

Islington Schools Forum

Chair: Abi Misselbrook-Lovejoy

C/o Governor Services

The Laycock Centre

London N1 1TH

Agenda

Date/time: Thursday 25 May 2023, 2pm to 4pm

Venue: Town Hall Committee Room 1

[Schools forum documents and reports | Islington Council](#)

	Item	Information and to note/ comments a views/decisn	Author	Report
1.	Apologies		Clerk (JW)	Verbal
2.	Declaration of Interest		JW	Verbal
3.	Forum composition		JW	Enclosed
4.	Minutes of previous meeting		JW	Enclosed
5.	Scheme for Financing Schools (DfE)	Comments & Views	DS	Enclosed
6.	School Balances (DRAFT - prior year	Information	DS	Enclosed
7.	DSG Outturn (DRAFT: prior year)	Information	TP	Enclosed

	Item	Information and to not/ comments nd views/decion	Author	Report
8.	Forum Forward Planning	Information	DS	Enclosed
9.	Sub Group Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years • High Needs • Capital 	Information	Forum reps	
10.	Quality Assurance	Information	AC	Verbal
11.	AOB : Mayors Fund - UFSM (KS2)	Information	TP	Verbal

Contact for queries:

[Suzie Crawford](#) / [Governor Services](#)

T 020 7527 5755

Islington Schools Forum

Chair: Abi Misselbrook-Lovejoy
C/o Governor Services
The Laycock Centre
London N1 1TH

Date/time: Thursday 25 May 2023, 2pm to 4pm

Agenda item: 3 – Forum Membership Update

Purpose of report: to note the proposed actions by the clerk

Recommendations:

Schools Forum are asked to note the updates below.

1. Update on forthcoming vacancies / end of terms of office

1.1. Primary Academy representative

As Tanya Watson, Headteacher of William Tyndale, will be leaving the school at the end of July 2023, the Clerk to the Forum is proposing to write to the Heads of Primary Academies asking them to appoint a new representative. The aim is to have a new representative agreed in time for them to observe the July 2023 meeting to help with their induction and to prepare them for taking up their position from 1 September 2023.

1.2. Free School Alternative Provision

Originally in appointing to this position, the clerk had been advised that the ArtsXchange was an Islington setting, the other being the Pears Family School. The heads of both settings agreed to share this position, with the Director of ArtsXchange, Jesse White, to take the position for one year until 31 July 2023. Then the Head of Pears, Matthew Hillman, was to take the position for 2023-24 and so on. It was clarified in autumn 2022 that the ArtsXchange is in fact a Camden setting, so Matthew Hillman agreed to take this position up to end July 2023. Given there is no other Free School AP in the borough, it is recommended that Matthew continue in this position up to 31 July 2026, unless another Free School AP is established in the borough before then.

1.3. Election of chair in July 2023

According to the Terms of Reference of Schools Forum, the election of the chair should be held every three years. An election was held in November 2022, and Abi Misselbrook-Lovejoy was elected. However, AM-L clarified at that meeting that she would step down as chair at the end of the academic year 2022-23 to focus on other work priorities. Therefore, the clerk will be inviting nominations from Forum members for a new chair and the election

will take place at the July 2023 meeting so that the new chair can be in position from straight after AM-L's departure as chair on 31 July 2023. The new chair should be a headteacher, given one of the vice-chairs is a school governor.

Contact for queries:

[Jane Wright](#)

Governor Services

T 020 7527 5560

Islington Schools Forum

Meeting documents and minutes published on [Islington Schools Forum webpage](#).

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 19 January 2023, The Laycock Centre

Attendees

Present

- Abi Misselbrook-Lovejoy (AM-L); Executive Head teacher, Rotherfield and Newington Green Primary Schools (Chair)
- Maggie Elliott (ME); Governor, Montem Primary School (Edventure Collaborative Federation with Drayton Park) (Vice-chair)
- Joy (Odunayo) Abegunde (JOA); Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), Islington Play Association
- Jenny Lewis (JL); Head teacher, Thornhill Primary School
- Alan Streeter (AS); Head teacher, Beacon High Secondary School (Islington Futures Federation)
- Patrick Mildren (PM); Head teacher, Canonbury Primary School
- Fiona MacCorquodale (FM); Head teacher, Prior Weston Primary School and Children's Centre (Interim Vice-chair)
- Andrew Bosi (AB); Governor, Rotherfield Primary School
- Claire Hersey (CHe); Principal Finance Officer, City of London Academy Trust
- Tanya Watson (TW); Head teacher, William Tyndale (Primary Academy)
- Penny Barratt (PB); CEO, The Bridge MAT
- Susan Service (SS); Head teacher, Arts & Media School Islington
- Nigel Smith (NS); Head teacher, New River College (Pupil Referral Unit)
- Joe Simpson (JS); Governor, St Peter and St Paul Primary
- Paul Lasok (PL); Governor, St Aloysius Secondary School (and St Joseph's)

Other attendees

- Tim Partington (TP); Head of Children's Services, Finance
- Debbie Stevenson (DS); Head of Early Years and Schools Finance Services
- Jon Abbey (JA)
- Alison Cramer (AC); Assistant Director, School Support and Information Services
- Jane Wright (JW); Manager Schools and EY Governance (Clerk)

Observer

- Local Authority Corporate Finance, Kate Bingham
- Sophie Garalda, William Tyndale Primary

Apologies

- Cllr Angelo Weekes (AW); Islington Council – non-Executive Member
- Cassie Moss (CM); Head teacher, Yerbury Primary School (Vice-chair)
- Coleen Marshall (CM), 14-19 Partnership, City and Islington College (attempted to access the meeting remotely)
- Vicky Linsley (VL); Head teacher, St Mary Magdalene Academy (Secondary)
- Matthew Hillman (MH), The Pears Family School (invited very late to the meeting)
- Francis Gonzalez (FrG); Head teacher, Richard Cloudesley Special School
- Sarah Callaghan (SC); Director of Learning and Culture
- Candy Holder (CH), Head of Pupil Services

Not in attendance

- Sally Franklin (SF); Head teacher, North Islington Nursery and Children's Centre

Meeting minutes

No.	Agenda item	Action
1.	<p>Welcome/Apologies for absence/not in attendance</p> <p>AM-L welcomed all to the meeting, including Joy Abegunde (JOA) who was joining Schools Forum as Non Schools Voluntary & Community representative.</p> <p>Apologies as above.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting (held on 10 November 2022)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accuracy – the minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting, subject to amendment of the word ‘permittable’ to ‘permissible’ in Item 8, page 5. • Matters arising (not covered on the agenda) – there were none. 	
3.	<p>Schools forum composition – for information and decision</p> <p>The clerk (JW) spoke to a report previously circulated. JW chaired the first part of this item – Election of Chair and Vice-chair of Schools Forum.</p> <p>JW had received no nominations for chair prior to the meeting. A nomination was received at the meeting for Abi Misselbrook-Lovejoy (AM-L) to be elected. AM-L informed Forum that she would be leaving the Forum at the end of the academic year to focus more on her schools. There were no other nominations.</p> <p>Agreed unanimously to re-elect Abi Misselbrook-Lovejoy as Chair of Schools Forum for three years or until she leaves Schools Forum.</p> <p>Election of Vice-chair</p> <p>JW clarified that the election of one vice-chair was needed. FM was interim vice-chair covering for CM. JW had received one nomination from Maggie Elliott (ME) who was prepared to continue as vice-chair. JW reminded the meeting that ME’s third term of office was due to end in December 2024. There were no other nominations.</p>	Action

Agreed unanimously to re-elect Maggie Elliott as Vice-chair of Schools Forum for three years or until she leaves Schools Forum.

Apportionment of Primary and Secondary Places in Line with School Census 2022

There did not need to be any change to the distribution of primary and secondary schools places (between maintained sector and academies/free schools) on Schools Forum as a result of the distribution of places filled at primary and secondary.

Noted

Update on Membership

Non Schools Voluntary & Community representative

JW had spoken at the EY Providers' Forum on 16 November about the Forum and, as a result, Joy Abegunde from Islington Play Association had put herself forward. JW emailed managers of VCS EY provisions asking for any objections to Joy's appointment and any further nominations. JW had received three emails in support of Joy's appointment, no objections and no further nominations. JA was therefore appointed for a term of office of 4 years up to 5.12.26.

Noted

Secondary Governor representative

JW had sent an email to chairs of secondary maintained schools asking for any objections to Paul Lasok's appointment for a second term of office and for any further nominations. JW had received no objections and no further nominations. PL was therefore appointed for a further term of office of 4 years up to 11.12.26.

Noted

Free School Alternative Provision representative. Originally this position was being shared between ArtsXchange and The Pears Family School. Since the last meeting it had been clarified that ArtsXchange, while physically in Islington, is technically not an Islington setting, so they could not be on Islington Schools Forum. Therefore, for the time being at least, the Free School AP representative was Matthew Hillman (MH).

Noted

<p>4.</p>	<p>Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Settlement (Future Year) – for Information</p> <p>DS spoke to a report that had been circulated in advance.</p> <p>The DSG settlement was received in December. In Column A, the Schools Block (SB) formula was applied to the final October Census 2022 figures, showing a reduction in pupil numbers of 404 primary and 44 secondary compared to Column B which had Illustrative Figures calculated in July 2022. This fall in pupil numbers represented a reduction in funding of £2.8m.</p> <p>The fall in pupil numbers also impacted Ongoing Duties and Historic Commitments funding of the Central School Services Block (CSSB) – the latter was also being reduced by 20% each year.</p> <p>The Government’s Autumn 2022 Statement was bringing new monies to schools and High Needs (HN), recognising costs pressures schools are facing (£2.3bn nationally) – For Islington, this translates to an additional £5m to primary and secondary schools which was outside the SB DSG and not included in the DSG Settlement spreadsheet. For HN this was being included in the settlement from 2023-24 - £1.8m (plus the £2m announced in Autumn 2021 settlement).</p> <p>In relation to the Early Years (EY) funding block, the increase in hourly rates for 2 year olds (up by 67p) and for 3 and 4 year olds (up by 24p). For 3 & 4 year olds, this increase included inflationary increases as well as the rolled in Teachers’ Pay and Pensions Grant which sat outside the funding block previously.</p> <p>In response to questions asked and points made by Forum members, the following points were clarified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AC would circulate the secondary roll projections. • It was not possible to consider roll projection data on a continuous basis as it is based on a number of factors at various points in the year and is monitored as data becomes available to us. • There was a suggestion of Forum looking now at the applications for secondary schools for September 2023, but AC clarified that data relating to this would go first to the School Organisation Board. AC added that such data should be shared with Forum when it is appropriate to. DS had brought the latest information to the July 2021 and 2022 meetings. 	<p>AC</p>
------------------	---	------------------

	Noted	
5.	<p>School Funding Formula (future year) – for decision</p> <p>DS spoke to a report that had been circulated in advance.</p> <p>Growth funding was agreed in principle at November 2022 Forum.</p> <p>Islington was following the National Funding Formula (NFF) factors and values, apart from a couple of oddities.</p> <p>When applying the NFF in full and reducing the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) to 0% (the minimum permissible), there was a shortfall of £691K in the funding envelope. There are two possible reasons for this change; in the 2022-23 local formula it was necessary to deviate from the NFF by increasing the base rate values. In doing so, this increased the baseline for the following financial year. The other reason is the supplementary grant which moved into the NFF may not have matched the exact allocations schools received as a separate grant.</p> <p>Some implicit growth funding must be released upfront for COLPAI as it is a growing school that has yet to admit all year groups. Also, PFI costs were uplifted by 13.54% in line with retail price index in November 2022 – adjustments in line with inflation in February 2023 will be made in 2024-25.</p> <p>At November Forum, it was agreed to discontinue Falling Rolls funding given we could no longer meet the DfE criteria, and there had been discussion about what to do with that funding, such as adding it to the funding for Schools in Financial Difficulty. With the shortfall now, it was confirmed that extra funding was no longer available.</p> <p>In order to remain within the funding envelope, DS suggested two options:</p> <p>Option 1 – cap gains of schools (as agreed in principle at November Forum), this was not the recommended solution as this would directly impact schools whose funding had been allocated according to cohort needs, to cap funding would reduce funding and impact on disadvantaged schools and children</p> <p>Option 2 – deviate from NFF and this time proportionately reduce the base rate across primary, KS 3 and 4. This follows the rationale as in the previous year which impacts on all schools fairly. The proposed</p>	Action:

	<p>factor value rate remains within the permitted range as set out by the ESFA.</p> <p>DS clarified that with Option 2, the base rate would reduce proportionately across primary, KS3 and KS4. It was confirmed there would be winners and losers with Option 1, while everyone would lose, but to a lesser extent, under Option 2. Option 1 was seen to be more volatile a solution.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Base Rate unit value be reduced proportionately across primary, KS3 and KS4 to meet affordability limits of Schools Block funding (option 2) b. Formula factors and values used in local School Funding Formula are agreed c. Schools Forum agrees to retain £300K for Growth funding. <p>Noted and unanimously agreed</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>DSG Central Retention (2023-24) – for decision</p> <p>TP spoke to a report that had been circulated in advance. In addition, information had been supplied before Christmas and in the meeting papers pack about the services funded through central retention. This information included the funding levels, the function and the must haves and must dos of each service, as well as the outcome of quality assurance (QA) activities with schools where relevant and any changes proposed for 2023/24.</p> <p>Two decisions were needed – in relation to central retention in principle in Central School Services Block (CSSB) and the EY Block. Decisions relating to the High Needs Block were for the LA to make, in consultation with Forum.</p> <p>Early Years Block – a paper on this area had been considered by the EY Subgroup on 13 January which had agreed in principle to the proposals - the overall Early Years Block allocation from the DfE was still provisional (dependent on outcome of January 2023 and 2024 Census). Central retention remains at 5% of EY funding for the free entitlements (2, 3 and 4 year olds). The level of central retention proposed for 2023/24 is £914K, with an increase of £15K from 2024/25. This follows two years of decreases in funding due to a drop in numbers of children accessing the free offer (Covid, etc). The central retention will contribute to Finance, ICT and data services,</p>	

Family Information Service, EYFS Team, Strategy and Management and Strengthening Parenting (Incredible Years courses).

CSSB – Forum was asked to note that there had been a further reduction of 20% in the historic duties in CSSB (£84K), following a 20% reduction each year in the past three years. Overall CSSB is reduced by 6.7% due to a reduction in school roll.

Schools Forum was asked to agree central retention under the CSSB each year, except for copyright licences which is an automatic top-slice by the DfE. The cost of centrally retained services for schools and academies is £1.438m against allocation of £1.379m – the shortfall of £0.059m can be met by a balance of £0.210m held from previous years.

Schools Forum discussed at length the issue of quality assurance of services funded through CSSB and EY Blocks. The points raised included:

NS commented that at the recent Heads' Briefing, there had been a big focus on how schools will balance their budgets. He suggested all services in relation to education be looked at and he referred to a detailed QA exercise that Schools Forum had carried out some years ago.

AM-L commented on the lack of QA processes, with services reporting what they do and not on the quality of their work.

AC clarified that the QA survey sent out in summer 2022 to elicit feedback from schools resulted in only 8 schools responding, so it had been considered that the outcome of that survey was not statistically robust enough to share the results.

JA agreed that if more money is devolved there should be QA to show what difference the services made, value, cost, etc. He added that services had to be adequately funded to be good quality.

FM confirmed that QA had not come up at the EY Subgroup.

PM commented that the services delivered needed to be what schools needed – capacity to change. He queried how schools can ask for changes to services.

AM-L asked about timing – did decisions about the Central Retention have to be made today or could it be later in the term? TP replied that the LA had to submit a report to the DfE in March on EY funding.

	<p>JA suggested that possibly a succinct report on what EY had delivered this year and what they had achieved could be produced to help with decision-making.</p> <p>AM-L commented on the timing of the QA survey (summer 2022) and the sharing of information on services funded through central retention around Christmas.</p> <p>TP said he would prefer not to postpone – he had proposed in his paper an extraordinary meeting of Schools Forum in March to confirm decisions.</p> <p>AC commented that more QA action had been proposed for the autumn. It was proposed that the QA work could take place this term, with self-assessment and reporting to QA panels.</p> <p>AM-L set out three options for Forum to decide today, with PL adding a fourth:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Agree the central retention in principle with QA to take place before final decision2. Vote on central retention now3. Postpone the decision on central retention, undertake the QA and bring back the vote at a later point4. Agree central retention provisionally, subject to further QA report and then adjust decisions as necessary. <p>JA suggested the development of a good quality QA framework by the March meeting – NS felt it would not be possible to develop this and apply it to the services in time for the meeting in March. Members of Forum were invited to be on a reference group to comment on the draft framework.</p> <p>ME suggested that applying the framework every two years would be sufficient – it had been a big project to be on the QA panels in the past.</p> <p>TW acknowledged that the breakdown of services in the information shared at Christmas was helpful – further breakdown of some information, including identifying proposed changes and greater transparency, would be needed. JL asked for greater consistency across reports, to include potential opportunities.</p>	
--	---	--

	<p>AM-L expressed her dissatisfaction with the lack of progress with the QA work that had been promised last spring.</p> <p>The recommendation that Schools Forum was finally asked to vote on was:</p> <p>To provisionally agree to the central retention (EY and CSSB) subject to the production of a good quality Quality Assurance framework to be brought to a special meeting of Schools Forum in March 2023.</p> <p>All those in favour: 13 votes All those against: 1 vote</p> <p>NS, JOA and TW agreed to be on the Reference Group, and AM-L would invite other headteachers to join it through her summary of the minutes of this meeting on Schools Bulletin.</p> <p>TP was to resend the papers breaking down the services to Forum for this special meeting so members could prepare.</p>	<p>AC, NS, JOA, TW, DS, TP</p> <p>TP</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>High Needs Places (future year) – for decision</p> <p>DS spoke to a report that had been circulated in advance.</p> <p>Forum was asked to agree in principle the number of specialist provision places to be commissioned in 2023-24 at the Pupil Referral Unit/alternative provision, special schools and the hearing unit at Laycock Primary. Also, to agree the arrangements for top-up funding for individual high needs pupils - this will, in the first instance, be increased in line with national guidance on allocating additional funds coming into the High Needs Block 2023-24. Options for how to spend additional funds would be discussed at the HN Subgroup.</p> <p>PB queried whether there could be discussion about in-year adjustment in line with termly census.</p> <p>JL raised the issue of the new Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARPs) – DS confirmed there was a separate arrangement for their funding outside of DSG.</p> <p>PS suggested syncing the funding of all special needs and alternative provision (AP) given academies submit their information around October/November. NS pointed out that in terms of numbers of pupils, that time of year was not good for AP – May best.</p>	

	<p>Recommendation that Schools Forum support the commissioning and funding arrangements for maintained special schools and resource units in 2023-24.</p> <p>Agreed</p>	
8.	<p>DSG Budget Monitor (in year) – for information and to note</p> <p>TP spoke to a report that had been circulated in advance.</p> <p>Forum was asked to note a forecast in-year overspend of £0.068m (at month 9).</p> <p>Also, that DSG balances were forecast to be at £5.150m at the end of the year. The balances were earmarked to manage increasing pressures on the HN and EY blocks and to meet cost pressures within schools.</p> <p>There had been very high demand for the Priority Early Years panel (EY additional SEN funding), whereas there had been underspends for this in earlier years. Additional HN funding was projected to be at 2% per year from 2024/25. Therefore, the balances were expected to be spent in the next two years.</p> <p>EY Block – funding based on participation. The numbers have been falling and we are able to provide some protection but again the balances are declining.</p> <p>TW queried whether funding for SEN services across HN and EY could be amalgamated to achieve savings.</p> <p>JL suggested broadening commissioning rather than commissioning from the same services.</p> <p>PB advised Forum that there were two working groups going through the HN budget, line by line and they will do this again – for discussion at HN Sub-group. Taking a solution-focused approach to making the best use of the money. JL volunteered to be involved.</p> <p><i>JS left at 3.35pm.</i></p> <p>Agreed (as amended on the paper – a) – overspend not underspend</p>	
9.	<p>Forward Planning – for information</p>	

	<p>DS spoke to a report that had been previously circulated.</p> <p>She would add the Emergency Schools Forum to take place in March 2023.</p> <p>Noted</p>	
10.	<p>Subgroups updates – for information</p> <p>EY Subgroup 13 January - FM reported. Meeting was well attended, with all sectors represented. There will be a short consultation in the next week or so on the Early Years Funding Formula.</p> <p>HN Subgroup 16 January - PB had already talked about the working groups scrutinising the HN budget.</p> <p>Capital Subgroup 12 January- ME reported. Two meetings since last Forum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group has asked for more information on the ARPs. • There was an opportunity to bid for lots of funding in relation to the carbonisation of schools. • The process for Match-funding in 2022/23 slipped a bit – letters are going out this week inviting expressions of interest by 17 March 2023 for the 2023-24 financial year. There is provisionally £200K available for this – DfE to confirm but to get people thinking now. • LBI is reviewing premises managers' houses on school sites – there will be a plan by May on the use of these 20 houses. <p>Noted</p>	
11.	<p>AOB – there were none.</p>	
	<p>Meeting close and dates of future meetings</p> <p>AM-L thanked all for their participation in the meeting. The meeting closed at 3.55pm</p>	
	<p>Dates of next meetings</p>	

	<p>(Virtual meetings on MS Teams unless otherwise indicated)</p> <p>Spring Term 2023</p> <p>NEW - Schools Forum special meeting - Thursday 23 March, 2-4pm, on MS Teams.</p> <p>Summer Term 2023</p> <p>Capital Sub Group - Thursday 11 May, 12.30pm – 2pm</p> <p>DSG/Chairs Sub Group - Wednesday 17 May, 2 – 3.30pm</p> <p>Early Years Sub Group - Friday 19 May, 1pm – 2.30pm</p> <p>High Needs Sub Group - Monday 22 May, 11am – 12.30pm</p> <p>Schools Forum - Thursday 25 May 2-4pm, in person – venue tbc</p> <p>DSG/Chairs Sub Group - Wednesday 5 July, 2 – 3.30pm</p> <p>Schools Forum – Thursday 13 July, 2-4pm, in person – venue tbc</p>	
--	---	--

Islington Schools Forum

Meeting documents and minutes published on [Islington Schools Forum webpage](#).

Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on Thursday 23 March 2023, MS Teams

Attendees

Present

- Abi Misselbrook-Lovejoy (AM-L); Executive Head teacher, Rotherfield and Newington Green Primary Schools (Chair)
- Maggie Elliott (ME); Governor, Montem Primary School (Edventure Collaborative Federation with Drayton Park) (Vice-chair)
- Joy (Odunayo) Abegunde (JOA); Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), Islington Play Association
- Jenny Lewis (JL); Head teacher, Thornhill Primary School
- Patrick Mildren (PM); Head teacher, Canonbury Primary School
- Fiona MacCorquodale (FM); Head teacher, Prior Weston Primary School and Children's Centre (Interim Vice-chair)
- Andrew Bosi (AB); Governor, Rotherfield Primary School
- Claire Hersey (CHe); Principal Finance Officer, City of London Academy Trust
- Tanya Watson (TW); Head teacher, William Tyndale (Primary Academy)
- Penny Barratt (PB); CEO, The Bridge MAT
- Susan Service (SS); Head teacher, Arts & Media School Islington
- Nigel Smith (NS); Head teacher, New River College (Pupil Referral Unit)
- Joe Simpson (JS); Governor, St Peter and St Paul Primary
- Paul Lasok (PL); Governor, St Aloysius Secondary School (and St Joseph's)
- Cllr Angelo Weekes (AW); Islington Council – non-Executive Member
- Ana Sevilla, Executive Head, Packington and New River Green Children's Centres

- Coleen Marshall (CM), 14-19 Partnership, City and Islington College

Other attendees

- Tim Partington (TP); Head of Children's Services, Finance
- Debbie Stevenson (DS); Head of Early Years and Schools Finance Services
- Alison Cramer (AC); Assistant Director, School Support and Information Services
- Jane Wright (JW); Manager Schools and EY Governance (Clerk)
- Matthew Beever (MB), Digital Communications and Customer Services Manager

Apologies

- Cassie Moss (CM); Head teacher, Yerbury Primary School (Vice-chair)
- Vicky Linsley (VL); Head teacher, St Mary Magdalene Academy (Secondary)
- Francis Gonzalez (FrG); Head teacher/Chris Smaling, Richard Cloudesley Special School
- Sarah Callaghan (SC), Director of Learning and Achievement
- Candy Holder (CH), Head of Pupil Services

Not in attendance

- Sally Franklin (SF); Head teacher, North Islington Nursery and Children's Centre
- Alan Streeter (AS); Head teacher, Beacon High Secondary School (Islington Futures Federation)
- Matthew Hillman (MH); Head teacher, The Pears Family School

Meeting minutes

No.	Agenda item	Action
1.	<p>Welcome/Apologies for absence/not in attendance</p> <p>AM-L welcomed all to the meeting. The chair mentioned that the minutes of the previous meeting (held on 19 January 2023) had been shared with Forum just after the main papers, so discussion of their accuracy and matters arising would be on the agenda of the next ordinary meeting on 25 May 2023.</p> <p>Apologies as above.</p>	
2.	<p>Quality Assurance Framework for LBI Services – for decision</p> <p>There had been lengthy discussion at the previous Forum in January (Item 6 – Dedicated Schools Grant [DSG] Central Retention 2023-24), so AM-L suggested the focus of this meeting would be queries and questions about the proposed Quality Assurance (QA) Framework which had been circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>AC recapped to the meeting that Forum had asked for a QA Framework for LA services before it could confirm its provisional agreement in January to agree the proposed Central Retention of DSG for LA services.</p> <p>The proposed QA framework covered all LA services for schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traded services • Functions/services funded from the Central Services Schools Block • Functions/services funded through the School Improvement Monitoring and Brokerage Grant (SIMBG) • Functions/services funded through de-delegated funds. <p>The document set out the steps to be taken, timelines, a sample survey for schools to rate the services out of five (Appendix A), and a template for services to conduct an annual self-assessment QA Service Report (Appendix B).</p> <p>Members of Schools Forum thanked AC and MB/team for their work on these documents. The points raised were:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given the context of these discussions – that money was limited and schools were having to make significant cutbacks - it was important that LA services were good value for money (VFM). NS would like the sources and amounts of money to be set out against the services – help to match QA outcomes with proportionate funding. AC clarified that the amounts and sources were included within each QA Service Report, but she agreed to add a covering sheet summarising all the services, amounts and sources in one document. JL suggested that some areas should have a greater weighting. JL and others also asked that the services in Appendix A be broken down to allow schools to give different ratings for different parts of a service if appropriate. PC queried how a service scoring 3 would know how to improve itself. TW echoed this, suggesting there should be further breakdown of use of budget per service in Appendix B – this would help the services themselves to achieve better VFM. AC replied that they had been trying not to overload the survey, but she was happy to make the survey more detailed if headteachers were happy to complete additional questions. The timing of the surveys to be in summer was queried, given the low take up of the previous summer survey at the end of term. AC clarified that the surveys can be sent at any time, but we have proposed the summer term as the end of academic year seemed an appropriate time. The first of the biennial reviews (Autumn 2023) needed to be completed in time for Schools Forum in January 2024 to make decisions about de-delegated funds. She noted to avoid holding the detailed panels during the summer and to ensure the surveys were issued well before the end of term.. A M-L suggested dedicating 15 minutes at a Headteachers’ Meeting/Briefing for Heads to complete the surveys. PC queried how the information from the survey would be collated efficiently – MB explained that the work of his team in relation to Traded Services and other survey activity would be expanded to cover this. They would analyse the results and advise services with low scores. A M-L clarified that this information was collated to help Schools Forum to make decisions in relation to de-delegated services and that Forum was accountable to other schools for this decision-making – but it also provided a framework for the LA to improve its services. 	<p>AC</p> <p>AC</p>
--	--	---------------------

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JL asked for drop-down menus for Questions 4 and 5 on the survey with common reasons. This would speed up the process for the heads of completing the survey. It would also allow for visual analysis of results, such as pie charts. MB agreed to look at that – he added that MS Forms have good reporting functions, picking up common words. He suggested that initially it would be good to allow for free text to provide a wider narrative. SS suggested, along with the greater breakdown of services, that there be a free text box under each service combining 4 and 5, asking in particular for feedback if a school rated a service 2 or less. • A M-L asked what had been done to reduce the level of de-delegated services. TP replied that there had been a 20% per annum reduction in the historical element of the Central School Services Budget (CSSB) over the last three years and there would be further reductions in the next two years. CSSB funding had reduced by £247k since 2020/21. DS added that De-delegated Services had been at the same level over the years and they were for very specific areas. The redundancy pot was still at the same rate, to support schools undergoing reorganisations – if it were reduced, those schools would have to find more funding. Similarly, the Schools in Financial Difficulties budget could be reduced, but that would place extra pressure on vulnerable schools. • In answer to a question from A M-L, TP and DS clarified that, if the proposed levels of central retention were confirmed, 0.9% of DSG would be used for CSSB and 0.9% for De-delegated services. CL commented that medium MATs usually top-sliced about 6% to 7%. <p>The Chair brought the meeting back to the purpose of the item – to confirm or otherwise the provisional agreement reached in January on the levels of de-delegated funding and spending on CSSG provided a robust QA Framework was in place.</p> <p>NS felt it was a good start, but more work and discussions about the framework were needed.</p> <p>A M-L’s personal view was she was uncomfortable about making decisions without the QA in place. But she acknowledged that the QA process had started and more development work would take place.</p> <p>JL felt QA should be a standing item on Schools Forum.</p>	<p>MB</p>
--	--	------------------

	<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support the proposed process for quality assurance of LBI Services to schools • To agree 2023-24 central retention as set out in the January Forum report <p>Agreed: subject to the improvements to the surveys asked for at this meeting and QA being a standing item on Forum meetings, 16 votes in favour, one vote against.</p> <p>DS informed the meeting that she had added QA on to the Forward Planning document for every Forum meeting.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>Meeting close and dates of future meetings</p> <p>AM-L thanked Schools Forum members for preparing for the meeting and their contributions and feedback at the meeting. She also thanked the LA staff for their work on the QA framework in such a quick timeframe. The meeting closed at 2.42pm.</p> <p>Dates of next meetings</p> <p>(Virtual meetings on MS Teams unless otherwise indicated)</p> <p>Summer Term 2023</p> <p>Capital Sub Group - Thursday 11 May, 12.30pm – 2pm</p> <p>DSG/Chairs Sub Group - Wednesday 17 May, 2 – 3.30pm</p> <p>Early Years Sub Group - Friday 19 May, 1pm – 2.30pm</p> <p>High Needs Sub Group - Monday 22 May, 11am – 12.30pm</p> <p>Schools Forum - Thursday 25 May 2-4pm, in person – venue tbc</p> <p>DSG/Chairs Sub Group - Wednesday 5 July, 2 – 3.30pm</p> <p>Schools Forum – Thursday 13 July, 2-4pm, in person – venue tbc</p>	

Islington Schools Forum

Chair: Abi Misselbrook-Lovejoy

C/o Governor Services

The Laycock Centre

London N1 1TH

Date/time: Thursday 25 May 2023, 2pm to 4pm

Agenda item: Item 5 - Scheme for Financing Schools 2023-24

Purpose of report: Information

Recommendations:

Schools Forum notes the report

Background

Section 48 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires Local Authorities (LAs) to prepare a Scheme for Financing Schools that sets out the financial relationship between the LA and the school they maintain. The Scheme should set out the requirements for financial management and associated issues that are binding on both the LA and its schools. Schemes need not follow the format used in this guidance, except for the text of directed revisions.

Updates in this report are in accordance with [issue 15](#) of the statutory guidance given by the Secretary of State.

In making any changes to schemes, other than directed revisions, local authorities must consult all maintained schools in their area and receive the approval of the members of their schools forum representing maintained schools.

2023-24 Update

The annual statutory guidance (issue 15) was updated on 31 March 2023. There are no new directed revisions and, as such, no mandatory changes to the scheme which would not require consultation. The proposed amendments are at the discretion of the LA and will require consultation with all maintained schools.

Islington will consult on any local changes with all maintained schools and governors during June in order for Schools Forum to make formal decisions in July. This will be subject to further legislation issued by the DfE.

A tracked-changed document will be issued as part of the consultation as well as a simple table of proposed changes to enable recipients of the consultation to easily view the sections requiring decisions. Each change will require the final formal decision from Forum.

The proposed timetable for consultation and subsequent approval of the 2023-24 Scheme is set out below:

Proposals	Timelines
Draft amendments proposed	25 May 2023 @ Schools Forum
Consultation launched	5 June 2023
Consultation period ends	30 June 2023
Final Scheme presented for approval	13 July 2023 @ Schools Forum

Islington are proposing to strengthen the arrangements to provide a clear, consistent and meaningful framework for the financial management of schools, including regularising the level of approval for Deficit Recovery Plans and the issuing of Notices of Concern. Proposed amendments can be viewed in appendix A.

Recommendations

School Forum are asked to note the latest issue from DfE and the requirement on the LA to consult with maintained schools ahead of July Forum.

Contact for queries:

Debbie Stevenson – debra.stevenson@islington.gov.uk

Head of Schools & Early Years Finance Services

T 020 7527 5763

Appendix A: Proposed Amendments to 2023-24 Scheme for Financing Schools

Clause	Title	Current Scheme	Proposed Amendments
1.1.11	The Funding Framework	The funding framework is based on the legislative provisions pursuant to sections 45 to 53 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998	<p><i>Insertion of latest statutory guidance taken into account to provide a future audit trail:</i></p> <p>The scheme has been written in accordance with issue 15 of statutory guidance (updated 31 March 2023) given by the Secretary of State pursuant to section 48(4) and paragraph 2A(2) of schedule 14 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.</p>
2.26.1	Notice of Concern	The Council may issue a notice of concern to the governing body of any school it maintains where, in the opinion of the Chief Finance Officer and the Corporate Director of Children’s Services, the school has failed to comply with any provisions of the scheme, or where actions need to be taken to safeguard the financial position of the local authority or the school.	<p><i>Change in decision maker reflecting the operational nature of the decision to issue such a Notice and highlight the relationship between a notice of concern and suspending delegation:</i></p> <p>The Council may issue a notice of concern to the governing body of any school it maintains where, in the opinion of the Chief Finance Officer and the Corporate Director of Children’s Services Director of Learning and Culture and Assistant Director of Finance, Children, Schools and Resources, the school has failed to comply with any provisions of the scheme, or where actions need to be taken to safeguard the</p>

Clause	Title	Current Scheme	Proposed Amendments
			<p>financial position of the local authority or the school.</p> <p>A notice of concern will not be used in place of suspension of financial delegation where that is the appropriate action to take; however, it may provide a way of making a governing body aware of the authority's concerns short of suspending delegation and identifying the actions a governing body should take in order to improve their financial management to avoid suspension.</p>
2.26.3	Notice of Concern		<p><i>Updated to include a dispute mechanism, as suggested by the DfE Guidance:</i></p> <p>Any dispute between the LA and the school issued with a 'notice of concern' regarding any aspect of the notice will be referred to the LA's Corporate Director, Resources.</p>
3.4.1	Budget shares and instalments for closing schools	The Council will adjust the budget shares and instalments for closing schools to take account of the date of closure. Instalments will be made net of estimated central expenditure. Closing schools will be notified in advance of the financial year of the basis for calculating the	<p><i>Enhanced by the inclusion of the regard the school must have to the scheme, including avoiding excessive spending, leading up to closure.</i></p> <p>Any spending from the budget share of a closing school must have regard to all aspects of this scheme. In order to minimise the</p>

Clause	Title	Current Scheme	Proposed Amendments
		budget share and the cash instalments to be paid.	Authority's liabilities, the Authority may wish to take the appropriate action, which may include action permitted by this Scheme, the <i>Education and Inspections Act 2006</i> (Section 66) and for the <i>School Standards and Framework Act 1998</i> (Section 51) to prevent schools entering into contractual arrangements or committing to unnecessary expenditure prior to the school closure date. Any monies incurred in this way may become the responsibility of the governing body.
4.5.2	Licensed Deficits	Schools must submit a recovery plan to the LA when their revenue balance projects a deficit when measured against the preceding March year-end balance. A governing body must apply for a Licensed Deficit Agreement (LDA) that allows for the setting of a deficit budget for an agreed period not exceeding three years. In cases where a governing body considers a deficit unavoidable the Chair of Governors must make a formal application in writing to the Corporate Director of Children's Services and Chief Finance Officer.	<p><i>Change in recipient of the Deficit Recovery Plan application:</i></p> <p>Schools must submit a recovery plan to the LA when their revenue balance projects a deficit when measured against the preceding March year-end balance. A governing body must apply for a Licensed Deficit Agreement (LDA) that allows for the setting of a deficit budget for an agreed period not exceeding three years. In cases where a governing body considers a deficit unavoidable the Chair of Governors must make a formal application in writing to the Corporate Director of Children's Services and Chief Finance Officer Director of Learning and Culture.</p>

Clause	Title	Current Scheme	Proposed Amendments
4.5.5	Licensed Deficits	The Corporate Director of Children’s Services in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer will consider the application taking the following into account	<p><i>Change in responsibility for considering the application to an operational level:</i></p> <p>The Corporate Director of Children’s Services in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer Local Authority will consider the application taking the following into account</p>
4.5.6	Licensed Deficits	<p>If the LDA application is agreed, it will be signed by the Corporate Director of Children’s Services and the Chief Finance Officer for the LA and by the Chair of Governors and head teacher for the school. It will set out the following.</p> <p>iv. The additional monitoring and support arrangements required by the Chief Finance Officer. This may require an additional charge to the school</p>	<p><i>Clarification that approval is recommended by the Director of Learning and Culture:</i></p> <p>If the LDA application is agreed, it will be signed by the Corporate Director of Children’s Services and the Chief Finance Officer for the LA and by the Chair of Governors and head teacher for the school</p> <p>A Licensed Deficit Agreement must be approved by the Corporate Director, Resources and Corporate Director, Children’s Services, on the recommendation of the Director of Learning and Culture, and the following conditions must be met:</p> <p>iv. The additional monitoring and support arrangements required by the Chief Finance Officer. This may require an additional charge to the school</p>

Clause	Title	Current Scheme	Proposed Amendments
5.4.1	Income from the sale of assets	Schools will be allowed to retain the proceeds of sale of assets except in cases where the asset was purchased with non-delegated funds (in which case it will be for the Council to decide whether the school should retain the proceeds), or the asset concerned is land or buildings forming part of the school premises and is owned by the Council.	<p><i>Enhanced to contain further guidance on the retention of funds from the sale of assets, as suggested in the latest issue of the statutory guidance:</i></p> <p>Schools will be allowed to retain the proceeds of sale of assets except in cases where the asset was purchased with non-delegated funds (in which case it will be for the Council to decide whether the school should retain the proceeds), or the asset concerned is land or buildings forming part of the school premises and is owned by the Council.</p> <p>Any retention of funds from the sale of land assets is subject to the consent of the Secretary of State, and any conditions the Secretary of State may attach to that consent relating to use of proceeds.</p> <p>The retention of proceeds of sale for premises not owned by the local authority will not be a matter for the scheme.</p>
11.6	Right of attendance for the Corporate Director, People Directorate	Governing bodies must permit the Corporate Director, People Directorate, or his/her representative, to attend any meeting of the	<p><i>Change in title, only, of statutory Chief Officer:</i></p> <p>Governing bodies must permit the Corporate Director, People Directorate Children's Services, or his/her representative, to attend</p>

Clause	Title	Current Scheme	Proposed Amendments
		governing body or its committees and working parties if it is necessary to do so	<p>any meeting of the governing body or its committees and working parties if it is necessary to do so</p> <p>- & same amendment to Title and Table of contents</p>
11.7	Right of attendance for the Chief Finance Officer	Governing bodies must permit the Council's Chief Finance Officer (or their representative) to attend meetings of the governing body at which any agenda items are relevant to the exercise of their responsibilities.	<p><i>Change in title of statutory Chief Officer:</i></p> <p>Governing bodies must permit the Council's Chief Finance Officer Corporate Director, Resources (or their representative) to attend meetings of the governing body at which any agenda items are relevant to the exercise of their responsibilities</p> <p>- & same amendment to Title and Table of contents</p>

Islington Schools Forum

Chair: Abi Misselbrook-Lovejoy

C/o Governor Services

The Laycock Centre

London N1 1TH

Date/time: Thursday 25 May 2023, 2pm to 4pm

Agenda item: Item 6 - Draft Schools Balances 2022-23

Purpose of report: Information

Recommendations:

Schools Forum are asked to note:

- Islington's provisional 2022-23 schools' balances position

School Balances

Following schools' financial closedown, the table in Appendix A provides details of school balances to be reported to Department for Education (DfE) as at 31 March 2023 compared to those held at March 2022. The balances are further compared to the ESFA's previously suggested revenue balance limits.

The final reported school balances for year ending 31 March 2023 totalled £6.291m, compared to a balance of £8.313m in 2021-22; representing a net decrease of £2.022m; -24%. It should be noted that the year-end balance represents 5% of the schools' annual Individual School Balances (ISB).

A further report will be presented to Schools Forum in July on completion of the annual process of schools submitting their planned use of surplus balances (PUSB) for capital and other purposes, before the end of May 2023.

There are 15 schools ending the 2022-23 financial year with deficit balances, compared to 10 at March 2022. Of the 10 reported deficits at 31 March 2022, one school has been able to deliver an underspend during the year meaning their cumulative financial position returns to surplus. Six schools during the 2022-23 financial year have entered into a deficit.

A further analysis of balances, when compared to the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) suggested guidance of balances held by schools; 8% for nursery, primary and special schools and 5% for secondary schools, indicate 17 schools (32.7%) are above the suggested

limits. Of the 17, 7 schools (41%) reported an in-year deficit which means their cumulative balance has reduced when comparing year-on-year.

Of the 52 maintained schools in Islington, 34 (65%) have reported in-year deficits with 18 (35%) schools reporting increases to their overall balances. This picture is reflective of the ongoing financial pressures schools are currently facing.

The Council's Scheme for Financing Schools does not permit a school to set a deficit budget. Where in exceptional circumstances deficits cannot be avoided, schools will enter into a formal agreed deficit recovery plan (DRP) which requires schools to move back in to a surplus financial position within a 3 year period. Schools, including their Chair of Governors, will be required to meet with the LA on at least a termly basis to monitor their progress against the DRP and asked to identify risks of achieving the required timeline of returning to a surplus. Schools are also required to submit their pupil number projections for determination of realistic future budget forecasts. The LA representatives included in the meetings will be Schools Finance; School Improvement and HR.

Recommendations

That Schools Forum notes:

- provisional 2022-23 schools' balances position
- deficit schools and schools that have moved out of deficit

A further report will be presented to the July meeting of this Forum to include the following:

- earmarked revenue balances for capital purposes
- RAG rating categorisation of schools and associated actions

Contact for queries:

Debbie Stevenson – debra.stevenson@islington.gov.uk

Head of Schools and Early Years Finance Services

T 020 7527 5763

Draft School Balances 2022-23

Appendix A

Data as at 3 May 2023

Note: balances are before deduction of revenue earmarked for capital balances not yet decided by schools.

School	School Balances 2021-22	School Balances 2022-23	Increase / (Decrease) in balances	School Budgets 2022-23	22-23 Balances as a % of ISB	ESFA Balance Guide @ 5% / 8%	Excess over
Kate Greenaway Nursery School	25,855	-51,341	-77,196	519,730	-10%	41,578	
Margaret McMillan Nursery School	333,878	276,145	-57,733	653,944	42%	52,315	223,830
North Islington Nursery School	98,315	14,037	-84,278	561,882	2%	44,951	
Total Nursery Schools	458,048	238,841	-219,207	1,735,556	14%	138,844	223,830
Ambler Primary School	115,198	-63,384	-178,582	2,759,193	-2%	220,735	
Ashmount Primary School	13,632	82,510	68,878	2,476,281	3%	198,102	
Blessed Sacrament RC Primary School	62,610	27,092	-35,518	793,047	3%	63,444	
Canonbury Primary School	15,787	13,060	-2,727	2,455,517	1%	196,441	
Christ The King RC Primary School	147,598	105,731	-41,867	1,715,476	6%	137,238	
Copenhagen Primary School	24,255	50,580	26,325	1,068,820	5%	85,506	
Drayton Park Primary School	-554,977	-974,037	-419,061	1,741,167	-56%	139,293	
Duncombe Primary School	-341,167	-276,307	64,859	2,563,119	-11%	205,049	
Gillespie Primary School	47,996	-28,327	-76,323	1,343,270	-2%	107,462	
Grafton Primary School	-265,720	-76,024	189,696	2,573,329	-3%	205,866	
Hanover Primary School	95,302	31,900	-63,401	1,846,407	2%	147,713	
Hargrave Park Primary School	87,188	59,183	-28,006	2,062,277	3%	164,982	
Highbury Quadrant Primary School	-165,562	-151,788	13,775	1,689,270	-9%	135,142	
Hugh Myddelton Primary School	17,868	9,314	-8,554	2,844,636	0%	227,571	
Laycock Primary School	-197,348	-344,350	-147,002	2,743,931	-13%	219,515	
Montem Primary School	283,517	-192,058	-475,575	2,033,791	-9%	162,703	
Moreland Primary School	101,455	85,740	-15,715	2,374,147	4%	189,932	
Newington Green Primary School	211,372	173,370	-38,002	2,498,384	7%	199,871	
Pakeman Primary School	38,971	32,660	-6,311	2,042,043	2%	163,363	
Pooles Park Primary School	-50,376	-170,288	-119,912	1,490,794	-11%	119,264	
Prior Weston Primary School	-359,204	-781,482	-422,279	1,898,263	-41%	151,861	
Robert Blair Primary School	93,769	-127,442	-221,211	1,393,270	-9%	111,462	
Rotherfield Primary School	238,734	300,749	62,016	2,236,332	13%	178,907	121,843
Sacred Heart RC Primary School	340,147	294,807	-45,340	2,761,822	11%	220,946	73,861
St Andrews (Barnsbury) Church of England Primary School	-36,699	-53,338	-16,639	1,251,269	-4%	100,101	
St Joan of Arc RC Primary School	204,582	151,356	-53,225	2,438,780	6%	195,102	
St John Evangelist RC Primary School	189,214	164,713	-24,501	1,749,146	9%	139,932	24,781
St Johns Highbury Vale CofE Primary School	-44,393	124,009	168,402	1,194,025	10%	95,522	28,487
St Johns Upper Holloway CofE Primary School	215,345	201,500	-13,846	1,351,882	15%	108,151	93,349
St Josephs RC Primary School	795,446	815,683	20,238	2,213,883	37%	177,111	638,573
St Judes & St Pauls CofE Primary School	152,093	11,928	-140,165	1,058,522	1%	84,682	
St Lukes CofE Primary School	29,841	30,253	413	1,381,443	2%	110,515	
St Marks CofE Primary School	228,483	193,054	-35,429	1,389,972	14%	111,198	81,856
St Marys CofE Primary School	258,149	231,852	-26,297	1,105,205	21%	88,416	143,435
St Peters & St Pauls RC Primary School	98,507	39,699	-58,808	1,302,131	3%	104,171	
Thornhill Primary School	484,050	626,108	142,058	2,698,630	23%	215,890	410,218
Tufnell Park Primary School	62,403	272,254	209,851	2,483,506	11%	198,681	73,574
Vittoria Primary School	96,620	148,229	51,608	1,214,810	12%	97,185	51,044

Winton Primary School	11,546	13,397	1,852	1,603,291	1%	128,263	
Yerbury Primary School	176,051	77,786	-98,265	2,281,012	3%	182,481	
Total Primary Schools	2,922,284	1,129,692	-1,792,591	76,122,092	1%	6,089,767	1,741,020
Central Foundation	488,720	363,729	-124,990	6,448,969	6%	322,448	41,281
Elizabeth Garrett Anderson	1,049,254	1,153,784	104,530	7,602,623	15%	380,131	773,653
Highbury Fields School	570,460	159,438	-411,022	6,040,197	3%	302,010	
Beacon High	-333,664	-240,394	93,270	4,534,360	-5%	226,718	
Arts & Media School Islington	773,006	939,773	166,766	5,731,834	16%	286,592	653,181
St Aloysius' College	1,815,796	1,961,632	145,835	4,362,592	45%	218,130	1,743,502
Total Secondary Schools	4,363,572	4,337,962	-25,610	34,720,575	12%	1,736,029	3,211,617
Richard Cloudesley PH School	420,832	544,380	123,548	1,775,831	31%	142,066	402,313
Samuel Rhodes MLD School	117,890	102,137	-15,752	2,860,936	4%	228,875	
Total Special Schools	538,721	646,517	107,796	4,636,767	14%	370,941	402,313
New River College	30,693	-61,988	-92,681	4,474,136	-1%	357,931	
Total Pupil Referral Unit	30,693	-61,988	-92,681	4,474,136	-1%	357,931	-
Total school balances before earmarked capital deductions	8,313,318	6,291,025	-2,022,293	121,689,125	5%	8,693,513	5,578,780

3 Year comparison	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
	£	£	£	£	£
Balance totals - <i>note capital deductions to be added in when school data available</i>	8,185,997	11,732,678	9,458,688	8,313,318	6,291,025
Change from previous year	-84,214	3,546,681	-2,273,990	-1,145,370	-2,022,293

Islington Schools Forum

Chair: Abi Misselbrook-Lovejoy

C/o Governor Services

The Laycock Centre

London N1 1TH

Date/time: Thursday 25 May, 2pm to 4pm

Agenda item: Item 7 – DSG Budget Monitor (2022-23)

Purpose of report: For information

Recommendations:

That Schools Forum notes:

- a) The provisional in-year outturn overspend of £0.135m against the Dedicated Schools Grant.
- b) That DSG balances provisionally stand at £5.083m at the end of 2022/23.
- c) That these balances are earmarked for in future years to manage increasing pressures on the high needs block and early years block, and to meet cost pressures within schools.
- d) The back-pay adjustments in relation to partial resolution of the term-time only staff holiday pay issue for maintained schools that buy into the Council's payroll service. Academies and the remaining maintained schools will receive funding on an equivalent basis.

Background

1. The provisional DSG outturn for 2022/23 is contained in this report. The overall position across all spending blocks is an in-year overspend of (-£0.135m, 0.09%, a movement of -£0.167m since month 9). DSG balances stood at £5.218m at the end of 2021/22 and have provisionally decreased to £5.083m at the end of 2022/23, as shown in the table below. These balances are earmarked in future years to manage increasing pressures on the high needs block and early years block, and to meet cost pressures within schools.

Schools Block	De-delegated	CSSB	High Needs Block	Early Years Block	Total
£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m

Opening balance	0.776	0.122	0.210	2.649	1.461	5.218
In-year movement	-0.264	0.034	0.054	0.635	-0.594	-0.135
Draft closing balance	0.512	0.156	0.264	3.284	0.867	5.083
Allocated	0	0.038	0.059	0	0	0
Earmarked for cost pressures / risks	0.512	0.118	0.205	3.284	0.867	5.083
To be allocated	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0.512	0.156	0.264	3.284	0.867	5.083

Schools Block (+£0.264m in-year overspend)

- This consists of funding centrally retained for growth (£0.300m) and falling rolls (£0.400m). The following variances against the budget have led to a £0.142m overspend:
 - + £0.018m (+6%) in-year overspend against the budget for growth
 - + £0.124m (+31%) in-year overspend against the budget for falling rolls
- The net overspend against growth and falling rolls will be partially offset by the £0.088m balance of growth and falling rolls funding from 2021-22, leading to net shortfall of £0.054m to be met from 2023-24 allocations.
- Schools Block balances stood at £0.776m at the end of 2021/22. Part of this balance (£0.688m) is being held pending any funding adjustments following the changes to the treatment of NNDR for schools by the DfE / resolution of the legal position in relation to the term-time only staff holiday pay issue. Part of the term-time holiday pay issue has been resolved for maintained schools that buy into the Council's payroll service, leading to a back pay cost of £0.122m (taking the total in-year Schools Block overspend to £0.264m). Maintained schools that do not buy into the Council's payroll service and academies will be invited to submit a request for an allocation of funding in relation to this issue, calculated on an equivalent basis.
- After taking into account the £0.142m in-year overspend against growth and falling rolls, and the term-time only staff back pay cost of £0.122m, the Schools Block balance has provisionally reduced to £0.512m. This will continue to be held for the same purpose in 2023/24 until the remainder of the holiday pay issue is resolved by the government.

De-delegated funding (-£0.034m in-year underspend)

- This is funding de-delegated by maintained schools for specific functions. Underspends cannot be used to offset overspends elsewhere within the DSG. The following variances against the budget have led to a £0.034m net underspend:
 - £0.003m (-4%) in-year underspend against the schools redundancy budget. The schools redundancy budget contains £0.100m of core Council funding. The core Council funding is allocated first so any underspend can be carried forward against the DSG for the benefit of maintained schools in the following financial year.
 - + £0.007m (+X%) in-year overspend against the Trade Union Facility Time budget

- - £0.038m (-20%) in-year underspend against the budget for priority support, this funding had been earmarked for a school in 2022/23 and will be transferred to them in 2023/24.
7. De-delegated balances stood at £0.122m at the end of 2021/22. After allowing for the net underspend of £0.034m this has increased to £0.156m. Adjusting for the £0.038m priority support allocation, £0.118m remains. We will consider how best to use this with School Forum in the autumn term.

Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) (-£0.054m in-year underspend)

8. There is an in-year unallocated balance of -£0.053m (-4%) against the CSSB and an underspend of -£0.001m against the school's admissions service.
9. The Central Services Schools block balances stood at £0.210m at the end of 2021/22. The in-year underspends will provisionally increase that balance to £0.264m. This balance is being used to smooth in known future funding reductions - £0.059m is being applied in 2023/24.

High Needs Block (-£0.646m in-year underspend)

10. There is a provisional -£0.646m underspend (-1.7%) against the High Needs Block. This is made up of the following variances:
- - £0.013m in-year underspend against the High Needs Block contribution to SALT and CAMHS costs in Early Years
 - - £0.140m unbudgeted in-year exclusions income
 - + £0.263m (+2%) in-year overspend against the budget for provision in academies, the independent sector, further education settings and in out of borough provision after allowing for forecast demographic cost pressures
 - - £0.745m in-year unallocated funding, but earmarked for future demand pressures
11. This position also allows for the additional £1.152m of one-off funding allocated to primary schools from meeting SEND related cost pressures in relation to early years to primary transfer.
12. The High Needs Block had a balance of £2.649m at the end of 2021/22. The in-year underspend will bring that balance to £3.295m. This balance is being held against future demand pressures on the High Needs Block. While additional funding has been provided for High Needs in 2023/24, funding allocations from the DfE are forecast to increase by just 2% a year from 2024/25 while demographic growth pressures are forecast to increase at around 8% a year. Forecasting shows that the High Needs Block budget is likely to enter into an in-year deficit in 2024/25.

Early Years Block (+£0.591m in-year overspend)

13. There is a provisional overspend against the Early Years Block of +£0.591m. This is made up of the following variances:
- + £0.161m (+26%) in-year overspend against the budget for SEND additional needs due to increases in demand.

- + £0.499m in-year overspend against the budgets for statutory entitlements for 2 year olds and 3 and 4 year olds. This follows the action to partially protect settings from losses in funding due to low participation by retrospectively funding settings at the agreed funding rates for 2023/24 in 2022/23. This is part of planned action to reduce the Early Years Block balance.
- - £0.055m (-58%) in-year underspend against the disabled access fund and a - £0.011m (-6%) underspend against the early years pupil premium. These underspends have occurred due to eligibility being lower than the DfE have provided for but may be subject to an element of clawback by the DfE in 2023/24.

14. This position is after taking into account the following retrospective funding adjustments that were made to our Early Years Block DSG allocations by the DfE in 2022/23 following the spring census:

	Prior Year	In-year	Total
	£m	£m	£m
3 and 4 year olds universal entitlement	-0.176	-0.702	-0.878
3 and 4 year olds extended entitlement	0.032	0.129	0.161
2 year olds	0.048	0.197	0.245
Early Years' Pupil Premium	-0.008	-0.037	-0.045
Disability Access Fund	-	-	-
Maintained nursery supplementary funding	-0.009	-0.039	-0.048
Total	-0.113	-0.451	-0.565

15. There was sufficient capacity in the budget / in-year contingency to absorb these adjustments, without calling on the Early Years Block balance from previous years. This will leave the capacity to provide settings with some protection against participation adjustments in the spring term, and some capacity to absorb future funding adjustments if numbers in settings to do not recover in future years.
16. The Early Years Block balances stood at £1.461m at the end of last year. The in-year overspend have provisionally reduced that balance to £0.867m. This balance is being held to mitigate against any in-year funding reductions from the DfE.

Recommendations

17. That Schools Forum notes:

- a) The provisional in-year outturn overspend of £0.135m against the Dedicated Schools Grant.
- b) That DSG balances provisionally stand at £5.083m at the end of 2022/23.

- c) That these balances are earmarked for in future years to manage increasing pressures on the high needs block and early years block, and to meet cost pressures within schools.
- d) The back-pay adjustments in relation to partial resolution of the term-time only staff holiday pay issue for maintained schools that buy into the Council's payroll service. Academies and the remaining maintained schools will receive funding on an equivalent basis.

Contact for queries:

Tim Partington – tim.partington@islington.gov.uk

Assistant Director of Finance, Children's, Schools and Resources

T 020 7527 1851

Islington Schools Forum

Chair: Abi Misselbrook-Lovejoy

C/o Governor Services

The Laycock Centre

London N1 1TH

Date/time: Thursday 25 May 2023, 2pm to 4pm

Agenda item: Item 8 – Forward Planning

Purpose of report: Information

Recommendations:

Schools Forum notes the updates and provide comments

Forward planning

The purpose of this report is to provide the foundation of a future work plan for Schools Forum meetings on a rolling 12-month period.

The report presented has been updated to reflect changes that have since emerged from the previous meeting.

The table in appendix A provides the updated work plan and includes an additional notes column to enable recognised changes.

Listed within the work plan are suggested standing items, these will be presented either via a written or oral report, dependent on the need for the meeting.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Schools Forum note the updated work plan and provide comments.

Contact for queries:

Debbie Stevenson – debra.stevenson@islington.gov.uk

Head of Schools & Early Years Finance Services

T 020 7527 5763

APPENDIX A – School Forum: Work plan

Standing Items: Declaration of Interest
 Forum Composition
 Forum Forward Planning
 Sub Group Updates
 Quality Assurance

Financial Year	Agenda Item	Information/ Comments & views / Decision	Notes
May 23	Scheme for Financing Schools (DfE)	Comments & Views	
	School Balances (DRAFT - prior year)	Information	
	DSG Outturn (DRAFT: prior year)	Information	
July 23	Scheme for Financing Schools (Local)	Decision	
	School Balances (FINAL - prior year)	Information	
	DSG Outturn (FINAL: prior year)	Information	
	DSG Allocations (in year)	Information	
	Schools Internal Audit Programme Outcomes (prior year)	Information	
	DSG Schools Block estimated funding (new year)	Information	
	Falling Rolls estimated allocations (new year)	Information	
November 23	School Funding Arrangements, Consultation results (future year) incl Scheme for Financing Schools, Growth & Falling Rolls	Decision	
	Central School Services Block - Central Retention	Decision	
	DSG Budget Monitor (in year)	Information	
	DSG Funding Settlement (in year)	Information	
	DSG projected allocations (future year)	Information	
January 24	Growth / Falling Rolls proposals (future year)	Decision	
	School Funding Formula (future year)	Decision	
	School Central Retention (future year)	Decision	
	Early Years Funding Formula (future year)	Decision	
	High Needs Places	Decision	
	DSG Budget Monitor (in year)	Information	
	DSG Settlement (future year)	Information	
May 24	Scheme for Financing Schools (DfE)	Comments & Views	
	School Balances (DRAFT - prior year)	Information	
	DSG Outturn (DRAFT: prior year)	Information	