

North Northamptonshire Schools Forum: 18th January 2024

Agenda Item 7

2024-25 Central School Services Block Budgets

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report aims to provide Schools Forum the Local Authority's proposals for central expenditure on education functions for the fiscal year 2024-25.
- 1.2 There is an overall estimated reduction of £206K in the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB). This is due to the 20% reduction in the historical element of the CSSB.

2. Central School Services Block (CSSB)

- 2.1 CSSB covers funding allocated to LAs to conduct central education functions on behalf of pupils in maintained schools and academies in England.
- 2.2 The CSSB is split into two elements:
- funding for ongoing responsibilities is a formula-based calculation (nationally distributed via a per pupil rate currently multiplied by October 2023 pupil census data).
 - funding for historic commitments allocated at levels carried forward from previous years. The DfE has been reducing the historic commitments funding since 2020-21 by 20% per annum. This reduction has been applied to the provisional 2024-25 CSSB funding.
- 2.3 NNC have received a provisional allocation of £3,080,594 in 2024-25 compared to £3,286,930 in 2023-24 which is a reduction of £206k.
- 2.4 Table 1 shows the change in CSSB funding between 2024-25 and 2023-24.

Table 1 – CSSB Funding

Central School Services Block Funding	2023-24	2024-25	Change	Percentage Change
Final CSSB unit of funding	£36.91	£38.25	£1.34	3.63%
2021 to 2022 CSSB pupil count	50,048	50,428	380	0.76%
Funding for On-going Duties	£1,847,253	£1,928,852	£81,599	4.42%
Funding for Historic Commitments	£1,439,677	£1,151,742	-£287,935	-20.00%
Total Central School Services Block Funding	£3,286,930	£3,080,594	-£206,336	-6.28%

Note: +ve increase in income -ve reduction in income

- 2.5 The change between unprotected NFF per-pupil funding and per-pupil baseline for

ongoing responsibilities for North Northamptonshire Council is 3.63%. However, as there was an increase of 380 pupils, North Northamptonshire received a 4.42% increase for ongoing responsibilities – which amounts to £81,599.

- 2.6 Table 2 summarised NNC’s current use of the CSSB funding in 2023-24, together with proposals for its use in 2024-25 and show the changes between 2023-24 and 2024-25.

Table 2 – NNC Proposed CSSB Expenditure for 2024-25

Central School Services Block	2023-24	2024-25	Change
	£	£	£
Historical Commitments			
Contribution to Combined Services (see Table 3)	639,677	244,742	- 394,935
Pre-2013 Premature Retirement / Redundancy Costs	800,000	907,000	107,000
Total Historical Commitments	1,439,677	1,151,742	- 287,935
Ongoing Responsibilities			
Admissions	499,208	507,517	8,309
Schools Forum	11,300	11,300	-
National Copyright Licences	321,279	394,568	73,289
Statutory and Regulatory Duties	1,010,000	1,010,000	-
Teacher's Pay and Pension Grant	5,467	5,467	-
Total Ongoing Responsibilities	1,847,253	1,928,852	81,599
Total CSSB	3,286,930	3,080,594	- 206,336

Note: +ve increase in expenditure -ve reduction in expenditure

- 2.7 Table 3 provides a breakdown of NNC’s proposals for the use of the CSSB on Combined Services in 2024-25 and changes from 2023-24.

Table 3 - NNC Proposed Combined Services Expenditure Budget

CSSB DSG Contribution to Combined Service	2023-24	2024-25	Change
	£	£	£
School Standards & Effectiveness	466,150	71,215	(394,935)
Moderation	15,000	15,000	0
Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board	33,247	33,247	0
Educational Entitlement	125,280	125,280	0
Total	639,677	244,742	(394,935)

Note: +ve increase in expenditure -ve reduction in expenditure

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The 20% year on year reduction funding on historical commitments leaves a funding gap of £288k against the historical commitment’s expenditure requirement in 2024 -25

3.2 This funding gap will need to be met by reducing the funding for Contribution to Combined Services by £395k. It is proposed that a further de-delegation for Education Functions is requested from maintained Primary, Secondary and Special Schools to meet this shortfall in funding for School Effectiveness going forward in future years.

3.3 The ongoing 20% reductions on Historic Commitments Funding on CSSB will continue year on year i.e., a further reduction of £230K in 2025-26 and £184K in 2026-27.

4. Legal implications

4.1 There are no legal implications arising from the proposals.

5. Risks

5.1 The main risks arising should Schools Forum not agree with the recommendations is to find alternative sources of funding to support the existing commitments. DSG Historical Commitments CSSB for Contribution to Combined Functions will cease as the DFE continues to reduce 20% year on year reduction and NNC's General Fund will not be able to continue to bridge the shortfall in funding. The criteria of what DSG CSSB can be spent on is set out in [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2023](#)

6. Recommendations for Schools Forum

6.1 Schools Forum members are asked to agree the Central Expenditure for the proposed 2024-25 Education Functions to be funded from the CSSB as per Table 2 and 3.

7. Next Steps

7.1 Once agreed by Schools Forum, the Central School Services Block budget will form part of NNC's 2024-25 DSG Budget Proposal for Executive and full Council approval in February 2024.

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