



Shropshire Council
Legal and Democratic Services
Guildhall,
Frankwell Quay,
Shrewsbury
SY3 8HQ

Date:

Committee:
Schools Forum

Date: Thursday, 11 December 2025

Time: 8.30 am

Venue:

You are requested to attend the above meeting.

The Agenda is attached

Tim Collard
Service Director - Legal and Governance

Members of Schools Forum

Mark Rogers	Sarah Finch
Marilyn Hunt	Lisa Henshall
Stephen Matthews	Rachel Williams
Reuben Thorley	Sarah Godden
Sandra Holloway	James Pearson
Alison Ashley	James Staniforth
Georgia Moss	John Hitchings
Mark Cooper	Shelly Hurdley
Bill Dowell	Sian Lines
Carla Whelan	Charles Thomas
Sue Lovecy	Andrew Smith
Sarah North	

Your Committee Officer is:

Samantha Bradley Performance & Integration Manager, Learning and Skills

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Email: Samantha.Bradley@shropshire.gov.uk

AGENDA

1 Apologies

2 Minutes and Matters Arising - 13 November 2025 (Pages 1 - 6)

Paper A attached.

3 School Funding Arrangements 2026-27 (John Rowe/Stephen Waters)

(Pages 7 - 12)

Paper B attached.

4 Consultation on the Central Retention of Dedicated Schools Grant from April 2026 (Sam Bradley) (Pages 13 - 22)

Paper C attached.

5 Central Schools Service Block 2026-27 (Stephen Waters) (Pages 23 - 44)

Paper D attached.

6 Communications

7 Future meeting dates

Thursday 22 January 2026	8.30 - 10.30	Microsoft (MS) Teams
Thursday 19 March 2026	8.30 - 10.30	Microsoft (MS) Teams
Thursday 18 June 2026 (tbc)	8.30 - 10.30	Microsoft (MS) Teams
Thursday 10 September 2026 (tbc)	8.30 - 10.30	Microsoft (MS) Teams
Thursday 12 November 2026 (tbc)	9.00 – 11.00	Face to Face



Schools Forum	Agenda Item 2
Date: 13 November 2025	Paper
Time: 09.00 to 11.00	A
Venue: Face to Face	Public

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON 11 NOVEMBER 2025 – HELD VIA MS TEAMS

NOTES WERE PRODUCED USING AI VIA COPILOT AS AGREED BY FORUM AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING

1	Apologies	
	Apologies received from Sian Lines, Mark Cooper, Reuben Thorley, Shelley Hurdley, Sarah North, James Pearson, John Boken, Lisa Henshall, Cllr Neil Bentley, Rachel Williams, Cllr David Vasmer, Mark Rogers	
2	Minutes and Matters Arising	
	The minutes from 11 September 2025 were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting with exception of voting for Vice Chair where information was duplicated and incorrect.	
3	Opening to Meeting	BD/DS
	Minutes and Matters Arising: Broader communication to all schools and colleges to be circulated in relation to Shropshire Council financial position. John Rowe confirmed this had been circulated. Draft letter to be shared with Andy and Neil for their input and review before sending. John Rowe confirmed letter had not yet been issued following departure of Collins Elechi and this would be reviewed imminently. Expression of interest in joining Schools Forum to fill vacancies confirmed to be sent out. Will add on weekly Schools update email. Sam Bradley confirmed that EOI had been sent to all schools but no response had been received. Agreed by Schools Forum that this would be re-circulated following Education Partnership meeting by John Rowe w/c 17 November 2025. HNB Monitoring Group interest to be shared at next Forum meeting for meeting to be scheduled. John Rowe provided and update of the initial meeting and how important this will be going forward to assist with understanding of the pressures the services are under and DSG	



	Management Plan. John Rowe to raise for additional members at Education Partnership Board w/c 17 November 2025.	
4	<p>Shropshire Council Financial Position</p> <p>Council Financial Emergency and Exceptional Support: John, David, and Stephen Waters provided a comprehensive update on Shropshire Council's financial emergency, including the request for exceptional financial support from central government, the current use of reserves, and the establishment of new financial controls and oversight boards.</p> <p>Declaration of Financial Emergency: John explained that Shropshire Council declared a financial emergency after projections showed that the Council's £34 million in reserves would be exhausted by the end of the financial year, driven by reduced funding and increased costs, particularly in adult and children's social care.</p> <p>Request for Exceptional Support: The Council has formally requested between £50 and £100 million in exceptional financial support from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, which would be a loan rather than a grant, intended to provide budget stability and avoid a Section 114 notice.</p> <p>Implementation of Financial Controls: David described the introduction of additional financial controls, including delays in payments and enhanced checks, as well as the formation of an agreement board with independent oversight to ensure robust internal and external scrutiny of the Council's financial management.</p> <p>Stakeholder Engagement: The team highlighted ongoing engagement with local MPs and opposition councillors to ensure transparency and collective understanding of the financial position, with the aim of fostering a unified approach to addressing the crisis.</p>	JR
5	<p>Schools Forum Membership and Representation</p> <p>Schools Forum Membership and Representation: Sam Bradley, John Hitchings, and other members discussed current vacancies in the Schools Forum, the importance of broad sector representation, and strategies to improve attendance and engagement from all nominated groups.</p> <p>Current Vacancies: Sam Bradley reported three academy vacancies and one diocese vacancy, with additional notice of Sian Lines representing</p>	



	<p>Diocese of Hereford and Councillor David Vasmer stepping down as an observer, and plans to resubmit expressions of interest to fill these roles.</p> <p>Concerns About Representation: David and other participants expressed concern about underrepresentation of certain sectors and the impact of non-attendance by nominated members, emphasising the need for a collective effort to ensure all voices are present in crucial decision-making.</p> <p>Strategies for Engagement: Suggestions included proactive outreach to groups, sharing work plans with the Education Partnership Board, and improving communication about the forum's purpose and the direct impact of its decisions on schools.</p>	
6	<p>Central Retention of Dedicated Schools Grant from April 2026</p> <p>Consultation on Central Retention and Delegation of School Funding: Stephen Waters and John led a detailed discussion on the upcoming consultation with maintained schools regarding the central retention and delegation of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funds for 2026–27, including explanations of key funding streams, options, and the rationale for each.</p> <p>Overview of Funding Streams: Stephen Waters outlined the distinction between de-delegation (central retention for services like maternity cover and trade union duties) and top-slicing (statutory functions such as redundancy funds, school finance, HR, and health and safety), explaining the historical context and statutory requirements.</p> <p>Consultation Process: The consultation will launch the week following the meeting, closing on 2 December, with decisions to be made at the Schools Forum on 11 December; John emphasised the importance of clear communication and providing working models to help schools understand the financial implications of their choices.</p> <p>Key Issues Raised: Participants discussed the impact of recent changes to maternity legislation, the need for more precise definitions of statutory functions, and the importance of ensuring that consultation documents are accessible and informative for all school leaders.</p> <p>Actions and Next Steps: The group agreed to strengthen consultation materials, include practical examples, and encourage maximum engagement from maintained schools to ensure informed decision-making.</p> <p>.</p>	SW/JR



7	<p>Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring 2025-26</p> <p>High Needs Block Funding Pressures and Strategic Response: Stephen Waters, John, and colleagues presented a detailed analysis of the high needs block deficit, drivers of increased expenditure, and the Council's multi-faceted strategy to manage demand, reduce reliance on independent placements, and improve local provision.</p> <p>Deficit Overview: The high needs block is forecast to have a £23.5 million in-year deficit for 2025–26, contributing to a cumulative DSG deficit of £41 million, with the main pressures arising from increased numbers of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), higher banding levels, and rising costs in independent special schools.</p> <p>Strategic Interventions: The Council is investing in local special schools, reviewing banding structures, and expanding capacity to reduce the flow of pupils into costly independent placements, with a focus on early intervention and co-production with schools.</p> <p>Tribunal Mitigation: Officers described efforts to modify school environments and invest in local provision to strengthen the Council's position in tribunals, aiming to prevent placements in independent settings and achieve long-term cost savings</p>	SW
8	<p>Update High Needs Monitoring Group</p> <p>Monitoring and Governance: A high needs monitoring group has been established to oversee the DSG management plan, ensure transparency, and coordinate with other strategic boards, with invitations extended for broader forum participation.</p>	JR
9	<p>Update Severndale Funding Arrangements</p> <p>Review and Reform of Special School Funding (Severndale Case Study): John, Ali, and colleagues explained the recent review of Severndale's funding arrangements, the introduction of a new banding system, and the implementation of a memorandum of understanding to ensure transparency, accountability, and alignment with pupil needs.</p> <p>Banding Review and Implementation: A comprehensive review of Severndale's banding levels was conducted, resulting in the removal of</p>	JR



	<p>obsolete bands and the introduction of three new levels, with retrospective funding adjustments to address implementation delays.</p> <p>Quality Assurance Process: Education quality advisors and school leaders undertook a forensic analysis of individual pupil needs, aligning funding to actual provision and ensuring that each child's placement and support matched the agreed criteria.</p> <p>Memorandum of Understanding: A new memorandum of understanding was developed with Severndale, including provisions for annual banding reviews, performance monitoring, and ongoing dialogue to maintain fairness and cost-effectiveness.</p> <p>Extension to Other Schools: Plans are in place to extend similar banding reviews and quality assurance processes to other state-funded special schools, aiming for consistency and transparency across the sector.</p>	
8	<p>Update Capital Allocation Works</p> <p>Capital Investment in Mainstream and Special School Provision: Andy and colleagues provided an update on significant capital investments, including a £20 million mainstream expansion and £8.265 million for special school and hub places, with plans to add 358 new special school places over three years to meet rising demand.</p> <p>Mainstream and Special School Expansion: A fully funded £20 million mainstream expansion and an additional £8.265 million for special school and hub places were announced, targeting both secondary and primary school growth where needed.</p> <p>Increase in Special School Capacity: The investment will create 358 new special school places, increasing total capacity to over 1,190 places and mirroring a projected 39% increase in demand for specialist provision.</p> <p>Strategic Site Development: Plans include relocating and converting existing school sites to special schools, reducing travel distances for pupils and supporting inclusive practice through collaboration with mainstream schools.</p> <p>The Council is working closely with schools to co-produce solutions, build trust, and ensure that capital investments align with long-term strategic goals for inclusive education.</p>	AN



10	Communication	
11	<p>Follow Up Tasks</p> <p>Diocese vacancies to be raised at Diocese board meeting</p> <p>All School Forum vacancies to be raised at Education Partnership Board</p> <p>If there are any remaining vacancies for School Forum, EOI will be distributed again to all schools</p> <p>Broader communication to all schools and colleges to be circulated in relation to Shropshire Council financial position</p> <p>Draft letter to be reviewed and updated then shared with Andy and Neil for their input and review before sending</p> <p>De-delegation and Top Slicing Consultation to be updated with working models and clear explanations to help schools understand the financial implications of maternity cover and other statutory functions and reiterate to head teachers the importance of engaging with the consultation and ensure timescales and expectations are clearly communicated</p> <p>Add additional information to Consultation regarding a request to automatically allocated 0.5% of DSG funding to HNB to give some assistance on recovery of the forecasted deficit</p> <p>Additional request for members to join HN Monitoring Group will be raised at Education Partnership Board and relevant information circulated</p>	<p>SM</p> <p>DS/JR</p> <p>SB</p> <p>JR</p> <p>JR</p> <p>JR/SW</p> <p>JR/SW</p> <p>JR</p>
13	Future Meeting Dates	
	<p>Thursday 11 December 2025 (tbc) MS Teams</p> <p>Thursday 22 January 2026 (tbc) MS Teams</p> <p>Thursday 19 March 2026 (tbc) MS Teams</p> <p>Thursday 18 June 2026 (tbc) MS Teams</p> <p>Thursday 10 September 2026 (tbc) MS Teams</p> <p>Thursday 12 November 2026 (tbc) Face to Face</p>	



Schools Forum	Agenda Item 3
Date: 11 December 2025	Paper
Time: 08.30 to 10.30	B
Venue: (MS) Teams	Public

Schools Funding Arrangements 2026-27

Responsible Officer John Rowe, Head of Education Quality and Safeguarding (LANO)
email: john.rowe@shropshire.gov.uk

Summary

Email notification was received from DfE on 25 September 2025 advising that the national funding formulas for 2026 to 2027 would not be published in September but planned for late Autumn 2025.

On 19 November 2025 an email was received advising funding allocations for 2026-27 financial year through the schools and central school services national funding formulae (NFF) will the high needs allocations being published later.

This report details specific local funding arrangements from April 2026 for consideration and agreement by Schools Forum in relation to:

- the potential transfer of funding between blocks

Recommendation

Schools Forum is recommended to consider and agree the specific funding arrangements from April 2026 as detailed within this report, specifically:

- Schools Forum is asked to agree the recommendation to transfer any remaining balance, up to 0.5% of the Schools Block, into the High Needs Block after fully funding individual schools in line with the NFF.

Or

- Schools Forum is asked to agree the recommendation to transfer 0.5% of the schools block budget prior to funding individual schools in line with the NFF.

Modelling based on 2025-26

Based on 2025-26 Post MFG Budget £223,792,308 for 147 Schools, deducting 0.5% for HN block prior to setting New ISB would be £1,118,962.



Average deduction per school would be £7,612 or £33.23 per pupil. The actual impact of 2025-26 0.28% transfer to HN block was average deduction per school of £4,251 or £17.36 per pupil.

REPORT

Background

1. In July 2017, the Government announced the introduction of a national funding formula (NFF) for allocating the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) to local authorities from April 2018.
2. Local authorities, in consultation with their schools and Schools Forum, continue to have some local flexibility on the basis for distributing funding to schools through the National funding formula in 2026-27. It remains the Government's intention to fund all schools nationally via the NFF in the future.
3. Following consultation with Shropshire schools and Schools Forum, Shropshire's local formula for distributing the Schools Block to individual schools and academies has mirrored the NFF since 2018-19.
4. Schools Forum members are asked to consider and agree specific arrangements for 2026-27 as detailed within this report. Shropshire Council's Cabinet will make a final decision on the school funding arrangements for 2026-27 in February 2026.

Update to the schools NFF for 2026-2027

Email notification was received from DfE on 25 September 2025 advising that the national funding formulas for 2026 to 2027 would not be published in September but planned for late Autumn 2025.

On 19 November 2025 an email was received advising funding allocations for 2026-27 financial year through the schools and central school services national funding formulae (NFF) will the high needs allocations being published later.

Nothing further has been received from DfE in relation to the HN element of the NFF.

School Revenue Funding Arrangements 2026-27

The actual primary unit of funding (PUF) and secondary unit of funding (SUF) which will be used to calculate each local authority's schools block allocation has been published for 2026-27. For Shropshire these equate to £5,963 per pupil and £7,196 per pupil, respectively. As a comparison, in 2025-26 Shropshire's PUF was £5,661 and SUF was £6,829.



These units of funding will be applied to pupil numbers recorded in the October 2025 school census to determine final schools block allocations for 2026-27. These will be issued to local authorities slightly later than usual given the delay from DfE.

In 2026 to 2027, each local authority will continue to set a local schools funding formula, in consultation with local schools. To ensure a smooth transition towards the direct NFF, local authorities will continue to be required to bring their own formulae closer to the schools NFF. As a reminder, Shropshire has mirrored the NFF in its local schools funding formula since 2018-19.

The main features in the schools NFF for 2026-27 are:

- the basic entitlement values, FSM6 values, the lump sum and the minimum per pupil funding values have increased to reflect the rolling in of the three separate pay and pensions grants from 2024 to 2025: TPAG, TPECG and CSBG.
- a further increase has then been applied to these same factors to cover the remaining costs of the 2024 teachers' pay award in mainstream schools, so that the full 12 months of salary costs are fully funded at a national level
- on top of this, a further overall increase has been applied to school- and pupil-led factors, as well as to the split sites factor
- through the minimum per pupil funding levels, every primary school will attract at least £5,963 per pupil, and every secondary school at least £7,196 per pupil
- the funding floor will be "cash flat" at 0% so that schools will be protected from per pupil cash reductions in their pupil-led funding
- There are no structural changes being made to the NFF in 2026 to 2027 with the 16 mandatory NFF funding factors remaining the same.

The guidance has been updated to help LA's review their notional SEN budget calculations and to help schools understand what the notional SEN budget is for.

All LA's should review this calculation each year alongside their local formula to make sure that their schools' notional SEN budget is a realistic amount for meeting the costs of additional SEN support up to £6,000 per pupil, noting that any shortfall in this notional budget for particular schools where a standardised calculation does not work can be met from additional high needs targeted funding.

High needs top-up funding should be allocated in addition to the notional SEN budget for SEN support costs in excess of £6,000 per pupil. [The notional SEN budget for mainstream schools: operational guidance 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/notional-sen-budget-for-mainstream-schools-2025-to-2026)

High Needs Funding Arrangements 2026-27



There is currently no update from DfE for HN funding allocations for 2026-27.

Central school services funding

The main features of central school services funding in 2026 to 2027 are:

- the total provisional funding for ongoing responsibilities is £379 million in 2026 to 2027. No local authority will see a reduction in per pupil funding for central services of more than minus 2.5% – which is the same protection as in 2025 to 2026.
- the total 2026-27 funding for ongoing responsibilities includes £39m of funding for centrally employed teaching staff given out separately in 2025-26. This is because the National Insurance Contributions (NICs) grant and Schools Budget Support Grant which have now been rolled in to the CSSB NFF.

Funding for historic commitments continues to be reduced in 2026-27 by 20% from local authorities' 2025-26 allocations. As in 2025-26, historic commitments funding will be protected from dropping below the total value of ongoing prudential borrowing or termination of employment costs, based on evidence received by the department.

Transfer of Funding between Blocks

5. The Schools Block remains ringfenced in 2025-26 but local authorities retain limited flexibility to transfer up to 0.5% of their Schools Block funding into another block with approval of Schools Forum. To transfer an amount above 0.5%, approval would need to be sought from the Secretary of State for Education
6. In previous financial years (apart from 2023-24 and 2024-25 due to affordability), Shropshire Schools Forum approved a transfer up to 0.5% of the Schools Block to the High Needs Block to support the growing pressures on the high needs budget. Agreement was given to transfer remaining Schools Block budget (up to 0.5%) after fully funding schools in line with the NFF each year, including transitional protections and caps. A balance of £476,000 (0.21%) was transferred from the Schools Block budget into the High Needs Block in 2025-26.
7. For 2026-27 due to increased cost pressures within the High Needs funding it is our intention to consult with schools forum transfer up to 0.5% of the Schools Block budget into the High Needs Block, should this be available after funding schools in line with the NFF. It is noted that there is no requirement to undertake such a consultation.
8. Until the October 2025 school census data is run through the NFF for 2026-27 for individual schools, it is not possible to confirm if there will be any Schools Block



balance remaining in next financial year. October 2025 census data will be made available to the local authority in mid-December and work will take place through January 2026 to calculate individual school budget shares for 2026-27 mirroring the NFF factor values.

9. Schools Forum is asked to agree the recommendation to transfer any remaining balance, up to 0.5% of the Schools Block, into the High Needs Block after fully funding individual schools in line with the NFF.



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Schools Forum	Agenda Item 4
Date: 11 December 2025	Paper
Time: 08.30 to 10.30	C
Venue: (MS) Teams	Public

Consultation on Central Retention of Dedicated Schools Grant from April 2026

Introduction

On behalf of Shropshire Schools Forum, the views of maintained schools are being sought on the central retention of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in the next financial year, 2026-27. Schools Forum is committed to consulting with maintained schools ahead of a Forum meeting on 11 December 2025 at which decisions on the de-delegation and top slicing of DSG from April 2026 will be taken.

Background

Schools Forum is a legally constituted advisory and consultative group, made up of representatives from the maintained, academy and wider education sectors, who work with the local authority on issues related to school funding. One of their key areas of work is in relation to the school funding formula and the retention of a small part of the overall DSG to underwrite the costs of services, centrally managed by the local authority on behalf of maintained schools, given the economies of scale and value for money for schools this can realise.

The Government's school revenue budget settlement guidelines allow local authorities, following consultation with the maintained schools' community and with Schools Forum approval, to centrally retain DSG through de-delegation and top slicing. These retention methods are as follows:

- De-delegation – centrally held budgets within the Schools Block of DSG can be de-delegated from maintained schools by the sector representatives on Schools Forum, with decisions taken on an annual basis.
- Top-slicing – in December 2016, the Government's school revenue settlement allowed local authorities to retain some of their Schools Block of DSG to carry out statutory duties for maintained schools, previously funded through general duties Education Services Grant (ESG), which was removed in September 2017.

The impact in 2025-26 of the decisions taken by Schools Forum in December 2024 are summarised in the table below giving proposed information before Autumn Census 2025 NOR calculated and excluding academy conversions to April 2026:

Decision	Total	Primary Per Pupil	Secondary Per Pupil
De-delegation (maintained primary and secondary):			



Pupil growth contingency	£0	-	-
Maternity cover	£424,970	£53.61	£53.61
Trade union duties	£27,980	£3.53	£3.53
School improvement (primary)	£112,480	£8.25 + £902/school	-
School improvement (secondary)	£550	-	£1.04
Top slice (maintained primary and secondary):			
Redundancy fund	£167,020	£21.07	£21.07
Statutory school finance	£34,010	£4.29	£4.29
Statutory human resources and health and safety	£70,000	£8.83	£8.83
Education welfare and inclusion	£200,000	£25.23	£25.23

This consultation document will examine each of the areas for which delegated funds are taken from maintained schools and seek views on a number of options for how to proceed on each in 2025-26. A simple return has been produced for collecting feedback from schools, which will be collated and inform the report that will be produced for the decision-making meeting of Schools Forum on 11 December 2025. **The consultation will run until Tuesday 02 December 2025**

It is important to understand that Schools Forum has the choice, for each budget area, between de-delegating/top-slicing or not. This means that **any decisions taken will impact on all maintained schools from April 2026**.

Planned Academy conversions

There are currently four maintained primary schools with a planned conversion date before 1st April 2026. This means the number of maintained schools is expected to reduce from 58 to 54 by 1st April 2026. It is therefore important this year to understand the effect this would have on the per pupil rates for de-delegation and top slicing, should these academisations proceed by the 1st April 2026.

De-delegation



This section looks at each of the support areas for which funding can be de-delegated from maintained schools. Historically, reports have been taken to the late autumn term meetings of Schools Forum to secure formal decisions for the following financial year. The table below summarises these decisions since 2017-18.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Pupil growth	£320,230	£150,170	£100,000	£95,000	£50,000	£30,000	£35,000	£53,709	£0
Maternity cover	£499,260	£410,000	£260,000	£236,713	£228,947	£270,000	£250,000	£266,945	£424,970
Insurance	£22,760	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Trade union duties	£50,020	£43,600	£27,772	£24,241	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£27,807	£27,980

An important consideration when looking at whether a budget should be de-delegated, is the impact on schools resulting from delegation, because **with delegation comes responsibility**. This means that the responsibility for the delegated budget line – for example, paying for staff maternity cover – transfers to the school and any costs have to be met from the school's delegated budget. The de-delegated funds have therefore provided something of an insurance policy for schools against one-off hits to their budget, which can have a significant impact on schools with tight budgets and modest contingencies.

1. Pupil growth contingency – primary only

A contingencies budget de-delegated from maintained primary schools to allow additional funding to be targeted at schools where pupil numbers increase by at least 15% of their funded number on roll. Controls limit allocations to actual additional costs incurred by a school as a direct result of increased pupil numbers.

A key consideration is delegated responsibility. In this case, by not de-delegating, there would be no contingency for pupil growth from April 2026 and so schools would have to absorb costs.

Pupil growth contingency – options for 2026-27:

- De-delegate funding from primary maintained schools a sum of £40,000. Based on Autumn Census NOR per pupil figure will be £5.13.
- Fully delegate funding and responsibility to maintained schools, meaning that schools would be liable for funding pupil growth from their individual delegated budgets from April 2026

2. Maternity cover



Funds the salary costs of any member of school staff on maternity leave and shared parental leave in the maintained primary and secondary sector, meaning the schools are only liable for the costs of the replacement employee.

A decision not to de-delegate this budget from April 2026, would mean that maintained schools would be responsible for meeting all maternity pay costs of school staff from their individual delegated budgets. Schools would be able to access commercially available products/policies, some combining maternity cover with sickness cover. The experience of academies is mixed – some are sourcing cover arrangements from the marketplace, while others are carrying the risk of meeting any maternity costs from their own budgets.

These options would be available to maintained schools if the decision is taken not to de-delegate funding for maternity cover. Schools would need to carefully consider the flexibility and 'headroom' within their budget (including reserves), as well as the age profile of their female staff. In financial planning terms this can be challenging, given the difficulty of predicting the need for maternity leave.

Maternity cover - options for 2026-27:

- a. De-delegate funding from maintained schools as in previous years, with per pupil sums determined by outturn position in 2025-26 – as an underspend is forecast the per pupil rate in 2026-27 can decrease from the current level of £53.41 to £45.41 estimated. Total estimated cost £354,243 based on Autumn Census 2025 NOR
- b. Fully delegate funding and responsibility to maintained schools, meaning that schools would be liable for funding maternity cover from their individual delegated budgets from April 2026

3. Trade union duties (referred to as facilities time)

This funding is de-delegated for the costs of trade union representatives supporting their members in maintained schools through what is commonly referred to as facilities time. The funding provides cover for, among other things: carrying out trade union duties, attending union training, undertaking health and safety functions, and accompanying members attending hearings, for example disciplinary or grievance. There is strong lobbying each year from the professional associations for these funds to be de-delegated.

Each union is required to attend a termly meeting with the local authority, called the Shropshire Education Unions Meeting (previously Association Secretary Group). The membership of this group includes the local union representative from each recognised trade union and representatives from the Council. This meeting is the mechanism which



allows collective consultation and negotiation between the local authority on behalf of schools and the trade unions on behalf of their members. All human resources policies and procedures are consulted and agreed at these meetings. Schools would be required to consult with trade unions and their own staff if this were removed. The group also discusses other employment relations issues and maintains a positive dialogue between schools and unions which in turn supports positive employee/employer relationships.

If local trade union representatives were not funded via the facilities time, maintained schools would be able to consider using their delegated funding to secure local arrangements with the trade unions, in particular by pooling funding with other maintained schools and academies. This could lead to a fragmentation of the current arrangements across the school sector. Alternatively, it would mean each school would have to allocate funding for facilities time for all unions represented in their school and may lead to schools dealing with regional trade union representatives with little or no local knowledge. It is the view of the local authority that this would not be as effective and efficient an arrangement as that which could be secured through continuation of de-delegation.

One of the options is to continue to operate a fixed budget for facilities time support to maintained schools, as has been the case in the last three years, which maintains and secures a baseline of funding to guarantee the required level of support to these schools from union representatives contracted to deliver this support. The budget has been set at a fixed de-delegated total of £29,070, with the per pupil cost determined by the number of maintained pupils at the time the budgets for 2026-27 are set.

Trade union duties - options for 2026-27:

- a. De-delegate funding of £29,070 from maintained schools. Based on Autumn Census 2025 NOR per pupil figure will be £3.73
- b. Fully delegate funding and responsibility to maintained schools, meaning that local arrangements for facilities time would need to be secured by individual schools and/or groups of schools in collaboration with trade unions

4. School improvement

The funding for school improvement provides access to a range of services including:

- Routine visits by Education Quality Advisers for school standards and associate headteachers in line with the Shropshire Education Excellence Strategy. The frequency of these is determined by need as specified in Shropshire's School Performance Monitoring (SPM) policy. All school will receive a minimum of one visit from an Education Quality Adviser and a visit from a link associate headteacher. Where a higher level of support is needed, the funding arrangements are negotiated between the schools requiring support and the LA.
- The top-slice arrangements also provide -



- Ad-hoc support, visits and remote support to provide advice on emerging issues including complaints, school improvement, staffing issues etc.
- Access to Perspective Lite
- Support during Ofsted inspection to the headteacher and the process of inspection.
- Support with respect to the process of headteacher appointment.
- For 2024-25, Schools' Forum agreed to de-delegate £112,481 from maintained primary schools and £546 from maintained secondary schools to secure ongoing statutory school improvement support for the year through the Education Improvement Service (EIS). The School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grant (SIMBG) was also removed completely from 2023-24.

This is an area of support in which it is difficult to present an option for schools to assume delegated responsibility, or to present an option for schools to secure the support on a buy-back basis, given the statutory nature of the support being provided. Therefore, the only option being presented is for continued de-delegation of funding for this statutory support.

School Improvement – option for 2026-27

De-delegate funding from primary maintained schools, levels of a fixed element of £902 per site and a variable element of £8.59 per pupil which has been increased by an inflationary uplift figure of 4.1%. De-delegation for the remaining secondary maintained school will be based on a per pupil unit value of £1.08. Total estimated cost £110,971 based on Autumn Census 2025 NOR

Top slicing

This section looks at each of the support areas for which funding has been top sliced from maintained schools in the financial year 2025-26. These support areas were previously funded from general duties ESG and so, in the knowledge that this grant funding was being removed by the Government in September 2017, Schools Forum determined that funding would be centrally retained in order to provide continuity of provision for maintained schools. This was based on the understanding and commitment to fully consult with schools on what would happen in each subsequent year, hence this consultation on top-slicing from April 2026.

5. Redundancy fund

This fund underwrites the costs of premature retirement and redundancy of staff in maintained schools. Schools Forum supported the principle of retaining a central fund for redundancy costs in maintained schools in previous years.



A decision not to top-slice funding from April 2026 would mean that individual maintained schools would be liable for meeting any redundancy costs from their delegated budget. This would present a potential financial risk and significant challenge for schools struggling to manage their budgets in year and with low levels of school balances to draw upon. Schools in the academy sector already face these financial challenges and so have to plan carefully and in a timely manner to manage such costs.

The costs of redundancy can vary significantly dependent on the grade of staff and length of service.

Redundancy fund - options for 2026-27:

- a. Top-slice funding from maintained schools as in 2025-26, with per pupil sums determined by outturn position in 2025-26 i.e. an overspend or underspend in 2025-26 will affect the per pupil rate in 2026-27. Total estimated cost £164,367 based on Autumn Census 2025 NOR maintaining per pupil rate at £21.07
- b. Fully delegate funding and responsibility to maintained schools, meaning that schools would be liable for funding all redundancy costs from their delegated budget from April 2026

6. Statutory school finance

This centrally retained funding underwrites the costs of officer support for statutory financial functions on behalf of maintained schools, including: the monitoring and control of school balances; advice and support to schools in financial difficulties; challenge to schools who are not exercising appropriate financial controls, and appraising and approving licensed budget deficits. This also includes completion of the APT and outturn budgets.

This is an area in which it is difficult to present an option for schools to assume delegated responsibility, or to present an option for schools to secure the support on a buy-back basis, given the statutory nature of the support being provided. Therefore, the only option being presented is for the continued de-delegation of funding for this statutory support.

Statutory school finance - option for 2026-27:

Top-slice funding from maintained schools, as in 2025-26, with the per pupil cost of £4.47 which has been increased by an inflationary uplift figure of 4.1%. Total estimated cost £34,870 based on Autumn Census 2025 NOR

7. Statutory human resources and health and safety

A number of statutory and regulatory functions in the area of human resources and occupational health and safety were previously funded through general duties ESG. This is primarily because the local authority is the employer of staff in maintained schools, with the exception of voluntary aided schools, who directly employ their own staff. While



maintained schools can secure advisory support through annual service level agreements, the costs of the functions previously funded through the general duties ESG are not costed into these agreements.

The areas of support covered by the £70,000 top-sliced in 2025-26 include health and safety, occupational health, recruitment, payroll and contracts, as well as HR advice.

A proportion of this centrally retained funding underwrites the costs of the statutory functions outlined in the Recruitment, Payroll and Contracts Service Level Agreement (SLA).

In addition, a significant proportion of this centrally retained funding underwrites the Health and Safety and Occupational Health SLAs. Such funding is required in order for the local authority to comply with its duties as the employer under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the relevant statutory provisions. It is the view of the local authority that compliance with the above legislation cannot reasonably be achieved through tasks delegated to the governing bodies of schools. The centrally identified funding includes expenditure incurred by the local authority in monitoring the performance of such tasks by governing bodies and, where necessary, giving them advice.

The local authority view is that the above areas are difficult to present as an option for schools to assume delegated responsibility, or to present an option for schools to secure the support on a buy-back basis, given the statutory nature of the support being provided. Therefore, the only option being presented is for the continued de-delegation of funding for this statutory support.

Statutory human resources and health and safety - option for 2026-27:

Top-slice funding of £70,000 from maintained schools, with the per pupil cost determined by the number of maintained pupils at the time the budgets for 2026-27 are set. Based on Autumn Census 2025 NOR per pupil rate will be £8.97

8. Education Access Service

The top-slice in 2026-27 is partly funding education welfare, delivered through the Education Access Service (EAS). The service also receives grant funding from retained duties ESG (which the local authority continues to receive and is separate from the general duties ESG, which ceased in September 2017), as well as income from trading with academies.

The top-slice provides maintained schools with access to all EAS support including education welfare, attendance and inclusion/exclusion officers, child employment services and performance licensing.



The proposed EAS service delivery agreement model has been based on a daily rate built around the time required in maintained schools for strategic intervention and casework. For the separate service delivery agreement for inclusion services, a standard rate will be applied for maintained primary schools. A bespoke package can be offered to meet the individual requirements of the remaining maintained secondary and special schools. The two service delivery agreements will give maintained schools access to the full range of advice and support offered by EAS.

There are risks to maintained schools of not opting into a traded arrangement. They would need to be confident that they have the skills and underpinning knowledge they require within their own setting, or where they can secure this support from elsewhere and at what cost.

Top slicing funding of £196,819 in 2026-27 contribute to the total cost of providing these services with per pupil amount maintained at 2025-26 level of £25.23.

Education Access Service - options for 2026-27:

- a. Top-slice from maintained schools to be maintained at the 2025-26 level of £25.23 per pupil. Total estimated cost £196,819 based on Autumn Census 2025 NOR
- b. Fully delegate funding and responsibility to maintained schools, presenting buy-back arrangements through service delivery agreements from April 2026 for those seeking to secure ongoing education welfare and inclusion support for the statutory areas currently covered by the top-slice



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Schools Forum	Agenda Item 5
Date: 11 December 2025	Paper
Time: 8:30 a.m.	D
Venue: Virtual via Microsoft (MS) Teams	Public

CENTRAL SCHOOL SERVICES BLOCK 2026-27

Responsible Officer Stephen Waters
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Summary

1. In November 2025, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) issued their technical note on the Central School Services Block (CSSB) and provisional CSSB allocations for 2026-27. Final allocations will be based on the 2026-27 pupil count.
2. The purpose of the CSSB is to provide funding to local authorities to carry out central functions on behalf of pupils in state-funded maintained schools and academies.
3. The funding is split into funding for historic commitments and funding for ongoing responsibilities.
4. For those centrally retained services categorised as historic commitments, Schools Forum approval is required on a line-by-line basis and the budget cannot exceed the value agreed in the previous funding period, and no new commitments can be entered into.
5. For 2026-27, the ESFA intend to reduce the historic commitments funding by 20% compared to their 2019-20 baseline. This reduction is in line with ESFA's previously stated policy to withdraw this funding over time.
6. The CSSB technical note issued by the ESFA states that "historic commitments funding will be protected from dropping below the total value of ongoing prudential borrowing or termination of employment costs, based on evidence received by the department". The appropriate evidence will be submitted by the January 2026 deadline and we will wait for the ESFA to confirm whether the funding will be protected.
7. For ongoing responsibilities, Schools Forum approval is required on a line-by-line basis and the budget can increase from year to year.
8. This report therefore presents a number of proposals on the retention of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in 2026-27 to fund these statutory duties for which formal Schools Forum approval is required.



Recommendation

9. Schools Forum notes that the historic commitments value within Shropshire's CSSB funding allocation has been subjected to a 20% cut in funding by the ESFA in its 2026-27 provisional allocation. Consequently, the historic commitments element of Shropshire's 2026-27 CSSB allocation has been reduced by £210,336 to £841,344.
10. Schools Forum consider and approve to the proposals presented in this report.

REPORT

Background

11. In 2018-19, Schools Block funding, for the first time, included the new Central School Services Block, determined by a separate national funding formula.
12. The purpose of the CSSB is to provide funding to local authorities to carry out central functions on behalf of pupils in state-funded maintained schools and academies.
13. The CSSB funding is split into funding for historic commitments and funding for ongoing responsibilities.
14. CSSB historic commitments funding for each local authority is equal to their 2017-18 baseline value submitted to the ESFA in April 2017 and confirmed by the ESFA in August 2017. These historic commitments are subject to a limitation of new commitments or increases in expenditure.
15. The funding for ongoing responsibilities comprised funding previously allocated through the retained duties element of the Education Services Grant (ESG) at a rate of £15 per pupil, plus funding for ongoing central functions such as schools admissions and the servicing of Schools Forum.
16. The CSSB national funding formula allocated funding to local authorities for ongoing responsibilities uses a pupil-led formula to establish a CSSB ongoing responsibilities rate per pupil. This is multiplied by the Schools Block pupil count from the latest census to arrive at each local authority's final allocation.

Shropshire's Central Schools Services Block Allocation 2025-26

17. In 2025-26, Shropshire Council's CSSB allocation totalled £2,568,006. The contributions levels or allocations for ongoing responsibilities plus the contributions for historic commitments were approved by Schools Forum on 12th December 2024 in "Paper D – Central School Service Blocks 2025-26" (based on a provisional allocation of £2,583,133).

	2025-26 Allocation
Historic Commitments	
Termination of employment costs	£756,330
Prudential borrowing	£295,350
Sub Total Historic Commitments	£1,051,680
Ongoing Responsibilities	
Schools admissions	£322,150
Servicing of Schools Forum	£10,000
Other items (Copyright Licensing Agency fee)	£317,976
Former retained duties ESG	£866,200
Sub Total Ongoing Responsibilities	£1,516,326
Total Central Spend	£2,568,006

Shropshire's Provisional Central Schools Services Block Allocation 2026-27

18. The Department for Education have issued provisional 2026-27 allocations for the CSSB. The technical note published states that “in 2026-2027, for those local authorities that receive it, historic commitments funding has been reduced by 20%”.
19. For Shropshire Council this means that the £1,051,680 historic commitments 2025-26 value in the table above has been subject to a 20% cut equal to £210,336 in determining the 2026-27 provisional historic commitments allocation of £841,344.
20. The CSSB technical note issued by the ESFA states that “historic commitments funding will be protected from dropping below the total value of ongoing prudential borrowing or termination of employment costs, based on evidence received by the department”. Officers will submit evidence to the ESFA to show that the value of ongoing prudential borrowing and termination of employment costs is far greater than the level at which the historic commitments funding will be reduced to provisionally in 2026-27. We will wait for the ESFA to confirm whether the funding will be protected.
21. The ongoing responsibilities value of £1,516,326 for 2025-26 has been run through the national funding formula to arrive at a provisional 2026-27 allocation for ongoing responsibilities of £1,682,785. This represents an increase of 10.9% on the ongoing responsibilities value. The provisional total CSSB allocation for 2026-27 is £2,524,129.
22. In 2026-27, funding is also being rolled into the CSSB which was provided separately in 2025-26 in respect of Centrally employed teachers, through the National Insurance Contributions Grant and Schools Budget Support Grant. The value of this funding rolled into the 2026-27 Ongoing Responsibilities funding is £194,754 which is greater than the £166,459 increase in this portion of the funding.

	2025-26 Allocation	Provisional Total 2026-27 CSSB NFF Funding	Provisional % Change to CSSB Funding in 2026-27
Historic commitments	£1,051,680	£841,344	20% reduction in line with ESFA's previously stated policy to withdraw this funding over time
Ongoing responsibilities	£1,516,326	£1,682,785	10.9% (funding rolled into the CSSB which was previously provided separately)
Total Central Spend	£2,568,006	£2,524,129	-1.7%

Historic Commitments Approval

23. As outlined in Appendix A, historic commitments require Schools Forum approval on a line-by-line basis. The budget cannot exceed the value agreed in the previous funding period, and no new commitments can be entered into. To enable Schools Forum members to make a more informed decision to continue to approve funding the following paragraphs give more detail regarding what services are funded and any ongoing commitments.

Termination of Employment Costs

24. This budget covers the ongoing termination costs for ex-Shropshire Council school staff. This historic pension commitment will eventually be reduced to nil, but over many years.

25. The DSG baselining exercise carried out by the ESFA established a baseline cost for termination of employment costs of £994,920. The total cost of these ongoing pension commitments is significantly higher than £994,920 with the Council also making a sizeable contribution. £994,920 is the maximum contribution permitted from centrally retained DSG on the basis that this budget line cannot increase in value compared to previous years and this was the level of contribution set in 2017-18.

26. For 2025-26, the recommended DSG level of £545,994 was approved in the Schools Forum Paper dated 12th December 2024. This was on the basis that the submission of evidence to the ESFA to protect this value was unsuccessful. Thankfully the evidence was approved and the figure was protected at £756,330.

27. For 2026-27, it is proposed that the £210,336 reduction in funding is set against this area in the event that the appeal to the ESFA to protect the value of ongoing prudential borrowing and termination of employment costs is not successful. In this instance it is proposed to reduce the £756,330 level from 2025-26 by £210,336 to £545,994. If the appeal to the ESFA to protect value of ongoing prudential borrowing and termination of employment costs is successful the value of "Termination of employment costs" will remain at the same level of £756,330 in 2025-26.

Recommendation 2 - Maintained and academy school representatives agree to contribute £545,994 to fund a portion of these ongoing pension commitments in the event that the appeal to the ESFA to protect the value of ongoing prudential borrowing and termination of employment costs is not successful, a reduction of £210,336 compared to 2025-26.

Prudential Borrowing Costs

28. The prudential borrowing costs budget heading covers expenditure incurred in the repayment of loans.
29. Shropshire Council has ongoing annual revenue costs of £295,350 for funding prudential borrowing relating to the Monkmoor Campus Project approved in 2006-07.
30. The rationale behind the project was to expand Severndale School to ensure that all Shropshire special needs pupils can be considered for a place in Severndale before a more expensive out of county place is deemed necessary. The delivery of this project delivered revenue savings against costs funded within the High Needs Block of DSG where placements are funded at expensive out of county, independent special schools.
31. Due to available financing from other areas of the schools capital programme on a cash flow basis the borrowing was not applied until 2010-11, with the first borrowing costs in 2010-11 and will thus be incurred until 2035-36.
32. Shropshire Council was required to evidence these costs to the ESFA as part of the DSG baselining exercise. A capital budget report for 2006-07, which approved the prudential borrowing together with the capital project appraisal form was submitted to the ESFA and the figure of £295,350 was approved as part of the Shropshire's baseline.
33. As this is an ongoing cost commitment of £295,350 until 2035-36, it is not appropriate to target any of the £210,336 reduction in historic commitments DSG funding to this budget line.

Recommendation 3 - Maintained and academy school representatives agree to continue to contribute £295,350 to fund the ongoing revenue costs of funding prudential borrowing for the Monkmoor Campus Project.

Ongoing Responsibilities Approval

34. As outlined in Appendix A, funding for ongoing central functions previously retained from the School Block also require Schools Forum approval on a line-by-line basis. In contrast to the historic commitments discussed above, the ongoing central functions of school admissions, servicing of Schools Forum, copyright licensing and ongoing responsibilities formerly funded by retained duties ESG, are not subject to the limitation of no new commitments or increases in expenditure, or any % reduction in funding. This portion of the CCSB funding allocation has increased by 9.9% compared to 2025-26, however this increase relates to funding that has been rolled into this portion of the CSSB which was previously provided separately.

Schools Admissions

35. Shropshire Council employs a School Admissions team to provide a comprehensive administrative service for the allocation of school places within statutory requirements through compliance with the School Admissions Code published by the Department for Education in 2014.
36. The Schools Admissions Team's core service includes:
 - Exchange of application data with other local authorities
 - Production of the annual Parents' Guide
 - Input/import of application details
 - Submission of electronic transfer file to schools
 - Production of offer letters to parents on behalf of admission authority
 - Administration of review process/ offers refused
 - Maintenance of transfer group waiting list.

37. In addition, an extended chargeable service is offered to academies which provides support in meeting the legal responsibilities of an admission authority.
38. To discharge these statutory duties, local authorities are expected to retain some central DSG funding to fund the costs of the Schools Admissions Team. The 2025-26 budget allocation for the Schools Admissions team was £322,150. An increased budget allocation of £363,340 is required for 2026-27.

Recommendation 4 - Maintained and academy school representatives agree to the increased charge of £363,340 for the provision of a School Admissions Team.

Servicing of Schools Forum

39. The servicing of Schools Forum expenditure line covers all expenditure incurred in connection with the local authority's functions of running the Forum as defined under section 47A of the 1998 Education Act.
40. The 2024-25 budget allocation for the Servicing of Schools Forum was £10,000, and will be held at this level in 2026-27.

Recommendation 5 - Maintained and academy school representatives agree to the budget of £10,000 for the servicing of Schools Forum.

Copyright Licenses

41. As set out in the 2017-18 DSG Technical Note published by the Department for Education on 20 December 2016, the Department agreed with the following agencies to purchase a single national licence managed centrally for all state-funded schools in England:
 - Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA)
 - Education Recording Agency (ERA)
 - Filmbank Distributors Ltd. (for the PVSL)
 - Motion Picture Licensing Company (MPLC)
 - Newspaper Licensing Authority (NLA)
 - Schools Printed Music Licence (SPML)
 - Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI)
 - Mechanical Copyright Protection Society (MCPS;
 - Performing Rights Society (PRS), and
 - Phonographic Performance Limited (PPL).
42. This means that local authorities and schools do not have to negotiate individual licences. The Department for Education pays the cost, including VAT, to the agencies and provides this as a service to local authorities, at a charge. Local authorities can reclaim VAT on the charge. These arrangements cover academies as well as maintained schools and local authorities can hold this money centrally, rather than include it in school budgets.
43. The 2025-26 budget allocation for the annual copyright licensing invoice was set at £317,976. For 2026-27 we have assumed that the annual fee will increase by an inflationary amount. Using the latest annual inflation rate of 3.8% (CPHI) for the year to September, this indicates an estimated uplift required of £12,083 to give an annual fee of £330,059 to help fund the increased cost of copyright licenses in 2026-27.

Recommendation 6 - Maintained and academy school representatives agree to the increased charge of £330,059 for the annual copyright licensing fees.

Ongoing Responsibilities that Local Authorities Hold for all Schools

44. The CSSB funds local authorities for the statutory duties they hold for both maintained schools and academies which was previously allocated through the retained duties element of the ESG.
45. Details of these retained ongoing duties are provided in Appendix B (Column 1).
46. £866,200 was included in Shropshire's CSSB 2025-26 allocation to cover these duties.
47. Schools Forum is required to agree to the central retention of retained duties ESG and to enable Schools Forum members to make a more informed decision to continue to approve funding, Appendix C details how the Council apportions this £866,200 to cover these ongoing retained duties. £866,200 is the value available within the ongoing responsibilities allocation of £1,516,326 once the items above have been allocated.
48. It is important to note that in some cases the total cost of providing the statutory functions listed would be greater than the illustrative budget allocation. In these cases the Council subsidises the additional costs above and beyond the £866,200 allocation.

Recommendation 7 - Maintained and academy school representatives agree to continue to contribute £979,386 to ongoing responsibilities that the local authority provides for maintained schools and academies as per the detail of these costs outlined in Appendix C.

49. The final table below illustrates what the proposed CSSB budget allocations above would be if all recommendations are approved.

	2025-26 Allocation	2026-27 Proposed Allocation if appeal successful	2026-27 Proposed Allocation if appeal unsuccessful
Historic Commitments			
Termination of employment costs	£756,330	£756,330	£545,994
Prudential borrowing	£295,350	£295,350	£295,350
Sub Total Historic Commitments	£1,051,680	£1,051,680	£841,344
Ongoing Responsibilities			
Schools admissions	£322,150	£363,340	£363,340
Servicing of Schools Forum	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000
Other Items (Copyright Licensing Agency fee)	£317,976	£330,059	£330,059
Former retained duties ESG	£866,200	£979,386	£979,386
Sub Total Ongoing Responsibilities	£1,516,326	£1,682,785	£1,682,785
Total Allocation	£2,568,006	£2,734,465	£2,524,129

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Appendix A

Schools forum approvals for centrally held funding

1. A number of the services that are covered by funding that is held centrally are subject to a limitation of no new commitments or increases in expenditure from 2017 to 2018.
 - 1.1. This limit does not now apply to admissions or the servicing of schools forums.
 - 1.2. Schools forum approval is required each year to confirm the amounts on each line.
 - 1.3. The following table sets out the level of approval required for each service and for funding of brought forward deficits.
2. When using centrally held funding, local authorities must treat maintained schools and academies on an equivalent basis.

Centrally retained service (Where Applicable in Shropshire and decision required today in bold)	Approval required
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• high needs block provision• central licences negotiated by the Secretary of State	Schools forum approval is not required (although they should be consulted)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• funding to enable all schools to meet the infant class size requirement• back pay for equal pay claims• remission of boarding fees at maintained schools and academies• places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils• admissions	Schools forum approval is required on a line-by-line basis

Centrally retained service (Where Applicable in Shropshire and decision required today in bold)	Approval required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • servicing of schools forum • contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for all schools • contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for maintained schools (voted on by relevant maintained school members of the forum only) • de-delegated services from the schools block (voted on by the relevant maintained school members of the forum only) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • central early years block provision • any movement of funding out of the schools block • any deficit from the previous funding period that reduces the amount of the schools budget • any brought forward deficit on de-delegated services which is to be met by the overall schools budget 	Schools forum approval is required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • capital expenditure funded from revenue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • projects must have been planned and decided on prior to 	Schools forum approval is required on a line-by-line basis. The budget cannot exceed the value agreed in the previous funding period, and no new commitments can be entered into.

Centrally retained service (Where Applicable in Shropshire and decision required today in bold)	Approval required
<p>April 2013; no new projects can be charged</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> details of the remaining costs should be presented contribution to combined budgets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> where the schools forum agreed prior to April 2013 a contribution from the schools budget to services which would otherwise be funded from other sources existing termination of employment costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> costs for specific individuals must have been approved prior to April 2013; no new redundancy costs can be charged prudential borrowing costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the commitment must have been approved prior to April 2013 details of the remaining costs should be presented 	<p>Read establishing local authority DSG baselines for more information.</p>

Centrally retained service (Where Applicable in Shropshire and decision required today in bold)	Approval required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • funding for significant pre-16 <u>pupil growth</u>, including new schools set up to meet basic need, whether maintained or academy • funding for good or outstanding schools with <u>falling rolls</u> where growth in pupil numbers is expected within three years 	Schools forum approval is required on a line-by-line basis, including approval of the criteria for allocating funds to schools

Appendix B

Central services that may be funded with agreement of schools forums

1. The split of services between responsibilities local authorities hold for all schools, and those that relate to maintained schools only are shown in tables below.
 - 1.1. Responsibilities held by local authorities for all schools (shown in the first column) are funded from the central schools services block, with the agreement of schools forums.
 - 1.2. Responsibilities held by local authorities for maintained schools only (shown in the second column) are funded from maintained schools budgets only, with agreement of the maintained schools members of schools forums.
 - 1.3. We've included references to the relevant schedules in the current [schools and early years finance \(England\) regulations 2017](#).

Statutory and regulatory duties

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Director of children's services and personal staff for director (Sch 2, 15a)• Planning for the education service as a whole (Sch 2, 15b)• Revenue budget preparation, preparation of information on income and expenditure relating to education, and external audit relating to education (Sch 2, 22)• Authorisation and monitoring of expenditure not met from schools' budget shares (Sch 2, 15c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Functions of LA related to best value and provision of advice to governing bodies in procuring goods and services (Sch 2, 56)• Budgeting and accounting functions relating to maintained schools (Sch 2, 73)• Functions relating to the financing of maintained schools (Sch 2, 58)• Authorisation and monitoring of expenditure in respect of schools which do not have delegated

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulation and review of local authority schools funding formula (Sch 2, 15d) Internal audit and other tasks related to the authority's chief finance officer's responsibilities under Section 151 of LGA 1972 except duties specifically related to maintained schools (Sch 2, 15e) Consultation costs relating to non-staffing issues (Sch 2, 19) Plans involving collaboration with other LA services or public or voluntary bodies (Sch 2, 15f) Standing Advisory Committees for Religious Education (SACREs) (Sch 2, 17) Provision of information to or at the request of the Crown other than relating specifically to maintained schools (Sch 2, 21) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> budgets, and related financial administration (Sch 2, 57) Monitoring of compliance with requirements in relation to the scheme for financing schools and the provision of community facilities by governing bodies (Sch 2, 58) Internal audit and other tasks related to the authority's chief finance officer's responsibilities under Section 151 of LGA 1972 for maintained schools (Sch 2, 59) Functions made under Section 44 of the 2002 Act (Consistent Financial Reporting) (Sch 2, 60) Investigations of employees or potential employees, with or without remuneration to work at or for schools under the direct management of the headteacher or governing body (Sch 2, 61) Functions related to local government pensions and administration of teachers' pensions in relation to staff working at maintained schools under the direct management of the headteacher or governing body (Sch 2, 62) Retrospective membership of pension schemes where it would not be appropriate to expect a

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
	<p>school to meet the cost (Sch 2, 75)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR duties, including: advice to schools on the management of staff, pay alterations, conditions of service and composition or organisation of staff (Sch 2, 63); determination of conditions of service for non-teaching staff (Sch 2, 64); appointment or dismissal of employee functions (Sch 2, 65) • Consultation costs relating to staffing (Sch 2, 66) • Compliance with duties under Health and Safety at Work Act (Sch 2, 67) • Provision of information to or at the request of the Crown relating to schools (Sch 2, 68) • School companies (Sch 2, 69) • Functions under the Equality Act 2010 (Sch 2, 70) • Establish and maintaining computer systems, including data storage (Sch 2, 71) • Appointment of governors and payment of governor expenses (Sch 2, 72)

Table 8a: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (statutory and regulatory duties)

Education welfare

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions in relation to the exclusion of pupils from schools, excluding any provision of education to excluded pupils (Sch 2, 20) • School attendance (Sch 2, 16) • Responsibilities regarding the employment of children (Sch 2, 18) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection of attendance registers (Sch 2, 78)

Table 8b: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (education welfare)

Asset management

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of the LA's capital programme including preparation and review of an asset management plan, and negotiation and management of private finance transactions (Sch 2, 14a) • General landlord duties for all buildings owned by the local authority, including those leased to academies (Sch 2, 14b) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General landlord duties for all maintained schools (Sch 2, 76a & b (section 542(2)) Education Act 1996; School Premises Regulations 2012) to ensure that school buildings have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriate facilities for pupils and staff (including medical and accommodation) • the ability to sustain appropriate loads • reasonable weather resistance • safe escape routes

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriate acoustic levels • lighting, heating and ventilation which meets the required standards • adequate water supplies and drainage • playing fields of the appropriate standards • General health and safety duty as an employer for employees and others who may be affected (Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974) • Management of the risk from asbestos in community school buildings (Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012)

Table 8c: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (asset management)

Central support services

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clothing grants (Sch 2, 52) • Provision of tuition in music, or on other music-related activities (Sch 2, 53) • Visual, creative and performing arts (Sch 2, 54) • Outdoor education centres (but not centres mainly for the

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
	provision of organised games, swimming or athletics) (Sch 2, 55)

Table 8d: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (central support services)

Premature retirement and redundancy

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dismissal or premature retirement when costs cannot be charged to maintained schools (Sch 2, 77)

Table 8e: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (premature retirement and redundancy)

Monitoring national curriculum assessment

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of National Curriculum assessments (Sch 2, 74)

Table 8f: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (monitoring national curriculum assessment)

Therapies

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is now covered in the high needs section of the regulations and does not require schools forum approval

Table 8g: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (therapies)

Other ongoing duties

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licences negotiated centrally by the Secretary of State for all publicly funded schools (Sch 2, 8); this does not require schools forum approval • Admissions (Sch 2, 9) • Places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils (Sch 2, 10) • Remission of boarding fees at maintained schools and academies (Sch 2, 11) • Servicing of schools forums (Sch 2, 12) • Back-pay for equal pay claims (Sch 2, 13) • Writing to parents of year 9 pupils about schools with an atypical age of admission, such as UTCs and studio schools, within a reasonable travelling distance (new addition to CSSB, to be included in 2018 to 2019 regulations)¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No functions

Table 8h: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (other ongoing duties)

¹Funding for this duty was previously delivered to local authorities via a s.31 grant. Additional funding will be added to the CSSB baseline for this from 2018-19.

Historic commitments

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capital expenditure funded from revenue (Sch 2, 1)• Prudential borrowing costs (Sch 2, 2(a))• Termination of employment costs (Sch 2, 2(b))• Contribution to combined budgets (Sch 2, 2(c))	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No functions

Appendix C

Responsibilities local authorities hold for all schools (funding may be retained centrally from all schools with agreement of Schools Forum)	How much does it cost Shropshire per year to provide it?
Statutory and Regulatory duties	
Director of Children's Services and personal staff for director (Sch 1, 20a)	£163,270
Planning for the education service as a whole (Sch 1, 20b)	£260,880
Revenue budget preparation, preparation of information on income and expenditure relating to education, and external audit relating to education (Sch 1, 20d)	
Administration of grants (Sch 1, 20e)	
Authorisation and monitoring of expenditure not met from schools' budget shares (Sch 1, 20fi)	
Formulation and review of local authority schools funding formula (Sch 1, 20g)	£71,360
Internal audit and other tasks related to the authority's chief finance officer's responsibilities under Section 151 of LGA 1972 except duties specifically related to maintained schools (Sch 1, 20i)	
Education Welfare Services	£179,550
Functions in relation to the exclusion of pupils from schools, excluding any provision of education to excluded pupils (Sch 1, 10c)	
School attendance (Sch 1, 11)	
Responsibilities regarding the employment of children (Sch 1, 29)	
Asset Management	
Management of the LA's capital programme including preparation and review of an asset management plan, and negotiation and management of private finance transactions (Sch 1, 10a)	£109,576
General landlord duties for all buildings owned by the local authority, including those leased to academies	
Additional funding for centrally employed teachers	£194,750
TOTAL	£979,386

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