



## NORTH YORKSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM

<b>Date of meeting:</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2023
<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Review of Pupil Growth &amp; Falling Rolls Contingency Funds</b>
<b>Type of report:</b> Delete as required	For decision
<b>Executive summary:</b> Including reason for submission	<p>The report provides an overview of the usage of the Pupil Growth and Falling Rolls Contingency Funds in the 2022-23 financial year and the likely funding requirements for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 financial years. The report details the level of reserves on the Pupil Growth and Falling Rolls Contingency Fund forecast for 31 March 2024.</p> <p>The report also provides an update on the DfE recent changes to the funding regulations for Pupil Growth and Falling Rolls Funds for the 2024-25 financial year. The proposed changes to the North Yorkshire Pupil Growth and Falling Rolls Funds in response to the regulation changes are detailed in the report.</p>
<b>Budget / Risk implications:</b>	<p>Financial implications for schools experiencing a significantly rising pupil roll or a temporary reduction in pupil numbers.</p> <p>Affordability within the current funding limits of the two Contingency Funds. Future funding requirements on the Funds will impact on the level of funding needed to be retained from school budgets in order to meet the funding requirement.</p>
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p>The School's Forum is asked:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To note the usage and forecast usage of the Pupil Growth and Falling Rolls Contingency Funds in the financial years 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 as detailed in this report.</li> <li>To note the reserves position on the Pupil Growth and Falling Rolls Fund as at 31 March 2023 and the forecast reserve position for 31 March 2024 as detailed in section 5 of this report.</li> <li>To note the DfE changes to the statutory guidance on Growth and Falling Rolls Funds for the 2024-25 financial year and to provide approval for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed discontinuation of the Falling Rolls Fund for the 2024-25 financial year.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>



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	<p>ii. The proposed changes to the funding methodology and eligibility criteria for the Pupil Growth Fund from 1 April 2024 in order to comply with the DfE requirements for 2024-25.</p> <p>d. To provide approval for the proposed release of the £500k that is annually requested for Pupil Growth &amp; Falling Rolls to be allocated to school budgets for the 2024-25 financial year and any funding requirement for basic need Pupil Growth in 2024-25 to be met from the Core Pupil Growth &amp; Falling Roll Reserve.</p> <p>e. To provide approval for the balance of the DfE Growth Funding, after the allocation of £500k to school budgets, to be allocated to the Pupil Growth - New Schools Fund</p>
<b>Voting requirements:</b>	LA Maintained School & Academy Members
<b>Appendices:</b>	None
<b>Report originator and contact details:</b>	<p>Howard Emmett, Assistant Director – Resources</p> <p><a href="mailto:Howard.Emmett@northyorks.gov.uk">Howard.Emmett@northyorks.gov.uk</a></p> <p>01609 532 118</p>
<b>Presenting officer:</b> If not the originator	Sally Dunn – Head of Finance

**Pupil Growth & Falling Rolls Contingency Funds****1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The report provides an overview of the usage of the Pupil Growth and Falling Rolls Contingency Funds in the 2022-23 financial year and the likely funding requirements for the 2023-24 the 2024-25 financial years. The report details the level of reserves on the Pupil Growth and Falling Rolls Contingency Fund forecast for 31 March 2024.
- 1.2 The report also provides an update on the DfE recent changes to the funding regulations for Pupil Growth and Falling Rolls Funds for the 2024/25 financial year. The proposed changes to the North Yorkshire Pupil Growth and Falling Rolls Funds in response to the regulation changes are detailed in the report.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Falling Rolls and Pupil Growth Contingency Funds were first introduced in the 2014-15 financial year, where criteria and methodology was endorsed by the Schools Forum. A review of the eligibility criteria for funding was last undertaken in 2020. In May 2022, the Schools Forum approved the expansion of the Pupil Growth Contingency Fund criteria to include provision for the allocation of additional funding to schools and academies that admit pupils as a direct result of the closure of a LA maintained school or academy. In November 2022, the Schools Forum approved changes to the funding levels and methodology provided through the Pupil Growth Funding for new schools within North Yorkshire.
- 2.2 For 2024-25 the DfE have amended the funding allocation provided with the Schools Block DSG to reflect both pupil growth and falling rolls. Funding will be allocated through the growth and falling rolls factors at LA-level, based on the observed differences between the primary and secondary number on roll in each LA within medium super output areas (MSOAs) between the October 2022 and October 2023 school censuses. The DfE has amended Growth Fund and Falling Rolls Fund Schools Block funding as well as the allocation criteria.
- 2.3 The DfE has also introduced some new mandatory requirements which the local authority will need to implement in respect of the local eligibility criteria for Pupil Growth and Falling Roll Funds. The DfE has confirmed that Growth and Falling Roll Funds will continue to be managed locally under the 'hard' National Funding Formula framework and that changes to these mechanisms, to improve their value and the consistency of approach between local authorities, will be made gradually. The new DfE requirements for 2024-25 are summarised as follows:
- Local Authorities must follow the new local formula requirements for growth funding whereby additional classes (identified by basic need) must be funded in line with minimum levels in the funding calculation. As a minimum, local authorities will have to provide funding to a level which is compliant with the following formula:  
$$\text{primary growth factor value (£1,550)} \times \text{number of pupils}$$
  - Local Authorities with a falling rolls fund must follow the new requirements for falling rolls funding. Local Authorities can only provide falling rolls funding to schools where school capacity survey (SCAP) 2022 data shows that school places will be required in the subsequent 3 to 5 years.

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- The mandatory restriction, that schools were previously only eligible for falling rolls funding if they were judged 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted, is also being removed from 2024 to 2025

2.4 Nationally in the current financial year, 132 of 153 local authorities operated a Growth Fund and 20 local authorities operated a Falling Rolls Fund.

**3.0 FALLING ROLLS FUND**

3.1 The current eligibility criteria and operating methodology for the North Yorkshire Council's (NYC) Falling Rolls Fund is as follows:

- Schools must be Ofsted rated 'good' or 'outstanding' to be eligible for falling rolls funding (this was previously a mandatory DfE requirement)
- The current year pupil roll is compared to the previous year census
- The eligibility threshold is a decrease of the greater of 5% or 5 pupils for Primary Schools and 5% for Secondary Schools between the current year census and the previous year census
- The re-growth criteria requires pupil numbers to be forecast (as per NYCC Strategic Services pupil forecast data) to return to the level of the previous census within 3 years of the current year.
- At least 60% of the pupils attending the school are from the catchment area of the school.
- Schools with excessive balances would not be eligible for funding from the Falling Rolls Fund. An excessive balance is deemed to be a revenue balance of 15% or more of delegated budget funding.
- Funding allocations from the Falling Rolls Fund are based on the Primary AWPU funding level for Primary Schools and the average of the key stage 3 and 4 AWPU funding levels for Secondary Schools. Funding is applied to the number of pupils above the relevant threshold. Schools are limited to 2 consecutive years for the receipt of funding. The overall funding allocation which any school could receive from the Fund over 2 consecutive years is capped at £100k in order to ensure overall affordability
- Exceptional requests from any school who does not meet the eligibility criteria for the Fund but feels that they have a strong case for the receipt of a funding allocation from the Falling Rolls Fund will be considered. This consideration will take the form of the submission of an application for funding which would be presented to a Panel of LA officers and Schools Forum representatives.

**3.2 Use of the Fund during 2022-23 financial year**

One primary school (LA maintained) received a payment of £12.9k. No secondary schools met the eligibility criteria for Falling Rolls funding.

**3.3 Forecast funding requirements from the Fund for 2023-24 and 2024-25 based on NYC's current criteria**

Based on forecast pupil numbers for September 2023, received from NYC's Strategic Planning team during August 2023 and through applying the LA criteria, one primary school has been identified as potentially eligible for Falling Rolls funding for the 2023-

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24 financial year. The table below provides a summary of estimated funding requirements for this school for the 2023-24 financial year:

	<b>Total Roll Oct 22</b>	<b>Total Roll Oct 23</b>	<b>Max. Total Roll</b>	<b>Fall in Roll No. Pupils</b>	<b>Fall in Roll %</b>	<b>Estimated Funding Allocation</b>
Primary School 1 (LA maintained)	106	100	111 (2026/27)	6	6%	<b>£2.4k</b>
<b>Estimated Funding Requirement</b>						<b>£2.4k</b>

No secondary schools are identified as meeting the eligibility criteria for the 2023-24 financial year based on current pupil number forecasts.

Based on the current NYC Falling Rolls Fund eligibility criteria and current pupil number forecasts, one LA maintained primary school and one primary academy are potentially eligible for Falling Rolls Funding in 2024-25. No secondary schools are currently identified as meeting the eligibility criteria for funding. The estimated funding requirement is £12.7k.

- 3.4 For the 2024-25 financial year, the DfE have specified that local authorities will continue to have discretion over whether to operate a falling rolls fund. Where local authorities operate a fund, they will only be able to provide funding where the 2022 Annual School Capacity Survey (SCAP) shows that school places will be required in the subsequent 3 to 5 years. This SCAP requirement replaces previous guidance that funding may only be used where local planning data shows that the surplus places will be needed within the next 3 financial years. The DfE have also specified that the restriction that support could only be provided to schools judged 'good' or 'outstanding' at their last Ofsted inspection will be removed.
- 3.5 Analysis has been undertaken in respect of the impact of the new DfE eligibility criteria for the Falling Rolls Fund. In reviewing the use of the SCAP data to determine eligibility for Falling Rolls Funding it was found that it would be unlikely that any school or academy within North Yorkshire would meet the eligibility requirement. This is due to the relatively large geographical area covered and the number of schools contained in the Local Authority Pupil Planning Areas in North Yorkshire; the SCAP data is based on the Pupil Planning Areas. The DfE have indicated that a disapplication request could be submitted for consideration by the Secretary of State in instances where a school is considered to be eligible for Falling Rolls Funding, but the SCAP eligibility criteria is not met.
- 3.6 The Local Authority has considered both the relatively low levels of funding that have been awarded from the Falling Rolls Fund over recent years and the scenario that no schools in North Yorkshire are likely to be eligible for Falling Rolls Funding in the future due to the SCAP requirement, without a disapplication request. In this regard, the Local Authority recommends that the Schools Forum approves that the Falling Rolls Fund is discontinued for the 2024-25 financial year.

**Pupil Growth & Falling Rolls Contingency Funds****4.0 PUPIL GROWTH FUND**

4.1 The purpose of this fund is to provide financial support to schools experiencing significant pupil growth where such growth results in funding pressures from the system of lagged funding. Pupil growth funding is only available for schools to support the revenue costs associated with exceptional pre-16 pupil growth to meet basic need in three clearly defined circumstances, being:

1. Primary schools - class expansion to meet basic need or in-year pupil number increases
2. Growth in secondary schools
3. New schools

4.2 The current operation and eligibility criteria for 1 and 2 detailed in 4.1 are outlined below:

Primary Schools:

- An assessment of the school's current class structure and future requirement needs to ensure an additional class is required. Class structures are assumed to be based on an average of around 30 pupils. This assessment is informed by input from NYC CYPS Strategic Services.
- Consideration is also given in extenuating factors that may prevent a school from reaching an average class size of around 30 pupils.
- Schools with excessive balances would not be eligible for funding from the Pupil Growth Fund. An excessive balance is deemed to be a revenue balance of 15% or more of delegated budget funding.
- A lump-sum funding contribution of £50k (full year allocation – 7/12 adjustment for LA maintained schools) is provided.

Secondary Schools

1. Year 7 growth of at least 15% between the current census and the previous census, and total pupil number growth of at least 5% between the current census and previous census
2. Once a school has met the Year 7 growth criteria detailed in 1. above, as well as being considered against the eligibility criteria for Year 7 growth in future years, there is also be consideration of overall pupil growth in the school for the next 4 years after the year in which the Year 7 growth criteria was met. Schools with overall growth of at least 5% between the current year census and the previous year census will be eligible for funding based on the increase in total pupil roll (Y7 – Y11) growth above the 5% threshold in each of the following 4 years.

In subsequent years after meeting the initial Year 7 growth eligibility criteria, a school could qualify for a funding allocation under either 1 or 2 above. If a school qualifies under both 1 and 2, the school would receive the higher of the funding allocation calculated under each growth threshold criteria.

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Funding methodology for secondary schools KS3 AWPU value x Y7 growth in excess of 15%. Funding allocation capped at £100k per secondary school per annum. An adjustment is applied of 7/12 to local authority maintained schools.

Schools with excessive balances would not be eligible for funding from the Pupil Growth Fund. An excessive balance is deemed to be a revenue balance of 15% or more of delegated budget funding.

Exceptional requests from any school who does not meet the eligibility criteria for the Fund but feels that they have a strong case for the receipt of a funding allocation from the Pupil Growth Fund will be considered. This approach will take the form of the submission of an application for funding which would be considered by a Panel of LA officers and Schools Forum representatives.

**4.3 Use of the Fund during 2022-23 financial year**

Three primary schools (academies) received payments of £50k per school. One secondary school (academy) received a capped maximum funding value of £100k, and two secondary schools (LA maintained) received £27k and £36.9k respectively. The total amount of funding paid from the Pupil Growth Fund for 2022/23 financial year was £313.9k.

**4.4 Forecast funding requirements from the Fund for 2023-24 and 2024-25**

**Primary Schools: 2023-24**

During 2023-24, one LA maintained primary school has been identified as eligible for receipt of Pupil Growth funding for 2023-24, the funding requirement for this school is £29.2k. One primary academy has also been identified as potentially eligible for receipt of Pupil Growth funding for 2023/24, with a funding requirement of £50k. The estimated total funding requirement is £79.2k.

**Secondary Schools: 2023-24**

Based on forecast pupil numbers for September 2023, received from NYC's Strategic Planning team during August 2023 and through applying the LA criteria, four secondary schools have been identified as potentially eligible for Pupil Growth funding for the 2023-24 financial year. The table below provides a summary of estimated funding requirements based on current analysis for the 2023/24 financial year:

	Y7 – Oct.2 2	Y7 – Oct.2 3	Y7 % Growth	Total Roll Oct.22	Total Roll Oct. 23	Total Roll % Growth	Estimated Funding Requirement
School 1 (LA Maint.)	137	139	1%	547	594	9%	£54.8k
School 2 (Academy)	126	167	33%	475	590	24%	£100k
School 3 (Academy)	175	210	20%	792	900	14%	£41.9k
School 4 (Academy)	229	270	18%	1004	1114	11%	£31.8k
<b>Estimated Funding Requirement</b>							<b>£228.5k</b>



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**2024-25 Eligibility**

Based on an assessment of school's current class structure and future requirement, two primary schools (LA maintained) have been identified as potentially eligible for Pupil Growth funding for the 2024-25 financial year. The estimated total funding requirement is £58.3k.

**4.5 Pupil Growth Funding Related To A School Closure**

In May 2022 the Schools Forum approved amended eligibility criteria and operating methodology of the Growth Fund in respect of any funding allocated to the Fund that is attributable to a school closure, and the associated funding for pupils transferring from the closed school. as agreed by the Schools Forum in May 2022. This element of the Fund has not been utilised to date.

**4.6 Pupil Growth Funding Related To A New School**

Pupil Growth Funding is the funding source available to local authorities to support the opening of new mainstream free schools built under the DfE free school presumption route. Schools built under this process require an additional funding commitment from the LA in respect of pre-opening funding, post-opening diseconomies funding and delegated budget in relation to estimated pupil numbers. The operating methodology of the Growth Fund in respect of any funding allocated for new schools, as agreed by the Schools Forum in November 2022, is as follows:

i. Pre-Opening costs

A lump sum funding allocation of £75k.

ii. Diseconomies of scale

a. A per pupil amount for pupil resources paid annually for the number of places added to the school's capacity in each year (i.e. each new year group that is opened but not funded until the following year) at £250 per primary mainstream pupil;

b. A lump sum for leadership diseconomies paid annually based on the number of empty cohorts based on £8,500 per empty cohort i.e. the number of year groups not yet open as per the following table:

<b>Empty Cohorts</b>	<b>Lump Sum Funding £</b>
6	£51,000
5	£42,500
4	£34,000
3	£25,500
2	£17,000
1	8,500



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iii. Incremental Growth in Pupil Numbers

A new school is funded based on estimated pupil numbers for each financial year that new year groups are being added to the school.

iv. Pupil Number Funding Protection

Funding protection is provided where actual pupil numbers fall below 75% of the full cohort pupil numbers (30 pupils for a one form entry for a Primary school). The funding protection would be implemented for the difference between the actual total number of mainstream pupils in the school, as at the start of the academic year, and the protection level of 75% of the expected total mainstream pupil numbers (30 pupils in year 1, 60 pupils in year 2, 90 pupils in year 3). The funding is based on Primary AWPU funding rates. The annual funding protection provided will be capped at a maximum of 10 pupils. In the event of the actual mainstream pupil numbers of the new school falling below 40% of the total expected mainstream pupil number, the funding protection would not be guaranteed and would be subject to negotiation with the Local Authority.

Use of the Fund during 2022-23 financial year

There was no use of this element of the New School element of the Pupil Growth Fund during the 2022-23 financial year.

Forecast funding requirements from the Fund for 2023-24 and 2024-25

£136k of funding from the New School element of the Pupil Growth Fund was provided to Keeble Primary Academy and Cambrai Primary Academy being new schools not yet operating with a full number of year groups. The two schools will require funding for this purpose again in the 2024-25 financial year.

Oakbridge Church of England Primary Academy in Northallerton is due to open in September 2024. The Trust operating the new school will receive £25k in respect of pre-opening costs in Spring 2024. The balance of the pre-opening costs funding of £50k will be paid in Summer 2024.

In respect the New School Pupil Growth Funding elements, it is estimated that the total funding allocation to be made over the 2023-24 and 2024-25 financial years to be as follows:

<b>Funding Element</b>	<b>Estimated Amount (£'000)</b>
Keeble & Cambrai – 2023/24 Additional Pupil Led Funding	136.0
Keeble - Funding Formula – Pupil Led Funding (NYC average £4224 per pupil x 7/12)	73.9
Cambrai - Funding Formula – Pupil Led Funding (NYC average £4224 per pupil x 7/12)	73.9

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Oakbridge - Pre-Opening Costs	75.0
Oakbridge - Resources	7.5
Oakbridge - Leadership Diseconomies of Scale	51.0
Oakbridge - Funding Formula – Lump Sum (7/12)	78.4
Oakbridge - Funding Formula – Pupil Led Funding (NYC average £4224 per pupil x 7/12)	73.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>569.6</b>

The new school may be eligible for additional pupil number funding protection in the event of the of the September 2024 actual cohort numbers being less than 75% of the full cohort numbers. This position will not be known until the school opens in September 2024.

4.7 Proposed changes to the Pupil Growth Fund eligibility criteria and operating methodology for financial year 2024/25 onwards

- a. The DfE requires local authorities to follow the new local formula requirements for growth funding whereby additional classes (identified by basic need) must be funded in line with minimum levels in the funding calculation for the 2024/25 financial year. As a minimum local authorities will have to provide funding to a level which is compliant with the following formula:

primary growth factor value\* (£1,550) × number of pupils x area cost adjustment\* (ACA)

(\*the DfE have specified that the primary growth factor value is applicable to all school phases)

(\*\*not applicable for North Yorkshire)

The North Yorkshire local authority Pupil Growth Funding allocation currently does not meet this requirement. It is proposed to update the North Yorkshire local authority Pupil Growth Funding allocation for the 2024/25 financial year to comply with the DfE requirement as follows:

Primary schools:

A minimum funding allocation of a lump-sum funding contribution of £50k (full year allocation) or the growth factor value (£1,550) x the increase in pupil numbers compared to the previous October census pupil numbers (main school only). An adjustment of 7/12 will be made to the funding allocation for LA maintained schools

Secondary schools:

KS3 AWPU value x Y7 growth in excess of 15%; where the calculated funding amount is in excess of £100k, the school will receive a funding allocation of the higher of £100k or the primary growth factor value (£1,550) × the increase in Y7 pupil numbers in excess of 15% growth compared to the previous October census pupil numbers (main school only). In subsequent 4 years, where the school meets the eligibility criteria and the calculated funding is in excess £100k, the school will receive a funding allocation of the higher of £100k or the primary growth factor value (£1,550) × the higher of either the increase in Y7 pupil numbers in excess of 15% growth or overall main school growth of in excess of 5% of roll when

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comparing the current year October census pupil numbers to the previous October census pupil numbers (main school only) An adjustment of 7/12 will be made to the funding allocation for LA maintained schools.

- b. The DfE have advised that the North Yorkshire eligibility criteria in respect of Schools with excessive balances (15% or more of delegated budget funding) not being eligible for funding from the Pupil Growth Fund is not compliant with the DfE new local funding formula requirements for 2024/25. It is proposed to remove this eligibility criteria item from the North Yorkshire Pupil Growth Fund. This would apply to the basic need and school closure elements of the Fund.

**5.0 PUPIL GROWTH & FALLING ROLLS FUND OVERALL POSITION & RESERVE**

- 5.1 The current forecast reserves position for the combined Pupil Growth & Falling Rolls Fund for 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 is as follows:

	<b>Core Pupil Growth &amp; Falling Rolls Fund</b>	<b>Pupil Growth Fund Associated with Closing Schools</b>	<b>New Schools Provision (pre-opening funding, post-opening diseconomies funding &amp; estimated pupil number funding)</b>
<b>Balance as at 31/03/2023</b>	<b>£1,028.4k</b>	<b>£0.0k</b>	<b>£2,698.4k</b>
2023/24 Funding Allocation	£500.0k	£k	£1,827.0k
2023/24 Estimated Funding Requirement	-£310.1k	-£k	-£161.0k
<b>Forecast Reserve as at 31/03/2024</b>	<b>£1,218.3k</b>	<b>£0.0</b>	<b>£4,364.4k</b>

- 5.2 In consideration of the level of reserve on the Core Pupil Growth & Falling Rolls Fund and the current forecast Pupil Growth Funding requirement for 2024-25 in respect of basic need, it is proposed to release the £500k that is annually requested for Pupil Growth & Falling Rolls to be allocated to school budgets for the 2024-25 financial year. Schools Forum members are asked to note the risk that any demands for basic need Pupil Growth Funding in excess of the available reserve will result in a request for an increased funding level being requested in the 2025-26 financial year.
- 5.3 The current estimated funding requirement on the Pupil Growth Fund for a new mainstream free school built under the DfE free school presumption route is between £900k and £1m over the initial 7 years of operation. Two new primary schools are currently scheduled to open in North Yorkshire over the next 3 year period: Oakbridge CE Primary Academy in Northallerton and Manse Farm in Knaresborough. In addition to these two new schools, it is expected that a further 3-4 new schools may be required within North Yorkshire over the next five to seven-year period. In this respect, it is proposed for the 2024-25 financial year to allocate the balance of the DfE Growth

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Funding, after the allocation of £500k to school budgets, to the Pupil Growth - New Schools Fund. A further assessment will be undertaken at the end of 2024-25 financial year as to level of reserve, the associated new school funding requirement and whether further funding contribution are required to the reserve.

**6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS****6.1 The Schools Forum is asked:**

- a. To note the usage and forecast usage of the Pupil Growth and Falling Rolls Contingency Funds in the financial years 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 as detailed in this report.
- b. To note the reserves position on the Pupil Growth and Falling Rolls Fund as at 31 March 2023 and the forecast reserves position for 31 March 2024 as detailed in section 5 of this report.
- c. To note the DfE changes to the statutory guidance on Growth and Falling Rolls Funds for the 2024-25 financial year and to provide approval for:
  - iii. The proposed discontinuation of the Falling Rolls Fund for the 2024-25 financial year.
  - iv. The proposed changes to the funding methodology and eligibility criteria for the Pupil Growth Fund from 1 April 2024 in order to comply with the DfE requirements for 2024-25.
- d. To provide approval for the proposed release of the £500k that is annually requested for Pupil Growth & Falling Rolls to be allocated to school budgets for the 2024-25 financial year and any funding requirement for basic need Pupil Growth in 2024-25 to be met from the Core Pupil Growth & Falling Roll Reserve.
- e. To provide approval for the balance of the DfE Growth Funding, after the allocation of £500k to school budgets, to be allocated to the Pupil Growth - New Schools Fund

STUART CARLTON

Corporate Director – Children and Young People's Service