



Northumberland County Council

Wellbeing and Community Health

Agenda Item : 9

SCHOOLS FORUM

26 September 2018

School Balances as at 31 March 2018

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Schools Forum of the position regarding School Balances as at 31 March 2018.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Schools Forum members are recommended to read the report prior to the meeting and table any questions, preferably in advance or at the meeting.

3. BACKGROUND

Maintained schools submitted their returns regarding the use of School Balances as at 31 March 2018. This is separate to their budget plans, and details their balances. Schools are allowed to carry forward a percentage of the budget without penalty, any funds in excess of this figure need to be supported with details of future spending intentions. The relevant percentages are shown below:

- Primary/Special schools 16% of the new financial year budget share;
- Middle/High schools 10% of the new financial year budget share

No schools were above the limit, therefore no funds need to be clawed back from schools.

4. CURRENT POSITION

The original figure brought forward into 2017/18 was £5.906m, as reported to Schools Forum in September 2017. However this figure has been reduced by £375,000 to reflect those schools closing or academising during the course of the year. The adjusted balances therefore reflect those schools who were reflected in both the 2017/18 opening and closing balances.

Overall School Balances have decreased by £1.345m (24%) from £5.531m to £4.186m. This figure represents the total funding carried forward into 2018/19 both in terms of commitment (or planned expenditure) and net balances held.

It should be noted that the schools balances information contained within this report includes schools that closed on 31 August 2018, schools who converted to academy status on 1 September 2018 and those schools currently considering or in the process of converting to an academy. If and when schools convert they will no longer be reported in the schools balances figures within the Authority's accounts.

Within the respective school phases, there are differences apparent both in respect of the numbers of schools in surplus or deficit and the movement in balances held by individual schools:

| Phase | Increase(+) or Decrease (-) in 2017/18 |
|------------------------|---|
| First/Primary Schools | - 820,919 (22%) |
| Middle Schools | - 299,977 (29%) |
| PRU | + 65,104 (141%) |
| High/Secondary Schools | - 495,646 (180%) |
| Special Schools | + 206,578 (22%) |
| TOTAL | - 1,344,860 (29%) |

The number of schools with a deficit closing balance has decreased from 32 to 28 and the size of the overall deficits has increased in the 12 months to March 2018, increasing by £0.186m (6%) from £2.947m to £3.132m.

The number of schools with a surplus closing balance has decreased from 118 to 107 and size of the overall surpluses has decreased by £1.534m (17%) from £8.852m to £7.318m. Again the differences between the phases are shown below:

| Change in Balances during 2017/18 | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|-----------------|------------|
| Phase | Schools in Surplus | | Schools in Deficit | | TOTALS | |
| | Surplus (£000) | Surplus (Nos) | Deficit (£000) | Deficit (Nos) | Surplus/Deficit | Nos |
| First/Primary | -375 | 87 | 446 | 21 | -821 | 108 |
| Middle | -206 | 9 | 93 | 3 | -299 | 12 |
| PRU | 65 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 65 | 1 |
| Secondary/High | -50 | 3 | 446 | 3 | -496 | 6 |
| Special | 306 | 7 | 100 | 1 | 206 | 8 |
| TOTAL | -260 | 107 | -1085 | 28 | -1345 | 135 |

Zephania Parkin
School Funding and Business Relationship Manager

17 September 2018