

## Attendance

### Members of the Schools' Forum

Barry Bond (Chair)	Special School Sector Governor Representative
Louisa Craig	Academies Sector Representative
Jon Dovey	Primary Sector Governor Representative
Raymond Green	Primary Sector Governor Representative
Trisha James	Primary Sector Governor Substitute
Ian Moore	Academies Sector Representative
Jeremy Parkes	Academies Sector Representative
Karen Preston	Academies Sector Representative
Zoe Rollinson	Primary Sector Head Teacher Representative
Graham Tate	Academies Sector Representative
Sarah Whittington	Special School Sector Head Teacher Representative
Phil Williams	Academies Sector Representative

### In Attendance

Debra Boniface	Finance Manager
Bill Hague	Head of School Organisation
Shelley Humphries	Democratic Services Officer
Councillor Lynne Moran	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
Meredith Teasdale	Director of Education

## Part 1 – items open to the press and public

*Item No.*    *Title*

- 1**        **Welcome and Introductions**
- 2**        **Apologies**  
Apologies for absence were received from Lisa Thompson, Lynne Law, Ben Davis, Matthew Welton, Arthur Thompson, James Ludlow, Lucia Turner and Stephen Smith.
- 3**        **Declaration of Interest or Confidentiality**  
There were no declarations of interest or confidentiality made.
- 4**        **Minutes of the Previous Meeting - 17 Jan**  
That the minutes of the last meeting held on 17 January 2019 be confirmed as a correct record.
- 5**        **Matters Arising**  
There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

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

Shelley Humphries, Democratic Services Officer provided an update on the Schools' Forum Membership 2018 – 2019 and highlighted that there had been two new substitutes nominated for the Primary Sector. It was also highlighted that there were a number of members whose terms would come to an end in September this year and that steps would be taken to seek nominations for these places.

Bill Hague, Head of School Organisation added that all end dates had been brought in line to end at the start of the academic year for consistency. A further membership update would be provided at the next meeting.

Resolved:

That a Schools' Forum Membership 2018 – 2019 update be provided at the July meeting of Schools' Forum.

7 **Schools' Forum Forward Plan 2018 - 2019**

Bill Hague, Head of School Organisation presented the Schools' Forum Forward Plan 2018 – 2019 and highlighted items already populating the plan.

It was requested that any agenda item requests be forwarded to Bill Hague, Head of School Organisation.

Resolved:

1. That any Forward Plan agenda item requests be forwarded to Bill Hague, Head of School Organisation.
2. That the Schools' Forum Forward Plan 2018 – 2019 be noted.

8 **Schools Funding Block 2019**

Debra Boniface, Finance Manager presented the Schools Funding Block 2019 – 2020 report for information. The report provided an update of the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2019-2020, following Forum agreement to apply the local funding formula, in accordance with the guidance issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (EFSA).

The report also provided a breakdown of blocks and it was clarified that the 'Final' column at paragraph 2.2 contained the final adjustments made by the EFSA. It was also clarified that the High Needs Block remained provisional as final revisions were awaited.

It was agreed that this was the best outcome for schools had been negotiated and the settlement figures were noted.

Resolved:

That the individual schools' budget settlement for 2019-2020 be noted.

9 **High Needs Block Funding 2019**

Debra Boniface, Finance Manager presented the High Needs Block Funding 2019 – 2020 report. The report provided an update on the High Needs block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2019-2020 and sought approval to allocate the funding in accordance with the guidance issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In respect of the Matrix (Top Up) Funding, it had been agreed in principal that an interim uplift of 5% would be added to the current banding and it was highlighted that the figures set out in Appendix 2 included this in the provisional figures. It was clarified that the final settlement figures would depend on the final out-turn position, indications for which were expected in April 2019 with the final position being expected in May 2019. This was to be reviewed through the High Needs Sub Group.

Concerns were raised in relation to the cost pressures on the high needs block. It was thought that the continued pressure was experienced because of the continued rise in pupils with complex needs entering the school system.

It was reported that there had been a considerable reduction in overspend, which was lower than the national average and the work undertaken to achieve this was commended.

Members of the Schools Forum agreed to:

1. Note the anticipated settlement for 2019-2020.
2. Note the areas of overspend on the DSG High Needs Block in 2018-2019 that will be treated as the first call on the 2019-2020 allocation, as approved by Schools Forum in January 2018.
3. Approve the allocation of High Needs expenditure for 2019-2020 (Appendix 1).
4. Approve the revised matrix bands for 2019-2020 (Appendix 2) on the understanding that the figures were under review.
5. Approve a total per place contribution for maintained PRUs and Special Schools to support the delivery of local authority.

Resolved:

1. That the anticipated settlement for 2019-2020 be noted.
2. That the areas of overspend on the DSG High Needs Block in 2018-2019 that will be treated as the first call on the 2019-2020 allocation, as approved by Schools Forum in January 2018 be noted.
3. That the allocation of High Needs expenditure for 2019-2020 (Appendix 1) be approved.
4. That the revised matrix bands for 2019-2020 (Appendix 2) be approved.
5. That a total per place contribution for maintained PRUs and Special Schools to support the delivery of local authority retained education functions previously funded by Education Services Grant be approved.

### **Early Years Funding Block 2019**

Bill Hague, Head of School Organisation presented the Early Years Funding Block 2019 – 2020 report for approval. The report provided a summary of the Early Years funding block of the Dedicated Schools Grant, as illustrated in the Dedicated schools grant (DSG): 2019 to 2020 announcement made by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on 19 December 2018.

Schools' Forum agreed to approve the local authority proposal to maintain the base hourly rates at the levels agreed for 2018-2019, which were set out as follows:

- Base Rate £4.25 (Universal and additional 15 hours)
- SEN Inclusion Fund £0.08
- Deprivation Funding £0.35
- Two-year-old funding £5.24
- Early Years Pupil Premium £0.53 (first 570 or Universal hours only)
- Maintained Nursery School Supplement £2.83 (Universal hours only)

Resolved:

That the local authority proposal to maintain the base hourly rates at the levels agreed for 2018-2019 be approved.

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### **Central Services Block 2019**

Debra Boniface, Finance Manager presented the Central Services Block 2019 – 2020 report for approval and summarised key points. The report provided an update on the Central Schools Services block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Services and sought approval to a list of items that the Local Authority proposed to manage centrally on the behalf of schools and academies.

It was noted that all copyright licensing was purchased within a single national licence. Attention was drawn to the addition of funding for the Safeguarding Officer within the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub which was agreed by Schools' Forum on 17 January 2019.

It was agreed by Schools' Forum to approve the budget allocations as a block rather than line by line.

Resolved:

That the proposed budget allocation of the Central Schools Services Block for 2019 – 2020 be agreed.

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### **Any Other Business**

#### High Needs Funding

It had been noted that the reduction in overspend in this area was to be commended, however it was highlighted that there was no increase in funding from the Government. It was noted that an appointment for the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills to meet with the Chief Secretary to the Treasury was awaited and this matter would be raised.

#### Fairtrade Fortnight

It was highlighted that 25 February 2019 was the start of Fairtrade Fortnight and that Wolverhampton had just renewed its Fairtrade City status.

Although it was noted that some of the schools in Wolverhampton were already Fairtrade schools, it was stated that Fairtrade contact Ann Bickley would be available to attend other schools to encourage engagement and raise awareness.

#### Brexit

It was noted that, as the transition period for withdrawal from the EU was scheduled for 29 March 2019, schools were asked to be mindful of establishing sound contingency plans in the event of a no-deal split. Particular concerns arose around

school meal providers and issues potentially experienced by EU nationals working or studying in schools around the settlement process outcomes.

#### School Catering proposals

A concern was raised in respect of the School Catering proposals due to be approved by Cabinet in April 2019. This concern was noted and Meredith Teasdale, Director of Education agreed to arrange a meeting for all those with similar concerns to explore interim options.

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#### **Dates for future meetings**

The next meeting of Schools' Forum will be on 4 July 2019.