# Briefing Note for Formula Funding Committee

**Subject -** **St Wilfrid’s Primary School – Carry Forward of Surplus Balance 2013/14**

**Background**

The school failed to complete and return the School Balances as at 31 March 2015 by the required date regarding us of balances, amounting to £15,000, carried forward form 2013/14 for specific purposes into 2014/15.

The school also failed to respond to reminders sent by the school’s Business Support officer, Pauline Simpson.

This matter was discussed at the Formula Funding Committee (FFC) on 18 August 2015, where it was agreed that the Primary Commissioner, David Street, would contact the school and report back to the FFC.

**Findings**

Following contact by David Street and Angela Whitehead, School Funding and Business Relationship Manager, the headteacher, Pauline Johnson, apologised for the failure to complete the return which had been an administrative oversight.

E-mail correspondence was shared and although £3,000 could be verified there was an outstanding amount of £12,000 that could not. Mrs Johnson and the Chair of Governors, Father Quinn were invited to a meeting at County Hall, with Sue Aviston, School Capital and Organisation Manager, on 6 Janaury 2015 to discuss the £12,000.

The Headteacher and Father Quinn explained that the issue dated back to the move from the St Andrew’s Primary site to the St Wilfrid’s Middle school site some 3 years ago.

A lot of refurbishment work was carried out. The school has minutes which set out that the cost of the refurbishment would be 100% funded by the Diocese.

The Diocese invoiced the school for £12,000, being a 10% contribution towards part of the refurbishment works. The school disputed the invoice but being prudent set aside £12,000 as a commitment from their 2013/14 surplus carry forward in case they did have to pay the invoice.

The Headteacher had contacted the Diocese to clarify the situation but at the time of our meeting had still not received a response.

It was explained at the meeting that according to regulations if the money has not been spent for the purposes of the commitment then It should be clawed back by the Authority but it was not a clear cut case. The situation with the Diocese needed clarification before a decision could be made.

Sue Aviston contacted a representative of the Diocese who confirmed that they would not require the School to pay the £12,000 invoice. They also apologised for the confusion which had resulted in the school being in a clawback situation through no fault of their own other than being prudent.

**Proposal**

As the school had acted in good faith by setting aside the £12,000, and the fact that it had not been spent on the specified commitment was due to failings on the part of the Diocese, it would seem unfair to penalise the school by clawing back the funding.

**Meeting of FFC**

Members of the FFC met to discuss the issue immediately after the Schools Forum meeting on 14 January 2016.

Ian Walker (Chair)

Dr Roger Vaughan

Mr Richard Woolhouse

Katie Morrison

Graham Wilkins

**Resolution**

Members were unanimous in their decision to allow the school to retain the £12,000.

Angela Whitehead would communicate the FFC decision to the school with the caveat that the funding should be spent as soon as possible and within 6 months of the FFC decision.