

Report Title:	RBWM Schools Strategy to Support Maintained Schools in Financial Difficulty
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Cabinet Member:	All
Meeting and Date:	Schools Forum – 14 th December 2023
Responsible Officer(s):	Clive Haines/ Louise Dutton
Wards affected:	All

REPORT SUMMARY

In July 2023, the Department for Education (DfE) announced that it is providing up to £40 million of additional funding in 2023 to 2024, to support individual schools which find themselves in particular financial difficulties. This is on top of the [£525 million schools will already be receiving this year through the teachers' pay additional grant \(TPAG\)](#), to support them with the September 2023 teachers' pay award.

This is one-off funding available in 2023 to 2024 only and the department has no plans for similar additional funding in 2024 to 2025.

This report outlines the strategy in which schools can apply.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Schools Forum notes the report and:

- i) Adopts the RBWM Schools Strategy to support maintained schools in financial difficulty.

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
School Forum adopts the RBWM Schools Strategy to support Maintained schools in financial difficulty. This is the recommended option	Strategy supports the DfE guidance.
Do nothing. This is not the recommended option	Grant money would be recalled by the DfE.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 This funding can be used to support maintained primary, middle, secondary and all-through schools, maintained special schools, pupil referral units, and maintained nursery schools. That are currently running an in-year deficit.
- 3.2 RBWM has been allocated £222,129.63 through the (Additional support for schools in financial difficulty in 2023 to 2024) grant that can be used to support their deficit plans if they fall within the following criteria:
- falling numbers on roll.
 - have engaged with the Schools Management Resource Advisor (SMR).
 - has a garrison intake (military schools that provides the primary education for the children of the forces).
 - larger than usual disadvantaged intake.

Table 2: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Schools in deficit budgets can apply for funding	Schools do not apply	Schools apply	Schools apply and funding is released	Schools apply and funding is released and schools have sustainable budgets	May 2024

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 There are no financial implications as this is a grant award

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 There are no risk managements implications.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 There are no consultations required

8. APPENDICES

- 8.1 This report is supported by two appendices:
- Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment.

- Appendix B - RBWM Schools Strategy to Support Maintained Schools in Financial Difficulty

9. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Statutory Officer (or deputy)</i>	
Elizabeth Griffiths	Executive Director of Resources & S151 Officer		
Elaine Browne	Deputy Director of Law & Governance & Monitoring Officer		
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Andrew Vallance	Deputy Director of Finance & Deputy S151 Officer		
Jane Cryer	Principal Lawyer & Deputy Monitoring Officer		
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Procurement Manager (or deputy) - if report requests approval to go to tender or award a contract</i>	
Lyn Hitchinson	Procurement Manager		
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Data Protection Officer (or deputy) - if decision will result in processing of personal data; to advise on DPIA</i>	
Samantha Wootton	Data Protection Officer		
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Equalities Officer – to advise on EQiA, or agree an EQiA is not required</i>	
Ellen McManus-Fry	Equalities & Engagement Officer		
<i>Other consultees:</i>			
<i>Directors (where relevant)</i>			
Stephen Evans	Chief Executive		
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place		
Kevin McDaniel	Executive Director of Adult Social Care & Health		
Lin Ferguson	Executive Director of Children's Services & Education		

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
Schools Forum decision	Yes	No

Report Author: Clive Haines, Deputy Director of Education 0782 586 2200

Appendix A - Equality Impact Assessment

For support in completing this EQIA, please consult the EQIA Guidance Document or contact equality@rbwm.gov.uk

1. Background Information

Title of policy/strategy/plan:	RBWM Schools Strategy to Support Maintained Schools in Financial Difficulty
Service area:	Education Standards
Directorate:	Education Department

Provide a brief explanation of the proposal:

- What are its intended outcomes?
- Who will deliver it?
- Is it a new proposal or a change to an existing one?

To support Schools in Deficit budgets via government grant
Schools Forum will governance the process
NEW DfE Grant

2. Relevance Check

Is this proposal likely to directly impact people, communities or RBWM employees?

- If No, please explain why not, including how you've considered equality issues.
- Will this proposal need a EQIA at a later stage? (for example, for a forthcoming action plan)

No Government Grant
No EQIA

If 'No', proceed to 'Sign off'. If unsure, please contact equality@rbwm.gov.uk

3. Evidence Gathering and Stakeholder Engagement

Who will be affected by this proposal?

For example, users of a particular service, residents of a geographical area, staff

Among those affected by the proposal, are protected characteristics (age, sex, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, marriage/civil partnership) disproportionately represented?

For example, compared to the general population do a higher proportion have disabilities?

What engagement/consultation has been undertaken or planned?

- How has/will equality considerations be taken into account?
- Where known, what were the outcomes of this engagement?

What sources of data and evidence have been used in this assessment?

Please consult the Equalities Evidence Grid for relevant data. Examples of other possible sources of information are in the Guidance document.

4. Equality Analysis

Please detail, **using supporting evidence**:

- How the protected characteristics below might influence the needs and experiences of individuals, in relation to this proposal.
- How these characteristics might affect the impact of this proposal.

Tick positive/negative impact as appropriate. If there is no impact, or a neutral impact, state 'Not Applicable'

More information on each protected characteristic is provided in the Guidance document.

	Details and supporting evidence	Potential positive impact	Potential negative impact
Age			
Disability			
Sex			
Race, ethnicity and religion			
Sexual orientation and gender reassignment			
Pregnancy and maternity			
Marriage and civil partnership			
Armed forces community			
Socio-economic considerations e.g. low income, poverty			
Children in care/Care leavers			

5. Impact Assessment and Monitoring

If you have not identified any disproportionate impacts and the questions below are not applicable, leave them blank and proceed to Sign Off.

What measures have been taken to ensure that groups with protected characteristics are able to benefit from this change, or are not disadvantaged by it?

For example, adjustments needed to accommodate the needs of a particular group

Where a potential negative impact cannot be avoided, what measures have been put in place to mitigate or minimise this?

- For planned future actions, provide the name of the responsible individual and the target date for implementation.

How will the equality impacts identified here be monitored and reviewed in the future?

See guidance document for examples of appropriate stages to review an EQIA.

6. Sign Off

Completed by: Clive Haines	Date: 05/12/2023
Approved by:	Date:

If this version of the EQIA has been reviewed and/or updated:

Reviewed by:	Date:
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Appendix B - RBWM Schools Strategy to Support Maintained Schools in Financial Difficulty

(Maintained Schools in this document also covers Maintained Nursery Schools and Maintained Special Schools/PRU.)

Academy Schools will receive funding opportunities through their current funding and mechanisms and are exempt from the Strategy

Introduction

In July 2023, the Department for Education (DfE) announced that it is providing up to £40 million of additional funding in 2023 to 2024, to support individual schools which find themselves in particular financial difficulties. This is on top of the [£525 million schools will already be receiving this year through the teachers' pay additional grant \(TPAG\)](#), to support them with the September 2023 teachers' pay award.

This is one-off funding available in 2023 to 2024 only and the department has no plans for similar additional funding in 2024 to 2025.

Eligibility

This funding can be used to support maintained primary, middle, secondary and all-through schools, maintained special schools, pupil referral units, and maintained nursery schools. That are currently running an in-year deficit.

10. RBWM has been allocated £222,129.63 through the (Additional support for schools in financial difficulty in 2023 to 2024) grant that can be used to support their deficit plans if they fall within the following criteria:

- Falling numbers on roll
- Have engaged with the Schools Management Resource Advisor (SMR)
- Has a Garrison intake (military schools that provides the primary education for the children of the forces)
- Large than usual disadvantaged intake

Strategy

Our strategy is to support schools that are in a deficit budget and require financial support to decrease their deficit budget and become financial sustainable by:

Table 1:

Criteria	Strategy Aim	Sustainability
Falling numbers on roll	To support schools with redundancy cost when considering restructures to limit the impact on pupils learning and resources. To help support the Cost to Save with redundancies	Schools staffing would match AWPU allocations which drives school's budgets
Have engaged with the Schools Management Resource Advisor (SMR)	To support financially with any outcomes that have been highlighted in SMR report. To bring deficit budgets down	Outcomes have been highlighted in the report as possible savings the school can make to reduce and maintain their budgets
Large than usual disadvantaged intake	To consider support to schools that have a large proportion of disadvantaged children. Other than existing funding streams such as (EHCP) To support exceptional cost such as alternative provision or resources/training the school has incurred. To main budget without this exceptional added cost	To help support the schools adapted for future co-cohorts and limit the need for alternative provision cost by upskilling staff – to avoid extra external cost
Has a Garrison intake (military schools that provides the primary education for the children of the forces)	To support any related cost outside the educational budget – such as pastoral support To support schools to maintain educational budgets	To support training and resources for staff to upskill staff to provide the pastoral care needed with regards to service children – to avoid extra external cost

Transparency and Governance

Local authorities should demonstrate transparency in the use of this additional funding. Existing processes and infrastructure may already enable this. For example, reports to the Schools Forum will be transparent through published papers and minutes.

- Schools will be selected against the strategy criteria and invited to submit an application.
- A panel will be formed consisting of Schools Forum representatives and applicants will be invited to present their case to panel.
- Panel will have a set Terms of References with delegated powers that can agree/or not agree each application and decide on the amount to be awarded.
- All awards will be presented to Schools Forum
- Schools Forum will have the responsibility for monitoring the grant budget.

Successful schools as a minimum will need to include the action awarded within their current Deficit Management Plans. This will be monitored through the Schools Bursar Support services.

Exceptions

It should be noted that this funding is not solely intended to cover schools which are in deficit as a result of the 2023 teachers' pay award. It is to support schools facing substantial overall financial challenges, which may be driven by factors other than teachers' pay.

Supporting Documents

[Financial support for local authorities supporting maintained schools in financial difficulty \(2023 to 2024\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/financial-support-for-local-authorities-supporting-maintained-schools-in-financial-difficulty-2023-to-2024)