

Attendance

Members of the Schools' Forum

Barry Bond (Chair)	Special School Sector Governor Representative
Debbie Clarke	Non-School Member Early Years (PVI Sector) Representative
Ben Davis	Academies Sector Representative
Susan Lacey	Nursery Sector Head Teacher Representative
Lynne Law	Academies Sector Representative
Davis Lewis	Academies Sector Representative
Ian Moore	Academies Sector Representative
Jeremy Parkes	Academies Sector Representative
Zoe Rollinson	Primary Sector Head Teacher Representative
Stephen Smith	Primary Sector Governor Representative
Arthur Thompson	PRU Sector Head Teacher Representative
Lisa Thompson	Headteacher - St. Andrew's CE Primary School
Lucia Jayne Turner	Nursery Sector Governor Representative
Sarah Whittington	Special School Sector Head Teacher Representative
Phil Williams	Academies Sector Representative
Trisha James	Primary Sector Representative

In Attendance

James Barlow	Finance Business Partner
Bill Hague	Head of School Organisation
Steve Hurdley	Finance Officer
Shelley Humphries	Democratic Services Officer
Adrian Leach	Head of Special Educational Needs and Disability
Councillor Lynne Moran	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
Alison Shannon	Chief Accountant
Meredith Teasdale	Director of Education

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 **Welcome and Introductions**
- 2 **Apologies**
Apologies were received from Schools' Forum members Ian Browne, Carroll McNally, Raymond Green, Karen Preston, Matthew Welton, Louisa Craig, Jon Dovey, Graham Tate, Lisa Turner. Debra Boniface, Finance Manager, CWC also gave apologies.
- 3 **Declaration of Interest or Confidentiality**
Other than the exempt report contained in Item 14 on the agenda, there were no declarations of interest or confidentiality.

4 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting - to be approved**

Resolved:

That the minutes from the previous meeting be approved as a correct record.

5 **Schools' Forum Membership 2018 - 2019**

Shelley Humphries, Democratic Services Officer presented the item on Schools' Forum Membership 2018 - 2019 and highlighted new and returning members. Bill Hague, Head of School Organisation also advised the Forum that the remaining vacancies had been undergoing a selection process.

Resolved:

That the current status of Schools' Forum Membership 2018 – 2019 be noted.

6 **Schools' Forum - Forward plan 2018 - 2019**

Bill Hague, Head of Schools Organisation presented the Forward Plan for Schools' Forum for 2018- 2019 and highlighted key points. It was noted that it was good practice to maintain a forward plan to enable Forum members to be aware of upcoming reports and when items that require decision would appear.

Resolved:

That the Forward Plan for Schools' Forum 2018 - 2019 be noted.

7 **Growth Fund Update 2018 - 2019**

David Kirby, Service Manager for School Places and Transport presented the report on the Growth Fund Update and highlighted key points. The report informed Schools' Forum of the growth fund allocations paid to each school for the academic year 2017 – 2018, estimated allocations for 2018 – 2019, potential allocations for 2019 – 2020 and changes to the Funding Formula. It was highlighted that Schools' Forum should be mindful of the caveat that figures were subject to change, dependant on the number of pupils on roll.

In response to a query in terms of timescales, it was clarified that there was no three-year time limit and the payments ceased once maximum figures of pupils on roll were reached.

The figures were driven by data from the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI), and demographical figures. The amount is multiplied by number on roll; secondary schools were said to be different at they had additional pupils.

It was noted that particular attention had been drawn to lump sums by auditors, however it was clarified that finance officers were able to investigate and provide a breakdown. Dave Kirby, Service Manager for School Places and Transport offered to respond to each school with breakdowns upon request.

Resolved:

1. That the Growth Fund Update report be noted.
2. That an item offering clarification on criteria for growth payments be added to the Forward Plan.
3. That David Kirby, Service Manager for School Places and Transport would respond to individual queries from schools about their growth fund payment breakdown.

8 **Scheme for Financing Schools**

Steven Hurdley, Finance Officer presented the report on the Scheme for Financing Schools and highlighted key points. The report outlined that the draft scheme had gone out to consultation with headteachers and the Chair of Governors as required by regulations. The last Scheme for Financing Schools was published in February 2016.

Following consultation, it was reported that no comments had been received to the proposed changes.

The approval of Schools' Forum had been sought to publish the revised scheme. The implementation and publication of the scheme, with effect from 1 January 2019 was agreed.

Resolved:

1. That amendments to Wolverhampton's Scheme for Financing Schools as shown in Appendix 1 to this report be approved.
2. That implementation and publication, with effect from 1 January 2019, of the revised Scheme for Financing Schools be approved.

9 **Feedback from High Needs Funding Sub-Group and High Needs Funding Formula**

Adrian Leach, Head of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) presented the report for Feedback from High Needs Funding Sub-Group and High Needs Funding Formula and highlighted key points. The report updated the Schools' Forum on work done by the High Needs Funding Sub-group and the latest High Needs Block Forecast.

It was explained that the High Needs Sub-group had been set up to investigate financial pressures around the High Needs Block. The last meeting of Sub-group was reported to have taken place on 15 November 2018 and meetings were scheduled to inform Schools' Forum.

It was reported that there was likely to be a projected £950,000 overspend, which was half that of last year.

There was pressure coming from the high level of SEND placements. The working group was picking up work over 24 months.

Resolved:

That High Needs Funding Sub-group update and latest High Needs Block forecast be noted.

10 **2019 - 2020 Consultation on Schools' Funding Formula**

James Barlow, Finance Business Partner presented the 2019 - 2020 Consultation on Schools' Funding Formula and highlighted key points. The report explained the options available for application of the National Funding Formula (NFF) to Wolverhampton schools in 2019-2020, considering current pressures alongside the anticipated requirement to fully implement the NFF by 2020-2021 and Forum

members present were asked to register their vote on behalf of the school cohort they represented.

It was explained that any figures represented were indicative only and exact calculations would be reported at a later date. It had been agreed to move 0.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block of Dedicated Schools Grant. It was also explained that the Local Authority held the final decision on application of a local funding formula, and that any adjustments to the agreed rates would be presented at the meeting in January 2019.

Before the votes were cast, the point was raised that any lack of engagement was thought to be because information on the consultation had not been filtered through until 14 November 2018, which may have accounted for the low voting figures. It was noted that it had been included in the Headteacher Bulletin, but perhaps had not been highlighted. Bill Hague, Head of School Organisation offered to explore ways of highlighting future communications, especially decisions that required a vote. It was also noted that it was important that representatives from schools take messages back from Schools' Forum meetings.

The three options for consideration as outlined in the report were highlighted and Schools' Forum members were invited to cast their votes.

The voting took place and resulted in eight votes in favour of Option B, three votes in favour of Option C and one abstention. The breakdown of the votes for Option B were as follows:

Special Schools	2
Primary Schools	4
Academies	2

The vote was carried and the formula calculation agreed upon was Option B, which included the following adjustments:

0.50% Transfer from Schools Block to High Needs Block
0.50% Minimum Funding Guarantee
1.50% Capping factor.

Resolved:

1. That the outcomes of the consultation be noted.
2. That the implications of the impact of the various options for all schools in Wolverhampton be considered
3. That members place a vote and the vote be carried
4. That Option B be agreed as the formula calculation for 2019-2020
Option B - 0.50% Transfer from Schools Block to High Needs Block
0.50% Minimum Funding Guarantee
1.50% Capping factor.

11 **Dates for future meetings**

Resolved:

That dates for future meetings be noted.

12 **Any Other Business**

There was no other business before proceeding to the final item.

13 **Exclusion of press and public**

Resolved:

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information on the grounds shown below.

14 **2019 - 2020 High Needs Place Commissioning**

Adrian Leach, Head of SEND presented the 2019-2020 High Needs Place Commissioning report and highlighted key points. It was explained that the report contained information relating to the number of high needs places commissioned at establishment level for the 2019 – 2020 academic year. It was noted that there had been Appendix 1 summarised the current and anticipated needs of children and young people with SEND requirements. Copies of Appendix 2 were circulated to Forum members to advise of the number of high needs places commissioned at each establishment for 2019 – 2020.

It was explained to Forum members that each provider had been visited and discussions had taken place in terms of the impact felt by each one. Schools' Forum was advised that schools would know place numbers by January 2019. It was noted that this was the first time this information had been presented to Schools' Forum at this point and was a result of responding to requests from Schools' Forum members.

The report was well received by members of Schools' Forum and it was expressed that this information would be invaluable in terms of future financial planning. It was also noted that transparency in funding allocations was appreciated and it was good that schools had been involved.

It was noted that this piece of work had been delivered by Tom Knott, SEND Commissioning Officer and Adrian Leach, Head of SEND and that it would develop and evolve over time. Forum members were invited to request any additional information they wished to see represented in future High Needs Place Commissioning reports.

It was noted that nurseries and those in alternative provision were marked as 'not applicable' as the number of children on roll moving through these areas were more fluid than in others. It was clarified that 'part-time' referred to the fact that some children were in nursery / pre-school part-time.

If numbers suddenly increased in hospital tuition, there was scope to handle the sudden rise in need and demand would be met. Mechanisms were in place to accommodate and there was some scope to make adjustments.

Resolved:

1. That the 2018 Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Sufficiency Analysis be noted.
2. That the 2019-2020 High Needs Place Commissioning Process be noted.
3. That the number of high needs places commissioned at each establishment for the 2019-2020 academic year be noted.

The Chair thanked all for coming and closed the meeting at 17:10.