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| School Forum 15th January 2025 | |
| Report from Executive Director of People - Children Service | |
| CSSB 2024/25 Forecast update and 2025/26 Budget | |
| Wards Affected: | All |
| Key or Non-Key Decision: | N/A |
| No. of Appendices: | N/A |
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1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To report on forecast figures for CSSB 2024/25 against previously agreed budgets.
- 1.2 To advise Schools Forum of the Central School Services Block (CSSB) Allocation for financial year 2025/26 and related block transfers.
- 1.3 To propose CSSB budget allocations for 2025/26.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Schools Forum note the latest forecast figures for CSSB 2024/25.
- 2.2 That Schools Forum approve the block transfer of £0.100m from the Schools Block DSG to the CSSB DSG for 2025/26 to contribute towards the Admission's Service costs.
- 2.3 That Schools Forum agrees the budget allocations for 2025/26 as outlined in this paper.

3 CSSB Forecast 2024/25

- 3.1 In the March 2024 Schools Forum meeting, the CSSB budget was presented for 2024/25. The latest forecast outturn for 2024/25 is shown below with a comparison to the current forecast position.

| Table 3:- CSSB Forecast Budget 2024-25 | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|---|
| Area | 2024-25 Budget £m | Forecast 2024-2025 | Variance £m | Notes |
| Income Streams | | | | |
| Pupil led funding | 0.839 | 0.839 | 0.000 | |
| Funding for historic commitments | 0.026 | 0.026 | 0.000 | |
| Total CSSB DSG Allocation | 0.865 | 0.865 | 0.000 | |
| Schools Block Contribution | 0.100 | 0.100 | 0.000 | |
| Total Income Streams | 0.965 | 0.965 | 0.000 | |
| Budget Allocations | | | | |
| LA Safeguarding Childrens Board | 0.030 | 0.030 | 0.000 | |
| Sub Total - Historical Commitment | 0.030 | 0.030 | 0.000 | |
| Servicing of Schools Forum | 0.064 | 0.064 | 0.000 | Uplift calculated on P7 forecast |
| Admissions | 0.325 | 0.325 | 0.000 | Uplift calculated on P7 forecast |
| Copyright Licences | 0.171 | 0.171 | 0.000 | Uplift calculated on government announcement - 7.1% |
| Education Welfare | 0.151 | 0.196 | 0.045 | Uplift calculated on P7 forecast |
| Asset Management | 0.013 | 0.013 | 0.000 | |
| Statutory Regulatory | 0.186 | 0.273 | 0.087 | Uplift calculated on P7 forecast |
| Sub Total - Ongoing Commitment | 0.910 | 1.042 | 0.132 | |
| Total Budget Allocations | 0.940 | 1.072 | 0.132 | |

3.2 Overall, there are budget pressures of £0.132m forecast in the 2024/25 CSSB budget which will need to be managed the LA.

3.4 A number of allocations reflect a percentage of staff costs for administrative and management roles. During 2024/25 some of these roles were resourced, at least in part, through interim contracts.

4 CSSB Allocation 2025/26 and Block Transfers

4.1 The December 2024 CSSB allocation for 2025/26 is £921,354 and comprises of £900,906 pupil led funding (based on a pupil count of 28,996) and £20,448 funding for historic commitments. This is an overall increase of £57,221 compared to 2024/25.

- 4.2 The mainstream schools elements of TPAG, TPECG 2024 and CSBG will be rolled into the schools NFF for 2025 to 2026. The funding for centrally employed teachers within the TPECG and CSBG are also being rolled into the CSSB NFF for 2025 to 2026.
- 4.3 A further £4 million will be provided to cover additional exceptional copyright license costs in 2025 to 2026. The additional funding each local authority will receive in respect of copyright licences will be calculated as 7.1% of their copyright licence costs in 2024 to 2025.
- 4.4 ESFA are phasing out funding for historic commitments and this element has been reduced by 20% compared to the 2024/25 funding.
- 4.5 The per pupil rate used for Slough is £31.07 per pupil. This low level of per pupil funding has resulted in an ongoing pressure on Central School Services and, as a result, Schools Forum agreed to an additional transfer from School Block to CSSB of £0.100m for the past 3 years (2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25) to support the admissions process.

5 CSSB Proposed Budget 2025/26

- 5.1 The proposed CSSB budget for 2025/26 follows a very similar format to 2024/25 with a small uplift of 2% for cost inflation across all areas and a 7.1% uplift has been applied for the copyright licences.

| Area | 2024-25 Budget £m | Forecast 2024-2025 | Proposed 2025-26 Budget £m | Change in Budget 2024/25 to 2025/26 £m | Notes |
|--|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|--|-----------|
| Income Streams | | | | | |
| Pupil led funding | 0.839 | 0.839 | 0.901 | 0.062 | |
| Funding for historic commitments | 0.026 | 0.026 | 0.020 | -0.006 | |
| Total CSSB DSG Allocation | 0.865 | 0.865 | 0.921 | 0.056 | |
| Schools Block Contribution | 0.100 | 0.100 | 0.100 | 0.000 | |
| Total Income Streams | 0.965 | 0.965 | 1.021 | 0.056 | |
| Budget Allocations | | | | | |
| LA Safeguarding Childrens Board | 0.030 | 0.030 | 0.030 | 0.000 | |
| Sub Total - Historical Commitment | 0.030 | 0.030 | 0.030 | 0.000 | |
| Servicing of Schools Forum | 0.064 | 0.064 | 0.064 | 0.000 | No change |
| Admissions | 0.325 | 0.325 | 0.325 | 0.000 | No change |

| Area | 2024-25 Budget £m | Forecast 2024-2025 | Proposed 2025-26 Budget £m | Change in Budget 2024/25 to 2025/26 £m | Notes |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|--|---|
| Copyright Licences | 0.171 | 0.171 | 0.183 | 0.012 | Uplift calculated on government announcement - 7.1% |
| Education Welfare | 0.151 | 0.196 | 0.200 | 0.049 | Based on current forecast |
| Asset Management | 0.013 | 0.013 | 0.013 | 0.000 | No change |
| Statutory Regulatory | 0.186 | 0.273 | 0.206 | 0.020 | Uplift to funding available |
| Sub Total - Ongoing Commitment | 0.910 | 1.011 | 0.991 | 0.081 | |
| Total Budget Allocations | 0.940 | 1.041 | 1.021 | 0.081 | |

5.2 Approval is sought for Schools Forum to approve the block transfer of £0.100m from the Schools Block DSG to the CSSB DSG for 2025/26.

6 CSSB Budget Commitments 2025/26

6.1 The CSSB provides funding for specific schools related services, including some services which the LA spends more on and for which the CSSB is a contribution to the total spend (eg asset management, statutory and regulatory services). The proposed budget allocations for 2025/26 are for the services which are described below.

6.2 Admissions £0.325m includes £0.100m transfer from the Schools Block

The school admissions budget funds the School Admissions Team. The team is responsible for the Local Authority's school admission processes. This includes co-ordination of the reception and secondary transfer admissions processes. This involves providing all residents who wish to apply with information about the process and an application form, processing all applications received and ensuring all applicants have one offer of a school place on national offer day. The team also co-ordinate in year primary and secondary admissions. Parents moving into Slough are provided with an application form and are offered a school place as soon as possible, usually within 4 weeks. The team deals with around 6,000 applications annually.

6.3 Servicing of Schools Forum £0.064m

The budget for servicing the Schools Forum represents the costs incurred in providing this statutory duty. The LA is required to co-ordinate at least four Schools' Forum meetings per year. This budget contributes to the running costs of Schools' Forums including any agreed and reasonable expenses for members attending meetings, the costs of producing and distributing papers, costs of room hire and refreshments and for clerking of meetings.

6.4 **LA Children's Safeguarding Board £0.030m**

Contributions to the Safeguarding function adds value to the work of the Slough Children's Safeguarding Board (SCSB) and support all schools and academies in their vital work to keep children and young people safe and achieve compliance with Ofsted requirements.

6.5 **Copyright Licences £0.183m**

This is negotiated centrally for all authorities; schools cannot opt out for these licences.

- Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA)
- Schools Printed Music Licence (SPML)
- Newspaper Licensing Authority (NLA)
- Education Recording Authority (ERA)
- Public Video Streaming Licence (PVSL)
- Motion Picture Licensing Company (MPLC)
- Phonographic Performance Limited (PPL)
- Performing Rights Society (PRS)
- Mechanical Copyright Protection Society (MCPS)
- Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI)

6.6 **Education Welfare (ESG) £0.200m**

The statutory Education Welfare functions include the promotion of good attendance for all children and young people, enforcement duties on behalf of schools and Academies for non- attendance and the licensing processes for the employment and engagement in entertainment activities by children and young people. In Slough the Attendance Team are responsible for these activities except licensing which is the responsibility of the Admissions & Transport Team. It also includes monitoring of attendance and the early intervention in cases of absence giving cause for concern in schools and academies. The Attendance Team also has an essential role in safeguarding and family support. The team are also involved in work linked to the Multiagency safeguarding Hub.

6.7 **Asset Management (ESG) £0.013m**

Contribution to the services related to school buildings including those leased to academies. Examples include the schools building condition survey, PFI negotiations and the asset management plan.

6.8 **Statutory and Regulatory (ESG) £0.206m**

Contributions to the Director of Educations post (70%), SACRE, Schools Accountant (100%), Strategic Finance Manager (30%) and Head of Education Services (100%)

7 Financial Implications

7.1 The financial implications have been detailed in the body of this paper.

8 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 Not applicable

9 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

9.1 Not applicable

10 Legal Implications

10.1 There are no legal implications for this report.

11 Equality Implications

11.1 Not applicable