



# **Title of report: De-Delegations and Education Management Function Proposal 2026/27**

**Meeting: Herefordshire Schools Forum**

**Meeting date: Friday 21 November 2025**

**Report by: Head of Strategic Finance (Deputy S151)**

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

This is not an executive decision

## **Wards affected**

(All Wards);

## **Purpose**

To request Schools Forum agree the De-Delegated Services and the Education Management Function for 2026/27.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**That:**

- **Consider the proposals for 2026/27 mainstream maintained schools De-Delegated Services and the Education Management Function set out in this report; and**
- **Schools Forum to advise the Corporate Director, Children & Young People of Schools Forum's support or otherwise.**

## Key considerations

1. During budget setting each year, Schools Forum will be asked to approve the de-delegation of funding for centrally provided support based on a per pupil rate, considered to be a fair way of accounting for the size of the school and its budget.
2. The final de-delegation budget will be determined once the October 2025 pupil numbers are confirmed in the Authority Pro Forma Tool (APT), which is used to calculate the schools' budgets. The details of which will be presented to Schools Forum in January 2026.
3. For the purpose of this report, inflation has been applied to services as per 2025/26 budget setting. This will be updated once the final Schools Block has been confirmed by DfE in December 2025 and the final inflation will be confirmed at the Schools Forum meeting in January 2026.
4. Schools block de-delegation does not apply to special schools or pupil referral units (PRUs).

## Recommendations for De-Delegations 2026/27

5. The current de-delegated services are:
  - a. Access Budgeting software
  - b. Free School Meals eligibility checking
  - c. EAL Service
  - d. Trade Unions
  - e. School Improvement Service
  - f. Contingencies
  - g. Behaviour Support Services
  - h. Education Management Function
6. A further breakdown of the de-delegated services is noted in the table below, including 2025/26 per pupil rates agreed by Schools Forum in January 2025 and a proposed inflationary increase for 2026/27, which will be updated once the Schools Block allocations are published in December 2025.
7. The forum will be required to vote on each service separately and by sector. Academy school representatives cannot vote on de-delegated services.

		2025/26			2026/27	
De-delegations	APT calculation basis	Rate £	Calculated No of Pupils/Schools	Total Amount £	Rate (with 2.36% inflation) £	Total Amount (based on 25/26 pupil numbers) £
Access budgeting software - computer license	Total number of schools	441.17	53.00	<b>23,382.24</b>	451.59	23,934.06
Free school meals eligibility checking	Primary pupil number	1.36	7,396.00	10,068.88	1.39	10,306.51
	Secondary pupil number	1.03	3,376.50	3,490.77	1.06	3,573.15
<b>Total FSM eligibility checking</b>				<b>13,559.65</b>		<b>13,879.66</b>
English additional language service - Support for underperforming ethnic minority groups and bilingual learners to provide EAL services for initial assessments, observations and advisory/monitoring visits	Combined primary & secondary pupil number	1.22	10,772.50	13,121.89	1.25	13,431.56
	Ever6 free school meals pupil number	7.23	2,092.89	15,124.60	7.40	15,481.55
	English additional language pupil number	37.55	720.38	27,047.30	38.43	27,685.62
<b>Total english additional language service</b>				<b>55,293.79</b>		<b>56,598.72</b>
Trade union facilities agreement	Primary pupil number (secondary use SLA service)	2.76	7,396.00	<b>20,440.60</b>	2.83	<b>20,923.00</b>
School improvement service	Combined primary & secondary pupil number	6.25	10,772.50	<b>67,373.74</b>	6.40	<b>68,963.76</b>
Contingencies	Combined primary & secondary pupil number	1.04	10,772.50	<b>11,247.33</b>	1.07	<b>11,512.77</b>
Behaviour support service	Primary pupil number	4.25	7,396.00	<b>31,417.96</b>	4.35	<b>32,159.42</b>
<b>Total De-delegations</b>				<b>222,715.30</b>		<b>227,971.38</b>
Education Management Functions	APT calculation basis	Rate £	Calculated No of Pupils/Schools	Total Amount £	Rate (with 2.36% inflation) £	Total Amount (based on 25/26 pupil numbers) £
Education Management Functions	Combined primary & secondary pupil number	13.04	10,772.50	140,481.93	13.35	143,797.30
<b>Total Education Management Functions</b>				<b>140,481.93</b>		<b>143,797.30</b>

## Community impact

- Increasingly schools funding is directed by government, and the council can only allocate funding given by government. School governing bodies retain the responsibility to spend the school budget on meeting pupil needs. Schools, colleges and post-16 providers and potentially parents will need to be consulted on any changes to the high needs services.

## Environmental impact

- This is a consultation with Schools Forum on school funding and will have no direct environmental impacts. School governing bodies and trustees are responsible for deciding on expenditure and they will be encouraged to minimise waste and resource use in line with the Council's Environmental Policy.

## Equality duty

10. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to consider how it can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations and demonstrate that it is paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.
11. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows: A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to – (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
12. In relation to school finance, it is the responsibility of individual governing bodies to commit expenditure according to individual pupil need. Changes in high needs provision will require consultation with users, and further advice from legal services will be sought should this be necessary. However, the decisions of the school forum should have regard to this duty and the potential implications of any decisions made.

## Resource implications

13. De-delegated services are funded from the Schools Block within the Dedicated Schools Grant.

## Legal implications

14. The Schools Forum is a statutory decision making and consultative body constituted in line with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, and its associated regulations, including the Schools Forum (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020, to enable members of the local school community to work in partnership with Herefordshire Council when making decisions about school funding and finances.
15. The funding of schools is prescribed by the Department for Education (DfE) through the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2025.

## Risk management

16. Budget Working Group (BWG) reviews all reports and proposals in detail prior to making recommendations to the Schools Forum. This two-stage process helps to ensure greater scrutiny of budget proposals and mitigate against any risks that may be identified. Any identified risks will be monitored and managed by the Children and Young People directorate jointly with the Schools Forum.

## Consultees

17. Budget Working Group (BWG) was consulted on 7 November 2025 and recommended the de-delegated services and education management function budgets continue to be funded in 2026/27 and be prepared as set out in this report, pending the DSG funding announcement and validated October 2025 School Census data. BWG will consider the budget proposals further once the DfE have announced the final DSG allocations in December 2025.

## **Appendices**

Budget Working Group presentation 7 November 2025.

## **Background papers**

None.

## **Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report**

APT	Authority Pro-Forma Tool
BWG	Budget Working Group (of Schools Forum)
DfE	Department for Education
EAL	English Additional Language
PRUs	Pupil Referral Units