

<b>CONSENT TO URGENT DECISION</b>	<b>PART 1</b> (to be completed by the person seeking consent)
<b>Proposed Decision Maker</b> (please name person or body proposing to take decision, if an officer also state title)	<b>Date for Decision</b>
Leader	17 November 2023
<b>Title:</b> <b>Disapplication to the Secretary of State requesting 0.5% DSG funding transfer from Schools Block to High Needs Block</b>	
<p><b>Summary of matter</b></p> <p>The funding position in relation to schools and SEND provision is challenging – those challenges are national and acknowledged by the Department for Education.</p> <p>The Schools Block funding is ring-fenced in 2024/25 in line with the DSG conditions of grant, however local authorities can transfer up to and including 0.5% of their Schools Block funding into another block, with the approval of their Schools Forum.</p> <p>Without Schools Forum agreement, or where they wish to transfer more than 0.5% of their schools block funding into one or more other blocks, local authorities must submit a Disapplication request to the Secretary of State.</p> <p>Local authorities wishing to make a transfer are required to consult local maintained schools and academies. A consultation with Warwickshire schools and academies took place between Friday 15 September 2023 and Monday 6 November 2003 on the Council's proposal to move up to 0.5% of funding from the DSG Schools Block to the High Needs Block.</p> <p>Whilst the Council is taking part in national initiatives around these challenges and has established a SEND and Inclusion Change Programme to address issues of financial sustainability on relation to the High Needs Block and funding, it remains the view of the Council that it is appropriate to move 0.5% of the Schools Block funding to the High Needs Block in order to address the ongoing financial challenges.</p> <p>The monetary value of the 0.5% transfer is calculated by taking the total schools block funding for DSG, then adding the premises funding and growth funding. It is estimated that this will equate to approximately £2.245 million.</p> <p>The proposal has been consulted on, and the consultation document set out the expected impact at the time of consultation and stated that 183 of 231 schools would be impacted, and a 0.5% transfer would be ranging from £1,059 to £68,295 for schools, totalling £2.255m.</p> <p>Since this time DfE have provided updated indicative allocations and data, and the most recent modelling (shared with Schools Forum on 16 November 2023) suggests that 185 of 231 would be impacted by a 0.5% transfer. The updated impacting range is from £1,032 to £68,817 which is between 0.22% and 0.75% of initial indicative budgets and would total £2.245m. Final school allocations are still subject to change by DfE.</p> <p>The total level of school balances (reserves) as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 for maintained and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022 for academies was £60m.</p>	

The outcome of the consultation is included within the background papers to the report.

The intention is to use the transferred funding to partly offset the projected 2024/25 in year deficit

### **Proposed Decision**

That the Leader of the Council

1. Authorises the Executive Director for Resources to submit a “Disapplication” to the Secretary of State, requesting that 0.5% of the 2024/25 Dedicated Schools Grant from the Schools Block is transferred to the High Needs Block (a value of approximately £2.245m).
2. Authorises the Executive Director for Resources to approve any amendments to the online Disapplication prior to its submission at close of play on 17 November 2023.

### **Reasons for urgency**


Pursuant to Standing Order 18 of the Council’s constitution, where a decision is urgent and it is impracticable to comply with Standing Orders 16 and 17 (Procedure before Key Decision, and General Exception Procedure) the decision may still be taken if the Chair of a relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee consents in writing that:

1. The decision cannot reasonably be deferred.
2. The decision should be treated as a matter of urgency and
3. Where the decision is contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the policy framework or budget, it is not practicable to convene a meeting of full council.

A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by call-in would seriously prejudice the council or the public interest.

Due to the need for on the proposed transfer and the tight deadlines between consultation end, the required Schools Forum meeting for consider approval of the proposal and the deadline for making of the Disapplication to the Secretary of State, it is not possible to allow for the usual publication and call-in periods. The decision should be treated as a matter of urgency and cannot reasonably be deferred as the deadline for submission of the Disapplication is 17 November whilst the need for the Disapplication would not be confirmed until after the Schools Forum reached its decision on 16 November.

The Disapplication is considered necessary for the reasons explained in the urgent Report (appended to this Consent). However, in essence the 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block will be utilised to partly fund the projected 2024/25 in year deficit. Unless the disapplication is made to the Secretary of State and approved, the transfer cannot take place, meaning that this option to mitigate the projected deficit by c£2.245m will be removed, and the Council would need to consider reducing non-statutory services to schools that add value but could not be financially sustained.

<b>Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? [please identify relevant plan/budget provision]</b>	
No	
<b>PART 2</b> (to be completed by the person giving consent)	
<b>Name</b>	Councillor Adrian Warwick
<b>Office Held</b>	<b>Chair of the Resources and Fire &amp; Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>
	
<b>Date consent is given</b>	16/11/2023