

TO: EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & LEARNING
DATE: 19 JANUARY 2021

**LOCAL AUTHORITY PROPOSALS FOR THE 2021-22 SCHOOLS AND
CENTRAL SCHOOL SERVICES BLOCK ELEMENTS OF THE SCHOOLS BUDGET**
Executive Director: People

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek agreement from the Executive Member to set the 2021-22 Schools and Central School Services Block elements of the Schools Budget based on recommendations made by the Schools Forum.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That the Executive Member AGREES the recommendations proposed for the 2021-22 budget by the Schools Forum in respect of the Schools Block and Central School Services Block budgets, as set out in paragraph 3.1 of Appendix A**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To ensure that relevant elements of the 2021-22 Schools Budget are set in accordance with the views of schools, other providers of education, the Schools Forum, the funding framework and the anticipated level of resources.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 These have been considered during the budget consultation stage and previous reports to the Schools Forum.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The Schools Forum has been considering the 2021-22 budget since October and has now reached the stage where final proposals can be presented to the Executive Member to agree. As the Executive member has observer status on the Schools Forum, receiving all reports and is entitled to attend meetings he is actively involved in the operation and considerations of the Schools Forum on this matter.
- 5.2 Whilst spending on the Schools Budget is funded by the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), and therefore outside of the Council's funding responsibilities, Local Authorities (LA) retain a legal duty to set the overall level of the Schools Budget before the start of each financial year. In deciding the relevant amount, LAs must plan to spend at least to the level of estimated DSG and can also take account of any accumulated under or overspending on the Schools Budget from previous years.
- 5.3 At its meeting of 15 December, the Executive agreed that the 2021-22 Schools Budget should be set at the eventual level of grant income plus any accumulated

balances in the Schools Budget together with up to £0.253m of council funding to help meet the cost pressure arising from new and expanded schools. The Executive also agreed that the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning would be authorised to make amendments and agree budgets for schools and services centrally managed by the Council.

- 5.4 With changes having been implemented by the Department for Education to introduce a ringfence on the Schools Block Budget, a decision is still awaited from the secretary of state regarding permission for the council to provide the additional funds to schools which have now been calculated at £0.227m. An alternative funding strategy has been identified to support schools which is set out in the report to the Schools Forum.
- 5.5 Appendix A presents the proposals expected to be agreed by the Schools Forum on 14 January in respect of Schools and Central School Services Block elements of the DSG. Should the Forum agree any recommendations outside those contained on the attached appendix, a verbal update will be provided when this decision is considered.
- 5.6 Budget decisions taken by the Executive Member have always been in accordance with the wishes of the Schools Forum, and the recommendations on this paper maintain that position.
- 5.7 Detailed proposals in respect of the High Needs and Early Years Blocks are expected to be presented for a decision in March. This approach reflects the different timescales that relevant budget and costing information becomes available and the workplan associated with the High Needs Block. A delay in making this decision will allow for the most up to date information to be considered and the setting of a more robust budget.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The relevant legal provisions are contained within the main body of the relevant Schools Forum reports.

Director of Finance

- 6.2 The financial implications arising from this report are set out within the supporting information of the relevant School Forum reports and present a budget that can be funded from the overall level of anticipated resources.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 There are no specific impacts arising from this report.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 These are contained within the main body of the relevant Schools Forum reports.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

7.1 Schools, the Schools Forum and People Directorate Management Team.

Method of Consultation

7.2 Formal consultations through on-line applications and written documents.

Representations Received

7.3 Set out in reports to the Schools Forum.

Background Papers

None.

Contact for further information

Paul Clark, Finance Business Partner - People

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Doc. Ref

Doc. Ref [https://bfcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/fina/bpm/FIBPSCB-FIN9.6/Schools Forum/Exec Member Reports/2020-21 SB CSSB and EY Block Element of the Schools Budget v1 for Exec Member.docx](https://bfcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/fina/bpm/FIBPSCB-FIN9.6/Schools%20Forum/Exec%20Member%20Reports/2020-21%20SB%20CSSB%20and%20EY%20Block%20Element%20of%20the%20Schools%20Budget%20v1%20for%20Exec%20Member.docx)

Approved by Cllr Dr Gareth Barnard
Executive Member, Children, Young People
& Learning

Approved by Rachel Morgan
Interim Director, Children's Services

Signature.....

Signature.....

Date: 19 January 2021

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Extract from expected Schools Forum agreement

TO: SCHOOLS FORUM
DATE: 14 JANUARY 2021

**2021-22 BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR THE SCHOOLS BLOCK AND
CENTRAL SCHOOL SERVICES BLOCK ELEMENTS OF THE SCHOOLS BUDGET**
Executive Director: People

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

To AGREE

3.1 In its role as the representative body of schools and other providers of education and childcare, the Forum REQUESTS that the Executive Member AGREES the following for the 2021-22 Schools Budget:

- 1. The changes to budgets as set out in Table 3, in particular:
 - i. that the Schools Block DSG be set at £81.769m (line 3);**
 - ii. that the Central School Services Block be set at £0.912m (line 3);**
 - iii. that the changes to other budgets aggregate to £6.721m (lines 8-19).****
- 2. that the factors used in the BF Funding Formula for Schools and their relative values are the same as those used by the DfE for BF in the NFF (Annex 4);**
- 3. that the £0.227m funding shortfall arising from using NFF rates in the BF Funding Formula, will be met from either:
 - i. Council Reserves, if permitted by the secretary of state, or otherwise**
 - ii. Not implementing the agreed £20 per pupil deduction contribution to education statutory duties, with the £0.004m shortfall met from a draw down from the DSG funded New School Start-up / Diseconomy Reserve.****
- 4. that the cost of the MFG should be financed by all schools above the 2% increase, not just those above the average increase.**
- 5. that other Schools Block related grants be reset to the amounts anticipated in 2021-22 (paragraph Error! Reference source not found.);**
- 6. that the resulting DfE pro forma template of the 2021-22 BF Funding Formula for Schools, as set out in Annex 5 be submitted by the 21 January deadline.**

The full paper can be viewed at [Agenda for Schools Forum on Thursday, 14 January 2021, 4.30 pm | Bracknell Forest Council \(bracknell-forest.gov.uk\)](#)