

Title of meeting: Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education

Date of meeting: 14 January 2021

Subject: Wimborne Infant and Junior Schools Amalgamation Balances

Report by: Alison Jeffery, Director of Children, Families and Education

Wards affected: All

Key decision: Yes/No

Full Council decision: Yes/No

1 Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Cabinet Member with an update on the final closing balances of Wimborne Infant and Wimborne Junior Schools and to request endorsement of the transfer of the balances to Wimborne Primary School from the Schools Specific Contingency.

2 Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet Member:

2.1.1 Approve the transfer of Wimborne Infant and Wimborne Junior Schools closing balances to Wimborne Primary School from the Schools Specific Contingency.

2.1.2 Approve the use of the 2020-21 carry forward in 2021-22 to reinstate the School Specific Contingency to the balance of £141,800 as at December 2020.

3 Background

3.1 The School and Early Years Finance England regulations state that when schools close any remaining balance (surplus or deficit) is returned to the Dedicated Schools Grant of the local authority, however the regulations recognise where a new school opens and is the successor of one or more previous schools then the balances can be transferred to the new school using the School Specific Contingency.

3.2 In January 2014 Schools Forum approved and the Cabinet Member endorsed the introduction of the Schools Specific Contingency, it was funded from the de-



delegation of a per pupil amount from maintained Primary and Secondary schools and is available for maintained Primary and Secondary schools for the following purposes:

- schools in financial difficulty
- new, amalgamating or closing schools
- the writing-off of deficits of schools which are discontinued, excluding any associated costs or overheads
- other expenditure where the circumstances were unforeseen when initially determining the schools budget share.

3.3 The notes of guidance attached at Appendix 1 set out the criteria for accessing the fund for amalgamating schools.

3.4 As at the 31 December 2020 the balance on the Schools Specific Contingency is £141,800.

4 Closing School Balances

4.1 Following the closure on 31 August 2020 of Wimborne Infant and Wimborne Junior Schools the financial accounts have been closed in accordance with the School and Early Years Finance (England) regulations and standard accounting practice. The final balance of the two schools is a surplus of £538,400.

4.2 The balance will be returned to the DSG and form part of the carry forward to 2021-22.

4.3 It is proposed to use the Schools Specific Contingency to transfer the final balance of £538,400 to Wimborne Primary School in accordance with the School and Early Years (England) Finance regulations. This will place the Schools Specific Contingency budget overspent in 2020-21.

4.4 It is therefore proposed to utilise the 2020-21 carry forward in 2021-22 to refund the Schools Specific Contingency to the current budget level of £141,800 for use in the 2021-22 financial year.

5 Reasons for recommendations

5.1 The purpose of this report is to request endorsement of the transfer of the closing balances of Wimborne Infant and Wimborne Junior Schools to Wimborne Primary School in line with the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations.

6 Integrated impact assessment

6.1 This report and the proposals within form part of, and are consistent with, the national implementation of the schools and high needs National Funding Formula

as directed by the Department of Education and set out in the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2020.

- 6.2 The funding system does not seek to target funding by reference to particular protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, but instead targets funding to those groups which the evidence demonstrates face barriers to their educational achievement.
- 6.3 An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has been completed and is attached at Appendix 2. It confirms that the proposals will not have a negative impact on areas of equality and diversity, communities & safety, regeneration & culture, environment and public space.

7 Legal implications

- 7.1 The recommendation at paragraph 2.1.1 of this report is consistent with Regulation 27(9) of the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2020.
- 7.2 Expenditure from the Schools' Specific Contingency referred to in the recommendation at paragraph 2.1.2 of this report is consistent with Schedule 2, Part 6 of the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2020.

8 Director of Finance's comments

- 8.1 Financial comments and implications are included in the body of this report.

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Signed by: Alison Jeffery, Director Children Families and Education

Appendices:

- Appendix 1: Guidance notes: Growth Fund and Schools Specific Contingency
- Appendix 2: Integrated Impact Assessment

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Schools revenue funding 2020 to 2021: Operational guide	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/864952/Schools_operational_guide_2020_to_2021_updated_February_2020_.pdf

School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2020	The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2020
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The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/
rejected by on

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Signed by:

Appendix 1

See Separate Document