

Schools Forum

6th July 2015

Schools Budget & Balances 2014/15

Introduction

1. This paper informs the Forum of the School Budget outturn position and an overview of the position on maintained School Balances for the 2014/15 Financial Year.

School Budget

2. Appendix 1 shows the planned spend against the actual outturn for 2014/15 on the Schools Budget. Please note that these figures are all prior to any Academy recoupment. Overall, there is a £1.208 million underspend, compared with a £601k underspend previously reported for the period to the end of December 2014 and presented to the Schools Forum 27th January 2015. The reasons for significant variances between planned and actual spending are:-
3.
 - a. Line 1.0.1 Individual Schools Budget - £1.325m underspend. This is caused by a lower than anticipated take-up of the Two Year old funding. This underspend comprises both statutory and trajectory funding. Also there were fewer than expected 3-4 year old payments in the Spring term.
 - b. Line 1.1.2 Behaviour Support Services - £61k underspend. This is due to vacancies.
 - c. Line 1.1.8 Staff Costs – Supply cover - £14k underspend. This is as a result of additional income being received.
 - d. Line 1.2.1 Top up Funding - Maintained Providers – £172k overspend. This is as a result of more top ups been given to schools than had been anticipated.
 - e. Line 1.2.2 Top up Funding – Academies and Free Schools - £140k overspend. This has arisen from a higher number of top up payments to Academies and Out of Area Schools.
 - f. Line 1.2.3 Top up Funding – Independent Providers - £253k overspend. This is due to a higher number of pre 16 top ups and additional out of area agency placements. However, some of this was offset by £276k underspend on post 16 top ups.

- g. Line 1.2.5 SEN Support Services - £45k underspend. This is as a consequence of a reduced charge for the Visually Impaired service and lower than anticipated spend on the Early Support Nursery as a result of vacancies and lower than expected transport costs.
 - h. Line 1.2.6 Support for Inclusion - £234k underspend. This is due to vacant posts not filled and additional income received for Home educated pupils.
 - i. Line 1.4.5 Carbon Commitment Reduction Allowances - £20k underspend. The actual 13-14 charge for the Carbon Reduction Scheme was lower than the estimated accrual.
 - j. Line 1.4.10 Pupil Growth / Infant Class sizes - £69k underspend. The budget set aside for growth was not fully utilised.
4. In addition to the £1.208m carry forward from 2014-15, there is still £921k in the reserve from 2013-14. This gives an overall carry forward £2.129m of this £1.42m has been earmarked for expenditure in 2015-16. This comprises £353k for Early Years funding, £811k in the High Needs block and an additional £256k for the Primary growth fund. It is proposed that the remaining £709k is not committed until there is a clearer view of potential pressures, particularly around High Needs, in the current year.

School Balances

- 5. Overall maintained school balances stand at £5.4m and have reduced by £0.8m meaning schools balances now equate to around 6% of the annual Individual Schools Budget. The main reason for the reduction is because a number of schools have converted to academy status during the year.
- 6. On prima facie evidence there are two secondary and fourteen primary schools holding excess surplus balances ie. with balances above the 5% and 8% thresholds respectively. This compares with 12 schools (4 secondaries and 8 primaries) holding balances above the thresholds at the end of 2013/14. For 2014/15 all schools with surplus balances had applied for and received permission to hold excess surplus balances.
- 7. AT 31st March 2015 there are no schools in deficit.

Recommendation

- 8. The Schools Forum is asked to note the position for 2014-15.

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