



Northumberland County Council

Agenda Item 7 Wellbeing and Community Health Services Group
Education and Skills Service

SCHOOLS' FORUM

04 July 2018

DSG Outturn 2017-18

1. Purpose of the Report

This report provides details of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) outturn position for 2017/18 to School Forum members, together with the implications of the outturn highlighted by significant cost pressures within the budget

2. Recommendations

Schools Forum is asked to:

- a) Approve that the overspend on the DSG for 2017/18 will have the first call on the DSG settlement for 2018/19;
- b) Approve the carry forward of the 2018/19 Trade Union Facility surplus of £9,472, in line with the report attached at Appendix A
- c) Note the ongoing monitoring of High Needs funding.

3. Background

At the Schools Forum meeting in January 2017 the budgets for each block within the DSG were set, with details for the Early Years the High Needs blocks being agreed at the meeting in February 2017.

- Schools Block £178,331,958
- Early Years Block £ 15,465,736
- High Needs Block £ 27,818,548

4. Outturn Position 2017/18

- 4.1 The latest monitoring report provided to Schools Forum was in September 2017, the forecast overspends at that point and the final year end position is shown in the Table below:

	Sept 2017 (£m)	2017/18 outturn (£m)	Change (£m)
Schools Block	0.043m underspend	0.397m underspend	0.354m improvement
High Needs Block	2.978m overspend	2.749m overspend	0.229m improvement
Early Years Block	0.026m underspend	0.290m underspend	0.264m improvement
OVERALL	2.909m overspend	2.062m overspend	0.847m improvement

4.2 Schools Block

The underspend in the Schools Block is a result of the decision made to withdraw funding from previous jointly commissioned initiatives with childrens' social care, as outlined in the September 2017 report. These savings have been offset to an extent by the overspend on the Behaviour Support Service, again as highlighted in the September report.

4.3 High Needs Block

Key pressures within the High Needs Block are as previously outlined in relation to:

- Independent Special Schools
- Top Up funding
- Inclusion – pressures arising from the increase in permanent exclusions
- Communication Support and ASD & SEMH services failing to achieve income targets;

The £2.749m overspend shown in 4.1 includes a “brought forward” 2016/17 deficit of £1.727 million and represents a £0.229m improvement on the position reported in September.

4.4 Early Years Block

Early Years underspending of £0.290m arises from the year end reconciliation of estimated compared to actual numbers and staffing underspending.

5 Summary and Conclusions

While there remain significant challenges in relation to the management of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), in common with local authorities nationally, some progress is being made through greater challenge and scrutiny of numbers. The implementation of new SEND Commissioning Panel processes from September 2018 will support this, including the reinforcement of a graduated approach to SEN.

HR Directorate
SCHOOLS FORUM

4 July 2018

Trade Union Facility Time

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To seek approval from Schools Forum to carry forward the budget surplus from 2017/18 to 2018/19.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Schools Forum members are recommended to read the report prior to the meeting and table any questions, preferably on advance or at the meeting. Schools Forum members are requested to support the proposal to carry forward the budget surplus of £9,472.

3. BACKGROUND

Schools Forum has previously agreed that the money for Trade Union Facility Time budget should be de - delegated from First, Primary, Middle, High and Secondary Schools, and this means that these schools benefit from the services of county-wide Trades Union elected representatives. The budget is not de-delegated from maintained Special Schools or Academies.

The Facility Time SLA is designed to assist maintained Special Schools by protecting them against the possibility that one of their members of staff could be elected as a County Secretary of their Trades Union or Professional Association. Under such circumstances, the school would be obligated to release the member of staff to work in any school across the County and to pay the associated supply costs to replace them. Participating in the SLA would mean that the Council would meet those supply costs instead. Whereas none of the County Secretaries are currently employed in a Special School, this could potentially happen if one of their members of staff were to put themselves forward for the position, so in essence this SLA is an insurance policy against the potentially very significant costs that might be incurred in such an eventuality. Special Schools should also be aware that County representatives of a Trades Union or Professional Association will only be able to represent their members at e.g. a disciplinary or ill-health meeting if the school in which the member works has contributed to this SLA.

The Facility Time SLA is designed to assist Academies in a different way. As a separate employer, each Academy could be required to release for Facility Time a representative of each of the Trades Unions or Professional Associations to undertake Trades Union duties within their own Academy. Given the number of Trades Unions and Associations which are represented within the school workforce, this could cost a significant amount of money. Participation in the SLA allows the Academy to utilise the services of the elected County Secretaries of each Trades Union or Professional Association instead of their own elected representatives. In addition, for those Academies which participate in the SLA, the Council is prepared to pay the Academy for an agreed level of Supply Cover if one of their members of staff is elected as the County Secretary for that Trades Union or Professional Association and the Academy allows them to undertake that work not just within their Academy but for all the schools within the County.

4. Current Position

The budget for Facility Time is managed by the HR Service working in conjunction with trades union colleagues. Income is generated by encouraging academies to sign up and this has been moderately successful. However, based upon the known schools that may academise between now and the Autumn term, and within the Autumn term, there may be a reduction in the de-delegated budget.

Under these circumstances, it would be supportive if the Schools Forum could agree the budget surplus of £9,472 to be carried forward to 2018/19.

Kelly Angus
Executive Director of HR/OD & Deputy Chief Executive

01670 623134 or 07920 284020
email: kelly.angus@northumberland.gov.uk