

## Report to the Cabinet, 19 January 2023



### Lancashire Schools Forum

CC Philippa Williamson, Leader, Lancashire County Council and CC Jayne Rear, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

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Date: 12 January 2023

C. CC Michael Goulthorp, Lead Member for Education and Skills

Dear Philippa and Jayne,

#### **Schools Budget 2023/24**

As you will be aware, at a meeting on 12 January 2023, the Schools Forum was presented with information about the latest proposals for setting the Schools Budget from April 2023.

Following consideration of the proposals, the Forum agreed a number of recommendations for your consideration in finalising the Schools Budget for 2023/24. Where applicable these recommendations follow the outcomes of consultations with schools and early years providers.

#### **The Forum:**

Supported the Schools Block proposals, as follows:

- Confirmed that the DfE's NFF methodology should continue to be used as the Lancashire formula in 2023/24.
- The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) be set at +0.5% for 2023/24, mirroring the National Funding Formula.
- No headroom within School Block to transfer funds to Early Years.
- Growth Fund allocation not being utilised with National Funding Formula Budgets.
- The transfer of circa £2.08m of Schools Block funding to the High Needs Block for the revised payment arrangements needed for the contractual school PFI contribution in relation to the former Hameldon site, as it is being taken over by a Lancashire special school.

Supported the High Needs Block proposals, as follows:

- 851 of Commissioned places for 2023/24.
- The increase in HNB allocation to broadly match uplifts in the mainstream sector, including;
  - Increasing the Weighted Pupil Numbers (WPN) rate by 3% to £5,330;
  - For Specific Factors Special School and PRU School Specific factors uplifted by 2% as in 2022/23
- The distribution of additional high needs funding of £8 million at 3.4% to all Special Schools and PRUS. This still have left unallocated amount on which School Forum was consulted on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023. They have supported to;
  - Pass over the grant as per Department of Education guidance at 3.4%, but also include the WPN HNB element for Primary and Secondary schools, as well as the FE Colleges, following a similar process as last year but with additional consideration for Early Years settings for pupils with EHCP plans. Based on 2022/23 figures this would be circa £2.2 million (further modelling needed with 2023/24 figures) which still leaves potentially circa £2.5 million which will be discussed with relevant working groups to decide on how most effectively utilise this funding throughout the year.
- Inclusion Engagement Team cost of £294,042 to be funded 2023/24 from High Needs Block.

Supported the Early Years Block proposals, as follows:

- Initial modelling on the early years block suggested the full £0.23 pence hourly increase can be funded from within Early Years Block Budget. School Forum understands that Early Years are facing considerable pressures within the sector. Therefore, for 2023/24 it was agreed that £1 million to be transferred from DSG Reserves again to allow an additional £0.04 pence for the 3 and 4-year-old entitlements over and above the DfE confirmed increase. This would provide of a new rate of £4.75 per hour agreed by School Forum on 12th January 2023. This would give an increase of £0.27 pence per hour.
- The passporting of other DfE Early Years funding increases to providers:
  - + £0.06 per hour 2-year-olds providing £5.63 per hour from April 2023.
  - + £0.27 per hour 3- and 4-year-olds providing £4.75 per hour from April 2023.
  - + £0.64 per hour for the maintained nursery schools supplementary funding providing £4.31 per hour from April 2023.

- + £0.02 per hour for Early Years Pupil Premium providing £0.62 per hour from April 2023, equivalent to up to £353 per eligible child per year.
  - + £28 per eligible child the disability access fund (DAF) per eligible child £828 per year from April 2023.
- The continuation of Deprivation Supplements on the existing methodology for 2023/24.
  - The continuation of the SEN Inclusion Fund at £500k for 2023/24.

Supported the Central School Services Block proposals, as follows:

- The historic commitments element transferred to the High Needs Block to continue for;
  - 200K to Emotional Health and Wellbeing commissioned service
  - 150K to for the Multi-Agency safeguarding Hub (MASH).

The Dedicated Schools Grant Reserve underwriting the uncertainties around the 2023/24 DSG Schools Budget, across Schools Block, High Needs Block, Early Years Block and CSSB.

I hope that you will be able to accommodate our recommendations and decisions when you set the Schools Budget for 2023/24.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely



Daniel Ballard  
Chair, Lancashire Schools Forum