

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 09/02/2026

Subject: School and Early Years Budget (Dedicated Schools Grant) 2026/27

Report of: The Deputy Leader and The Cabinet Member for Finance and Reform

Report author: Tony Burton, Head of Finance Children's Services and Education and Peter Haylock, Director of Education

Responsible Directors: Sukvinder Kalsi, Executive Director of Finance & Corporate Services and Jacqui McShannon, Executive Director of People

SUMMARY

This report seeks approval of the final proposed 2026/27 Dedicated Schools Grant budgets for the following blocks for the financial year ending 31 March 2027:

- Schools Block
- Central Services Schools Block
- Early Years Block and Maintained Nursery Supplement funding

This report covers the budget decisions for the following Hammersmith & Fulham education provision funded from the four blocks of the Dedicated Schools Grant:

- The Schools Block Budget:
 - Hammersmith & Fulham Schools Forum agreed the model for 2026/27 budget shares on 20 January 2026.
 - Due to the timing of the Department for Education (DfE) issuing the final allocations, it was not possible for Schools Forum to agree a provisional funding model at their meeting on 16 December 2025.
 - Instead, they agreed in principle to proposals on funding factors. The DfE require political endorsement of the Schools' Forum decision to agree the 2026/27 budget.
 - funding for mainstream primary and secondary schools. Schools block funding of £127.775m has been confirmed for Hammersmith & Fulham for 2026/27 by the DfE. This represents a 1.58% increase per pupil compared to a 2.48% increase nationally.
- The Central Services Schools Block Budget:
 - £1.758m funding in 2026/27 to meet the statutory education functions of the local authority and historic central funding commitments. This is a reduction of £0.182m versus 2025/26.
- The Early Years Block Budget:
 - £24.854m indicative budget to fund government funded childcare entitlements

- £0.99m maintained nursery supplementary grant funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Schools Block Dedicated Schools Grant Budget 2026/27 Financial Year:
 - a. To approve the Local Authority formula for allocating resources to Hammersmith & Fulham schools for 2026/27 as set out in Appendix 1, the Authority Proforma Tool (APT) for setting school budgets.
 - b. To approve the National Funding Formula (NFF) transitional funding formula factor rates (as set out in Appendix 1) as the basis for calculating the 2026/27 schools funding formula, together with a minus 0.5% per pupil Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) protection for individual schools versus 2025/26 levels with respect to pupil led funding.
 - c. To approve the transfer of £1.262m being 1.0% of the total schools' block allocation from the schools' block to the high needs block in the 2026/27 financial year. This is to support high needs education expenditure for special educational needs in Hammersmith and Fulham and follows Minister of State approval received on 9th January 2026.
 - d. To approve de-delegation budgets of £0.564m for maintained mainstream schools only as confirmed by Schools Forum on 20 January 2026.
 - e. To approve the education functions budgets of £0.285m for maintained mainstream schools only, as confirmed by Schools Forum on 20 January 2026.
2. Central Services Schools Block Budget 2026/27.
 - a. To approve the proposed budget allocation for Central Services Schools Block DSG totalling £1.758m.
3. Early Years Block Budget 2026/27
 - a. To approve the proposed budget allocation for Early Years Block Dedicated Schools Grant of £24.854m based on the provisional funding allocation December 2025.
 - b. To approve the allocation of Maintained Nursery School Supplementary Funding of £0.991m based on the provisional funding allocation December 2025.

Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Corporate Plan and the H&F Values
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Building shared prosperity	The allocation of funding to local schools who are employers within the borough.
Creating a compassionate and inclusive council	Enables pupils within the borough to receive a good quality education.
Doing things with local residents, not to them	Providing educational opportunities for all pupils within the borough.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	Contributes to a level of financial stability for schools. The high needs block transfer enables this support to schools to continue and helps to reduce the high needs budget pressure.
Taking pride in H&F	Ensures continuing good quality provision in the borough's schools enabling pupils to take pride in their school and the borough.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	Assists with the delivery of climate Education to young people within the borough.

Financial Impact

Schools Block Budget

This report covers the allocation of the funding for all mainstream schools in Hammersmith & Fulham for education between reception and year 11 for the period April 2026 to March 2027. The basis for the distribution of funds within the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant across all schools is in line with the regulated range of allowable variables in the grant conditions as determined by the National Funding Formula for Schools and Schools revenue funding 2026 to 2027 Operational Guidance.

Other than the proposed transfer between blocks the remaining funds are distributed to individual schools in line with their individual characteristics and with regard to the National Funding Formula.

De-delegated budgets are budgets managed for schools centrally by the local authority on their behalf.

Funding for education functions is to meet the cost of providing statutory education functions on behalf of maintained schools and in line with the education funding regulations.

Central Services Schools Block (CSSB)

Total funding in 2026.27 is £1.758m.

- The core funding relates to the statutory services provided for all schools and is £1.015m for 2026/27, a slight increase year on year.

- The historic element of CSSB funding is £0.743m in 2026/27, a reduction of £0.186m in the year to 2026/27 and £2.604m since 2019/20 financial year.
- The decrease for 2026/27 has been met by savings on historic CSSB expenditure.
- The historic CSSB will be reduced by a further £0.743m over the medium term at circa £0.186m per annum over a further 4 years until historic funding is nil in 2030/31.

Early Years Block Budget (Government Funded Childcare Entitlements)

This report covers the allocation of the funding for all providers of early years education and childcare prior to statutory school age.

The Early Years Block budget continues the budget model from 2025/26 financial year and ensures compliance with grant conditions, the Early Years Operational Guide 2026/27 and requirements of the National Funding Formula.

Tony Burton, Head of Finance Peoples Services, 23 December 2025
 Verified by James Newman, AD Finance, 6 January 2026

Legal Implications

The Dedicated Schools Grant is payable to local authorities under section 14 of the Education Act 2002. It is a 'ring fenced grant' that is to say it must be solely spent on the grant conditions and guidance has been prepared by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to assist local authorities in the operation of the dedicated schools grant (DSG). Each year new regulations are issued as they only cover one year the current being School and Early Years Finance and Childcare (Provision of Information About Young Children) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2025 These Regulations provide that Local Authorities must consult their Schools Forum and schools maintained by them when determining the school funding formula. Cabinet is the decision-making body for the schools funding formula and must consider the outcome of the consultation and take that into consideration when making a decision on whether to adopt the NFF, as per Schools Forum's recommendation. Although not duty bound to follow the recommendation of Schools Forum following the consultation, if Cabinet departs from the recommendation clear reasons must be given.

Glen Egan, Assistant Director of Legal Services 22 December 2025

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

Schools Forum Papers and draft minutes:

- Schools Forum 16 December 2025 – Provisional budget principles and Decision
- Schools Forum 11 November 2025 – Decision on Block Transfer
 - [Minutes Template](#)
- Schools Forum 20 January 2026 – Final Budget and Decision

Schools Forum 20th January 2026

- Schools revenue funding 2026 to 2027 Operational Guide
[Schools operational guide: 2026 to 2027 - GOV.UK](#)
- Early Years Entitlements: Local Authority Funding Operational Guide 2026 to 2027
[Early Years Operational Guide 2026 to 2027 GOV.UK](#)

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Proposals and Analysis of Options

Schools Block

1. The recommended model of distribution of the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant through the Authority Proforma Tool was agreed by Schools Forum on 20 January 2026 as below and per the detailed funding factor rates and values in Appendix 1.
2. The agreed model aims to provide stability to schools in 2026/27 by ensuring that schools receive a minus 0.5% minimum funding guarantee (maximum allowable in the national funding formula) on a per pupil basis for pupil led funding. The agreed factors are National Funding Formula (NFF) factors (plus area cost adjustment for inner London) uprated by 0% (to be updated following modelling) to ensure the full schools block allocation is distributed to schools. Note that 12 out of 47 schools receive MFG funding protection under the model in 2026/27 which most schools receiving pupil led funding growth year on year.
3. Schools Forum agreed on the 16 December 2025 to the following principles pending the December 2025 release of the 2026/27 national funding formula (NFF) allocations:
 - Firstly, increase the Minimum Funding Guarantee up to the maximum allowed subject to affordability within the final allocations. This will ensure all schools benefit from a minimum increase in funding levels in pupil led funding year on year.
 - Secondly increase factor rates uniformly above national funding formula rates after inner London Area cost Adjustment (subject to affordability within the final funding allocation). This ensures that schools receive funding according to the NFF and mirroring the NFF as is required by grant regulations.
4. The national uplift in schools funding for 2026/27 will provide a continuing challenge for Schools given inflation levels in the economy and the continuing impact on pay and non-pay inflation experienced during the 2025/26 financial year.
5. A short consultation for the 2026/27 schools and Early Years block budget was launched on 12th January 2026 following the release of the proposed budget model to Schools Forum on Friday 9th January. The consultation ended on Friday

16th January. An update was provided to Schools Forum on 20th January 2026 on the consultation responses from schools and in with respect to responses on the proposed Schools to High Needs block transfer of 1%.

6. A transfer to support the High Needs Block of £1.262m or 1.0% of the Schools Block has been agreed with Schools Forum and will be used to mitigate funding pressures in the high needs budget in 2026/27. As the block movement proposed is greater than 0.5% it requires agreement of the Department for Education Safety Valve Team and the Minister of State for Education. Ministerial approval was received on the 9th January 2026
7. De-delegation budgets of £0.564m for maintained mainstream schools have been agreed at Schools Forum on 20th January 2026. These are budgets that maintained primary schools agree to delegate to the local authority to manage and spend.
8. Education functions budgets of £0.285m were also agreed at Forum on 20th January 2026. These budgets are set with reference to DfE schools funding guidance to meet the cost of meeting the local authorities retained education functions with respect to maintained mainstream schools.

Central Services Schools Block

9. The CSSB budget for 2026/27 is presented below and was recommended to Schools Forum on 20th January 2026.

Area of Expenditure	2025/26	2026/27 Proposed	Change
	£	£	£
Copyright Licensing (Estimated)	145,900	149,200	3,300
Asset Management and Place Planning	197,100	202,200	5,100
Management, Support, Finance/Business Intelligence and SACRE	654,200	649,900	-4,300
Virtual School	106,000	0	-106,000
Admissions and ACE	592,700	584,000	-8,700
Time limited Support to High Needs Block Expenditure	243,400	172,500	-70,900
Total Spend/Funding	£1,939,300	£1,757,800	-181,500

10. In 2026/27 there is no change to the arrangements for Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) of the DSG. The CSSB allocation for 2026/27 provides funding for:
 - The retained duties element of the Education Services Grant (ESG) for all schools

- Ongoing central statutory functions – for example Admissions – for maintained schools
- Ongoing historic commitments.

11. Planned expenditure reductions have been made with respect to the historic contribution to the Virtual School in 2026/27 achieved through streamlined resources while enhancing support through collaborative partnerships. These changes ensure continuity of enrichment and mentoring while leveraging external funding and partnerships for greater impact.
12. Reduced funding also limits the extent to which the CSSB budget can support the High Needs Block budget in 2026/27 with planned contribution reduced to £0.172m.

Early Years Block Budget

13. The recommended model of distribution of the Early Years Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant through the Authority Proforma Tool was agreed by Schools Forum on 20 January 2026 as below and per the detailed funding factor rates and values in Appendix 2.
14. Schools Forum are required to agree the deployment of the 3% top slice for central services planned spend of in 2026/27 and as detailed below:

Proposed Early Years Central Services Budget 2026/27

Item of Central Expenditure	24/25
	Total
	£
i. Education Early Years Services	443,000
ii. Help and Support for Families in Need	85,000
iii. Finance and Statutory Functions	126,000
iv. Business Intelligence census and Assessments	65,000
Total Central Spend	719,000

Reasons for Decision

15. Schools' budget shares from the schools' block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) are agreed annually according to the process and regulations set out by the Department for Education (DfE).
16. Schools Forum and the Local Authority must approve the basis for the allocation to schools. Hammersmith & Fulham Schools Forum agreed the budget model proposed at a meeting on 20th January 2026.

Equality Implications

17. There are no direct negative equality implications for groups with protected characteristics, under the Equality Act 2010, by the approval of these funding proposals set out in the Recommendations.
18. Officers anticipate a neutral impact as the funding model outlined in this report is determined by the National Funding Formula for mainstream schools. The proposals around Minimum Funding Guarantee intend to ensure that all schools receive a minimum level of funding increase on a per pupil basis versus 2023/24 financial year.

Risk Management Implications

19. The council continues to experience growing pressures on the High Needs budget as a result of demographic growth, government policy changes and the continuing impact of the government's austerity. In addition, there will be further pressure from pay and non-pay inflation. Ensuring that resources available to schools are appropriately allocated supports the delivery of the council's corporate priorities to ensure that children and young people will receive a great start in life and that schools will be amongst the best in the country, with enough places for all and with all children achieving the best that they can.

Jules Binney, Risk and Assurance Manager 23rd December 2025

Climate and Ecological Emergency Implications

20. This report covers the revenue budgets for schools and education in Hammersmith and Fulham rather than the maintenance or capital programme on the school's estate. There is no expectation from the DfE that these budgets are used by education providers for anything other than minor revenue maintenance.
21. While there are no direct capital works funded through these allocations, the revenue budgets can indirectly support the council's climate objectives by:
 - Enabling schools to deliver climate education and sustainability awareness as part of the curriculum.
 - Allowing schools to implement minor energy efficiency measures and sustainable practices within their delegated budgets (e.g., reducing waste, promoting recycling, and encouraging active travel through school travel plans).These measures contribute to long-term behavioural change and support the borough's commitment to addressing the climate and ecological emergency.
22. The local authority holds the budget for the school's capital investment as this is not delegated to schools and subject to separate decisions as part of the medium-term capital strategy.

Hulya Ataoglu, Climate Programme and Finance Lead, 23 December 2025

Consultation

23. The local authority consulted with the wider schools' and Early Years provider community in January 2026 with respect to the distribution principles for the schools block budget allocation.
24. Hammersmith & Fulham Schools Forum agreed the proposed 2026/27 schools block budget shares on 20th January 2026.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1, the 2026/27 Authority Proforma Tool (APT) for setting school budgets submitted to Department for Education 21/01/26

Appendix 2, Proposed Early Years Budget 2026/27 Detailed Budgets

Appendix 1 – Authority Proforma Tool 2026/27 – Proposed Schools Block Budget Model and Factor Rates – see pages below

Local Authority Funding Reform Proforma

LA Name:	Hammersmith and Fulham									
LA Number:	205									
	Primary minimum per pupil funding level	Secondary (KS3 only) minimum per pupil funding level	Secondary (KS4 only) minimum per pupil funding level	Secondary minimum per pupil funding level						
	£5,115.00	£6,388.00	£7,018.00	£6,640.00						
Disapplication number where alternative MPPL values are used										
Pupil Led Factors										
1) Basic per-pupil entitlement	Description	Amount per pupil		Pupil Units		Sub Total	Total	Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%)	Notional SEN (%)	
	Primary (Years R-6)	£4,805.60		8,278.00		£39,780,746	£90,617,411	31.58%	2.95%	
	Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9)	£6,723.58		4,259.00		£28,635,733		22.73%	2.53%	
	Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11)	£7,579.70		2,929.00		£22,200,932		17.62%	2.53%	
2) Deprivation	Description	Primary amount per pupil	Secondary amount per pupil	Eligible proportion of primary NOR	Eligible proportion of secondary NOR	Sub Total	Total	Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%)	Primary Notional SEN (%)	Secondary Notional SEN (%)
	FSM	£597.15	£597.15	2,488.00	2,223.00	£2,813,185	£16,855,532	13.38%	18.41%	26.40%
	FSM6	£1,430.80	£2,039.78	2,609.00	2,629.00	£9,095,536			18.41%	26.40%
	IDACI Band F	£283.80	£407.96	1,005.71	780.98	£604,022			7.00%	8.90%
	IDACI Band E	£342.92	£543.94	1,604.40	1,276.97	£1,244,776			11.10%	15.40%
	IDACI Band D	£538.03	£768.61	794.27	672.88	£944,526			27.00%	33.00%
	IDACI Band C	£591.24	£839.56	901.89	814.98	£1,217,460			31.40%	35.40%
	IDACI Band B	£626.71	£898.68	494.15	502.77	£761,525			1.00%	1.00%
	IDACI Band A	£827.74	£1,147.01	80.29	94.20	£174,503			1.00%	1.00%
3) English as an Additional Language (EAL)	Description	Primary amount per pupil	Secondary amount per pupil	Eligible proportion of primary NOR	Eligible proportion of secondary NOR	Sub Total	Total	Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%)	Primary Notional SEN (%)	Secondary Notional SEN (%)
	EAL 3 Primary	£721.31		2,107.44		£1,520,127	£2,725,087	1.88%	100.00%	
	EAL 3 Secondary		£1,927.44		440.93	£849,868				100.00%
4) Mobility	Pupils starting school outside of normal entry dates	£1,164.74	£1,673.21	225.39	55.33	£355,092		0.28%	100.00%	100.00%

	Description	Weighting	Amount per pupil (primary or secondary respectively)	Percentage of eligible pupils	Eligible proportion of primary and secondary NOR respectively	Sub Total	Total	Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%)	Primary Notional SEN (%)	Secondary Notional SEN (%)		
5) Low prior attainment	Primary low prior attainment		£1,418.98	31.41%	2,600.39	£3,689,892	£5,858,103	4.65%	100.00%			
	Secondary low prior attainment (year 7)	60.34%	£2,158.03	13.49%	1,004.72	£2,168,211			100.00%			
	Secondary low prior attainment (year 8)	57.71%		13.84%								
	Secondary low prior attainment (year 9)	55.77%		14.25%								
	Secondary low prior attainment (year 10)	54.47%		14.13%								
	Secondary low prior attainment (year 11)	54.47%		14.15%								

Other Factors

Factor	Lump Sum per Primary School (£)	Lump Sum per Secondary School (£)	Lump Sum per Middle School (£)	Lump Sum per All-through School (£)	Total (£)	Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%)	Notional SEN (%)	
6) Lump Sum	£180,564.70	£180,564.70			£8,486,541	6.74%	0.00% 0.00%	
7) Sparsity factor	£69,293.33	£100,747.30	£100,747.30	£100,747.30	£0	0.00%	0.00% 0.00%	
Rows 45 to 48 are populated with the NFF methodology, please leave this as is if you wish to follow the NFF. As per the Operational Guidance, the distance thresholds can be increased or the year group size thresholds decreased and the distance threshold taper is optional. An alternative method of allocation to the NFF's average year group size taper can be chosen: the continuous taper (Tapered) or fixed sum (Fixed). Examples of each are provided in the Operational Guidance.								
Primary distance threshold (miles)	2.00	Primary pupil number average year group threshold	21.40	Apply primary distance taper	Yes	NFF, tapered or fixed sparsity primary lump sum?	NFF	
Secondary distance threshold (miles)	3.00	Secondary pupil number average year group threshold	120.00	Apply secondary distance taper	Yes	NFF, tapered or fixed sparsity secondary lump sum?	NFF	
Middle schools distance threshold (miles)	2.00	Middle school pupil number average year group threshold	69.20	Apply middle school distance taper	Yes	NFF, tapered or fixed sparsity middle school lump sum?	NFF	
All-through schools distance threshold (miles)	2.00	All-through pupil number average year group threshold	62.50	Apply all-through distance taper	Yes	NFF, tapered or fixed sparsity all-through lump sum?	NFF	
8) Fringe Payments			Fringe multiplier	1.0000	£0	0.00%		
9) Split Sites		Basic eligibility funding	£65,154.65	Distance funding rate	£32,636.45	£68,653	0.05%	0.00%
10) Rates					£1,362,604	1.08%	0.00%	
11) PFI funding					£0	0.00%	0.00%	

12) Exceptional circumstances (can only be used with prior agreement of DfE)					
Circumstance	Total (£)		Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%)	Notional SEN (%)	
Additional lump sum for schools amalgamated during FY25-26	£0		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Additional sparsity lump sum for small schools	£0		0.00%	0.00%	
Exceptional Circumstance3	£0		0.00%	0.00%	
Exceptional Circumstance4	£0		0.00%	0.00%	
Exceptional Circumstance5	£0		0.00%	0.00%	
Exceptional Circumstance6	£0		0.00%	0.00%	
Exceptional Circumstance7	£0		0.00%	0.00%	

Total Funding for Schools Block Formula (excluding minimum per pupil funding level and MFG Funding Total)	£125,973,931	100.00%	
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13) Additional funding to meet minimum per pupil funding level	£0	0.00%	0.00%
Total Funding for Schools Block Formula (excluding MFG Funding Total)	£125,973,931	100.00%	

14) Minimum Funding Guarantee	-0.50%	£539,285	
Where a value less than -0.5% or greater than 0% has been entered please provide the disapplication reference number authorising the value			
Apply capping and scaling factors? (gains may be capped above a specific ceiling and/or scaled)	No		
Capping Factor (%)		Scaling Factor (%)	
Total deduction if capping and scaling factors are applied	£0		
	Total (£)	Proportion of Total funding(%)	Notional SEN (%)
MFG Net Total Funding (MFG + deduction from capping and scaling)	£539,285	0.43%	0.00%
Total Funding for Schools Block Formula	£126,513,216		£14,691,257
Notional SEN	Top-up - proportion of NOR	4.12%	SEN support plus EHCP minus Top-up - proportion of NOR
		14.35%	Notional SEN funding per eligible pupil
			£4,894

High Needs threshold (only fill in if, exceptionally, a high needs threshold different from £6,000 has been approved)			
Additional funding from the high needs budget	£0.00		
Growth fund (if applicable)			
Falling rolls fund (if applicable)			
Other Adjustment to 25-26 Budget Shares	£0		
Total Funding For Schools Block Formula (including growth and falling rolls funding)	£126,513,216		
% Distributed through Basic Entitlement	71.93%		
% Pupil Led Funding	92.13%		
Primary: Secondary Ratio	1 :	1.26	
26-27 NFF NNDR allocation, excluding prior year adjustments	£1,362,604		
Total Funding For Schools Block Formula (including growth and falling rolls funding) after deduction of 26-27 NFF NNDR allocation	£125,150,612		

Appendix 2, Proposed Early Years Budget 2026/27 Detailed Budgets

Draft 2026/27 Early Years Budget by Entitlement

	26/27 3 and 4 YO Entitlements (Universal & Extended)	26/27 2 YO Entitlements (Working Parents & Targeted Additional Support)	26/27 Under 2 YO Entitlements (Working Parents)	26/27 Total All Entitlements
	£m	£m	£m	£m
A. Base Rate - Participation based on estimated hours	9.734	4.676	5.436	19.846
B. Deprivation Supplement	0.933	0.358	0.268	1.559
C. Supplement for Quality	0.388	N/A	N/A	0.388
D. SEN Inclusion Fund	0.632	0.279	0.315	1.226
E. Lump Sum to MNS	0.704	N/A	N/A	0.704
F. Contingency	0.057	0.066	0.054	0.177
G. Central expenditure - 3%	0.373	0.164	0.182	0.719
H. Maintained Nursery School Supplement	0.991	N/A	N/A	0.991

Draft 2026/27 Early Years Budget Factors and Hourly Rates Proposed 2026/27

	26/27 3 and 4 YO Entitlements (Universal & Extended)	26/27 2 YO Entitlements (Working Parents & Disadvantaged Children)	26/27 Under 2 YO Entitlements (Working Parents)
	£ per hour	£ per hour	£ per hour
A. Base Rate - Participation based on estimated hours	6.78	10.57	15.20
B. Deprivation Supplement	0.65	0.81	0.75
C. Supplement for Quality	0.27	N/A	N/A
D. SEN Inclusion Fund	0.44	0.63	0.88
E. Lump Sum to MNS - Help & Support Families in Need	0.49	N/A	N/A
F. Contingency	0.04	0.15	0.15
G. Central services expenditure – 3%	0.26	0.37	0.51
TOTAL Funded Rate	8.93	12.53	17.49

END