

Warrington Schools Forum

Agenda

Date: 22 June 2021

Time: 4.30 pm – 6.30 pm

Venue: via Zoom

	Item	Enc / Verbal	Decision; Discussion; Information	Entitled to vote	Lead
1.	Apologies and Welcome				Chair
2.	Minutes from the previous meeting and matters arising (<i>19 January 2021 – as the March meeting was cancelled</i>)	Enc			Chair
3.	Schools Forum Code of Conduct	Enc	Discussion		Paula Worthington
4.	2020/21 DSG & Education Services Outturn Positions	Enc	Information		Garry Bradbury
5.	2020/21 School Balances	Enc	Information		Garry Bradbury
6.	AOB				Chair
7.	Meeting schedule for 2021: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 October 2021 Tuesday at 4.30 – 6.30 pm if virtual <i>(Venue or virtual arrangements TBC)</i>				

Warrington Schools Forum

Minutes – 19 January 2021 (Held via Zoom – due to Covid-19)

Draft to be confirmed March 2021

Membership

Membership with differentiated voting rights ~ Total Membership of 26, of whom 22 are entitled to vote on funding formula issues										
Sector Representation (22)	Appointed by the Council following election by:	Member	Dates and Attendance							
			13 October 2020	19 January 2021	23 March 2021	22 June 2021	12 October 2021	2022 date TBC	2022 date TBC	2022 date TBC
Maintained Nursery School Senior Staff (1)	Primary Headteachers Group	Marcia Atherton (MA) <i>From 19/01/2021</i>	P	P						
Special School Staff (1)	Special School Headteachers Group	Lucinda Duffy (LD)	P	P						
Special School Governor (1)	Governors Forum	Mike Frost (MF)	P	P						
PRU (1)	PRU Management Board	Lindsay Regan (LR) <i>From 19/01/2021</i>	A	A						
Academy – all phases (8) Agreed this should be: (5 secondary including UTC) (3 primary)	Academy Schools	Gwyn Williams (GW)	P	P						
		Tim Long (TL)	P	P						
		John Carlin (JC)	A	P						
		Jon Wright (JonW)	P	P						
		Gary Cunningham (GC)	P	P						
		Paula Warding (PWA)	P	P						
		Cath Cooke (CC)	P	P						
	UTC	Amanda Downing (AD)	A	X						
Maintained Primary School Sector (7)	WAPH and Governors Forum	Jacqui Wightman (JacquiW)	P	P						
		Lesley McGann (LM)	P	A						
		Lyndsey Glass (LG)	P	P						
		Ian Moss (IM)	P	P						
		Janet Lazarus (JL) <i>Governor</i>	P	P						
		Craig Burgess (CB) <i>Governor</i>	P	P						
		Donna Kendal (DK) <i>Governor</i>	-	P						
Maintained Secondary School Sector (2)	WASCL	Chris Hunt (CH)	P	A						
		Ed McGlinchey (EM)	A	X						

Private Voluntary and Independent Providers (1)	PVI Providers Forum	Kelda Willians (KW)	A	X						
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Representing <u>Non-Schools Members (4)</u>	Member	Dates and Attendance							
		13 October 2020	19 January 2021	23 March 2021	22 June 2021	12 October 2021	2022 date TBC	2022 date TBC	2022 date TBC
Anglican Diocese (1)	Jane Griffiths (JG)	P	P						
Roman Catholic Diocese (1)	Chris Williams (CW)	P	A						
16-19 Institutions (1)	Damian McGuire (DM)	P	P						
Parent Governor (1)	Vacant	-	-						

Independent Chair	Maureen Banner (MB)	P	P						
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Representing <u>Warrington Borough Council</u>		13 October 2020	19 January 2021	23 March 2021	22 June 2021	12 October 2021	2022 date TBC	2022 date TBC	2022 date TBC
Director, Early Help, Education and SEND	Paula Worthington (PWo)	P	P						
Finance Manager	James Campbell (JC)	Z	P						
Senior Accountant (Schools)	Garry Bradbury (GB)	P	P						
Executive Member for Children and Young People's Services	Cllr Matt Smith (CllrMS)	A	A						

Key

P ~ Present

S ~ Substitute

A ~ Apologies

- ~ Vacancy

X ~ Absent with no apologies

O ~ Observer

Z ~ no connection to Zoom

Trades Union

Laura Watson

(NASUWT)

Lucie Humphreys

(NEU)

Present

Helen Fleming

WBC (presenting item 3)

Alison Weir

WBC (presenting item 4)

Louise Atkin

WBC (presenting item 5)

Ellen Parry

WBC (presenting item)

Apologies

Kellie Williams

WBC (presenting item 5)

Minutes

Gill Sykes

1. APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

The chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted. Bev Scott-Herron decided to step down because of the numbers and Schools Forum would like to thank her for her contribution and hospitality.

2. MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING (13 OCTOBER 2020)

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting and the following was noted:

- P8 – Andrea Riley was due to come back to the January meeting. Noted that there is an Early Years meeting in February about the nursery.
- P10 – a meeting of the school meals working group was convened as an action from the last Schools Forum but Damian McGuire and Gary Cunningham did not attend.

3. TRADE UNION FACILITIES TIME

Helen Fleming presented her report to the forum and the following was noted:

- The purpose of the report is to request that the maintained school sector commits to the de-delegation for teacher trade union facilities time for the 2021/22 financial year with effect from April.
- Historically the figure was set at £3.67 and last year the figure was revised down to £1.62 mainly due to a significant underspend in the budget. To make sure schools are only paying what they need to pay a review of the contribution has been undertaken. There is an estimated underspend from 2020/21 of approximately £13k. If this underspend is carried forward, the calculated contribution rate from April for participating schools would be £2.93.
- The report outlines the proposed figure and seeks agreement from the forum to carry forward the underspend in order to set the contribution rate at £2.93. Should the forum choose not to use the 2020/21 underspend to reduce the per pupil contribution rate the cost would rise to £3.37.

Questions/comments were invited by the Chair.

- Tim Long noted that the principle of facilities time is not something they are against, they want a better understanding of how the money is spent, how it is calculated and what they get back in terms of support before the trust can commit to the process. The trust has to account for value for money and a calculation based on the number of members in schools and the number of pupils in school might not be the best measurement. Also noted that not all unions are supported in the facilities time.
- Helen noted that the current trade union facilities agreement is due to be reviewed this year. They are starting to plan a consultation with stakeholders and Schools Forum in connection with the document. The process won't be ready in time for the new facilities arrangement that starts this April, but should be in place for September depending on progress with the consultation.
- It has not yet been agreed what the process will look like. There will be preliminary discussions on the policy document before going through the mechanism of consultation. Stakeholders will be involved in the process. Tim asked for the forum to be given more detail about what the process will look like along with timeframes. Helen informed that they will provide details of the process and how they intend to move forward as soon as it is available.
- Gary Cunningham noted that the current cost saving is from the district secretary retiring and queried if there is a rate that the local authorities and Schools Forum agree with regard to each area or is it dependent on who is in post. Helen noted that we reimburse whoever is elected by the trades union in the role. Historically the NEU rate has cost more based on the person in post.
- Garry Bradbury noted there can't be a national decision as the de-delegation process is a local provision.
- Jacqui W queried whether the salary was capped at M6 in the past. Helen agreed to find out.
- Laura Watson noted that if you capped the pay you would restrict who would apply. Some people wouldn't undertake the role at M6. The role can be 7 days per week and depending on what is going on with your staff can be 8.00 am on a Monday or 11.00 pm on a Sunday night. It is a very varied role and

the service isn't just about reading policy documents it is about preventing issues coming to you in the first place.

- Jon Wright informed that Omega value the facilities time and value the work done together. There is an allocation in the schools funding to facilitate this and it is something we should be doing. The academy trust is able to buy in and appreciates the work the team has done and appreciates the work of association colleagues.
- Jacqui noted if we are all agreeing to this we need to confirm that the reduced rate is only going to apply to those schools who contributed and if schools want to come in afterwards we need to decide what figure they will join at. Jacqui proposed accepting the recommendations and Lyndsey Glass seconded.
- Chris Hunt emailed on behalf of secondary maintained colleagues with their acceptance of the recommendations.

Recommendations:

- (1)** Schools Forum are requested to agree to carry forward the predicted 20/21 under spend into 21/22 in order that this can be used to reduce the per pupil cost for participating schools and academies for next financial year. **AGREED**
- (2)** Taking into account the carry forward, it is therefore proposed that Schools Forum agree, on behalf of the maintained school sector to de-delegate £2.93 per pupil for the purposes of teacher trade union facility time in 2021/22. Participating academies are asked to contribute at the same rate. **AGREED**
- (3)** This reduced rate will apply only to those schools that have supported and contributed to the shared facilities time arrangements historically. **AGREED**

4. SCHOOL INSURANCE

Alison Weir introduced herself and presented her report to the forum and the following was noted:

- A paper was prepared for Schools Forum last year outlining the proposed extension of the Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) to maintained schools. We are trying to establish if there is an appetite to continue with the council or if schools are starting to look at RPA.
- If there is sufficient movement into RPA it might be difficult for the council to cover the remaining schools. There may be a tipping point about whether we continue as we are.
- Key concerns are about the cover and the price for the cover.
- Premium costs have increased as the whole insurance market is really challenged. We are talking to brokers about whether there is anything more cost effective for schools.
- We offer wraparound cover for VA schools and our cover steps in where the Diocese cover stops.
- If schools would prefer the certainty of a flat rate charge per pupil, this could be introduced, although different rates would be required for maintained schools, RC schools, and CE schools because of the differing arrangements in place for property insurance across voluntary aided schools.
- Noted that the service offers advice and support as well as the insurance.

Questions and comments were invited by the Chair.

- Noted that this relates to maintained schools.
- It is worth exploring the options on the final bullet point of the report. If schools return to council arrangements there needs to be something to return to.
- Alison noted that as schools converted to academies it was relatively straightforward to take them out of the process on an incremental basis. It is fine to add the odd school in, but if there is annual movement in and out we may have to agree a period of time to be out before coming back in.
- Lyndsey queried if it needs consideration by WAPH and noted that against having to arrange yourself it has been working well.
- Alison informed that previously the only change was schools converting to academy, but now RPA has been opened up to maintained schools. General view now seems to be an overriding view for change. If levels continue with pressures on premiums it could be a more difficult decision for schools to take.

The Chair asked if the maintained sector were accepting the report and this was agreed.

The following considerations are available to the Forum:

- (1) To continue with the Council's current arrangements for providing and charging for insurance or to explore options for change, which range from review of charging arrangements to procuring alternative arrangements through the RPA.
- (2) To consider whether opt into the RPA should be on a collective basis (which would require a decision to de-delegate insurance), or an individual decision for each school.
- (3) To recognise that any decisions to opt in to the RPA either collectively or individually may have implications for the Council's LTAs with insurers.
- (4) To recognise that arrangements will need to be agreed for covers which are not available under the RPA.
- (5) To recognise that the Council will continue to retain some liabilities for schools which opt into the RPA and to commission further work to consider how these liabilities will be managed and funded.
- (6) To recognise that arrangements will need to be agreed for schools which have opted into the RPA and subsequently wish to return to the Council's arrangements.

5. SPECIAL SCHOOL REVIEW AND BROADER HIGH NEEDS ISSUES

Louise Atkin presented the report to the forum with Ellen Parry as Kellie Williams was unwell and had sent her apologies. The following was noted:

- Schools Forum are asked to consider a holistic review of special educational needs provision. It has been a number of years since Warrington has had a comprehensive review. It will be an opportunity to review some of the initiatives put in place e.g. committed to inclusion and to inform future planning.
- The proposal to the forum is to support the SEN review and to note that this could potentially have an impact on the high needs budget. Noted that everyone will be kept informed whatever the findings are.
- We are looking to review placements in the short, medium and long term and looking at capacity of special provision for forecast numbers. There will be a site review and the resources needed to meet special educational needs moving forward with consideration of therapeutic resource now and what may be required for the future. Banding and top up funding will be reviewed as well as the demand for outreach support.
- The project initiation document (PID) has been included to forum members to support special needs review.

Questions and comments were invited by the Chair.

- Regional benchmarking is taking place within the North West, looking at banding and funding across regional local authorities. The DfE host the NW meetings and we have some statistical neighbours we can compare with.
- The NW authorities are all reviewing SEN due to pressures on budgets and the need for special needs places. We are all committed to sharing resources and good practice.
- Noted that communication with mainstream settings about possibly fundamental changes needs to be very clear.
- Craig B asked if the review is going to be time-consuming and cost money, will there be outcomes you can implement. Louise noted we will be giving priority to short, medium and long term measures and looking at designated provision places to support children with additional needs moving forward. Craig B noted that we shouldn't forget the good practice which sometimes costs more and to be careful not to let budget cuts impact on the children in our local authority.
- Lyndsey noted it was really important to keep the review in-house and use people we know so it doesn't cost vast amounts of money. Some reviews in the past used costly external consultants. Ellen confirmed that external consultants had been considered but it was decided to keep the review in-house.
- The forum queried what was planned for consulting with families. Louise confirmed that the PID shows all stakeholders we will be consulting with families, people's voice, SENDIASS and WARRPAC. In view of Covid-19 the local authority is liaising with special provisions about the best way to seek family view. This can be individual to each school and there will be a combination of surveys and where appropriate

face to face discussions. The review team will be talking to school leaders about the best way to contact to families.

- Craig B echoed that we need to be really careful when approaching stakeholders with the message that we are trying to provide the best possible service for Warrington children. All families will fear cuts and the review team should speak to WARRPAC first for the best way to get the message across without frightening families.
- Ellen noted that Kellie Williams has regular meetings with WARRPAC and a newsletter goes out to all families.
- The Chair noted that within some of our wards are families who are not conversant with the language in the report and asked if the review team will be asking schools to ensure they have someone in place to help families who can't grasp what they are being told. Louise confirmed that they are talking to school leaders about the best way to communicate with the parents. We are aware of some of the difficulties and barriers to communication and hopefully can overcome these for a successful review.
- This will also be a time to celebrate some of the outstanding practice across Warrington and explore where we need to make a difference.

Recommendations - Schools Forum is asked to:

- (a)** Note the proposal outlined in section 2. **NOTED**
- (b)** Support the proposal for a review of provision for children and young people with special and additional needs. **AGREED**
- (c)** Support the process for the reviews by committing to the schedule of activities. **AGREED**
- (d)** Have consideration of the impact the review may have on the High Needs Block. **NOTED**
- (e)** Note that the council will work with all stakeholders during the review including SENDIAS, WARRPAC, parents / carers and with WAPH, WASCL, school leaders and governors. **NOTED**

6. MEMBERSHIP – updated membership was agreed by the forum

7. DSG SETTLEMENT AND SCHOOLS FUNDING 2021/22

Garry Bradbury presented his report to the forum and the following was noted:

- The DSG allocations were notified in December. There is increased funding across all the blocks, however the EY block in total is still less than last year. The additional funding is negated by a reduction in numbers from the census between January 2019 and January 2020. There is a per pupil increase, schools block factors have increased and IDACI has changed. The teacher pay grant and pension grant is included in the formula for mainstream and no longer a separate allocation. There will still be a separate allocation for special and nursery.
- Growth funding has reduced. There is a census reduction in pupil numbers. However, FSM numbers have increased by approximately 20%. When we ran the NFF for updated data there was a slight affordability issue and had to use all the growth funding to make NFF affordable.
- Although the EY block hourly funding rate has increased the actual aggregate of funding has reduced because of the decline in numbers reported at the October Schools Forum meeting. A meeting of the EY funding formula group is planned for February and its recommendation will be reported back to the next Schools Forum.
- The HN block showed a substantial increase, partly as a consequence of the FSM increase.
- The school budgets 2021/22 consultation delivered a clear message in favour of 2.4 (from the report) being implemented. If we do that after using most of the growth funding it would leave unallocated element of £53K. The forum needs to make a decision about what to do with the unallocated element and there are a number of options. It could be used for contingency or added to AWPU. As most schools are protected by the sector minimum or MFG only 13 schools (7 primaries and 6 secondaries) would see the benefit of a small allocation. Alternatively, this could be transferred out of the schools block into the HN block or could be transferred to the EY block. As discussed the EY block has become a concern in terms of funding levels because of the structure and the number of 2, 3 and 4 year olds.
- Maintained schools need to make a decision on the remaining de-delegations. For the last couple of years we didn't de-delegate for pupil number contingencies. For information, there is money still

remaining from 3 years ago, £93K for pupil number increases and £76K for class sizes. The actual numbers on roll have not increased and in primary have reduced slightly. This contingency has not been drawn upon much and could be topped up or left as is.

- Pupil premium funding rates remain the same. We have now been informed that qualifying data is to be taken from the October census rather than the January census.

Questions and comments were invited by the Chair.

- Jacqui noted that we don't need to consider the amounts of money, we need to make decisions about principles. Propose we agree with the school budget consultation recommendation of Option 1 (the 2% option for MFG). Concerned about EY and their budget as in the past a large proportion was moved out of their block. Need to be mindful of the youngest children and early intervention. Recommend the unallocated element of £53K is transferred to the EY block. The primary maintained sector agrees to the proposed de-delegations, but not for the contingency.
- Lyndsey seconded all the points made by Jacqui and reiterated that EY had taken a big hit with the HN block money and we need to sustain the excellent maintained EY provision including our nursery.
- Gwyn Williams referred to the way the presented results of the consultation were totalled up as votes for primary and secondary. Noted that it is not fair for the primary votes to be worth the same as secondary votes when a secondary school could have ten times more children than a primary school. Garry informed that if the message from the two sectors had been different then this would be a reason for a different analysis. Gwyn wanted to make clear that although it was academic this time it might not be for a different report and this should be borne in mind.
- Damian referred to Appendix 2 and asked for there to be a column with pupil numbers for the calculation so that it gives a better picture for the funding.
- Pupil premium plus in relation to post looked after children was discussed and there were questions around this subject. The Chair suggested a report could be prepared for the next Schools Forum, but following the meeting Paula Worthington emailed forum members to clarify the confusion around pupil premium plus. See email reproduced below in italics.
- Craig Burgess asked about the overspend on the HN block and how does this compare with other local authorities in the North West. Garry informed that it is between £1.3m and £1.5m and some local authorities have overspends of tens of millions. Noted that individual LAs vary in size and characteristics and a £10m overspend in one LA may be proportionate to our £1.5m overspend. There are very few local authorities with less of an overspend than us.

It is recommended that Schools Forum members representing mainstream schools:

- (1) Note the contents of the report; **NOTED**
- (2) Consider the budget options in the light of this evening's discussion of the autumn funding consultation outcome, and recommend which MFG option to include for 2021/22, and agree an appropriate use of the allocation of headroom funding; **AGREED WITH OPTION 1 (THE 2% OPTION FOR MFG), AGREED THE UNALLOCATED ELEMENT OF £53K IS TRANSFERRED TO THE EY BLOCK.**
- (3) For maintained sector representatives, agree de-delegations, where appropriate, for the various services discussed in section 4.5. **AGREED**

The following update to discussion was emailed to Schools Forum members from Paula Worthington outside of the meeting on 21/01/2021:

I was only able to join the meeting late having only finished at University just after 5.30. I understand that there was some confusion about Pupil Premium Plus and I wanted to confirm the position. There appeared to be an assertion that the LA is now in receipt of Post Looked After Pupil Premium funding instead of this funding going to schools. This is incorrect. This funding is still going to schools based on school census returns. It is the school's responsibility to identify and claim for post-looked after children.

Guidance published on 17th December 2020 states "Schools get £2,345 for every pupil who has left local authority care through adoption, a special guardianship order or child arrangements order."

In 2020/21, the funding for Warrington schools is £778,540 (which comprises £426,790 to maintained schools and £351,750 to academies) to support 332 post-looked after children.

If you would like to discuss this further please can I ask you to contact Simon Lennox Virtual Headteacher in the first instance simon.lennox@warrington.gov.uk

8. AOB

Proposal for Free School Meals funding from academy schools – follow-up report

Ellen Parry presented her report to the forum. It was noted that the feedback from Omega MAT was only available to forum members on the morning of the Schools Forum meeting and it was felt there was not enough time to consider it fully. The following was noted:

- The school meals group convened a meeting as an action from the last schools forum but the academy reps did not attend. Noted that the headteacher working group for school meals meet on a regular basis and bring up anything they are not happy with.
- Query raised of Omega MAT about whether they received their voucher money back from the government or if they didn't use the national voucher scheme. For the reduced service during lockdown, queried if their vulnerable or key worker children had free meals and extra drinks packages.
- Noted that it would not be fair for maintained schools to be paying for academy schools when this service has already been provided.
- Damian noted that TCAT fully support everything within the Omega MAT document. TCAT were the first to make an offer about how much it would contribute and note that it is not a FSM issue it is a service issue. When their calculation was made the actual amount is lower than what was estimated by the local authority.
- Noted that reps need to be at the meeting to have some control over the decisions and the service. If you feel the service is not value for money, you need to share that with the group. It was felt strongly that academies shouldn't withhold the money.
- It was noted there possibly needs to be a review of the service, with a different SLA for academies. The council cannot continue underwriting overspends of the service.
- Ellen noted there needs to be some funding coming back from the academies and any issues should have been raised as soon as they come about. We disagree with some of the information e.g. around hot meals. Schools were contacted and the service were tailoring the needs of each school. Some schools said no to hot meals.
- Damian informed that they made an offer in July and there has been a lack of communication following their offer so to be pushed for a decision now is wrong.
- Jon Wright noted that the Omega MAT paper was a very honest overview of a complex issue. He stated that it was trying to support the LA and support the school meals service. This seems to have been missed by people who have read it. It is not about the quality of the service although that was raised. It is other issues about academies who lost funding on their own school meals services as well as the LA. Academies have to go to the trust and explain what they can pay. Money is allocated in different ways and the conditions of the grant for academies is different from the grant for maintained schools. The intention was to try to help the forum get a balanced view.
- Gary C noted that the school meals service have been flexible and supportive and noted that they are not refusing to pay but need clarity around the figures. Gary proposed a meeting is held where CFOs and FDs from the trusts meet with Garry Bradbury and School Meals reps to agree a fully accounted solution. We may then come to a common agreement across all academies, whilst at the same time address local issues regarding individual school meals' balances and potential inaccuracies. If an agreement is reached, this can then be signed off by trustees at each of the MATs. It was agreed for this meeting to take place as soon as possible and in the meantime the recommendations below were deferred.

Action: Ellen to arrange a meeting as soon as possible.

Schools Forum is asked to:

(a) Note the proposal outlined in section 2. **DEFERRED**

(b) Support the proposal for academies to transfer all of their free school meal funding allocations to the School Meals Service each academic year from 1st September 2020. **DEFERRED**

(c) Support the proposal for the transfer of academy FSM funding from the start of the first lockdown until the end of the academic year (July 2020). **DEFERRED**

9. MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2021

- 23 March 2021 at 4.30 pm via Zoom
- 22 June 2021
- 12 October 2021

All Tuesdays at 5.15 – 7.00 pm unless held virtually and will then start at 4.30 pm
(Venue or virtual arrangements TBC)

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and the meeting was closed.

DRAFT

Schools Forum Code of Conduct

The forum acts as a consultative body on some issues and a decision making body on others – the respective roles of schools forums, local authorities and the DfE are summarised in the schools forum powers and responsibilities document and the overarching areas on which schools forums make decisions are set out in Section 1 point 9 of the schools forum operational and good practice guidance. Decisions made by schools forum do not automatically cover academies however it is hoped we will work together collectively in the best interests of all schools and colleges in Warrington.

Central to the effectiveness of the schools forum will be the relationship between its constituent members and with the local authority. There are a number of characteristics of this relationship that are especially important (taken from the operational and good practice guide)

- Partnership – a shared understanding of the priorities, issues and concerns of schools, academies and the local authority – working to a collective contract
- Effective support - the schools forum is supported by the LA in an efficient and professional manner
- Challenge and scrutiny – school forum may be asked to agree proposals from their LA that will have an effect on **all** schools and academies in the local area – the extent to which they do this is an important aspect of their effectiveness
- Communication - it is vital that communication is open, respectful and transparent

Key principles to support effective working are:

1. *Selflessness* – schools forum members should serve only the public interest and not confer an advantage on any person or individual school – the extent to which schools forum can challenge and scrutinise is an important aspect of their effectiveness
2. *Honesty and integrity* – members should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or material benefit for themselves and should act in a truthful manner
3. *Objectivity* – members should make decisions based on merit and without prejudice or favour
4. *Accountability* – members should be accountable for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities
5. *Openness* – members should be as open as possible about their actions and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions and decisions
6. *Personal judgement* - Members should take account of the views of their elective / nominating bodies to reach conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.
7. *Respect for others* - Members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the local authority's officers. They should respect other Forum members

8. *Stewardship* - Members should do whatever they are able to ensure that the local authority uses Dedicated Schools Grant prudently and in accordance with regulations.
9. *Leadership* - Members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, should act in a way that secures or preserves schools confidence.
10. *Confidentiality* - Members should observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of the Forum. Forum members will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding Schools Forum business arise outside a Forum meeting.
11. *Papers* – most business will be done on the basis of prepared papers – it is crucial that these are concise and informative, shared in a timely manner, produced in a consistent format and robustly discussed in agreed meetings prior to the schools forum meeting to aid decision making. The agenda and related documents will be produced objectively and openly to support the Forum business

When new members join appropriate induction materials will be provided, and if appropriate a 'mentor' from the forum will be identified for a short period of time

These key principles have been developed from The Seven Principles of Public Life known as the Nolan Principles – these are the basis of ethical standards expected of public office holders

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/971710/Schools_forum_operational_and_good_practice_guide_amended_March_2021.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/971711/2021_Schools_forums_powers_and_responsibilities.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/740722/Schools_forums_structure.docx.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/888263/Schools_forum_self-assessment_checklist.pdf

REPORT

Report to:	Schools Forum	Item:	4
Date:	22 June 2021	For:	Information
Title:	2020/21 DSG & Education Services Outturn Positions		
Author:	Garry Bradbury	Queries to:	Gbradbury@warrington.gov.uk

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to notify Schools Forum of the confirmed outturn position for the central Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) activities for 2020/21. This includes whole-school activities and central education functions, but excludes individual school balances, which are reported on separately. It also briefs on the wider closing position for Education and SEND
- 1.2 The accounts for financial year 2020/21 were closed during April, but have not yet been officially ratified by the LA's external auditors. Families & Wellbeing Directorate has reported an overspend on DSG of £219,095. This represents, in percentage terms, a deficit balance of 0.21%, after accounting for Academy recoupment. However, because Schools Block DSG is 100% committed, with the surpluses and deficits being retained by the schools, the reported overspend is, in practical terms, generated against the other three blocks (Early Years, High Needs and Central Services, totalling a net £33m), where it represents an overspend of 0.66%.
- 1.3 This final overspend is closer to the predicted closing position at the start of the financial year (£86k in deficit), and is therefore much reduced from the in-year £600k-£700k deficit anticipated as placement costs grew at pre-and post-16 out of borough settings. The compensatory factor has been an underspend in the Early Years block attributable to reductions in attendance funding at settings as a consequence of COVID-19. PVI settings were granted support funding during the lockdown period, though this was inevitably less than normal funding if children had attended in usual numbers. Nevertheless, there are likely to be retrospective EY Block funding reductions when the Block is recalculated per the January 2021 census, so we have created a contingency as a hedge against this.
- 1.4 A deficit position means that there is no funding to be recirculated generally to schools. The accumulated deficit (current year plus brought-forward balance) is no longer treated as an immediate spending pressure for 2021/22. However the Department for Education expects that Authorities will be beginning the process of "payback" of accumulated deficits – though

they do not give a steer on how long this process should ultimately take. The intention presently is that 2021/22 budgets should include the provision to pare back the deficit to previous years' levels – in other words the in-year DSG deficit in 2020/21 will act as “first call” on spending plans in 2021/22.

2 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT BALANCES

2.1 DSG is reporting a net overspend of £0.219 m in 2020/21 (and consequently an accumulated deficit of £0.938m). This overall position is an aggregate of a number of individual variances. The table below shows those individual balances with appropriate observations:

	Budget	Outturn	Variance	
School Budgets	£78,274,010	£78,274,013	-£3	
Licences	£115,000	£76,949	£38,051	Charges waived, FFT paid WBC
Staffing	£5,000	£84,004	-£79,004	Maternity & Rehab
Early Years	£12,945,231	£13,053,578	-£108,347	Includes contingency (see 1.3)
High Needs	£11,285,123	£11,355,471	-£70,348	Post-16 SEN o/spend, Medical u/spend
Free Meals	£30,000	£30,000	£0	
Repairs & Maintenance	£80,000	£80,000	£0	
Contingency	£932,750	£937,362	-£4,612	
DSG Received	-£103,667,114	-£103,672,280	£5,166	Timings of recoupment
	£0	£219,096	-£219,096	

2.2 DSG is also reported across activity headings with the Families and Wellbeing directorate. The final 2020/21 position for DSG is shown below:

	Budget	Outturn	Variance	
4_1_1 Retained School Budgets	-£11,395,123	-£11,246,375	-£148,748	Original deficit
4_1_3 Achievement & Inclusive Education (11-19)	£588,350	£461,482	£126,868	Medical tuition contribution from Virtual School
4_1_7 Admissions & School Organisation	£80,000	£80,000	£0	
4_1_9 DSG Free Meals	£30,000	£30,000	£0	
4_1_10 Commissioned SEN support	£10,344,273	£10,548,380	-£204,107	Post-16 SEN
4_1_11 Support teams (Sensory Team / SALT)	£352,500	£345,608	£6,892	
4_2_7 Early Years Quality & SEND	£0	£0	£0	
	£0	£219,096	-£219,096	

2.3 Primary representatives on Schools Forum have already agreed that the underspends on de-delegated contingencies (£93,303 pupil number growth, £75,951 additional classes) should be rolled into 2021/22, in lieu of a further de-delegation in this financial year. Also, agreement was reached with all members that a surplus of £13,742 on the union facilities agreement should be carried forward. The closing DSG position accounts for these. The overall balance on other de-delegated services was a net overspend of £23,069, so there is no unused balance to return to schools. Miscellaneous licences were underspent because some licence holders waived charges due to COVID-19, and the Fischer Family Trust licence was this year picked up centrally by the LA. Details below:

	<i>De- delegation</i>	<i>B/fwd</i>	<i>Spend</i>	<i>Carry- forward agreed SF</i>	<i>Balance Remaining</i>
Miscellaneous Licences	£34,019.46		£250.00		£33,769.46
CLEAPSS	£5,436.90		£3,768.55		£1,668.35
Teachers Panel*	£48,889.56	£39,000.00	£74,147.53	£13,742.03	£0.00
Maternity	£365,532.88		£426,653.15		-£61,120.27
FMS	£82,855.20		£80,241.94		£2,613.26
Primary NOR Contingency		£139,180.68	£45,877.56	£93,303.12	£0.00
Primary Class Size Contingency		£89,207.23	£13,255.84	£75,951.39	£0.00
	£536,734.00	£267,387.91	£644,194.57	£182,996.54	-£23,069.20

*Original de-delegation adjusted for Academy contributions

3 EDUCATION BUDGETS 2020/21

3.1 Although DSG is a significant part of non-school education funding, it does not underpin the entirety of the sector. Other grant funding and core Local Authority budgets are also employed. In 2020/21, the core education position was an underspend of £750K, across areas of activity depressed by the effects of the pandemic (transport, disabled children direct carers' payments, LA interventions), and as such, unlikely to be repeated. The overall 2020/21 position is illustrated below, showing how the DSG overspend fits into the fuller picture for Education & SEND.

Service Area	Budget	Outturn	DSG Under / Over Spend (- = overspend)	Base Under / Over Spend (- = overspend)	Total Under / Over Spend (- = overspend)
FWB4_1_1 Retained School Budgets	-£11,395,123	-£11,246,375	-£148,748	£0	-£148,748
FWB4_1_2 Music	£0	£10,519		-£10,519	-£10,519
FWB4_1_3 Achievement & Inclusive Education (11-19)	£891,342	£712,107	£126,868	£52,367	£179,235
FWB4_1_4 Planning & Participation (11-19)	£983,857	£831,676		£152,181	£152,181
FWB4_1_5 Central Schools	-£849,891	-£1,034,680		£184,789	£184,789
FWB4_1_6 School Meals	£99,400	£37,929		£61,471	£61,471
FWB4_1_7 Admissions & School Organisation	£53,604	£88,273	£0	-£34,669	-£34,669
FWB4_1_8 Transport	£2,700,199	£2,546,491		£153,708	£153,708
FWB4_1_9 DSG Free Meals	£30,000	£30,000	£0	£0	£0
FWB4_1_10 Commissioned SEN support	£11,232,474	£11,388,279	-£204,107	£48,302	-£155,805
FWB4_1_11 Support teams	£352,500	£345,608	£6,892	£0	£6,892
FWB4_1_12 CWD Services	£843,015	£700,320		£142,695	£142,695
FWB4_1 Head of Education Services & SEND	£4,941,377	£4,410,148	-£219,095	£750,324	£531,229



4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Schools Forum is asked to note the 2020/21 outturn position for DSG, and that this overspend will be aggregated with the 'brought forward' deficit of £718,754, such that the accumulated DSG deficit as at March 2021 stands at £937,849.
- 4.2 Maintained school representatives are asked to note that no additional balances are due to be returned in respect of de-delegated services.

2.2 As can be seen, balances in both mainstream sectors have increased, but proportionately, the greatest change is across the three maintained secondary sector schools, where the surplus has more than doubled.

2.3 Individual school balances are detailed in **Appendix 1**.

2.4 In terms of discretionary enquiry, 22 primary schools, 2 secondary, and 2 special schools recorded balances in excess of the Audit Commission recommendation.

These are highlighted below for information.

Cost Centre	School	2020/2021 Balance @ 31/3/21	2020/2021 Balance of Funding	2020/21 Challenge Level	Previous automatic clawback
35002	Dallam	£328,461	16.67%	£170,793	£21,349
35006	St Elphin's CE	£280,583	14.07%	£121,062	£15,133
35007	St Andrew's	£210,571	16.98%	£111,391	£13,924
35010	St Margaret's	£347,205	14.79%	£159,363	£19,920
35011	Our Lady's	£92,528	9.88%	£17,627	£2,203
35012	Sacred Heart	£192,493	18.43%	£108,920	£13,615
35013	St Alban's	£149,689	13.36%	£60,038	£7,505
35015	St Benedict's	£139,426	12.23%	£48,240	£6,030
35016	St Stephen's	£183,576	15.95%	£91,487	£11,436
35020	St Monica's	£103,948	12.19%	£35,707	£4,463
35021	St Wilfrid's	£148,242	8.62%	£10,595	£1,324
35024	Stockton Heath	£157,479	9.01%	£17,634	£2,204
35026	Thelwall Junior	£120,594	14.97%	£56,135	£7,017
35027	Thelwall Infants	£80,740	11.87%	£26,309	£3,289
35028	Statham	£115,409	12.39%	£40,863	£5,108
35033	Culcheth	£174,297	16.99%	£92,231	£11,529
35045	Locking Stumps	£178,408	9.60%	£29,808	£3,726
35047	St Joseph's	£184,502	15.67%	£90,311	£11,289
35056	Barrow Hall Lane	£330,546	12.61%	£120,870	£15,109
35060	Birchwood	£211,179	17.85%	£116,560	£14,570
35065	St Phillip's	£219,617	9.63%	£37,127	£4,641
35405	Sandy Lane Nursery	£217,210	27.70%	£154,471	£19,309
Total Primary		£4,166,704	13.61%	£1,717,544	£214,693
35103	Culcheth	£603,028	9.42%	£283,051	£35,381
35107	St Gregory's	£898,371	15.45%	£607,559	£75,945
Total Secondary		£1,501,399	12.29%	£890,609	£111,326
35200	Green Lane	£503,458	18.21%	£282,221	£35,278
35205	Green Lane 6th Form	£211,615	35.00%	£163,241	£20,405
35201	Fox Wood	£224,604	12.11%	£76,289	£9,536
Total Special Schools & Alternative Provision		£939,677	17.99%	£521,751	£65,219
TOTAL		£6,607,780	13.75%	£3,129,904	£391,238

2.5 The amounts considered “excessive” by the Audit Commission criteria (i.e. the theoretical 2020/21 challenge level) represent 32% of primary balances, 53% of secondary balances and 56% of special school balances. The previous WBC “automatic clawback” (12.5% of excess balances) would have recirculated £391,238

amongst schools – this would be 4.9% of overall balances.

- 2.6 Although the levels of balance appear superficially quite high, first impressions may be somewhat misleading. There is no substitute for individual schools investigating their balances in detail, but Accountancy has done a global exercise to ‘strip out’ balances remaining tied to grants such as pupil premium and primary PE & Sports grant, and also the surpluses used to deliver a balanced budget in 2021/22. This revised, “underlying” figure – uncommitted balances, in essence – is substantially lower at £3,683,075. The detail of this is shown in **Appendix 2**.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Schools Forum members are asked to note the level of maintained school balances recorded at the end of 2020/21.
- 3.2 Schools Forum members representing WAPH and WASCL are asked to consider whether to recommend that schools evaluate internally their closing 2020/21 balances.

Appendix 1: 2020/2021 School Balances

Cost Centre	School	2020/2021	2020/2021	2020/2021	2019/2020	Year on Year	
		Balance @ 31/3/21	Funding	Balance of Funding	Balance @ 31/3/20	£	%
		£	£	%	£	£	%
35001	Bewsey Lodge	10,229	2,169,847	0%	28,027	-17,798	-64%
35002	Dallam	328,461	1,970,844	17%	197,972	130,488	66%
35006	St Elphin's CE	280,583	1,994,014	14%	253,909	26,674	11%
35007	St Andrew's	210,571	1,239,755	17%	184,375	26,196	14%
35008	St Ann's	85,641	1,239,838	7%	105,282	-19,641	-19%
35009	St Barnabas'	71,430	1,229,548	6%	8,735	62,695	718%
35010	St Margaret's	347,205	2,348,021	15%	294,981	52,224	18%
35011	Our Lady's	92,528	936,257	10%	72,170	20,358	28%
35012	Sacred Heart	192,493	1,044,654	18%	123,760	68,733	56%
35013	St Alban's	149,689	1,120,635	13%	17,017	132,672	780%
35014	St Augustine's	59,975	931,452	6%	39,565	20,410	52%
35015	St Benedict's	139,426	1,139,830	12%	119,197	20,230	17%
35016	St Stephen's	183,576	1,151,114	16%	36,105	147,471	408%
35017	Appleton Thorn	26,596	919,556	3%	21,477	5,119	24%
35018	The Cobbs	4,258	1,447,517	0%	28,880	-24,622	-85%
35020	St Monica's	103,948	853,012	12%	99,392	4,556	5%
35021	St Wilfrid's	148,242	1,720,580	9%	47,777	100,464	210%
35022	Bradshaw	62,842	936,575	7%	50,472	12,370	25%
35023	St Thomas'	68,876	1,063,195	6%	80,518	-11,642	-14%
35024	Stockton Heath	157,479	1,748,071	9%	110,199	47,280	43%
35025	Stretton St Matthew's	27,446	909,471	3%	833	26,613	3196%
35026	Thelwall Junior	120,594	805,731	15%	62,324	58,270	93%
35027	Thelwall Infants	80,740	680,387	12%	55,876	24,864	44%
35028	Statham	115,409	931,819	12%	96,027	19,381	20%
35029	Cherry Tree	31,588	977,500	3%	-18,673	50,261	-269%
35030	Ravenbank	67,399	1,747,058	4%	46,644	20,755	44%
35031	Oughtrington	111,760	1,783,743	6%	70,621	41,139	58%
35033	Culcheth	174,297	1,025,829	17%	137,897	36,400	26%
35034	Newchurch	47,664	853,152	6%	52,783	-5,118	-10%
35035	Twiss Green	-47,479	910,508	-5%	-5,387	-42,093	781%
35036	St Paul of the Cross	25,973	788,611	3%	18,850	7,123	38%
35038	Christ Church	101,099	1,513,436	7%	68,061	33,038	49%
35039	St Oswald's	34,448	944,372	4%	-12,774	47,221	-370%
35040	Brook Acre	74,537	1,410,325	5%	85,198	-10,661	-13%
35042	St Bridget's	15,357	1,141,944	1%	-10,900	26,257	-241%
35043	St Lewis'	46,692	802,176	6%	61,327	-14,636	-24%
35045	Locking Stumps	178,408	1,857,496	10%	153,862	24,546	16%
35047	St Joseph's	184,502	1,177,388	16%	68,395	116,107	170%
35048	St Vincent's	-114,332	794,520	-14%	-50,550	-63,782	126%
35050	St Peter's	61,275	916,177	7%	60,045	1,230	2%
35052	Woolston	61,046	912,078	7%	5,083	55,963	1101%
35056	Barrow Hall Lane	330,546	2,620,951	13%	177,225	153,322	87%
35057	Sankey Valley St James'	88,840	1,228,842	7%	97,489	-8,649	-9%
35059	Winwick	57,765	859,150	7%	48,372	9,393	19%
35060	Birchwood	211,179	1,182,748	18%	121,714	89,466	74%
35062	Cinnamon Brow	60,574	1,685,484	4%	32,976	27,598	84%
35064	Callands	60,614	1,601,978	4%	8,120	52,495	647%
35065	St Phillip's	219,617	2,281,126	10%	256,551	-36,934	-14%
35066	Grappenhall Heys	16,788	978,300	2%	44,690	-27,902	-62%
35067	Latchford St James'	49,075	1,068,588	5%	53,666	-4,592	-9%
35405	Sandy Lane Nursery	217,210	784,239	28%	202,740	14,469	7%
Total Primary		5,434,679	64,379,437	8.4%	3,908,897	1,525,782	39%
35103	Culcheth	603,028	6,399,558	9%	272,870	330,158	121%
35107	St Gregory's	898,371	5,816,240	15%	509,733	388,637	76%
35121	Cardinal Newman	173,558	4,533,032	4%	1,029	172,528	16761%
Total Secondary		1,674,957	16,748,830	10%	783,633	891,324	114%
35200	Green Lane	503,458	2,765,454	18%	415,316	88,141	21%
35205	Green Lane 6th Form	211,615	604,675	35%	161,510	50,105	31%
35201	Fox Wood	224,604	1,853,941	12%	175,799	48,806	28%
35206	Fox Wood 6th Form	30,046	567,027	5%	142,343	-112,297	-79%
35202	Woolston Brook	-40,167	1,569,237	-3%	69,867	-110,033	-157%
Total Special Schools & Alternative Provision		929,556	7,360,334	13%	964,835	-35,279	-4%
TOTAL		8,039,192	88,488,602	9.1%	5,657,365	2,381,827	42.1%



Appendix 2

Breakdown of School Balances 2020/2021

Cost Centre	School	Balance used					Total
		Uncommitted balance	in 21/22 budget	Pupil Premium	PE & Sport	COVID Catch Up	
		£	£	£	£	£	£
PRIMARY SCHOOLS							
35001	Bewsey Lodge	10,229	0	0	0	0	10,229
35002	Dallam	135,905	136,401	30,061	16,234	9,860	328,461
35006	St Elphin's CE	-61,038	278,275	50,680	11,630	1,036	280,583
35007	St Andrew's	99,858	108,877	0	0	1,836	210,571
35008	St Ann's	-7,832	68,557	8,841	16,075	0	85,641
35009	St Barnabas'	37,584	28,734	0	5,112	0	71,430
35010	St Margaret's	281,686	37,585	0	27,934	0	347,205
35011	Our Lady's	65,963	23,582	0	2,983	0	92,528
35012	Sacred Heart	106,214	51,181	16,767	9,551	8,780	192,493
35013	St Alban's	-22,099	136,595	7,288	20,155	7,750	149,689
35014	St Augustine's	-9,065	59,975	0	8,552	513	59,975
35015	St Benedict's	10,678	94,566	24,345	1,859	7,978	139,426
35016	St Stephen's	164,436	9,570	0	0	9,570	183,576
35017	Appleton Thorn	10,096	16,494	0	0	6	26,596
35018	The Cobbs	0	4,258	0	0	0	4,258
35020	St Monica's	10,834	77,364	0	14,103	1,647	103,948
35021	St Wilfrid's	43,316	71,294	6,332	12,018	15,282	148,242
35022	Bradshaw	27,937	29,172	1,058	384	4,291	62,842
35023	St Thomas'	-7,896	67,471	0	9,301	0	68,876
35024	Stockton Heath	90,991	55,639	0	10,849	0	157,479
35025	Stretton St Matthew's	20,108	3,669	0	3,669	0	27,446
35026	Thelwall Junior	40,238	65,689	6,637	0	8,030	120,594
35027	Thelwall Infants	20,983	54,311	3,145	2,301	0	80,740
35028	Statham	36,925	71,017	0	7,467	0	115,409
35029	Cherry Tree	-2,491	31,588	0	2,491	0	31,588
35030	Ravenbank	16,167	25,616	16,941	3,553	5,122	67,399
35031	Oughtrington	86,784	12,488	0	12,488	0	111,760
35033	Culcheth	119,492	35,816	2,624	16,365	0	174,297
35034	Newchurch	27,537	18,744	0	1,383	0	47,664
35035	Twiss Green	-76,391	14,456	0	6,794	7,662	-47,479
35036	St Paul of the Cross	4,876	14,268	0	3,680	3,149	25,973
35038	Christ Church	63,619	37,480	0	0	0	101,099
35039	St Oswald's	-21,291	34,448	0	11,951	9,340	34,448
35040	Brook Acre	-9,452	71,238	0	9,756	2,995	74,537
35042	St Bridget's	5,478	9,879	0	0	0	15,357
35043	St Lewis'	-8,766	46,692	0	7,934	832	46,692
35045	Locking Stumps	118,272	46,812	8,988	4,336	0	178,408
35047	St Joseph's	75,282	54,610	28,342	17,513	8,755	184,502
35048	St Vincent's	-117,218	0	0	2,886	0	-114,332
35050	St Peter's	-24,159	61,275	0	16,816	7,343	61,275
35052	Woolston	8,249	34,768	0	11,348	6,681	61,046
35056	Barrow Hall Lane	269,162	30,692	9,555	21,137	0	330,546
35057	Sankey Valley St James'	29,258	50,992	0	0	8,590	88,840
35059	Winwick	-12,533	40,926	12,252	17,120	0	57,765
35060	Birchwood	63,022	99,696	41,656	3,367	3,438	211,179
35062	Cinnamon Brow	30,631	23,861	5,817	0	265	60,574
35064	Callands	-21,585	58,414	16,755	5,191	1,839	60,614
35065	St Phillip's	219,617	0	0	0	0	219,617
35066	Grappenhall Heys	-9,681	16,788	0	9,681	0	16,788
35067	Latchford St James'	11,480	32,931	3,073	1,591	0	49,075
35405	Sandy Lane Nursery	101,493	115,717	0	0	0	217,210
Total Primary		2,052,903	2,570,471	301,157	367,558	142,590	5,434,679
SECONDARY SCHOOLS							
35103	Culcheth	313,978	225,000	8,890	0	55,160	603,028
35107	St Gregory's	694,935	101,718	60,483	0	41,235	898,371
35121	Cardinal Newman	142,212	15,673	3,350	0	12,323	173,558
Total Secondary		1,151,124	342,391	72,723	0	108,718	1,674,957
SPECIAL SCHOOLS & ALTERNATIVE PROVISION							
35200	Green Lane	346,683	113,696	0	15,219	27,860	503,458
35205	Green Lane 6th Form	145,865	65,750	0	0	0	211,615
35201	Fox Wood	7,620	158,837	19,168	26,570	12,409	224,604
35206	Fox Wood 6th Form	25,046	5,000	0	0	0	30,046
35202	Woolston Brook	-46,167	0	0	6,000	0	-40,167
Total Special Schools & Alternative Prov		479,047	343,283	19,168	47,789	40,269	929,556
		3,683,075	3,256,145	393,048	415,347	291,577	8,039,192