (£8,362 and £24,840 in 2021-22).
- 6.28 As voluntary aided (VA) schools own and are responsible for the maintenance of their buildings, different arrangements are in place, outside local authority accounts, and therefore, information on the 5 VA schools in Bracknell Forest are not available for inclusion in this report.

Annex F provides a summary of individual school balances of DFC as at 31 March 2023.

6.29 Some comments on the analysis are as follows:

1. Aggregate unspent balances have increased by 79% and now amount to £0.576m (was £0.322m). Taking account of the late notification of the significant in-year funding addition, schools have spent a considerable proportion of the increase.
2. Average surplus balances held by primary schools amount to £27,752 (was £14,159 last year) with secondaries at £54,699 (down from £59,646).
3. The level of capital balances are not considered excessive as schools tend to save funds over a number of years before committing to significant projects. It does present an opportunity for schools to consider larger and more significant value projects than in the recent past.
4. All schools had at least a net nil balance at year end.
5. 5 schools are in danger of having to return unspent grant at 31 August 2023, which aggregates to £0.031m. Relevant schools have been informed of this risk to their funding.

## **7 Advice received from statutory and other officers**

### Borough Solicitor

7.1 The relevant legal provisions are contained within the body of the report.

### Executive Director of Resources: Finance

7.2 The Executive Director of Resources: Finance is satisfied that no significant financial implications arise from reporting 2022-23 school balances. However, schools continue to operate in difficult financial circumstances and a number of risks exist.

### Equalities Impact Assessment

7.3 There are no specific impact assessments arising from this report.

### Strategic Risk Management Issues

7.4 There are no specific strategic risk management issues arising from this report

### Climate Change Implications

7.5 The recommendations from this report will have no impact on emissions of carbon dioxide as they generally relate to on activities already undertaken.

### Health and wellbeing considerations

7.6 The recommendations from this report will have no impact on health and wellbeing as they report on activities already undertaken.

## **8 CONSULTATION**

8.1 Not applicable, applying statutory regulations and approved policies.

Background Papers

None.

Contact for further information

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(01344 354054)

Doc. Ref

[https://bfcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/fina/bpm/FIBPSCB-FIN9.6/Schools\\_Forum/\(117\)\\_220623/2022-23\\_School\\_Balances.docx](https://bfcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/fina/bpm/FIBPSCB-FIN9.6/Schools_Forum/(117)_220623/2022-23_School_Balances.docx)

**2022-23 School Revenue Balances**

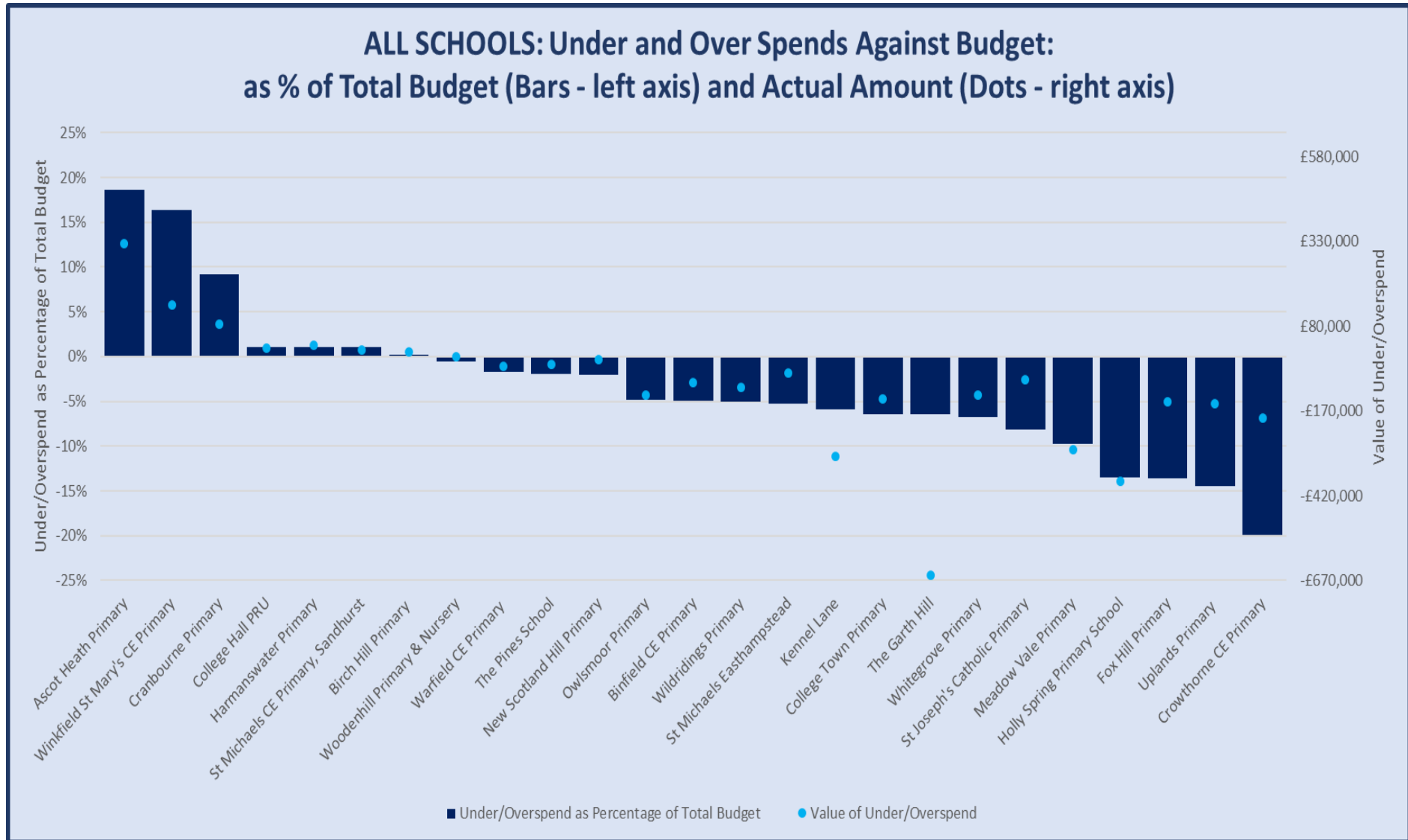
| School                            | 2022-23<br>Funding<br>(excluding<br>brought<br>forward) | School Balances  |                                  |                           |  |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--|---|
|                                   |   | Carry<br>Forward<br>amount<br>(- surplus /<br>+ deficit) | Percentage<br>2022-23<br>Funding | Change<br>from<br>2021-22 | Percentage<br>of total<br>Budget<br>last<br>year | Change in<br>Percentage<br>of total<br>Budget |
| Ascot Heath Primary               | £1,732,256  | £322,659   | 18.63%                           | £46,071                   | 16.52%   | 2.10%   |
| Binfield CE Primary               | £1,761,739  | -£86,466   | -4.91%                           | -£29,742                  | -3.31%   | -1.60%  |
| Birch Hill Primary                | £1,881,614  | £3,655   | 0.19%                            | £87,081                   | -4.42%   | 4.62%   |
| College Town Primary              | £2,087,657  | -£133,829  | -6.41%                           | £151,858                  | -13.22%  | 6.81%   |
| Cranbourne Primary                | £925,421  | £85,118  | 9.20%                            | -£27,236                  | 12.95%   | -3.75%  |
| Crowthorne CE Primary             | £955,645  | -£190,735  | -19.96%                          | -£64,109                  | -13.50%  | -6.46%  |
| Fox Hill Primary                  | £1,062,969  | -£144,219  | -13.57%                          | -£40,552                  | -10.07%  | -3.50%  |
| Harmanswater Primary              | £2,243,836  | £23,378  | 1.04%                            | £47,485                   | -1.04%   | 2.08%   |
| Holly Spring Primary              | £2,814,321  | -£378,921  | -13.46%                          | -£118,431                 | -10.13%  | -3.34%  |
| Meadow Vale Primary               | £2,909,755  | -£285,284  | -9.80%                           | £6,348                    | -10.62%  | 0.82%   |
| New Scotland Hill Primary         | £962,422  | -£19,953   | -2.07%                           | £50,859                   | -7.64%   | 5.57%   |
| Owlsmoor Primary                  | £2,533,689  | -£122,289  | -4.83%                           | £231,006                  | -13.87%  | 9.04%   |
| The Pines School                  | £1,660,430  | -£31,745   | -1.91%                           | -£65,975                  | 2.13%  | -4.04%  |
| St Joseph's Catholic Primary      | £954,379  | -£77,537   | -8.12%                           | -£4,806                   | -7.71%   | -0.42%  |
| Winkfield St Mary's CE Primary    | £874,286  | £143,002   | 16.36%                           | £48,388                   | 10.94%   | 5.42%   |
| St Michaels Easthampstead         | £1,128,579  | -£58,971   | -5.23%                           | -£53,163                  | -0.55%   | -4.68%  |
| St Michaels CE Primary, Sandhurst | £885,918  | £9,226   | 1.04%                            | £28,115                   | -2.17%   | 3.21%   |
| Uplands Primary                   | £1,021,368  | -£147,505  | -14.44%                          | £46,363                   | -18.74%  | 4.29%   |
| Warfield CE Primary               | £2,141,531  | -£37,833   | -1.77%                           | £39,090                   | -3.61%   | 1.85%   |
| Whitegrove Primary                | £1,811,130  | -£123,337  | -6.81%                           | £12,779                   | -7.52%   | 0.71%   |
| Wildridings Primary               | £1,961,326  | -£99,895   | -5.09%                           | -£12,302                  | -4.50%   | -0.60%  |
| Woodenhill Primary & Nursery      | £1,791,413  | -£10,158   | -0.57%                           | -£4,206                   | -0.35%   | -0.22%  |
| College Hall PRU                  | £1,532,890  | £16,182  | 1.06%                            | £63,219                   | -3.95%   | 5.01%   |
| The Garth Hill                    | £10,114,410   | -£655,737  | -6.48%                           | -£176,984                 | -4.89%   | -1.59%  |
| Kennel Lane                       | £5,171,169  | -£305,597  | -5.91%                           | -£78,860                  | -4.57%   | -1.34%  |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>£52,920,153</b>                                      | <b>-£2,306,791</b>                                       | <b>-4.36%</b>                    | <b>£182,296</b>           | <b>-4.85%</b>                                    | <b>0.49%</b>                                  |

|   |             |           |         |  |
|---|-------------|-----------|---------|--|
| Primary average                               | £1,640,986  | -£61,893  | -3.77%  | NB this summary analysis excludes<br>College Hall PRU and Kennel Lane<br>Special School. |
| Secondary average                             | £10,114,410 | -£655,737 | -6.48%  |  |
| Primary smallest budget /highest<br>deficit   | £874,286    | £322,659  | 18.63%  |  |
| Primary largest budget / highest<br>surplus   | £2,909,755  | -£378,921 | -19.96% |  |
| Secondary smallest budget /highest<br>deficit | £10,114,410 | £0        | 0.00%   |  |
| Secondary largest budget / highest<br>surplus | £10,114,410 | -£655,737 | -6.48%  |  |

Note: schools shaded in yellow have deficits greater than 5% of budget and the council is required to provide information to the DfE relating to associated deficit recovery plans.

**2022-23 School Revenue Balances – ranked by percentage of budget**

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**Key explained:**

Dark blue bars represent percentage of budget over (+) or under (-) spent. The left-hand y-axis indicates the percentage value  
 Light blue dots represent the cash value of deficit (+) or surplus (-). The right-hand y-axis indicates the cash value.

**Summary profile of deficit and surplus school balances – All Schools**

| Phase                 | 2021-22   |                   |   | 2022-23   |                   |   | Change in carry forward<br>2021-22 to 2022-23<br><br>(+ increase / - decrease<br>in surplus) |               |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------|---|---|-------------------|---|--|---------------|
|                       | Budget<br>for the year<br>(excludes<br>b/forward) | Carry<br>Forward  | Carry<br>Forward<br>as % of<br>final budget | Budget<br>for the year<br>(excludes<br>b/forward) | Carry<br>Forward  | Carry<br>Forward<br>as % of<br>final budget |  |               |
| Primary and PRU       | £36,542,443                                       | £1,783,597        | 4.88%                                       | £37,634,574                                       | £1,345,457        | 3.58%                                       | -£438,140  | -24.56%       |
| Secondary and Special | £14,745,652                                       | £705,490          | 4.78%                                       | £15,285,579                                       | £961,334          | 6.29%                                       | £255,844   | 36.26%        |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>£51,288,095</b>                                | <b>£2,489,087</b> | <b>4.85%</b>                                | <b>£52,920,153</b>                                | <b>£2,306,791</b> | <b>4.36%</b>                                | <b>-£182,296</b>   | <b>-7.32%</b> |

| Analysis of net balances |         |           |         |                       |                       |                       |                       |        |
|--------------------------|---------|-----------|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| Deficits                 |         | Surpluses |         |                       |                       |                       | Significant Surpluses |        |
| Number                   | Largest | Number    | Largest | No. 0-5%<br>of budget | No. 5-8%<br>of budget | No. > 8%<br>of budget | Number                | Amount |

**2021-22**

|                       |          |                 |           |                    |          |          |          |          |                  |
|-----------------------|----------|-----------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------------|
| Primary and PRU       | 4        | £276,588        | 19        | -£353,295          | 7        | 3        | 9        | 7        | -£573,041        |
| Secondary and Special | 0        | £0              | 2         | -£478,753          | 2        | 1        | 0        | 0        | £0               |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>4</b> | <b>£517,786</b> | <b>21</b> | <b>-£3,006,873</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>-£573,041</b> |

**2022-23**

|                       |          |                 |           |                    |          |          |          |          |                  |
|-----------------------|----------|-----------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------------|
| Primary and PRU       | 7        | £322,659        | 16        | -£378,921          | 6        | 4        | 6        | 6        | -£446,726        |
| Secondary and Special | 0        | £0              | 2         | -£655,737          | 0        | 2        | 0        | 1        | -£150,016        |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>7</b> | <b>£603,220</b> | <b>18</b> | <b>-£2,910,011</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>-£596,742</b> |

**Change 2021-22 to 2022-23**

|                       |          |                |           |                |           |          |           |          |                 |
|-----------------------|----------|----------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------------|
| Primary and PRU       | 3        | £46,071        | -3        | -£25,626       | -1        | 1        | -3        | -1       | £126,315        |
| Secondary and Special | 0        | £0             | 0         | -£176,984      | -2        | 1        | 0         | 1        | -£150,016       |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>3</b> | <b>£85,434</b> | <b>-3</b> | <b>£96,862</b> | <b>-3</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>-3</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>-£23,701</b> |

## Approved scheme to control significant surplus school balances

Normal text indicates the wording for the BFC Scheme. Words in *italics* are offered as an explanation to the Scheme text and are not part of the Scheme.

### Controls on surplus balances

Surplus balances held by schools as permitted under this scheme are subject to the following restrictions:

- a. the Authority shall calculate by 30 June each year the surplus balance, if any, held by each school as at the preceding 31 March. For this purpose the balance will be the recurrent balance as defined in the Consistent Financial Reporting Framework;

*Balances on Devolved Formula Capital and any other specific grant funded activities are excluded, unless allowed for in the relevant grant conditions.*

- b. the Authority shall deduct from the calculated balance any amounts for which the school has a prior year commitment to pay from the surplus balance from the previous financial year;

*In this context, a prior year commitment is defined as a project previously agreed with the Authority to be excluded from the claw-back calculation, for example, capital building and construction projects – see c.i to viii below for full criteria to be used to establish a valid commitment against a surplus balance.*

- c. the Authority shall then deduct from the resulting sum any amounts which the governing body of the school has declared to be assigned for specific purposes permitted by the authority, and which the authority is satisfied are properly assigned. To count as properly assigned, amounts must not be retained beyond the period stipulated for the purpose in question, without the consent of the Authority. In considering whether any sums are properly assigned the Authority may also take into account any previously declared assignment of such sums but may not take any change in planned assignments to be the sole reason for considering that a sum is not properly assigned. Schools will be required to provide relevant information to support funds assigned for a specific purpose, in a format prescribed by the authority.

The criteria to consider whether sums are properly assigned are as follows:

- i. Capital building and construction projects
- ii. Furniture, IT and other one-off expenditure of a capital nature
- iii. Infrastructure, maintenance and refurbishment
- iv. Staffing remodelling and restructuring
- v. Specific curriculum resources
- vi. Balances held in respect of pupil focused extended activities
- vii. Money held to fund budget deductions known to be occurring in the next financial year e.g. fall in pupil numbers.
- viii. Balances held in respect of an activity that supports a number of other BF schools, such as one operating a school improvement and CPD service
- ix. Other high cost activities, of a long term nature, agreed in advance with the Executive Director responsible for schools.

*The conditions outlined here are intended to ensure schools can build up reserves towards particular projects but cannot defer implementation indefinitely. A change in the plans of a school*

*is not allowed to be the only criterion by which a sum can be considered to be properly assigned or not. After the accounts are closed each year, the Authority will contact schools with significant surplus balances to agree whether any of the balance has been properly assigned for a specific purpose and can therefore be deducted from the claw-back calculation.*

*The above specified criteria have previously been approved by the Schools Forum following consultation with schools where they were supported by the vast majority of respondents.*

- d. The maximum surplus that can be retained by a secondary school is 10% of the annual budget. For primary, special and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), it is the greater of 16% or £150,000.
- e. if the result of steps a-c is a sum greater than the maximum amount specified in d, above, then the Authority shall deduct from the current year's budget share an amount equal to the excess.
- f. the calculation will be made against the final budget for the year in question i.e. after any contingency funding, significant in-year pupil growth allocation etc. The deduction will be made annually in arrears i.e. the final balance at 2011-12 calculated against the final budget for 2011-12 (known around June 2012) will be deducted at the start of the 2013-14 financial year.

*This paragraph has been added to make clear that the calculation will be made against final and not initial budgets. It is also proposed to delay any claw-back for one year to allow relevant schools time to plan for the change when setting subsequent budgets.*

- g. Should any school wish to retain a higher surplus than permitted in steps d-f above, the Schools Forum will consider each referral on a case by case basis, taking account of the merits of each individual proposal based upon the submission made by the school.
- h. An appeal against a decision by the Forum in step g. can be made to the relevant Director. The Director's determination will be final.
- i. Where, at 31 March 2014, a school holds a surplus balance in excess of steps d-f, this can be retained until 31 March 2017 without specific approval of the Forum.

Funds deriving from sources other than the Authority will be taken into account in this calculation if paid into the budget share account of the school, whether under provisions in this scheme or otherwise.

The total of any amounts deducted from schools' budget shares by the Authority under this provision are to be applied to the Schools Budget of the Authority



**School Revenue Balances – Significant Surpluses**

| School                            | 2022-23 Significant surplus                                 |                          |                          |                          | Previous significant surpluses (4 years) |                  |                  |                  |
|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                                   | Amount requiring explanation and permission (over 5% or 8%) | Amount above maximum cap | Total significant amount | Number consecutive years | 2021-22                                  | 2020-21          | 2019-20          | 2018-19          |
| Ascot Heath Primary               | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | £0                                       | £0               | £0               | £0               |
| Binfield CE Primary               | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | £0                                       | £0               | £0               | £0               |
| Birch Hill Primary                | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | £0                                       | £0               | £0               | £0               |
| College Town Primary              | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | -£112,849                                | -£139,510        | -£46,059         | -£33,659         |
| Cranbourne Primary                | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | £0                                       | £0               | £0               | £0               |
| Crowthorne CE Primary             | -£76,452  | -£37,831                 | -£114,283                | 2                        | -£51,585                                 | £0               | £0               | £0               |
| Fox Hill Primary                  | -£59,181  | £0                       | -£59,181                 | 2                        | -£21,315                                 | £0               | £0               | £0               |
| Harmanswater Primary              | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | £0                                       | £0               | £0               | £0               |
| Holly Spring Primary              | -£153,775   | £0                       | -£153,775                | 5                        | -£54,727                                 | -£118,078        | -£66,968         | -£86,315         |
| Meadow Vale Primary               | -£52,504  | £0                       | -£52,504                 | 3                        | -£71,954                                 | -£7,568          | £0               | -£218,357        |
| New Scotland Hill Primary         | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | £0                                       | £0               | £0               | £0               |
| Owlsmoor Primary                  | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | -£149,521                                | -£13,010         | £0               | £0               |
| The Pines School                  | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | £0                                       | £0               | £0               | £0               |
| St Joseph's Catholic Primary      | -£1,187   | £0                       | -£1,187                  | 1                        | £0                                       | £0               | -£1,650          | -£7,511          |
| Winkfield St Mary's CE Primary    | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | £0                                       | £0               | £0               | £0               |
| St Michaels Easthampstead         | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | £0                                       | -£14,069         | £0               | -£32,273         |
| St Michaels CE Primary, Sandhurst | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | £0                                       | £0               | £0               | £0               |
| Uplands Primary                   | -£65,796  | £0                       | -£65,796                 | 5                        | -£111,090                                | -£125,234        | -£22,700         | -£26,330         |
| Warfield CE Primary               | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | £0                                       | £0               | £0               | £0               |
| Whitegrove Primary                | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | £0                                       | -£5,641          | -£75,466         | -£93,006         |
| Wildridings Primary               | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | £0                                       | -£29,142         | £0               | £0               |
| Woodenhill Primary & Nursery      | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | £0                                       | £0               | £0               | £0               |
| College Hall PRU                  | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | £0                                       | £0               | £0               | £0               |
| The Garth Hill                    | -£150,016   | £0                       | -£150,016                | 1                        | £0                                       | £0               | £0               | £0               |
| Kennel Lane                       | £0  | £0                       | £0                       | 0                        | £0                                       | £0               | £0               | -£1,762          |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>-£558,911</b>  | <b>-£37,831</b>          | <b>-£596,742</b>         |                          | <b>-£573,041</b>                         | <b>-£452,252</b> | <b>-£212,843</b> | <b>-£499,213</b> |
| <b>Number</b>                     | <b>7</b>  | <b>1</b>                 | <b>7</b>                 |                          | <b>7</b>                                 | <b>8</b>         | <b>5</b>         | <b>0</b>         |

## Analysis of significant school surplus balances

| School   | Significant Surplus |          |          |                             |         |                 |
|--|---------------------|----------|----------|-----------------------------|---------|-----------------|
|  | Type of spend       |          |          | Spend by year (finish date) |         |                 |
|  | Uncomm-itted        | Approved | Complete | 2023-24                     | 2024-25 | 2025-26 onwards |
| <b><u>Crowthorne Primary (20.0% surplus - £76,452 significant within cap)</u></b>  |                     |          |          |                             |         |                 |
| To purchase 30+ laptops which are 6+ years old which were initially purchased as refurbished units. The laptops are being brought this (Summer) term and will be in place for the start of the next academic year.         |                     | £16,860  |          | £16,860                     |         |                 |
| Replacement boiler for the School House which has experienced leaks and will need replacing.   |                     | £3,000   |          |                             | £3,000  |                 |
| New interactive whiteboard for Year 6 as the screen needs replacing and due to the size and shape of the room, a larger screen will be needed. The current screen cannot be seen by every child when they are in the room. |                     | £3,000   |          | £3,000                      |         |                 |
| Play equipment budget to go towards the Positive Playtime project in the 3 year School Improvement Pan   |                     | £3,411   |          |                             | £3,411  |                 |
| Re-decoration of the school hall. To be carried out during the summer holiday  |                     | £4,000   |          | £4,000                      |         |                 |
| Replacement of Kitchen equipment. Further funds to be identified to fully finance the requirement.   |                     | £4,000   |          |                             | £4,000  |                 |
| Donations from a number of different places (Parents, Wellington College, Senior living, PTA etc) that have not been fully expended and are to be used for specific projects.  |                     | £5,835   |          | £5,835                      |         |                 |
| Unspent government grants, including Sports Grant (£5,120), Ukrainian Family Resettlement grant (£2,166), School Led Tuition (that will be clawed back as we do not plan to spend £851) and others £889)                   |                     | £9,026   |          | £9,026                      |         |                 |
| Telephone costs including VOIP upgrade as current telephone systems will stop working in 2025  |                     | £2,425   |          | £2,425                      |         |                 |

| School  | Significant Surplus |                 |          |                             |                |                    |
|---|---------------------|-----------------|----------|-----------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
|   | Type of spend       |                 |          | Spend by year (finish date) |                |                    |
|   | Uncomm<br>-itted    | Approved        | Complete | 2023-24                     | 2024-25        | 2025-26<br>onwards |
| <b><u>Crowthorne Primary (20.0% surplus - £76,452 significant within cap)</u></b>   |                     |                 |          |                             |                |                    |
| External specialist school meals adviser to support the procurement process for school meals. Funding set aside for service to be delivered in 2023-24.   |                     | £2,550          |          | £2,550                      |                |                    |
| Deputy headteacher was planned to complete non-classroom teaching, however due to unexpected staff changes this did not happen. This resulted in a budget surplus for staff, which will now be used to finance 2 days of cover a week for 12 months |                     | £23,000         |          | £23,000                     |                |                    |
| <b>Total accounted for</b>  |                     | <b>£77,107</b>  |          | <b>£69,696</b>              | <b>£7,411</b>  |                    |
| <b><u>Foxhill Primary (13.6% surplus - £59,181 significant)</u></b>   |                     |                 |          |                             |                |                    |
| IT Infrastructure upgrade including network, cabling, Wi-Fi, phones, broadband, transition to cloud, asset management system.   |                     | £15,000         |          | £15,000                     |                |                    |
| Security - CCTV, locks and gates  |                     | £10,000         |          | £10,000                     |                |                    |
| Maintenance - works that have not yet gone ahead / been completed during transition to new School Business Manager: trees, glazing, gazebos   |                     | £7,500          |          | £7,500                      |                |                    |
| Balances held in anticipation: to cover transportation to alternative provision 22-23. This was refunded and will now be held for increased energy costs  |                     | £28,500         |          | £28,500                     |                |                    |
| <b>Total accounted for</b>  |                     | <b>£61,000</b>  |          | <b>£61,000</b>              |                |                    |
| <b><u>Holly Spring Primary (13.5% surplus - £153,775 significant)</u></b>   |                     |                 |          |                             |                |                    |
| Decoration of classrooms that couldn't be undertaken in the Spring Term   |                     | £23,000         |          | £23,000                     |                |                    |
| Staff remodelling to include 2 SEN teachers and 1 Intervention teacher  |                     | £165,833        |          | £96,134                     | £69,699        |                    |
| <b>Total accounted for</b>  |                     | <b>£188,833</b> |          | <b>£119,134</b>             | <b>£69,699</b> |                    |

| School  | Significant Surplus |                 |           |                             |                 |                 |
|---|---------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|   | Type of spend       |                 |           | Spend by year (finish date) |                 |                 |
|   | Uncomm-itted        | Approved        | Complete  | 2023-24                     | 2024-25         | 2025-26 onwards |
| <b><u>Meadow Vale Primary (9.8% surplus - £52,504 significant)</u></b>  |                     |                 |           |                             |                 |                 |
| Staffing remodelling & restructuring following closure of Rainbow Resource  |                     | £52,504         |           | £52,504                     |                 |                 |
| <b>Total accounted for</b>  |                     | <b>£52,504</b>  |           | <b>£52,504</b>              |                 |                 |
| <b><u>St Joseph's Catholic Primary (8.1% surplus - £1,187 significant)</u></b>  |                     |                 |           |                             |                 |                 |
| Improve the areas used by pupils during breaktime & lunchtime   |                     | £5,000          |           | £5,000                      |                 |                 |
| <b>Total accounted for</b>  |                     | <b>£5,000</b>   |           | <b>£5,000</b>               |                 |                 |
| <b><u>Garth Hill Secondary (13.5% surplus - £150,016 significant)</u></b>   |                     |                 |           |                             |                 |                 |
| Commitment in saving towards the refurbishment of the 3G sports pitch. The 3G life expectancy is 10 years with current pitch installed in 2011. Used by school and community lettings providing income to school. Surface needs replacing summer 2024 as becoming unsafe  |                     | £100,000        |           |                             | £100,000        |                 |
| Protecting curriculum model based on 270 pan, due to large number of in-year admissions. The in-year admissions have created a strain on resources with increased number of SEND, vulnerable at-risk/ challenging behaviours. Committed to increasing pastoral induction, support & intervention, reflected in 2023-24 staffing budget. |                     | £50,016         |           | £50,016                     |                 |                 |
| <b>Total accounted for</b>  |                     | <b>£150,016</b> |           | <b>£50,016</b>              | <b>£100,000</b> |                 |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>£0</b>           | <b>£534,460</b> | <b>£0</b> | <b>£354,350</b>             | <b>£180,110</b> | <b>£0</b>       |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>0%</b>           | <b>100%</b>     | <b>0%</b> | <b>66%</b>                  | <b>34%</b>      | <b>0%</b>       |
| <b>Total</b>  |                     | <b>£534,460</b> |           |                             | <b>£562,288</b> |                 |

## 2022-23 School Capital Balances

| SCHOOL                          | 2022-23<br>new year<br>funding<br><br>£ | Carry Forward  |   |   | Amount<br>that<br>must be<br>spent by<br>31 Aug 2023 |
|---------------------------------|---|--|---|---|--|
|                                 |   | Total<br>amount<br>(+deficit /<br>-surplus)<br><br>£ | Percentage<br>of new year<br>funding<br><br>£ | Change from<br>2021-22<br>(+increase /<br>-decrease)<br><br>£ |  |
| Ascot Heath Primary             | £25,851                                 | -£23,303   | 90%   | -£6,013   | £0   |
| Birch Hill Primary              | £27,069                                 | -£44,674   | 165%  | £27,069   | £8,791   |
| College Town Primary            | £29,793                                 | -£20,422   | 69%   | £3,793  | £0   |
| Cranbourne Primary              | £20,199                                 | -£15,427   | 76%   | £15,427   | £0   |
| Crowthorne CE Primary           | £20,606                                 | -£30,234   | 147%  | £16,211   | £3,260   |
| Fox Hill Community Primary      | £20,503                                 | -£23,901   | 117%  | £12,550   | £0   |
| Harmanswater Primary            | £30,319                                 | -£20,431   | 67%   | £20,431   | £0   |
| Holly Spring Infant and Nursery | £32,482                                 | -£44,151   | 136%  | £8,812  | £722   |
| Meadow Vale Primary             | £33,127                                 | -£54,151   | 163%  | £33,127   | £9,752   |
| New Scotland Hill Primary       | £20,598                                 | -£12,952   | 63%   | £3,925  | £0   |
| Owlsmoor Primary                | £31,967                                 | -£38,667   | 121%  | £22,737   | £0   |
| Pines Primary                   | £24,411                                 | -£22,315   | 91%   | £10,846   | £0   |
| St Marys CE Primary (Winkfield) | £20,168                                 | -£18,778   | 93%   | £168  | £0   |
| Uplands Primary                 | £21,456                                 | -£23,856   | 111%  | £13,276   | £0   |
| Warfield CE Primary             | £28,468                                 | -£45,550   | 160%  | £18,578   | £7,995   |
| Whitegrove Primary              | £27,056                                 | -£23,455   | 87%   | £18,890   | £0   |
| Wildridings Primary             | £27,329                                 | -£19,005   | 70%   | £18,929   | £0   |
| Woodenhill Primary and Nursery  | £25,844                                 | -£18,257   | 71%   | £5,917  | £0   |
| Garth Hill                      | £86,334                                 | -£54,699   | 63%   | -£4,947   | £0   |
| Kennel Lane                     | £41,545                                 | £0   | 0%  | -£558   | £0   |
| College Hall PRU                | £23,158                                 | -£21,723   | 94%   | £14,561   | £0   |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>£618,283</b>                         | <b>-£575,951</b>                                     | <b>93%</b>                                    | <b>£253,729</b>   | <b>£30,520</b>                                       |

|                 |         |         |
|-----------------|---------|---------|
| Primary average | £25,958 | £13,593 |
| Secondary       | £86,334 | -£4,947 |

## Request to retain significant surplus above the policy cap



### CROWTHORNE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dear Colleagues,

Our outstanding balance for the end of the last financial year, is larger than anticipated, and is certainly larger than it has been before. This is due to a number of factors, including amounts allocated to projects that were completed after accounts closed, and some that we will complete over the next year.

We also received unexpected monies from other 3<sup>rd</sup> parties to support the work of the school. For example, a grant from Wellington College for refurbishment of our library and improvements to the school hall. This is ring-fenced and must be spent by August 2023 (as per the conditions of the grant).

As a small school, we tend to feel financial pressures more than larger schools due to economies of scale, and with the narrative and uncertainty around the cost of utilities and other resources, we have been cautious in expenditure this year. We also receive significantly less in grants such as the Pupil Premium Grant and Sports funding than larger schools; however, this year, we overspent in the Pupil Premium line as we received less than had been budgeted for.

The additional figure over 16% and potential for clawback is £37,832. The below is an analysis on what we plan to use this money for next year:

1. We have had to make adaptations to our accessible toilet as we have a pupil who needs a hoist and additional toileting facilities. This has left staff with one toilet to use. We have saved **£15,000** towards adding an additional toilet, but quotes have come in above this. We had hoped to be able to add to this over the next few years and increase the pot to £22,000 (based on 21/22 quotes). This is a project that we have been planning and accruing for over a number of years. (c/f £10k from 21/22, increased by £5k in 22/23)
2. **£2,290** Tree Surgeons Costs: This work was due to be carried out earlier in the year but the tree surgeon needed to delay the work – The work was carried out at the end of the financial year and we were invoiced in 22/23. This work was for the 'priority actions' from the annual tree survey report, which we are obliged to carry out for Health and Safety reasons. This was paid in April 23.
3. **£1,500** We put aside £4,000 last year, having been told that we would need to replace the boiler in the School House. The boiler has made it through the year, but in February/March there was a leak and we were again told the boiler is likely to need replacing this year. We have therefore increased this amount by £500 to cover increased costs.  
We c/f £4,500 for this project into 23/24 - £1,500 in here and £3,000 in our School Balance.
4. **£1,135**. Costs incurred at the end of the financial year for work carried out on a leak in the school house (see note re old Boiler) £410 and a broken ces pit pump £725 – Invoices arrived after we closed the accounts.
5. Last summer we were given £25,000 by Wellington College – This was to develop our library, move a class back into the main building, and to re-furbish the Hall. We started with the work on the library and bring the class back into the building. This summer (during the summer holidays) the work on the school hall will be completed – The figure left for this project is

**£17,800** – As we move to the final stage of the work, we are anticipating needing to add to this amount to ensure that we are able to complete all of the work and make the changes we had always planned to.

6. We are holding the small figure of **£190** as we received this in error from Wokingham BC – We have informed them but they have not yet clawed it back.

The work and projects identified above total **£37,915**. This is just over the amount that Schools' Forum could technically claw back. We hope that seeing how this money is due to be spent directly on enhancing the provision for pupils and staff across the school, the forum will agree that the monies should remain with Crowthorne CE Primary with the expectation that the projects are completed by the Autumn Term, or as soon as possible afterwards, thus ensuring the children benefit over the next full academic year.

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ruth Jackson', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ruth Jackson

Headteacher

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To: Schools Forum  
Date: 22 June 2023

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**2022-23 Funding Allocations to mainstream schools from  
Budgets Centrally Managed by the Council  
Executive Director - People**

## **1 Purpose of report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present information on the in-year allocation of funds to mainstream schools through School Specific Contingencies and other budgets that are funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and in the first instance centrally managed by the council. It also presents the opportunity to amend existing funding policies. These funds relate only to mainstream schools.

## **2 Executive Summary**

- 2.1 The funds used to provide targeted support to schools meeting qualifying criteria allocated £0.394m in 2022-23, an overall under spend of £0.046m. This helps to fund unpredictable and sometimes significant additional costs that only a small number of schools face and which the simplified national funding formula lacks the required sensitivities.
- 2.2 The associated policies that provide consistency and transparency of operation are generally considered appropriate and fit for purpose with only minor changes for reasons of clarification and updating new funding rates being proposed.

## **3 Recommendations**

**The Forum notes:**

- 3.1 **The following funding allocations to schools, made in accordance with approved policies;**
1. **£0.063m for significant in-year increases in pupils (paragraph 6.9);**
  2. **£0.043m for schools required to meet the Key Stage 1 Class Size regulations (paragraph 6.13);**
  3. **£0.023m for new and expanding schools (paragraph 6.17);**
  4. **£0.096m for schools with a disproportionate number of SEN pupils (paragraph 6.21);**
  5. **£0.169m for schools in financial difficulty (paragraph 6.30);**
- 3.2 **The intention of the Department for Education from 2024-25 to introduce a minimum national funding approach to funding schools with significant rising or declining pupil numbers (paragraph 6.10).**

### **3.3 The Forum agrees the following:**

- 1. minor changes to text to improve clarity of policy and the updating of funding rates where relevant (paragraph 6.33).**

## **4 Reasons for recommendations**

- 4.1 To ensure that the Schools Forum supports how centrally managed funds have been allocated to mainstream schools and is aware of the total amount and schools involved.

## **5 Alternative Options Considered**

- 5.1 These were considered as part of the budget setting process, including not setting aside contingency funds.

## **6 Supporting Information**

### Background

- 6.1 Members of the Forum will be aware that the funding framework for mainstream schools is regulated by the DfE and that this governs the conditions attached to how funds can be allocated to schools. It also sets out the purposes for which funds can be centrally managed by LAs and how in-year allocations can be determined.

- 6.2 As part of the budget setting process, the Forum agreed that the following six budgets should initially be managed by the LA, for in-year allocation to schools:

1. The Growth Fund: Comprising:
  - a. significant in-year increases in pupil numbers;
  - b. schools required to meet the Key Stage 1 Class Size regulations;
  - c. new and expanding schools.
2. SEN specific contingency;
3. General Schools Contingency: Comprising:
  - a. Schools in financial difficulty;
  - b. General Schools Contingency.

- 6.3 In accordance with the funding framework, items 1 and 2 above are held as centrally managed budgets, available to support both maintained and academy schools.

Item 3 is a de-delegated budget and supports maintained mainstream schools only. De-delegated funding is initially included in individual school budget allocations, but returned from maintained schools for central management, following consultation with schools and agreement of the Schools Forum.

Maintained schools that meet the agreed qualifying criteria then receive in-year funding allocations, whereas academy schools retain their relevant share of the funds to directly manage associated responsibilities.

Where de-delegated budgets in aggregate underspend in a financial year, the relevant amount is returned to mainstream maintained schools as a refund.

- 6.4 This annual report is presented to confirm individual funding allocations and to provide an opportunity to review the relevant funding policies.
1. Growth Fund allocations - £198,000 total budget (applies equally to maintained mainstream schools and academies that meet qualifying criteria).
    - a. Significant in-year increases in pupil numbers - £83,000 budget
- 6.5 To provide in-year financial support to schools experiencing significant increases in statutory aged pupil numbers, LAs are permitted to retain funding in a Growth Fund for allocation once qualifying criteria is met. This reflects the requirement of the DfE to calculate school budgets on actual pupil numbers prior to the start of the financial year which means there is no recognition of in-year increases which in some cases will have a significant impact on costs.
- 6.6 To provide additional resources to schools facing in-year increases, the Schools Forum has agreed that funding allocations should be made where there is a significant increase in pupils between the census point used for funding school budgets and the actual intake at the start of the next academic year. The relevant thresholds and funding rates are:
- less than 2 FE schools = increase of 10 pupils, at half the core funding rate
  - 2 FE schools = increase of 20 pupils, at the core funding rate
  - 3 FE and above schools = increase of 25, at the core funding rate
- 6.7 Admitting additional pupils at these levels is considered the point at which relevant schools would most likely experience significant cost increases. The general expectation is that schools can absorb additional pupils up to these numbers without having to incur any significant cost increases.
- 6.8 The core funding allocation is based on the cost of employing a Teacher at Main Scale Point 6 for the autumn and spring terms only (£31,519 in 2022-23). This is a short-term funding measure as on-going funding beyond this point would be included in the next year's budget as relevant pupils would be on the October census used for funding purposes and are therefore taken into account in the next year's budget calculation. Annex 1 sets out the full policy which is proposed to remain unchanged.
- 6.9 Total allocations amounted to £63,037 with a resultant under spending of £19,963. Annex 2 sets out individual school calculations and other relevant data.
- 6.10 As part of the school funding reforms relating to the National Funding Formula, from 2024-25 the DfE are making funding for schools which see significant increases in their pupil numbers more consistent across the country, by setting minimum levels of additional funding that every eligible school will receive. There are also plans to introduce some changes to local authorities' allocation of funding for schools which have significant declines in pupil numbers which in future are expected to increase which supports the policy objective of targeting this support to the schools where places will be needed in future. Details of the practical implications from these changes have yet to be released and it therefore remains unclear of the likely impact in BF.

b. Schools required to meet the Key Stage 1 Class Size regulations - £115,000 budget

- 6.11 In a similar way to that in which funds can be retained for allocation in year to schools experiencing significant increases in pupil numbers, LAs are also permitted to create a contingency to allocate funds to support schools facing additional costs to ensure Key Stage 1 class size regulations to limit classes to no more than 30 pupils per teacher are not breached. Again, this allows the targeting of funds to schools facing real cost pressures that the Funding Formula is not permitted to deal with.
- 6.12 The Forum has agreed that where the aggregate number of Key Stage 1 pupils does not equate to a multiple of 30, additional resources will be added at the amount required to cover the cost of appointing a Teacher on Main Scale Point 6 for the relevant period, after taking account of the funding delivered through the Funding Formula. Top up funding is provided on a “missing pupil” basis and is calculated at the amount required to meet teacher costs only. Based on the 2022-23 values in the Funding Formula, 13 pupils at the national Minimum Per Pupil Funding Level that a school must receive delivers sufficient resources to employ a teacher. Therefore, the maximum top-up funding a school can receive that has one pupil on roll above a multiple of 30 is for 12 ‘missing’ pupils.
- 6.13 Based on actual changes in pupil numbers for the 2022 summer and autumn terms, and the spring term 2023, 4 schools were entitled to additional funding, which aggregates to £42,650 resulting in an under spending of £72,350. Annex 4 sets out individual school allocations and other relevant data.
- 6.14 To avoid double funding, if the same pupils result in schools receiving funding through the *significant in-year increase in pupil numbers* category then any Key Stage 1 specific funding is disallowed. The relevant qualifying criteria are set out in Annex 3.

c. New and expanding schools - £22,500 budget.

- 6.15 With the Kings Group (KGA) Academy Binfield open to secondary aged pupils from September 2018 and primary aged pupils from September 2019 and KGA Oakwood Primary also open from September 2019, allocations are due from the funding policy for Start-up and diseconomy funding for new and expanding schools.
- 6.16 In respect of diseconomy funding – intended to support general running costs when schools have significantly fewer pupils than their capacity - this was allocated through the BF Funding Formula for Schools, which in accordance with DfE requirements, required notional pupil numbers to be added to the allocation process to deliver the increased funding determined through the policy.
- 6.17 For post-opening costs which is intended to provide a lump sum amount to equip each new class that is to open with day-to-day resources, Binfield and Oakwood Primary schools opened new classes at September 2022, with 2 in Binfield and 1 in Oakwood.

Total payments for new and expanding schools were therefore on budget at £22,500.

- 6.18 As the policy for start-up and diseconomy funding for new and expanding schools is well established, receiving a refresh in December 2019, no further changes are proposed at this time.

2. SEN specific contingency - £37,480 budget (applies equally to maintained mainstream schools and academies that meet qualifying criteria. This is the only budget in this report that is funded from the High Needs Block).
- 6.19 The DfE encourages LAs to allocate additional resources to schools that admit a disproportionate number of pupils with SEN with a clear expectation that this will affect only a minority of schools. The rationale of the contingency is that the normal operation of the simplified Funding Formula does not adequately resource schools for all costs when there is a large concentration of high needs pupils and inclusion of pupils into mainstream schools rather than specialist providers should be encouraged.
- 6.20 There is no prescribed methodology on how such a fund should work and the scheme agreed by the Forum following consultation schools requires schools to meet both of the following criteria:
1. Where the proportion of pupils on roll classified as high need exceeds 4% of total pupil numbers in a primary school and 2% in a secondary school, and
  2. Where the proportion that top up funding paid to support High Needs pupils compared to the total budget allocated via the BF Funding Formula exceeds 2% in a primary school and 1% in a secondary school.
- 6.21 This resulted in 4 schools receiving in total £95,700 in additional funding (was £30,700 in 2021-22 for 1 school), resulting in an overspending of £88,220. Annex 5 sets out the calculation of individual school data and eligibility to funding.
- 6.22 In completing the calculations for 2023-24, it has become apparent that greater clarity is required on the data to be used, with the following options considered.
- i. BFC Statutory aged pupils – this is the calculation used for 2023-24 allocations
  - ii. BFC and other Local Authority statutory aged pupils
  - iii. BFC statutory aged and post 16 aged pupils
  - iv. BFC and other Local Authority statutory aged and post 16 aged pupils
- 6.23 In preparing financial modelling of the options, academy schools would need to supply post 16 funding information as the council does not receive this directly from the ESFA. In making calculations for the allocation of funds, it is important that the council has certainty of data and therefore it is not recommended to include post 16 information in the calculation. In terms of other local authority pupils, there is no significant effect from adding relevant pupils, and therefore it is proposed to include these pupils. Therefore option ii above is recommended.
- The policy wording has been updated in Annex 5 to reflect the proposed clarification to the method of calculation.
- 6.24 The 2023-24 allocations have again seen an increase in funds allocated which amounted to £114,336, with 5 schools qualifying. The 2024-25 budget proposals will need to consider whether the funding thresholds and budget allocation remain the most appropriate levels.
3. Schools Contingency: (this is a de-delegated budget and applies only to maintained schools when eligibility criteria met)
- a. Schools in Financial Difficulty - £171,920 budget
- 6.25 School Funding Regulations allow for additional funds outside the normal operation of the Funding Formula to be provided to schools considered to be in financial difficulty. In

agreement with the Schools Forum, this de-delegated budget has been returned to the Council for central management. The agreed criteria to be used to allocate this funding is if, in the opinion of the relevant Director for schools and Director responsible for Finance, a school:

1. was unable to set a balanced budget and were in need of a loan arrangement at the start of the relevant financial year, and/or
  2. was likely to fall into one of the categories of causing concern, including requires improvement and special measures without additional financial support.
  3. was a 1 form of entry school judged good or better that has more than 5% empty places
- 6.26 Where schools enter an Ofsted category of concern this includes those schools judged to be inadequate or requiring improvement the LA holds a declaration of concern meeting (DoC) and establishes a Rapid Response Board (RRB) for the first 12 weeks. Where effective action is being taken this is then monitored through a Standards Monitoring Board (SMB) on a termly basis. Where required there is an independent chair and senior officers of the LA as members. The headteacher and Chair of Governors of the school are invited to attend the SMB to report on progress. A support plan outlines the actions to be taken by the school and the LA in order to effect rapid improvement.
- 6.27 In order to allow funds to be allocated within an appropriate time scale, the Forum has agreed to delegate a set of powers to the Director responsible for schools to allocate funds up to but not exceeding £0.15m in any financial year, dependent on the Ofsted category of the school, or where there is considered a risk of being placed in a category.
- 6.28 The level of allocation of funds would be:
1. schools judged to have serious weaknesses (up to £20k per year)
  2. schools deemed to be in need of special measures (up to £50k per year)
  3. schools at risk of either judged to have serious weaknesses or entering special measures (up to £30k per year)
  4. 1 form of entry schools judged good or better that have more than 5% empty places (up to £20k per year per school and £40k in total)
- 6.29 Allocations will only be agreed where the relevant school has demonstrated insufficient funds exist within the budget to fund the required actions or activities. The full policy text is set out in Annex 6 which is proposed to remain unchanged.
- 6.30 Funding allocations for the year amounted to £168,598 which represented an under spending of £3,322. This under spending was returned to maintained schools as part of the agreed financial year-end process to repay any aggregate unspent de-delegation funding to maintained schools.

Further details of the allocations to schools in financial difficulty are shown in Annex 7.

*b. General Schools Contingency - £9,040 budget*

- 6.31 Where a primary school faces exceptional, unexpected costs in-year that were not known when the budget was set and it would be unreasonable to expect the school to meet the costs, bids for additional funding can be sought. The Forum has previously agreed that claims are considered on a case by case basis by the Heads of Service

covering Finance, Human Resources and Property before formal consideration by the Forum.

- 6.32 No claims were submitted in the year. The full criteria for making allocations from the General School Contingency is set out at Annex 8 which is proposed to remain unchanged.

#### Qualifying criteria used to make funding allocations

- 6.33 To ensure that a consistent and transparent approach is adopted to the allocation of contingency funding to schools, the Forum has agreed a set of eligibility criteria to be applied, and these are attached as annexes to the report. Relevant policies are included in annexes 1, 3, 5, 6 and 8. No substantial changes are recommended to the existing policies although for clarity, additional information is proposed to be added to the SEN Contingency policy as well as updating policy funding rates where relevant to the actual costs (or best estimate) for the relevant period are made when relevant information becomes available.

#### Conclusion

- 6.34 The funds approved by the Forum to be held by the LA allow for appropriate in-year targeting of resources that is not possible through the simplified Funding Formula for Schools. Current arrangements are considered appropriate and ensure that financial support is provided when needed and that clear and consistent criteria is applied in the allocation of resources.

## **7 Advice received from statutory and other officers**

### Borough Solicitor

- 7.1 The relevant legal issues are addressed within the main body of the report.

### Director of Resources: Finance

- 7.2 The financial implications arising from this report are set out in the supporting information. The allocations meet the requirements of the appropriate funding regulations, the agreed policies and have been taken into account in the financial monitoring arrangements for the Schools Budget.

### Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.3 None identified.

### Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 7.4 None identified.

### Climate Change Implications

- 7.5 The recommendations from this report will have no impact on emissions of carbon dioxide as they generally relate to on activities already undertaken.

### Health and wellbeing considerations

- 7.6 The recommendations from this report will have no impact on health and wellbeing as they report on activities already undertaken.

## **8 CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 None.

### Background Papers

None

### Contact for further information

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### Doc. Ref

[https://bfcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/fina/bpm/FIBPSCB-FIN9.6/Schools Forum/\(117\) 220623/2022-23 Funding Allocations from the Schools Contingency.docx](https://bfcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/fina/bpm/FIBPSCB-FIN9.6/Schools Forum/(117) 220623/2022-23 Funding Allocations from the Schools Contingency.docx)



## **Criteria for in-year budget allocations to schools experiencing significant growth in pupil numbers**

This element of the Growth Fund is ring fenced so that it is only used for the purpose of supporting growth in pre-16 pupil numbers to meet basic need<sup>1</sup>. The fund will be for the benefit of both maintained and Academy schools. For Academy Schools, the funding is for an academic year.

The Growth Fund shall include funding for an allocation to those schools that experience exceptional increases in pupil numbers between the October census used for funding original budgets and actual pupil numbers on roll on the following October census

To assist schools in meeting the additional costs arising in such circumstances, an in-year budget addition will be made where the whole school number on roll from Reception up to Year 11 increases up to the point that significant additional costs are expected to be incurred.

The relevant thresholds for additional funding are:

- less than 2 FE schools = 10
- 2 FE schools = 20
- 3 FE and above schools = 25

With the exception of less than 2 FE schools, the amount of additional funding is calculated from the cost of appointing a teacher on Main Scale Point 6 – salary and employer on-costs - for the period September to March.

Less than 2 FE schools will be funded at half the value of other schools sizes, to reflect the lower additional costs expected to be incurred i.e. it is not expected that such schools would ever need to open a new class and recruit a new teacher.

To calculate whether a school is eligible, the following checks will be carried out:

- For the year of entry, the calculation of additional pupils will be capped at the lower of the actual number admitted or the Published Admission Number (PAN), other than where the need to exceed PAN is agreed in advance with the LA.
- Pupil admissions from parental appeals, LAC pupils and pupils with an EHCP are included in the number on roll when checking that a school has not exceeded its PAN in year of entry; these admissions are generally known by May preceding the start of the academic year.
- Schools can request that the Assistant Director: Education and Learning of Education considers additional funding in exceptional circumstances. These will be considered on an individual case basis.
- An appeal to a decision of the Assistant Director: Education and Learning can be made to the Executive Director: People, whose decision will be final.

For schools that qualify for this factor the calculation is unchanged from the current methodology that compares the total NOR for statutory aged pupils on roll for the

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<sup>1</sup> The DfE define basic need as the statutory duty on local authorities to make sure there are enough school places for children in their local area. This requirement does not extend to individual planning or school designated areas within an authority.

October census in the current financial year with that of the October Census number on roll in the previous financial year.

Where a school does admit pupils above PAN without agreement of the LA, the calculation for a significant growth in pupil numbers will exclude pupils in the year of entry.

There are 2 exceptions to the general policy.

1. This relates to schools that agree with the LA to open a 'surge' class – i.e. one additional class to accommodate up to 30 additional pupils – where additional funding will be allocated irrespective of the actual number of pupils admitted, if the pupils in the 'surge' class are admitted after the census used for funding purposes. The funding allocation will be calculated in the same way as for general in-year growth, applied from the beginning of the term that the 'surge' class is open, [i.e. rather than against the number of months the 'surge' class is open].

Where a 'surge' class opens after the census point used for calculating the school's budget for the next financial year, a further funding top-up will be made to cover the full year cost of a teacher on Main Scale Point 6 and a Learning Support Assistant on Bracknell Forest pay point 12 for the relevant financial year. This funding will be made available for one year only at the commencement of the relevant financial year.

2. This relates to those schools that expand by a whole form of entry. As the current calculation is based on the form of entry at admission, it assumes those schools expanded by a whole form of entry are immediately admitting to all year groups at the increased capacity, when in reality, the increased capacity starts in the entry year, and takes 7 years (5 for a secondary school) to work through the school until admission to full capacity is possible. In order to make a fair calculation of the threshold to be used to calculate in-year growth allowances in these circumstances, the threshold to be used to calculate a growth allowance is calculated on the number of classes available at the census point used to calculate the original budget.

For example, a primary school moving from a 2 form to 3 form entry school has 3 classes in reception in the first year after expansion, and 2 classes in other year groups. The funding threshold for a 2-form entry school is 20 with 25 used for 3 form entry schools. In the first year following expansion, eligibility to growth allocations would be calculated on reception classes at the 25-number threshold, with all other classes at a threshold of 20. For the second year, Reception and Year 1 would be calculated on a 25 threshold, all other year groups on 20 and so on. A full illustration of the calculation is set out below and shows how the funding threshold rises gradually, in line with the phased increase in pupil numbers, starting at 21, and rising to 25 after 7 years.

**Approved by the Schools Forum on 15 July 2021. No changes were proposed by either the council or Schools Forum at the 23 June 2022 meeting.**

**No changes proposed by the council other than to update funding rates.**

## 2022-23 Funding allocations for significant in-year growth in pupil numbers

| Threshold 10 for schools with less than 2 Forms of entry<br>Threshold 20 for schools with 2 Forms of entry<br>Threshold 25 for schools with 3 and more Forms of entry |                                 |                        |               |               |               |                   |                |
|---|---------------------------------|------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------|
| School  | No. of Forms of entry - rounded | Total places available | NOR Oct 2021  | NOR Oct 2022  | Change in NOR | Revised threshold | Amount         |
| Ascot Heath Primary   | 2                               | 420                    | 394           | 392           | -2            | 20                | £0             |
| Binfield CE Aided Primary   | 2                               | 420                    | 414           | 409           | -5            | 20                | £0             |
| Birch Hill Primary  | 2                               | 420                    | 376           | 394           | 18            | 20                | £0             |
| College Town Primary  | 3                               | 630                    | 455           | 470           | 15            | 25                | £0             |
| Cranbourne Primary  | 1                               | 210                    | 203           | 202           | -1            | 10                | £0             |
| Crown Wood Primary  | 3                               | 630                    | 530           | 557           | 27            | 25                | £31,519        |
| Crowthorne CE Primary   | 1                               | 210                    | 210           | 209           | -1            | 10                | £0             |
| Fox Hill Primary  | 1                               | 210                    | 206           | 200           | -6            | 10                | £0             |
| Great Hollands Primary (1)  | 2 to 1                          | 360                    | 283           | 249           | -34           | 16                | £0             |
| Harmans Water Primary   | 3 to 2                          | 480                    | 446           | 430           | -16           | 21                | £0             |
| Holly Spring Primary  | 3                               | 630                    | 578           | 594           | 16            | 25                | £0             |
| Jennetts Park Primary   | 2                               | 420                    | 381           | 378           | -3            | 20                | £0             |
| Kings Academy Primary (2)   | 1 to 2                          | 150                    | 90            | 154           | 64            | 10                | £31,519        |
| Meadow Vale Primary   | 3                               | 630                    | 594           | 592           | -2            | 25                | £0             |
| New Scotland Hill Primary   | 1                               | 210                    | 189           | 190           | 1             | 10                | £0             |
| Kings Academy Oakwood(2)  | 1                               | 210                    | 138           | 178           | 40            | 10                | £31,519        |
| Owlsmoor Primary  | 3                               | 630                    | 521           | 508           | -13           | 25                | £0             |
| The Pines Primary and Nursery (1)   | 2 to 1                          | 360                    | 309           | 300           | -9            | 16                | £0             |
| Sandy Lane Primary  | 3                               | 630                    | 438           | 444           | 6             | 25                | £0             |
| St Joseph's Catholic Primary  | 1                               | 210                    | 212           | 211           | -1            | 10                | £0             |
| St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Pry  | 1                               | 210                    | 207           | 202           | -5            | 10                | £0             |
| St Michael's Easthampstead CE   | 1                               | 245                    | 238           | 215           | -23           | 10                | £0             |
| St Michael's CE Aided Pry (Sand't)  | 1                               | 210                    | 193           | 191           | -2            | 10                | £0             |
| Uplands Primary   | 1                               | 210                    | 210           | 209           | -1            | 10                | £0             |
| Warfield CE Primary   | 1                               | 210                    | 408           | 415           | 7             | 20                | £0             |
| Whitegrove Primary  | 2                               | 420                    | 414           | 420           | 6             | 20                | £0             |
| Wildmoor Heath  | 1                               | 210                    | 202           | 201           | -1            | 10                | £0             |
| Wildridings Primary   | 2                               | 420                    | 395           | 388           | -7            | 20                | £0             |
| Winkfield St Mary's CE Primary  | 1                               | 210                    | 188           | 198           | 10            | 10                | £0             |
| Wooden Hill Primary & Nursery   | 2                               | 350                    | 360           | 371           | 11            | 20                | £0             |
| The Brakenhale  | 7                               | 1,050                  | 1,054         | 1,043         | -11           | 25                | £0             |
| Easthampstead Park  | 8                               | 1,200                  | 814           | 855           | 41            | 25                | £31,519        |
| Edgbarrow   | 8                               | 1,200                  | 1,112         | 1,114         | 2             | 25                | £0             |
| Garth Hill College  | 9                               | 1,350                  | 1,246         | 1,264         | 18            | 25                | £0             |
| Kings Academy Secondary (2)   | 7                               | 1,050                  | 656           | 866           | 210           | 25                | £31,519        |
| Ranelagh CE   | 5                               | 750                    | 860           | 866           | 6             | 25                | £0             |
| Sandhurst   | 7                               | 1,050                  | 1,010         | 1,028         | 18            | 25                | £0             |
| <b>Total Primary</b>  | <b>52</b>                       | <b>10,765</b>          | <b>9,782</b>  | <b>9,871</b>  | <b>89</b>     | <b>492</b>        | <b>£31,519</b> |
| <b>Total Secondary</b>  | <b>51</b>                       | <b>7,650</b>           | <b>6,752</b>  | <b>7,036</b>  | <b>284</b>    | <b>175</b>        | <b>£31,519</b> |
| <b>Total All Schools</b>  | <b>103</b>                      | <b>14,305</b>          | <b>12,824</b> | <b>12,952</b> | <b>128</b>    | <b>532</b>        | <b>£63,037</b> |

(1) schools being expanded/contracting have variable funding thresholds relative to the number of new classes.

(2) new schools are separately funded for pupil growth and the totals exclude any amounts.

### **Criteria for in-year budget allocations to schools to meet unavoidable costs arising from the Key Stage 1 class size regulations that limit classes to no more than 30 pupils per teacher**

The Growth Fund shall include funding for an allocation to those schools that experience unavoidable costs arising from the Key Stage 1 class size regulations that are not resourced through the Funding Formula.

Numbers in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will be collected termly from the relevant school census to determine the total number of pupils in each school affected by the relevant Regulations. Where the aggregate number of pupils does not equate to a multiple of 30, additional resources will be added at the amount required to cover the cost of appointing a teacher on Main scale Point 6 – salary and employer on-costs - for the relevant period, after taking account of the minimum funding delivered through the Funding Formula. The minimum amount of per pupil funding delivered through the BF Funding Formula is based on the Minimum Per Pupil Funding amount (MPPFL) as determined by the Department for Education. The MPPFL calculation includes all funding delegated to schools through the BF Funding Formula with the exception of business rates. Funding will be added on a “missing pupil” basis.

The allocated funding may need to be scaled if demand significantly exceeds the budget allocation, with final decisions to be determined each year by the Schools Forum.

An illustration of the funding calculation is as follows which would need to be updated each year to reflect budget decisions and the cost of employing a teacher (all units of resource are based on values at the start of 2022-23 financial year):

- a. The per pupil funding rate is assumed to be the Minimum per pupil funding rate for 2022-23 this is £4,265 (A)
- b. The cost of a teacher on Main scale Point 6 – salary and employer on-costs - is £54,000 (B)
- c. To have sufficient income from the Funding Formula to employ a teacher, a school needs  $\text{£54,000 (B) / £4,265 (A) = 13 pupils (C)}$
- d. The Funding Formula therefore provides sufficient funding to appoint a teacher provided there are 13 pupils. The maximum top-up funding a school can receive is for 12 ‘missing’ pupils (C).
- e. Therefore where the actual number on roll exceeds a multiple of 30 compared to the number on roll funded in the original budget the school would be entitled to top-up funding if this is below 13.
- f. Funding will be added, pro rata per term, for each missing pupil

The attached Annex sets out funding top-up rates, based on the cost of employing a teacher at £54,000 and the BF Funding Formula delivers sufficient funding to appoint a teacher provided there are 13 or more pupils above the 30 multiples. These factors and amounts are subject to annual re-calculation.

Children admitted **in-year** as an “excepted pupil” in accordance with The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012, or other relevant legislative requirement will not be included in the calculation for top up funding as they will not impact on the need to

recruit a teacher. The exclusion will apply for the full period the child is on roll at the school to the end of Key Stage 1.

“Excepted pupils” currently include those that are admitted to the school outside a normal admission round:

- as a result of the local authority specifying the school in the child’s statement;
- are looked after;
- were in error initially refused admission;
- are from a service family.

“Excepted pupils” on the roll of a school at the October census will generate per pupil funding for a school in the next budget. These funds will be taken into account in any top up funding calculations.

Separate calculations will be made each term, based on data obtained from the relevant census.

Exceptions:

There are two exceptions to the general rule set out above:

1. In order to avoid double funding, a school will not be eligible for Key Stage 1 class size funding in the autumn and spring terms where the school has qualified of an in-year growth allowance for these pupils.
2. When a school is funded on the basis of estimated actual costs, which is ordinarily a new school or one that opens additional forms of entry during a financial year, it will not be entitled to any top up funding from the Key Stage 1 class size contingency, provided funds for the additional costs that will arise are allocated from an alternative source.

Pupils on roll at a Special Resource Provision are excluded from the calculation.

**Approved by the Schools Forum on 23 June 2022.**

**No changes proposed by the council other than to update funding rates.**

**2022-23 Funding allocations to support schools needing to meet the  
Key Stage 1 Class Size Funding regulations**

| School                                  | Total KS1 pupils funded October 2021 Census | K.S 1 Allocation summer term 2022 | K.S 1 Allocation autumn term 2022 | K.S 1 Allocation spring term 2023 | Total          |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Ascot Heath Primary                     | 163   | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Binfield CE Primary                     | 174   | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Birch Hill Primary                      | 161   | £1,777                            | £1,422                            | £1,066                            | £4,265         |
| College Town Primary                    | 196   | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Cranbourne Primary                      | 90  | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Crown Wood Primary                      | 229   | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Crowthorne CE Primary                   | 88  | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Fox Hill Primary                        | 88  | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Great Hollands Primary                  | 94  | £14,217                           | £0                                | £0                                | £14,217        |
| Harmans Water Primary                   | 164   | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Holly Spring Primary                    | 235   | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Jennetts Park CE Primary                | 146   | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Meadow Vale Primary                     | 239   | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| New Scotland Hill Primary               | 72  | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Owlsmoor Primary                        | 206   | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Pines (The)                             | 106   | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Sandy Lane Primary                      | 139   | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| St. Joseph's Catholic Primary           | 90  | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| St. Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary | 87  | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| St. Michael's CE Primary, Easthampstead | 83  | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| St. Michael's Sandhurst                 | 98  | £7,108                            | £0                                | £0                                | £7,108         |
| Uplands Primary                         | 90  | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Warfield CE Primary                     | 170   | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Whitegrove Primary                      | 176   | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Wildmoor Heath                          | 78  | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Wildridings Primary School              | 167   | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Winkfield St. Mary's CE Primary         | 78  | £0                                | £0                                | £0                                | £0             |
| Wooden Hill Primary & Nursery*          | 158   | £7,108                            | £5,687                            | £4,265                            | £17,060        |
| <b>Total Allocation</b>                 | <b>3,865</b>                                | <b>£30,210</b>                    | <b>£7,108</b>                     | <b>£5,331</b>                     | <b>£42,650</b> |

## 2022-23 termly allocation detail for Key Stage 1 Class Size Funding

| Ref | School                              | Data used for original budget |                                      |                                       | Summer Term data          |                          |                           |   |                            | Autumn Term data              |                          |                           |   |                            | Spring budget data            |                          |                           |   |                            | Ref |
|-----|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---|----------------------------|-----|
|     |                                     | KS1 pupils as at October 2021 | Number of classes that can be funded | Number of pupils above multiple of 30 | KS1 pupils as at May 2022 | Number of classes needed | Additional classes needed | Number of 'missing pupils' needed to fund extra class | KS1 Allocation summer term | KS1 pupils as at October 2022 | Number of classes needed | Additional classes needed | Number of 'missing pupils' needed to fund extra class | KS1 Allocation autumn term | KS1 pupils as at January 2023 | Number of classes needed | Additional classes needed | Number of 'missing pupils' needed to fund extra class | KS1 Allocation spring term |     |
| 1   | Ascot Heath Primary                 | 163                           | 6                                    | 13                                    | 159                       | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 157                           | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 160                           | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 1   |
| 2   | Binfield CE Primary                 | 174                           | 6                                    | 24                                    | 179                       | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 171                           | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 170                           | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 2   |
| 3   | Birch Hill Primary                  | 161                           | 6                                    | 11                                    | 161                       | 6                        | 0                         | 1   | £1,777                     | 162                           | 6                        | 0                         | 1   | £1,422                     | 162                           | 6                        | 0                         | 1   | £1,066                     | 3   |
| 4   | College Town Primary                | 196                           | 7                                    | 16                                    | 194                       | 7                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 205                           | 7                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 205                           | 7                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 4   |
| 5   | Cranbourne Primary                  | 90                            | 3                                    | 0                                     | 83                        | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 86                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 87                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 5   |
| 6   | Crown Wood Primary (1)              | 229                           | 8                                    | 19                                    | 234                       | 8                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 249                           | 9                        | 1                         | 0   | £0                         | 254                           | 9                        | 1                         | 0   | £0                         | 6   |
| 7   | Crowthorne CE Primary               | 88                            | 3                                    | 28                                    | 89                        | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 89                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 90                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 7   |
| 8   | Fox Hill Primary                    | 88                            | 3                                    | 28                                    | 89                        | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 88                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 88                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 8   |
| 9   | Great Hollands Primary              | 94                            | 4                                    | 4                                     | 93                        | 4                        | 0                         | 8   | £14,217                    | 74                            | 3                        | -1                        | 0   | £0                         | 88                            | 3                        | -1                        | 0   | £0                         | 9   |
| 10  | Harmans Water Primary               | 164                           | 6                                    | 14                                    | 164                       | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 173                           | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 175                           | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 10  |
| 11  | Holly Spring Primary                | 235                           | 8                                    | 25                                    | 238                       | 8                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 243                           | 9                        | 1                         | 0   | £0                         | 249                           | 9                        | 1                         | 0   | £0                         | 11  |
| 12  | Jennetts Park CE Primary            | 146                           | 5                                    | 26                                    | 145                       | 5                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 147                           | 5                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 154                           | 6                        | 1                         | 0   | £0                         | 12  |
| 13  | Meadow Vale Primary                 | 239                           | 8                                    | 29                                    | 239                       | 8                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 233                           | 8                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 236                           | 8                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 13  |
| 14  | New Scotland Hill Primary           | 72                            | 3                                    | 12                                    | 71                        | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 80                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 84                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 14  |
| 15  | Owlsmoor Primary                    | 206                           | 7                                    | 26                                    | 207                       | 7                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 205                           | 7                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 206                           | 7                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 15  |
| 16  | Pines (The)                         | 106                           | 4                                    | 16                                    | 110                       | 4                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 90                            | 3                        | -1                        | 0   | £0                         | 88                            | 3                        | -1                        | 0   | £0                         | 16  |
| 17  | Sandy Lane Primary                  | 139                           | 5                                    | 19                                    | 142                       | 5                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 144                           | 5                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 140                           | 5                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 17  |
| 18  | St. Joseph's Catholic Primary       | 90                            | 3                                    | 0                                     | 89                        | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 90                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 90                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 18  |
| 19  | St. Margaret Clitherow Catholic Pry | 87                            | 3                                    | 27                                    | 84                        | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 85                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 85                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 19  |
| 20  | St. Michael's E'stead CE Aided Pry  | 83                            | 3                                    | 23                                    | 84                        | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 81                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 82                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 20  |
| 21  | St. Michael's CE Primary, Sandhurst | 98                            | 4                                    | 8                                     | 95                        | 4                        | 0                         | 4   | £7,108                     | 87                            | 3                        | -1                        | 0   | £0                         | 87                            | 3                        | -1                        | 0   | £0                         | 21  |
| 22  | Uplands Primary                     | 90                            | 3                                    | 0                                     | 89                        | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 90                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 90                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 22  |
| 23  | Warfield CE Primary                 | 170                           | 6                                    | 20                                    | 169                       | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 174                           | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 174                           | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 23  |
| 24  | Whitegrove Primary                  | 176                           | 6                                    | 26                                    | 179                       | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 180                           | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 180                           | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 24  |
| 25  | Wildmoor Heath                      | 78                            | 3                                    | 18                                    | 80                        | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 85                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 84                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 25  |
| 26  | Wildridings Primary School          | 167                           | 6                                    | 17                                    | 169                       | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 153                           | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 157                           | 6                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 26  |
| 27  | Winkfield St. Mary's CE Primary     | 78                            | 3                                    | 18                                    | 81                        | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 81                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 80                            | 3                        | 0                         | 0   | £0                         | 27  |
| 28  | Wooden Hill Primary & Nursery       | 158                           | 6                                    | 8                                     | 157                       | 6                        | 0                         | 4   | £7,108                     | 165                           | 6                        | 0                         | 4   | £5,687                     | 165                           | 6                        | 0                         | 4   | £4,265                     | 28  |
|     | <b>TOTAL Primary</b>                | <b>3,865</b>                  | <b>138</b>                           | <b>475</b>                            | <b>3,873</b>              | <b>138</b>               | <b>0</b>                  | <b>17</b>   | <b>£30,210</b>             | <b>3,867</b>                  | <b>137</b>               | <b>-1</b>                 | <b>5</b>  | <b>£7,108</b>              | <b>3,910</b>                  | <b>138</b>               | <b>0</b>                  | <b>5</b>  | <b>£5,331</b>              |     |

### Criteria for in-year budget allocations to schools admitting a disproportionate number of SEND pupils numbers

Text proposed to be deleted is bold and ~~stuck through~~  
New text is **bold and shaded yellow**

The DfE encourages LAs to allocate additional resources to schools that admit a disproportionate number of pupils with SEN with a clear expectation that this will affect only a minority of schools. The rationale of the contingency is that the normal operation of the simplified Funding Formula does not adequately resource schools for all costs when there is a large concentration of high needs pupils and inclusion of pupils into mainstream schools rather than specialist providers should be encouraged.

There is no prescribed methodology on how such a fund should work and the scheme agreed by the Forum following consultation requires schools to meet both of the following criteria:

1. Where the proportion of pupils on roll ~~classified as high need~~ **receiving top up funding** exceeds 4% of total pupil numbers in a primary school and 2% in a secondary school, and
2. Where the proportion that top up funding paid to support High Needs pupils compared to the total budget allocated via the BF Funding Formula exceeds 2% in a primary school and 1% in a secondary school.

#### **Data source and method of calculation to be as follows:**

1. **Statutory aged pupils only i.e. 5 to 6 year olds to be used in the calculation, including other LA pupils.**
2. **Census point for pupil numbers to be the same as that used to calculate the main school budget statement, currently the October prior to the commencement of the relevant financial year**
3. **The number of pupils on roll receiving top up funding and the total value to be as included in the original main school budget statement provided by the council, ordinarily the February or March prior to the commencement of the relevant financial year**
4. **All pupils receiving top up funding counted as 1 FTE, irrespective of actual attendance.**
5. **All per pupil top up funding to be based on a full year allocation, irrespective of actual attendance**

Approved by the Schools Forum on 15 July 2021. No changes were proposed by either the council or Schools Forum at the 23 June 2022 meeting.



## 2022-23 allocations from the SEN Specific Contingency

### Budget criteria

|       |                  |       |                  |
|-------|------------------|-------|------------------|
| 2.00% | Primary % rate   | 4.00% | Pry nos criteria |
| 1.00% | Secondary % rate | 2.00% | Sec nos criteria |

| SCHOOL                            | No. top-up pupils by school 3 Mar 2022 | NOR As at Oct 21 | Top-up pupils % (1) | Value of top-up for full year | Budget 22 -23 excl de-delegation | Top-up as % of school budget (2) | Qualify under both criteria? | 2022-23 funding on proposed criteria |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Ascot Heath Primary               | 3.3                                    | 394              | 0.85%               | £29,862                       | £1,682,390                       | 1.77%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Binfield Primary                  | 2.0                                    | 414              | 0.48%               | £21,055                       | £1,736,812                       | 1.21%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Birch Hill Primary                | 2.3                                    | 376              | 0.62%               | £27,073                       | £1,614,875                       | 1.68%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| College Town Primary              | 4.0                                    | 455              | 0.88%               | £65,430                       | £1,941,822                       | 3.37%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Cranbourne Primary                | 2.0                                    | 203              | 0.99%               | £22,628                       | £890,226                         | 2.54%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Crown Wood Primary Academy        | 16.6                                   | 530              | 3.14%               | £169,123                      | £2,265,350                       | 7.47%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Crowthorne Primary                | 4.3                                    | 210              | 2.07%               | £45,768                       | £891,565                         | 5.13%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Foxhill Primary                   | 5.0                                    | 206              | 2.43%               | £36,548                       | £959,340                         | 3.81%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Great Hollands Primary Academy    | 14.3                                   | 283              | 5.07%               | £136,457                      | £1,390,155                       | 9.82%                            | Yes                          | £15,759                              |
| Harmans Water Primary             | 0.0                                    | 446              | 0.00%               | £0                            | £1,923,431                       | 0.00%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Holly Spring Primary              | 11.7                                   | 578              | 2.02%               | £112,235                      | £2,459,178                       | 4.56%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Jennett's Park Primary Academy    | 10.3                                   | 381              | 2.71%               | £102,472                      | £1,636,098                       | 6.26%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| KA Oakwood                        | 2.0                                    | 138              | 1.45%               | £9,551                        | £754,870                         | 1.27%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Meadowvale Primary School         | 11.7                                   | 594              | 1.97%               | £85,760                       | £2,505,130                       | 3.42%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| New Scotland Hill Primary         | 4.3                                    | 189              | 2.29%               | £22,118                       | £857,045                         | 2.58%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Owlsmoor Primary                  | 11.0                                   | 521              | 2.11%               | £71,945                       | £2,245,475                       | 3.20%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| The Pines Primary                 | 5.3                                    | 309              | 1.73%               | £46,474                       | £1,405,280                       | 3.31%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Sandy Lane Primary                | 2.7                                    | 438              | 0.61%               | £17,700                       | £1,915,716                       | 0.92%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| St Joseph's RCP                   | 5.3                                    | 212              | 2.52%               | £55,734                       | £895,501                         | 6.22%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| St Margaret RC Primary Academy    | 4.3                                    | 207              | 2.10%               | £47,155                       | £937,633                         | 5.03%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Winkfield St. Mary's CE Primary   | 5.0                                    | 188              | 2.66%               | £35,301                       | £817,604                         | 4.32%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| St Michael's E'STEAD              | 3.3                                    | 238              | 1.40%               | £24,208                       | £1,027,006                       | 2.36%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| St Michael's CE Primary Sandhurst | 6.0                                    | 193              | 3.11%               | £39,871                       | £835,678                         | 4.77%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Uplands Primary                   | 4.3                                    | 210              | 2.07%               | £29,381                       | £892,326                         | 3.29%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Warfield Primary                  | 6.7                                    | 408              | 1.64%               | £47,210                       | £1,925,915                       | 2.45%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Whitegrove Primary                | 7.3                                    | 414              | 1.77%               | £49,675                       | £1,767,818                       | 2.81%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Wildridings Primary               | 7.0                                    | 395              | 1.78%               | £104,139                      | £1,730,253                       | 6.02%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Woodenhill Primary                | 7.0                                    | 360              | 1.94%               | £56,701                       | £1,539,793                       | 3.68%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Wildmoor Heath Primary            | 3.3                                    | 202              | 1.65%               | £35,402                       | £882,215                         | 4.01%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| The Brakenhale                    | 29.0                                   | 1,054            | 2.76%               | £158,772                      | £6,397,443                       | 2.48%                            | Yes                          | £31,900                              |
| EPCS                              | 16.7                                   | 814              | 2.05%               | £87,673                       | £5,127,782                       | 1.71%                            | Yes                          | £18,341                              |
| Edgbarrow                         | 27.0                                   | 1,112            | 2.43%               | £192,237                      | £6,195,665                       | 3.10%                            | Yes                          | £29,700                              |
| GHC                               | 21.0                                   | 1,246            | 1.69%               | £113,070                      | £7,724,099                       | 1.46%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| KABinfield                        | 16.0                                   | 899              | 1.78%               | £73,921                       | £4,988,102                       | 1.48%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Ranelagh                          | 14.0                                   | 860              | 1.63%               | £64,991                       | £4,769,800                       | 1.36%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| Sandhurst                         | 17.0                                   | 1,010            | 1.69%               | £120,684                      | £5,891,566                       | 2.05%                            | No                           | £0                                   |
| <b>Primary total</b>              | <b>172</b>                             | <b>9,692</b>     |                     | <b>£1,546,974</b>             | <b>£42,326,500</b>               | <b>3.65%</b>                     | <b>0</b>                     | <b>£15,759</b>                       |
| <b>Secondary total</b>            | <b>141</b>                             | <b>6,995</b>     |                     | <b>£811,348</b>               | <b>£41,094,457</b>               | <b>1.97%</b>                     | <b>1</b>                     | <b>£79,941</b>                       |
| <b>Total ALL</b>                  | <b>313</b>                             | <b>16,687</b>    |                     | <b>£2,358,323</b>             | <b>£83,420,957</b>               | <b>2.83%</b>                     | <b>1</b>                     | <b>£95,700</b>                       |

## **Criteria for the allocation of additional funds to support schools facing financial difficulties**

### Outline of the scheme

School Funding Regulations allow for additional funds outside the normal operation of the Funding Formula to be provided to schools considered to be in financial difficulty. In agreement with the Schools Forum, de-delegated funding has been set aside in the School's Budget for this purpose. The criteria to be used to allocate this funding has also previously been agreed, and a school would qualify for additional financial support if, in the opinion of the Council's Director responsible for schools and the Council's Director responsible for finance, they:

1. were unable to set a balanced budget and were in need of a licensed deficit arrangement at the start of the relevant financial year, and/or
2. were in or likely to fall into one of the Ofsted categories of causing concern, including serious weaknesses or special measures.
3. Were a 1 form of entry school judged good or better that have more than 5% empty places

Where additional funding is agreed, it is on condition that the senior managers and relevant governors of each school attend regular monitoring meetings with officers of the Council, provide such financial and other information that is requested, and do not make any significant deviations in spending, either in magnitude or by type without the approval of the Council's Director responsible for schools.

Before any proposed allocation of such funds is passed on to relevant schools, they are reported to and agreed by the Schools Forum. However, this can cause uncertainty and result in a delay in releasing resources to meet an immediate need.

### Powers delegated to the Director responsible for schools

In order to allow funds to be allocated within an appropriate time scale it is recommended that a set of principles be agreed by the School Forum which allows the Council's Director responsible for schools discretion to allocate funds up to but not exceeding a set level dependent on the Ofsted category of the school. Any such allocations would subsequently be reported to the Schools Forum.

The level of allocation of funds would be:

5. schools judged to have serious weaknesses (up to £20k per year)
6. schools deemed to be in need of special measures (up to £50k per year)
7. schools at risk of either judged to have serious weaknesses or entering special measures (up to £30k per year)
8. 1 form of entry schools judged good or better that have more than 5% empty places (up to £20k per year per school and £40k in total)

With a maximum value of aggregate allocations of £150k in any one financial year without the express approval of the Schools Forum.

Allocations will only be agreed where the relevant school has demonstrated insufficient funds exist within the budget to fund the required actions or activities.

Arrangements to support and monitor schools also includes:

1. a Declaration of Concern (DoC) where a school is at risk of being judged as Requiring Improvement or inadequate at its next inspection.
2. following Where effective action is being taken this is then monitored through a Standards Monitoring Board (SMB) on a termly basis this a Rapid Response Board is established for the first 12 weeks.. Where required there is an independent chair.
3. the SMB reviews evidence provided by school leaders and LA staff after 12 weeks and a decision made as to whether leadership are taking effective action following the DoC.
4. an SMB is also established where schools enter an Ofsted category of concern (judged to have serious weaknesses or placed into Special Measures)
5. the processes are clearly shared within the Learning and Improvement Strategy / Annex A School Improvement

Where the school is unable to fund these actions from its own delegated budget the SMB can request that additional resources be sought. Any such requests are approved by the Council's Director responsible for schools. Funds would be allocated to the school from those held for schools in financial difficulty Where schools enter an Ofsted category of concern (judged to have se

**Approved by the Schools Forum on 15 July 2021. No changes proposed by either the council or Schools Forum at the 23 June 2022 meeting.**

**No changes proposed by the council.**

## 2022-23 funding allocations to schools in financial difficulties

### Allocations agreed under the Director's delegated powers

Arrangements to support and monitor schools includes a Declaration of Concern (DoC). A DoC is called where a school is at risk of being judged as Requiring Improvement or inadequate at its next inspection. Following this a Rapid Response Board is established for the first 12 weeks. Where effective action is being taken this is then monitored through a Standards Monitoring Board (SMB) on a termly basis. Where required there is an independent chair. The SMB reviews evidence provided by school leaders and LA staff after 12 weeks and a decision made as to whether leadership are taking effective action following the DoC. The processes are clearly shared within the Learning and Improvement Strategy / Annex A School Improvement.

Taking account of proposals from the SMB meetings at relevant schools and 1 FE primary schools with over 5% empty places, funding allocations totalling £0.109m were agreed during the year as follows:

1. £45,278 to St Michael's Easthampstead. This comprised 2 elements:
  - i. CPD for all classroom staff to ensure a consistent approach to classroom practice is undertaken together with online and hard copies of "WalkThrus" resources to aid embedding Quality First Teaching and improving overall quality of education. Total cost £3,278.
  - ii. Additional teacher at Year 2 where pupil numbers are above the statutory maximum. As numbers in other Key Stage 1 year groups are within limits, the school does not qualify for additional staffing which is considered necessary to achieve required improvements. Total cost £42,000.
2. £16,582 to Fox Hill where a number of areas for improvement were identified including quality of teaching, progress of SEND pupils, Early Years Foundation Stage, support to the Leadership Team and new School Business Manager and safeguarding systems.
3. £4,800 to Ascot Heath Primary School to commission support to the interim English Lead to improve reading and writing additional classroom support to pupils with SEND.
4. £1,938 to Winkfield St Marys to accelerate the necessary improvements required to develop the curriculum plan.
5. £20,000 to Winkfield St Marys as a 1 FE with low pupil numbers. There were 188 on roll at October 2022 which results in 10% of empty places.
6. £12,280 to St Michael's CE Aided Primary Schools (Sandhurst) as a 1 FE with low pupil numbers. There were 193 on roll at October 2022 which results in 8% of empty places
7. £7,720 to New Scotland Hill Primary School as a 1 FE with low pupil numbers. There were 189 on roll at October 2022 which results in 10% of empty places.

### LA expenditure

In addition to these school allocations, the Forum has also agreed that up to £60,000 of School Adviser and other professional staff support time, such as HR and Finance can be

funded from this budget to support the SMBs and other additional arrangements provided directly by the council.

## **Eligible expenditure against the schools contingency**

### **Background**

**The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations** define “expenditure on the schools specific contingency” as:

“Central expenditure deducted for the purpose of ensuring that monies are available to enable an increase in a school’s budget share after it has been allocated, and where it subsequently becomes apparent that a governing body has incurred expenditure which it would be unreasonable to expect them to meet from the school’s budget share, which may include expenditure in relation to:

- schools in financial difficulty;
- the writing-off of deficits of schools which are discontinued, excluding any associated costs and overheads;
- new, amalgamating or closing schools;
- circumstances which were unforeseen when the school’s budget share was initially determined.”

In order to provide greater clarity, and to be able to fund all of the circumstances permitted by the DfE, which takes account of comments received from schools to the consultation on the school loan scheme, the following text is proposed to be approved.

### **Eligible expenditure from the BF schools’ contingency fund (de-delegated)**

- Unexpected and unavoidable costs in schools, which it would be unreasonable to expect governing bodies to meet from their delegated budget, and where the amount required and the circumstances giving rise to the additional costs were unknown at the time of setting the budget. These would ordinarily need to exceed £5,000.

Claims will be considered on a case by case basis by the Heads of Service covering Finance, Human Resources and Property before formal presentation to the Forum for a decision. Where relevant, this consideration will take account of whether any advice was sought from the council, the appropriateness of that advice and the actions then taken by schools and their impact.

- Correction of formula errors
- Where a school is closing and a deficit is likely, every effort should be taken to achieve break-even. Where a school is becoming an academy, they should also ensure costs are only incurred that relate to the school, and for the period it is a maintained school. However, where a school closes with a deficit, where the EFA does not reimburse for this, the cost must be picked up by the Dedicated School Grant (DSG).
- Funding for schools in financial difficulties where this is not the result of poor local management decisions. [Note a separate policy is in place for this category].

**Approved by the Schools Forum on 15 July 2021. No changes proposed by either the council or Schools Forum at the 23 June 2022 meeting.**

**No changes proposed by the council.**