

DIRECTORATE OF LEARNING AND SKILLS

Schools Budget Forum

Monday 13th February 2023

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Trevor Baker, David Blackwell, Trevor Brown, Vince Browne, Cedric Burden, Mairead Canavan, Norman Craggs, Tim Exell, Matt Gilbert, Cllr. Emma Goodjohn, Sarah Jenkins-Welch, Rhodri Jones, Rhys Angell Jones, Sian Lewis, Martin Price, Paula Vaughan, Terry Vaughan-Taylor

Also in attendance: Matt Bowmer, Cllr. Lis Burnett, Rachel Cox, David Davies, Paula Ham, Morwen Hudson, Gemma Jones, Lisa Lewis, Nicola Monckton, Lisa Soderland, Rob Thomas,

Item	Issue	Discussion	Action
1.	Welcome & apologies	Apologies from Cllr. Rhiannon Birch, Chris Britten, Mari Gibbs, Lorraine Lancaster, Colin Smith	
2.	Minutes of previous meeting Matters arising	Agreed as accurate <u>Special School Funding Review</u> – On the agenda. <u>WG Funding Challenge</u> – On the agenda	
3.	Budget Proposals 2023/24	Matt Bowmer presented the latest proposals for the 2023/24 budget via a PowerPoint presentation which will be circulated to Budget Forum members after the meeting. The provisional settlement has been positive for Wales as a result of the Barnett consequential resulting in additional funding for Education and Social services. The Vale of Glamorgan SSA (IBA) for Education has increased by 5.1%, and Social services 7%. The current budget for schools for 2023/24 has changed since the publication of draft budget which went to Cabinet on 19 th January.	

The current working budget is that schools will be awarded the following growth for 23/24

Pay inflation *(see note below)	£7.708M
Rates revaluations	£0.250M
Energy growth	£2.300M
Special school demographic growth	£1.000M
Free school meals growth	£0.400M
Resource bases	£0.450M
Derw Newydd	£0.500M
ANF Fund	£0.250M
TOTAL Growth	£12.858M
Transfers **(note below)	£0.423M
Growth plus transfers	£13.281M

*Note the position on the projected pay awards has changed many times, the current estimate for pay inflation is based on

1. Non-Teaching staff 6% from April 2023
2. Teaching staff, 6.5% of the 8% currently estimated for the September 2022 pay award for the five months from April 2023-August 2023, plus an additional 5% in September 2023.
3. Resetting the base position for the 2022 pay awards

** note 2. transfers are in respect of budgets where delegation has been transferred to schools, (this includes the apprenticeship levy).

Use of reserves

Two areas of growth have been partly funded by one off use of reserves (£1.2M) in recognition that these areas of pressure will reduce again in future.

The increase in energy cost pressure of £2.3M has been partly funded by £1M use of council reserves.

The free school meal increase of £400k has been partly funded by a one-off transfer of council reserves of £200k.

Efficiency Savings £2.75M

The school's budget has been allocated an efficiency savings target of £2.75M for the 23/24 financial year.

As a result, the total movement on the schools budget is demonstrated in the table below

		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Growth awarded</td> <td>£12.858M</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transfers to delegated budget</td> <td>£0.423M</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Efficiency Savings</td> <td>-£2.750M</td> </tr> <tr> <td>One off use of reserves</td> <td>-£1.200M</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Net movement</td> <td>£9.331M</td> </tr> </table> <p><u>SSA/IBA comparison</u> The current budget is estimated at £5.5M above education SSA/IBA.</p> <p><u>Next Steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public consultation ends 16th February 2023 • Scrutiny consultation February 2023 • Final proposals to Cabinet 27th February 2023 • Final proposals to Council 6th March 2023 <p><u>Any Budget Forum members wishing to raise any queries regarding the proposals can email Dave Blackwell directly who will collate and pass on queries to Matt Bowmer</u></p> <p>Cllr. Lis Burnett assured the Budget Forum that Education remains a priority for the Vale of Glamorgan Council, who will support schools in any way possible which includes assisting in lobbying Welsh Government for additional funding, as well as ensuring that any additional school funding awarded by Welsh Government is passed onto schools.</p>	Growth awarded	£12.858M	Transfers to delegated budget	£0.423M	Efficiency Savings	-£2.750M	One off use of reserves	-£1.200M	Net movement	£9.331M		
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4.	Pay award budget growth for 2022/23	<p>An additional £1.5M has been awarded to schools to contribute towards the cost of meeting the 2022/23 cost of pay awards in excess of the amounts allowed for in the budget.</p> <p>All schools have been emailed an additional budget allocation which should be treated as an increase to schools budgets, rather than a transfer of income.</p> <p>The £1.5M represents 60% of the additional cost to ensure a 5% pay award to teachers and the £1,925 absolute allocation to non-teaching staff.</p> <p>Matt Bower advised that indications are that WG will be funding the difference between the 5% agreed for</p>												

All/DB

		teachers, and the 8% currently proposed for September 2022 if approved.	
5.	WG Funding Challenge	<p>Dave Blackwell updated the forum on progress with regards to the Welsh Government Funding Challenge.</p> <p>A sub-group of the Budget forum has been set up to look at the funding of education in the Vale of Glamorgan, compared to the rest of Wales and to establish the best method to lobby Welsh Government to review the WG funding formula with the aim to reduce the gap between the Funding per pupil in the Vale of Glamorgan and other Local Authorities.</p> <p>Budget Forum members on the group are Trevor Baker, Dave Blackwell, Vince Browne, Norman Craggs, Matt Gilbert and Rhys Angell Jones, with Nicola Monckton also in attendance for support.</p> <p>The group met with John Rae from the WLGA on November 10th 2022 to find out more information on the formula and look for specific areas that can be challenged. Key points identified are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WG use census data from 1991 within the formula • Mainstream formulas have not been updated in over 20 years • There is no consideration within the future that allows for the basic cost to educate a child • The formula is based on relative, rather than actual need • It is unknown whether Vale of Glamorgan schools would be worse or better off in terms of funding should these factors be addressed <p>Norman Craggs added that the Vale of Glamorgan is adversely affected by sparsity and deprivation, and that the formula is further affected by the level of Council tax income that Local Authorities can achieve.</p> <p>Dave Blackwell raised a question with the minister at the Round Table event on January 19th with regards to the lac of progress that WG had made with regards to the recommendations from the Luke Sibietta review.</p>	

		Dave Blackwell has also emailed Luke Sibietta directly to ask if he would be available to answer some specific queries regarding education funding in Wales.	
6.	Special School Funding Review	<p>David Davies and Trevor Baker updated the forum on the plans to review the Special school funding formula in the 2023/24 financial year.</p> <p>This piece of work will be prioritised for the next financial year. The demand for placements at Ysgol Y Deri is growing each year, as are the complexities of the pupils enrolled.</p> <p>A comparison with similar provision is not possible, as Ysgol Y Deri has a different operating model to the rest of Wales, combining all varying needs of pupils in just one school.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that a review of the formula will generate any savings, however a review is required to ensure the funding formula is transparent and has necessary checks and balances in place to ensure funding is adequately distributed.</p> <p>Dave Blackwell advised that the Budget Forum would value insight into the funding of the special school, which is funded at the highest in Wales, compared to the mainstream sectors which are funded at the lowest in Wales. An understanding of the formula will also contribute to the Welsh Government funding challenge.</p>	TB/DD
7.	AOB	<p><u>Next meeting dates</u> – All occur on Wednesday mornings, 9.30am on Microsoft teams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 14th 2023 • September 20th 2023 • November 29th 2023 (invitation to the leader, the Head of Finance and the Chief Executive) • March 6th 2024 <p>The meeting scheduled for March 8th 2023 has been cancelled due to the additional meeting that took place today on 13th February</p>	