

NOTICE
OF
MEETING
SCHOOLS FORUM

will meet on

THURSDAY, 16TH DECEMBER, 2021

At 2.00 pm

by

VIRTUAL MEETING - ONLINE ACCESS, ON [RBWM YOUTUBE](#)

TO: MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM

SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES: MAGGIE CALLAGHAN, ISABEL COOKE, SARAH COTTLE, JOHN FLETCHER, ANDREW MORRISON, JOOLZ SCARLETT, CATHRIN THOMAS, MARTIN TINSLEY (CHAIRMAN), CHRIS TOMES (VICE-CHAIRMAN) AND MIKE WALLACE.

Karen Shepherd – Head of Governance - Issued: 7th December 2021

Members of the Press and Public are welcome to attend Part I of this meeting. The agenda is available on the Council's web site at www.rbwm.gov.uk or contact the Panel Administrator **Oran Norris-Browne** Oran.Norris-Browne@RBWM.gov.uk

Recording of Meetings – In line with the council's commitment to transparency the Part I (public) section of the virtual meeting will be streamed live and recorded via Zoom. By participating in the meeting by audio and/or video, you are giving consent to being recorded and acknowledge that the recording will be in the public domain. If you have any questions regarding the council's policy, please speak to Democratic Services or Legal representative at the meeting.

AGENDA

PART I

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGE NO</u>
1.	<u>APOLOGIES</u> To receive apologies for absence.	-
2.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> To receive any Declarations of Interest.	3 - 4
3.	<u>MINUTES</u> To confirm the minutes from the previous meeting.	5 - 10
4.	<u>BUDGET MONITORING AND FORECAST 2021/22</u> To receive the above the report.	11 - 30
5.	<u>SCHOOL BUDGET FUNDING 2022/23 CONSULTATION REVIEW</u> To receive the above report.	To Follow

MEMBERS' GUIDE TO DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

Disclosure at Meetings

If a Member has not disclosed an interest in their Register of Interests, they **must make** the declaration of interest at the beginning of the meeting, or as soon as they are aware that they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) or Other Registerable Interest. If a Member has already disclosed the interest in their Register of Interests they are still required to disclose this in the meeting if it relates to the matter being discussed.

Any Member with concerns about the nature of their interest should consult the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

Non-participation in case of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI)

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your DPIs (summary below, further details set out in Table 1 of the Members' Code of Conduct) you must disclose the interest, **not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room** unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (as agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer), you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted by the Monitoring Officer in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a DPI.

Where you have a DPI on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet Member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

DPIs (relating to the Member or their partner) include:

- *Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.*
- *Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses*
- *Any contract under which goods and services are to be provided/works to be executed which has not been fully discharged.*
- *Any beneficial interest in land within the area of the council.*
- *Any licence to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer.*
- *Any tenancy where the landlord is the council, and the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest in the securities of.*
- *Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:*
 - a) that body has a place of business or land in the area of the council, and*
 - b) either (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body **or** (ii) the total nominal value of the shares of any one class belonging to the relevant person exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.*

Any Member who is unsure if their interest falls within any of the above legal definitions should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to one of your Other Registerable Interests (summary below and as set out in Table 2 of the Members Code of Conduct), you must disclose the interest. **You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting** but otherwise **must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation**. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (as agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer), you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Other Registerable Interests (relating to the Member or their partner):

You have an interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:

- a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority*
- b) any body*
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature*
 - (ii) directed to charitable purposes or*

one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

Disclosure of Non- Registerable Interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a DPI) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. **You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting** but otherwise **must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation**. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer) you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –

- a. your own financial interest or well-being;
- b. a financial interest or well-being of a friend, relative, close associate; or
- c. a body included in those you need to disclose under DPIs as set out in Table 1 of the Members' code of Conduct

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied.

Where a matter **affects** your financial interest or well-being:

- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise **must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation**. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer, you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Other declarations

Members may wish to declare at the beginning of the meeting any other information they feel should be in the public domain in relation to an item on the agenda; such Member statements will be included in the minutes for transparency.

Agenda Item 3

SCHOOLS FORUM

THURSDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2021

PRESENT: Martin Tinsley (Chairman), Chris Tomes (Vice-Chairman), Isabel Cooke, Joolz Scarlett, Michael Wallace, Sarah Cottle,

Also in attendance: Councillor Maureen Hunt

Officers: James Norris, Kevin McDaniel, Clive Haines, Sarah Ward, Tracey Anne Nevitt, Rebecca Askew, Helen Huntley, Oran Norris-Browne, Alasdair Whitelaw and Frances Lee

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from John Fletcher.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

MINUTES

AGREED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on the 21st October 2021, be an accurate record.

BUDGET MONITORING AND FORECAST 2021/22

The Director of Children's Services (Kevin McDaniel) placed on record his apologies to the panel for the late publication of the reports due to various technical challenges and the short time between this meeting and the last.

The Schools Forum considered the report regarding the budget monitoring and forecast for 2021/22.

The Head of Finance for Achieving for Children (James Norris) said that the report provided the forum with the indicative forecast position for the current financial year and the deficit position at the end of the financial year on the 31st March 2022.

The Head of Finance for Achieving for Children said that the current reported position was a £1.755 million overspend, which was the same as the last reported figure. He added that it was expected that the financial update would be brought to the December Schools Forum.

The Head of Finance for Achieving for Children said that there was not a lot more to add that was different from the October Schools Forum meeting apart from saying that they were awaiting final confirmation from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) in respect to the early years block clawback. He said that just over £800,000 was accounted for at year-end to be received in 2021/22, although it was now anticipated that this would in fact be more. This notification was expected in November 2021 and therefore would be factored into forecasts for the December Schools Forum report.

The Head of Finance for Achieving for Children said that there was a cumulative deficit position of £3.5 million, which represented around 2.6% of the overall allocation.

The Head of Finance for Achieving for Children thanked forum members for attending a working party in November 2021. He said that 3 themes came from that meeting, which were as follows.

- The expansion of the local offer.
- Increased local partnerships.
- The improvement of the commissioning arrangements and the annual review process.

The Head of Finance for Achieving for Children said that these were agreed upon areas as to where attention should be focussed upon.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE REPORT

The Schools Forum considered the report regarding the Social, Emotional and Mental Health Service.

The SEND Consultant for School Improvement (Helen Huntley) said that funding for the SEMH intervention programme would be ceasing in Easter 2022, however there was an overwhelming amount of support from the Schools Forum that this service should continue.

The SEND Consultant for School Improvement said the potential options for SEMH provision were:

1. To agree on the proposals to maintain a Royal Borough of Maidenhead and Windsor Social Emotional and Mental Health Service and provision and to further develop its SEMH provision.
2. To consider the recommendations as to how this service and provision would be funded which included changes to the use of the Designated School Grant (DSG) funding.
3. To consider Targeted Support for Social, Emotional and Mental Health Early Years Hub.

The SEND Consultant for School Improvement asked the Schools Forum to consider investing into early years intervention and prevention but admitted that there was no saying that it would be able to make a difference. She added that if no investment was made then this could lead to an extraordinary increase in costs.

These were broken down into 3 factors:

- The increase in number of children with SEMH as a prime need.
- The cost of alternative provision for permanently excluded pupils.
- The extraordinary cost for the specialist provision of Children with SEMH in an independent setting.

The SEND Consultant for School Improvement said that if a pupil had to be placed in a specialist independent provision for a period of 5 years, this could cost £400,000. She added that if a child was permanently excluded and spent 5 years in alternative a specialist Independent provision, then this would cost £87,000 for one child.

The SEND Consultant for School Improvement said that the borough wished to invest in non-statutory services to accommodate the best decision for young people and to implement indicative cost avoidance.

The Chairman said that he believed that the consensus at the working party meeting prior to the November forum, was that it was best to invest now to save in the future. He acknowledged that if they were to back this provision then other provision may have to be cut, which he said would be a difficult decision to make.

Isabel Cooke said that the cases of SEMH were escalating and that some thinking outside of the box was required to ensure that this provision could continue.

The SEND Consultant for School Improvement referred to Table 1 of the report which broke down the costs for the discussed provisions. She noted that the provision of the Core SEMH Service and provision for 2022/23 would be £195,814. She said that the first proposal would be to retain this service, with the cost including the salaries of an SEMH coordinator, 3 SEMH coaches and 2 members of the behaviour support staff. She added that one of the members of the behaviour support staff had resigned, with a discussion to be had on whether this position should be re-filled.

The SEND Consultant for School Improvement informed the forum of the 3 different options set out in 3.4 and explained them. Mike Wallace asked what the element of risk was if the local authority did not break neutral and if there would be a backup plan in this instance.

The Head of Finance for Achieving for Children said that the cost that would occur would come from the High Needs block, rather than from the local authority. He said that they were currently working with 21 pupils and if 7 of these had been permanently excluded and had to spend two years in Alternative Provision, this would have cost more than the total cost of the core SEMH service.

The Chairman asked if there was any evidence over the last few years that money was saved from other areas of the budget. The SEMH Coordinator (Alasdair Whitelaw) said that they had worked with 23 schools and 23 individual students, none of which had been permanently excluded. The Chairman acknowledged that this had therefore been successful.

The Director of Children's Services said that a decision had to be made on potentially stopping or reducing services with less of a priority as the one present, in order to balance the costs and risks.

The Chairman asked if this would put the borough at risk from an Ofsted inspection. The Director of Children's Services said that the borough had received a written statement of action in 2017 from Ofsted with regards to the borough's children with additional needs. He said that he was not worried about an Ofsted inspection overall, however he was worried that the borough would not provide the right services to pupils within the schools.

The Chairman asked how much the borough had spent per child over the last 2 years towards the 23 children mentioned. The SEMH Coordinator said that per child for a half term, they had one coach mentor with a salary of approximately £21,000, with schools also having the option of spending £2,000 on resources. He noted that not all schools spent this allocated money.

The Director of Children's Services said that it would have cost approximately around £17,000 per child compared to that of a special school placement, which would cost typically £35-40,000.

The SEND Consultant for School Improvement set out the 3 options to forum members in section 3.5 of the report. Joolz Scarlett said that if schools were to buy the discussed provision individually, then they would not be able to get the same deal as the one discussed.

The SEMH Coordinator confirmed this as the local authority had a license for 65 schools currently and 62 or 63 had subscribed to it, with 52 schools actively using it. He said that there was also a super user account with 34 schools having signed the SEMH Coordinator up as a super user, allowing him to see their data. He added that the cost of this would not be increasing in the next year and would remain at £16,900.

The SEND Consultant for School Improvement said that the super user account allowed for that person to see where there was a need for additional services, due to the overview that they had been allowed to see. She added that information could be used to support transitions in pupil's school careers.

The SEND Consultant for School Improvement stated the options available to the forum as set out in sections 3.6 and 3.7. These were noted by the forum.

The Chairman asked if the vacant post of an SEMH assistant was to be filled. The SEND Consultant for School Improvement said that this was a decision that the forum needed to make. The Director for Children's Services said that the money for this was currently budgeted for, however a discussion needed to be had on whether this was the best way forward.

The Chairman and the forum agreed that this service was an important one to maintain.

WELLBEING SERVICE REPORT

The Schools Forum noted the contents of the Wellbeing Service report.

The Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist (Rebecca Askew) outlined the basis of the report to the forum and made them aware that there were 2 proposals that would be discussed, and clearly stated that the 1st proposal would be the one that would be focussed on, as made clear in Table 1 of the report.

The Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist said that 4 members of staff had resigned over the past 6 months from the wellbeing team. She said that the salary had been stated by these staff as being a main factor in their resignations. She added that they started on grade 5 salaries and that this did not equate to similar salaries within Achieving for Children (AFC), especially with the nature of the work being highly skilled, with high-risk management in working with children presenting with self-harm and on occasions suicidal ideation.

The Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist stated that the proposal was to fill the vacant posts, equivalent to 2 full-time positions. The request is to grade these positions at the upper spinal points of grade 5 on the salary scale.

The Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist outlined proposal 2 of the report, in relation to high intensity cognitive behavioural therapy training. This was often required for many cases that came through the early help service. She added that the proposal set out in the report may in the future be met through NHS funding through a band 8a post, and the practitioner would be employed by Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust.

(Councillor Hunt left the meeting)

The Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist made it clear to forum members that this would not be an immediate development due to there being significant difficulties in recruiting to senior NHS positions.

The Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist said that the proposal being put forward was to recruit 2 full-time equivalent wellbeing practitioners into the team. She added that this could be accounted for by the base budget against the increased income generation.

The Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist said with regards to the 2nd proposal that positively it would provide support for the high intensity cases moving forward, but there was no action required by the borough to fill the vacancy. However, without this position being filled it would ensure that waiting times for services such as CAMHS would potentially increase more requests for education, health, and care assessments with SEMH as a primary need.

The Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist referred the forum to part 4 of the report, which clearly stated the potential impacts that could exist if the 1st proposal was not taken up. She said that there would be a disproportionate impact on particular groups, particularly customer and public groups with SEN/disabilities due to the higher incidence of mental health needs in these groups.

(Frances Lee left the meeting)

The Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist summarised the appendices for the forum by stating the contents. She said that section 6.2 outlined support from the wellbeing service being open to all children and young person's attending schools within the borough, between the ages of 5 and 18 years of age. She added that this was with the exception of private schools.

The Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist mentioned with reference to section 6.3 of the report that support was also given from team members towards children known to the social care pods. She said that this was at a level of 0.4 full time equivalents, delivered by the team lead within the wellbeing team. Volunteers were highly encouraged in the team, and a volunteer Councillor was also currently enlisted one day a week.

The Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist outlined section 6.4 of the report to the forum by saying that there is currently an additional 1.5 full-time equivalency of practitioner time provided to the borough through Early Help via the Getting Help Team (employed by Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust).

The Chairman asked what the impact was of not having the 2 members of staff in place. The Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist replied by stating that waiting times were being seen to increase and the number of children being seen would decrease due to a lower capacity being available. The Chairman said that it was clear that this provision needed to continue. Isabel Cooke stated that she agreed with the Chairman wholeheartedly.

The Director of Children's Services made it clear that costs would potentially be seen to increase for services if all provisions were kept but recognised the importance of the provisions.

(Sarah Cottle left the meeting)

(Helen Huntley left the meeting)

SCHOOL BUDGET CONSULTATION 2022/23

The Schools Forum noted the contents of the School Budget Consultation 2022/23.

The Head of Finance for Achieving for Children referred to the proposed reduction in the school improvement monitoring and brokerage grant by 50% for next year and 100% the year after that.

The Head of Finance for Achieving for Children said that currently the borough was seeing a 15% to 16% increase to volume and costs, with funding increases only addressing around 50% of the pressure that was expected in the following year.

The Head of Finance for Achieving for Children said that from 2024/25, the borough expected all authorities to be moving to the National Funding Formula. He noted that this had not yet been confirmed by the EFSA.

He then addressed some notable changes as being:

- The core factors had gone up by 2%.
- The minimum per pupil funding levels had gone up by 2%.
- The minimum per pupil level funding values for primary school children at £4,265 and secondary school children at £5,525.

The Head of Finance for Achieving for Children said that there were funding guarantees that now had to be met as stated in section 4.4 of the report. He said that the borough was currently running at a 0.5% year on year pupil protection funding.

The Head of Finance for Achieving for Children summarised by stating that the formula was very similar to that of last year and that there was a focus on closing remaining gaps on funding. He added that the borough was below the National Funding Formula on the lump sum allowance. He noted that further headroom would potentially lead to all schools regardless of size receiving a lump sum of around £129,000.

The Head of Finance for Achieving for Children said that the School Improvement Grant was proposed to be reduced by 50% from April 2022 and potentially 100% in 2023. He noted that

the view of the borough was that this was an area that the government should be continuing to fund.

The Chairman asked where this money had been found by the Department for Education (DfE). The Director of Children's Service paraphrased the DfE by saying that academies had led the way during COVID and that maintained schools should also be able to make their choices of services.

The Chairman asked for clarity over the £129,000 lump sum. The Head of Finance for Achieving for Children clarified this by stating that the current lump sum allowance was approximately £122,000, so the potential extra finance would be around £7,000.

The Director of Children's Services said that if the Schools Forum wished to transfer some funds from the schools' block to the high needs block, then this would be acceptable as long as the forum members voted unanimously in favour. He added that the Secretary of State would also need to ratify this.

The Head of Finance for Achieving for Children said due to the low level of change in the formula, there would be no need in sharing the data from individual schools at the current stage, unlike in previous years. Consultation on the Schools Forum would run from 22nd November to 6th December 2021, with aggregated results being shared at the next Schools Forum. The Chairman thanked all forum members and officers for their attendance.

The meeting, which began at 2.00 pm, finished at 3.23 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....

Report Title:	Budget Monitoring and Forecast 2021/22
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Stuart Carroll - Deputy Chairman of Cabinet, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health and Mental Health
Meeting and Date:	Schools Forum 16 December 2021
Responsible Officer(s):	Kevin McDaniel - Director of Children's Services James Norris - Head of Finance Achieving for Children (RBWM)
Wards affected:	All

REPORT SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Schools Forum with the projected financial position for 2021/22 along with a summary of associated Risks & Opportunities; the projected reserve deficit balance as at 31 March 2022 and an understanding of the financial pressures faced in respect of the Dedicated Schools Grant. Details are set out in sections 2 and 3.
2. The Dedicated Schools Grant has a cumulative deficit position, therefore, it must work to mitigate this pressure including submitting a Deficit Management Plan to the Department for Education. The future action is set out in section 5.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION

1.1 RECOMMENDATION: That Schools Forum:

i) notes the report including the reported variance, schedule of Risks & Opportunities and the projected deficit balance carried forward as at 31 March 2022.

ii) provides comments on the recommendations of the Deficit Management Plan working party, as set out in section 5.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.1 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Indicative Settlement for the Royal Borough for 2021/22 (including Academy schools) based on the March 2021 budget notification is £133,912,000 with net retained funding of £69,720,000 consists of £36,916,000 of maintained schools delegated budgets and £32,804,000 central schools budget (including Early Years and High Needs). Delegated budgets are treated as spent as soon as they are delegated.

- 2.2 Since the March 2021 DSG budget notification there has been a net in-year grant increase of £1,256,000. This increase is partly in respect of the Early Years Block, relating to the receipt of deferred Education Skills Funding Agency funding for last year 2020/21 of £266,000 and as reflected in the current budget the estimated funding due for the current year 2021/22 of £672,000. The total Early Years Block grant movement being £938,000. In addition, there has been an in-year High Needs Block funding adjustment of £318,000.
- 2.3 In respect of 2021/22 the central schools budget has a projected net overspend of £1,193,000, representing a favourable movement of £562,000 to the forecast variance previously reported to Schools Forum in November 2021. The Schools Block and Early Years Block forecast favourable movements are both one-off for 2021/22 and are not expected to repeat at the same levels for 2022/23.
- 2.4 The material forecast variances are as follows:
- Schools Block (£537,000) – this favourable variance relates to the release of the total uncommitted balance of the pupil growth fund of £537,000 from a total allocation of £679,000. This forecast variance has not been previously.
 - Central School Services Block (£95,000) – this favourable variance mainly relates to the underspend within the Non Independent Special School Places (£51,000) and staffing vacancies (£30,000). This forecast variance has not been previously reported.
 - Early Years Block (£266,000) - this favourable movement relates to the final budget allocation received from the ESFA in November 2021 for 2020/21. The final allocation 2020/21 was 3% more than projected. It is confirmed that the Early Years Block funding for 2020/21 was allocated to all nursery settings. This forecast variance has not been previously reported.
 - High Needs Block £2,091,000 - increased costs relating to the provision of Independent Special or Non Maintained Special Schools and other associated direct support. In comparison to 2020/21 the average unit cost and volume for 2021/22 has increased by 1% and 9% respectively. This variance includes an adverse movement of £336,000 compared to the previously reported position relating to an increase in the number of pupils being placed at an Independent Special or Non Maintained Special School including movements since the start of the new academic year.

There are pressures on the High Needs Block with this position continuing and replicated in most other local authorities. It is linked to a combination of factors to include rising demand for service provision that meets the increasingly complex needs of children and young people, and the SEND Reforms (2014) that increased support to include individuals from birth up to 25 years of age.

Further analysis of High Needs Block cost drivers will be reported to the Schools Forum in April 2022.

2.5 The further material forecast risks and opportunities are as set out below:

- Schools Block - there are no further applications for pupil growth funding anticipated for the remainder of 2021/22, therefore, the current forecast reflects the release of the total uncommitted balance of the pupil growth fund of £537,000 from a total allocation of £679,000. Any applications approved during the remainder of 2021/22 would impact on the reported position. The budget allocation for 2022/23 will be confirmed as part of the budget settlement in December, the current estimated allocation for the budget build was set at £500,000; however, based on the latest data this is now expected to be significantly lower. The current pupil growth funding commitments for 2022/23 are £110,000.
- High Needs Block – reflected within the current reported position is an estimated provision of £450,000 for additional pupils from November 2021 who will meet the eligibility for Top Up funding or be placed at an Independent Special or Non Maintained Special School. This provision will be actively monitored as part of the continuing budget monitoring for 2021/22.

2.6 Table 1 sets out the summarised financial position for 2021/22

Table 1 Summarised Financial Position 2021/22

Schools Block Budget	S251 Budget Notification (March 2021)	Less Academy Recoupment & Direct Funding (Nov 2021)	Net Budget Notification (Nov 2021)	DfE & Indicative In-Year Budget Changes (Nov 2021)	Current Budget	Forecast Variance	Current Forecast
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure							
Schools	99,611	(62,695)	36,916	0	36,916	(537)	36,379
Central School Services	1,097	0	1,097	0	1,097	(95)	1,002
Early Years	9,025	0	9,025	938	9,963	(266)	9,697
High Needs	24,180	(2,753)	21,426	318	21,744	2,091	23,835
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	133,912	(65,448)	68,464	1,256	69,720	1,193	70,913
Funding							
Dedicated Schools Grant	(133,912)	65,448	(68,464)	(1,256)	(69,720)	0	(69,720)
TOTAL FUNDING	(133,912)	65,448	(68,464)	(1,256)	(69,720)	0	(69,720)
NET EXPENDITURE	0	0	0	0	0	1,193	1,193
	Summary					£000	
	Total in year (surplus) / deficit					1,193	
	Balance brought forward DSG general reserve (surplus) / deficit					1,925	
	Add back unused earmarked reserves 31 st March 2021 (surplus) / deficit					(134)	
	Net Projected (surplus) / deficit					2,984	

3. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

3.1 The projected net in-year overspend of £1,193,000 is an adverse movement on the dedicated schools grant general reserve which as at 31st March 2021 was a net deficit of £1,925,000. Incorporating the release of the unused earmarked reserve of £134,000 the revised projected deficit as at 31st March 2022 is £2,984,000.

3.2 The projected cumulative deficit for RBWM is 2.2% of the total budget allocation 2021/22.

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 The financial implications are set out in sections 2 and 3. The overall impact is a projected carried forward deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant as at 31 March 2022 of £2,984,000.
- 4.2 This is a national challenge, with many authorities reporting a projected carried forward deficit by 31 March 2022. Those with the most significant balances are entering into a “safety valve” agreement with the DfE where the authority undertakes to reach a positive in-year balance on its Dedicated Schools Grant. The authority undertakes to control and reduce the cumulative deficit in line with the financial plan as submitted and funding assumptions as agreed with the DfE.
- 4.3 Local authorities are required to carry forward overspends to their schools budget either in the immediately following year or the year after. ESFA guidance states that DSG deficits should not be covered from the general fund or other grants but that over time they should be recovered from DSG income.

5. DEFICIT MANAGEMENT PLAN

- 5.1 In accordance with the DfE conditions of grant, AfC working with RBWM must agree a Deficit Management Plan to address the cumulative deficit position with a recovery period of three to five years.
- 5.2 There is no specific timescale for implementing the Deficit Management Plan, however, initial steps are already underway and having an impact.
- 5.3 Following Schools Forum 21 October 2021 a working party including Schools Forum members and officers met and agreed the following key themes to be explored as set out below:
- expansion of the local offer within the Borough
 - increased local partnerships incorporating working with neighbouring authorities
 - improved commissioning arrangements including greater focus on annual reviews and unit costings
- 5.4 Additionally, at Schools Forum 18 November 2021, a report on the encouraging impact of the Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) service on the level of permanent exclusions was discussed. Schools Forum members gave unanimous positive feedback for the extension of this programme which was due to end April 2022.
- 5.5 The report reflected that the average cost of a permanently excluded SEMH pupil is £44,000; the service is currently working with 21 pupils. The SEMH service will be budgeted as a cost to save for 2022/23 as set out in table 2.

Table 2 Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Budget 2022/23

	£
SEMH Service Cost 2022/23	311,000
Indicative Cost Avoidance based on 7 pupils not being excluded (at average unit cost of £44,000)	(311,000)
Net Cost	0

5.6 The Deficit Management Plan must be signed off by the Director of Children's Services and the Executive Director for Resources (section 151 officer). The Deficit Management Plan must be taken to Schools Forum meetings and discussed by members.

5.7 The Deficit Management Plan will be reported to the Schools Forum in April 2022.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The DSG conditions of grant 2021/2022 (paragraph 5.2), requires that any Local Authority with an overall deficit on its DSG account at the end of the financial year 2020/21, or whose DSG surplus has substantially reduced during the year, must be able to present a plan to the Department for Education (DfE) for managing their future DSG spend.

7. RISK MANAGMENT

7.1 Based on current demand, pricing and estimated future grant funding the current projected cumulative deficit for the DSG by 31 March 2023 is in the region of £5m.

8. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

8.1 Equalities. Equality Impact Assessments are published on the [council's website](#). It has been assessed that there are no Equality Impact risks arising from this report.

8.2 Climate change/sustainability. There are no climate change/ sustainability risks arising from this report.

8.3 Data Protection/GDPR. There are no data protection/ GDPR risks arising from this report.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

9.1 This report is supported by the following background documents:

- Schools revenue funding 2021/22 Operational guide
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pre-16-schools-funding-local-authority-guidance-for-2021-to-2022>

10. CONSULTATION

10.1 There is no requirement for stakeholder consultation arising from this report.

11. TIMETABLE FOR IMPEMENTATION

11.1 There is no timetable for implementation of any actions arising from this report.

12. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory: Statutory Officers (or deputy)</i>			
Adele Taylor	Executive Director of Resources/S151 Officer	01-12-21	02-12-21
Emma Duncan	Deputy Director of Law and Strategy / Monitoring Officer	01-12-21	
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Andrew Vallance	Head of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)	01-12-21	
Elaine Browne	Head of Law (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	01-12-21	
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	01-12-21	
<i>Other consultees:</i>			
<i>Directors</i>			
Duncan Sharkey	Chief Executive	01-12-21	02-12-21
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place	01-12-21	
Kevin McDaniel	Executive Director of Children's Services	01-12-21	07-12-21
Hilary Hall	Executive Director of Adults, Health and Housing	01-12-21	02-12-21
<i>Heads of Service</i>			
Nikki Craig	Head of HR, Corporate Projects and IT	01-12-21	03-12-21
Louisa Dean	Head of Communications	01-12-21	01-12-21
Councillor Stuart Carroll	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health and Mental Health	Consulted on contents on report: Yes	

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
For information	No	No

Report Author: Report Author: James Norris - Head of Finance Achieving for Children (RBWM)
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ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqIA : Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring and Forecast 2021/22

Essential information

Items to be assessed: (please mark 'x')

Strategy		Plan		Project		Service procedure	X
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Responsible officer	James Norris	Service area	Finance	Directorate	Achieving for Children
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Stage 1: EqIA Screening (mandatory)	Date created: 01-12/2021	Stage 2 : Full assessment (if applicable)	Date created :N/A
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Approved by Head of Service / Overseeing group/body / Project Sponsor:

"I am satisfied that an equality impact has been undertaken adequately."

Signed by (print): Kevin McDaniel

Dated: 01/12/2021

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqlA : Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring and Forecast 2021/22

Guidance notes

What is an EqlA and why do we need to do it?

The Equality Act 2010 places a 'General Duty' on all public bodies to have 'due regard' to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between those with 'protected characteristics' and those without them.
- Fostering good relations between those with 'protected characteristics' and those without them.

EqlAs are a systematic way of taking equal opportunities into consideration when making a decision, and should be conducted when there is a new or reviewed strategy, policy, plan, project, service or procedure in order to determine whether there will likely be a detrimental and/or disproportionate impact on particular groups, including those within the workforce and customer/public groups. All completed EqlA Screenings are required to be publicly available on the council's website once they have been signed off by the relevant Head of Service or Strategic/Policy/Operational Group or Project Sponsor.

What are the "protected characteristics" under the law?

The following are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010: age; disability (including physical, learning and mental health conditions); gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

What's the process for conducting an EqlA?

The process for conducting an EqlA is set out at the end of this document. In brief, a Screening Assessment should be conducted for every new or reviewed strategy, policy, plan, project, service or procedure and the outcome of the Screening Assessment will indicate whether a Full Assessment should be undertaken.

Openness and transparency

RBWM has a 'Specific Duty' to publish information about people affected by our policies and practices. Your completed assessment should be sent to the Strategy & Performance Team for publication to the RBWM website once it has been signed off by the relevant manager, and/or Strategic, Policy, or Operational Group. If your proposals are being made to Cabinet or any other Committee, please append a copy of your completed Screening or Full Assessment to your report.

Enforcement

Judicial review of an authority can be taken by any person, including the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) or a group of people, with an interest, in respect of alleged failure to comply with the general equality duty. Only the EHRC can enforce the specific duties. A failure to comply with the specific duties may however be used as evidence of a failure to comply with the general duty.

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqlA : Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring and Forecast 2021/22

Stage 1 : Screening (Mandatory)

1.1 What is the overall aim of your proposed strategy/policy/project etc and what are its key objectives?

The overall aim of the report is to provide the Schools Forum with the projected financial position for 2021/22 along with a summary of associated Risks & Opportunities; the projected reserve deficit balance as at 31 March 2022 and an understanding of the financial pressures faced in respect of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

In addition, the report sets out the recommendations of the Deficit Management Plan working party to address the budget deficit position.

1.2 What evidence is available to suggest that your proposal could have an impact on people (including staff and customers) with protected characteristics? Consider each of the protected characteristics in turn and identify whether your proposal is Relevant or Not Relevant to that characteristic. If Relevant, please assess the level of impact as either High / Medium / Low and whether the impact is Positive (i.e. contributes to promoting equality or improving relations within an equality group) or Negative (i.e. could disadvantage them). Please document your evidence for each assessment you make, including a justification of why you may have identified the proposal as “Not Relevant”.

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqlA : Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring and Forecast 2021/22

Protected characteristics	Relevance	Level	Positive/negative	Evidence
Age	Yes	Low	Positive	This report does impact on pupils within this protected characteristic; however, as school funding is on a formula basis impact has already been considered within previous reports and decision making processes
Disability	Yes	Low	Negative	There will be a Deficit Management Plan developed which may impact on the current range of services provided for pupils within this characteristic. The impact will be continually reviewed and reassessed.
Gender re-assignment	No			There is nothing in the report which is considered to impact on this protected characteristic.
Marriage/civil partnership	No			There is nothing in the report which is considered to impact on this protected characteristic.
Pregnancy and maternity	No			There is nothing in the report which is considered to impact on this protected characteristic.
Race	No			There is nothing in the report which is considered to impact on this protected characteristic.
Religion and belief	No			There is nothing in the report which is considered to impact on this protected characteristic.
Sex	No			There is nothing in the report which is considered to impact on this protected characteristic.
Sexual orientation	No			There is nothing in the report which is considered to impact on this protected characteristic.

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqlA : Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring and Forecast 2021/22

Outcome, action and public reporting

Screening Assessment Outcome	Yes / No / Not at this stage	Further Action Required / Action to be taken	Responsible Officer and / or Lead Strategic Group	Timescale for Resolution of negative impact / Delivery of positive impact
Was a significant level of negative impact identified?	No	Continued monitoring and reporting of the Dedicated Schools Grant budgets including development of Deficit Management Plan.	James Norris	Termly reporting to Schools Forum.
Does the strategy, policy, plan etc require amendment to have a positive impact?	No	None		

If you answered **yes** to either / both of the questions above a Full Assessment is advisable and so please proceed to Stage 2. If you answered “No” or “Not at this Stage” to either / both of the questions above please consider any next steps that may be taken (e.g. monitor future impacts as part of implementation, re-screen the project at its next delivery milestone etc).

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqlA : Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring and Forecast 2021/22

Stage 2 : Full assessment

2.1 : Scope and define

2.1.1 Who are the main beneficiaries of the proposed strategy / policy / plan / project / service / procedure? List the groups who the work is targeting/aimed at.

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2.1.2 Who has been involved in the creation of the proposed strategy / policy / plan / project / service / procedure? List those groups who the work is targeting/aimed at.

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ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqlA : Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring and Forecast 2021/22

2.2 : Information gathering/evidence

2.2.1 What secondary data have you used in this assessment? *Common sources of secondary data include: censuses, organisational records.*

2.2.2 What primary data have you used to inform this assessment? *Common sources of primary data include: consultation through interviews, focus groups, questionnaires.*

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqlA : Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring and Forecast 2021/22

Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation

Protected Characteristic	Advancing the Equality Duty : Does the proposal advance the Equality Duty Statement in relation to the protected characteristic (Yes/No)	If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low)	Negative impact : Does the proposal disadvantage them (Yes / No)	If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low)	Please provide explanatory detail relating to your assessment and outline any key actions to (a) advance the Equality Duty and (b) reduce negative impact on each protected characteristic.
Age					
Disability					
Gender reassignment					
Marriage and civil partnership					
Pregnancy and maternity					
Race					
Religion and belief					
Sex					
Sexual orientation					

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqlA : Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring and Forecast 2021/22

Advance equality of opportunity

Protected Characteristic	Advancing the Equality Duty : Does the proposal advance the Equality Duty Statement in relation to the protected characteristic (Yes/No)	If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low)	Negative impact : Does the proposal disadvantage them (Yes / No)	If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low)	Please provide explanatory detail relating to your assessment and outline any key actions to (a) advance the Equality Duty and (b) reduce negative impact on each protected characteristic.
Age					
Disability					
Gender reassignment					
Marriage and civil partnership					
Pregnancy and maternity					
Race					
Religion and belief					
Sex					
Sexual orientation					

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqlA : Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring and Forecast 2021/22

Foster good relations

Protected Characteristic	Advancing the Equality Duty : Does the proposal advance the Equality Duty Statement in relation to the protected characteristic (Yes/No)	If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low)	Negative impact : Does the proposal disadvantage them (Yes / No)	If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low)	Please provide explanatory detail relating to your assessment and outline any key actions to (a) advance the Equality Duty and (b) reduce negative impact on each protected characteristic.
Age					
Disability					
Gender reassignment					
Marriage and civil partnership					
Pregnancy and maternity					
Race					
Religion and belief					
Sex					
Sexual orientation					

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2.4 Has your delivery plan been updated to incorporate the activities identified in this assessment to mitigate any identified negative impacts? If so please summarise any updates.

These could be service, equality, project or other delivery plans. If you did not have sufficient data to complete a thorough impact assessment, then an action should be incorporated to collect this information in the future.

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqlA : Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring and Forecast 2021/22

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