

Agenda Item 43

TITLE 2023/24 Budget Planning

FOR CONSIDERATION BY Schools Forum on 6 July 2022

WARD None Specific;

LEAD OFFICER Director, Children's Services - Helen Watson

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

This reports forms part of regular reporting to Schools Forum, informing areas of statutory decision making and improving visibility and consultation on wider Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) financial matters.

RECOMMENDATION

Schools Forum are asked to note and comment on the report.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The report provides an update on key considerations and high level timeline for 2023/24 budget setting.

2023/24 Budget Setting July 2022

01. Purpose of the Report

This report provides Schools Forum with an update on key considerations and high level timeline for 2023/24 budget setting.

02. Recommendation

Schools Forum is asked to note and comment on the report.

03. Background

Following the successful introduction of a Schools Block Task & Finish Group in 2019, the approach was widened to the Early Years Block, providing for a more transparent and co-operative approach to budget setting. The Task & Finish Groups review local funding formulas and make recommendations to Schools Forum on the factors to be used in setting budgets.

In addition to the work of the Task & Finish Groups, annual consultation is undertaken with all schools prior to final budget decisions being taken.

This report sets out the proposed arrangements for setting the 2023/24 budgets, further building on the approach taken previously.

The DfE have reaffirmed their intention to implement a National Funding Formula for schools but it is not expected that this will impact 2023/24 budget setting.

04. Task and Finish Group membership for 2022/23 budget setting

Schools Block Task and Finish Group:

Derren Gray (Chair)
Brian Prebble
Carol Simpson
Chris Coniam
Corrina Gillard
Julia Mead
Margaret Lucey
Ben Godber

Early Years Task and Finish Group:

Ian Morgan
Kerrie Clifford
Karen Edwards
Wokingham Early Years Team representative

05. **Proposed arrangements for 2023/24**

The DfE have indicated that they will be issuing Primary and Secondary Units of Funding and Operational Guidance to Local Authorities for the 2023/24 Schools Block Budget around the end of July 2022. This will enable the LA to analyse the implications of the changes to schools funding for the coming financial year and to undertake detailed modelling over the summer period.

Schools Block

It is proposed that the Schools Block Task and Finish Group undertake a review of the current factors in the local funding formula in order to consult with schools as early as possible on the principles to be applied in determining the school budget allocations for the new financial year.

Early Years Block

While funding levels are unlikely to be known until later in the year, it is proposed that the EY Task and Finish Group reconvene early in the Autumn term to review principles for budget setting.

High Needs Block

It is proposed that a High Needs Task and Finish Group is established to progress early discussion on principles for 2023/24 budget setting. Review work with both Addington and Foundry would feed into discussions, with earlier consideration on longer term financial planning assumptions.

06. **Proposed timeline for the 2023/24 consultation and budget setting process**

See Appendix 1 – Proposed Timeline.

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