

MEETING	SCHOOLS FINANCE FORUM
DATE	19 November 2013
TITLE	Schools' Balances
PURPOSE	
RECOMMENDATION	
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CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION	Councillor Sian Gwenllian

Wales Government Publication (SDR 183/2013)

Comments

1. I have already reported to the previous meeting of the School Budget Forum (25/6/13) on the reduction in Gwynedd schools balances from £4.4m on the 31 March 2012 to £3.8m on the 31 March 2013.
2. Following the recent publication by Wales Government of school balances as at 31 March 2013 (Appendix 2) there is an opportunity to compare Gwynedd schools balances with other Welsh Local Authorities.
3. Table 2 of Appendix 2 shows Gwynedd schools balances as a percentage of delegated budgets at 4.5% compared to a Wales average of 3.3%, with Gwynedd's percentage continuing to be amongst the highest in Wales.
4. Following a request by Gwynedd Council, Wales Government now publish information on negative balances in tables 1 and 2, with the total negative balances in Gwynedd appearing to be comparatively small. Of course the aim is that none of our schools should have negative balances.
5. Through receiving the information on negative balances I am now able to recalculate the school balances percentage excluding negative balances as you can see in Appendix 1. This calculation provides a fairer picture of school balances.

Conclusion

1. The comparatively high level of balances in Gwynedd schools continues to cause concern as **some schools** do not, it would appear, make the best use of the finance available for pupils who are currently within the education system. This matter has previously been highlighted on numerous occasions by the Cabinet Member for Education.
2. The high level of balances in some Gwynedd schools is also an obstacle to the Cabinet Member for Education whilst attempting to defend schools from high financial cuts.