

**City of Wolverhampton Council**

**Minutes of the meeting of the Schools' Forum  
Held at Green Park School at 4:00pm on  
Monday 26 February 2018**

**Present**

Mr B Bond – Chair  
 Mrs L Craig – Academies Sector Representative  
 Mr S Davis – Academies Sector Representative  
 Ms K Elliot - Primary Sector Headteacher Representative  
 Mr R Green MBE - Primary Sector Governor Representative  
 Ms S Lacey – Nursery Sector Representative  
 Mrs J Hopkins- Primary Sector Representative  
 Mr J Parkes – Academies Sector Representative  
 Mr G Tate – Academies Sector Representative  
 Mr A Thompson – PRU Sector Governor Representative  
 Mrs S Whittington – Special School Sector Representative  
 Mr P Williams – Academies Sector Representative  
 Mr A Otero – Secondary Sector Headteacher Representative  
 Mr M Welton – Primary Sector Headteacher Representative

**In attendance**

Mrs D Boniface – Finance Manager – Education, CWC  
 Mr J Follette – Finance Officer - CWC  
 Mr B Hague – Head of School Planning & Resources, CWC  
 Mrs T Duhra – Clerk, Education Business Manager, CWC  
 Mrs C Nye – Director of Finance  
 Mrs M Teasdale - Director of Education, CWC

**Consent to  
Absence**

Mrs G Morris – Academies Sector Representative  
 Mr I Browne – 16-19 Years Sector Representative  
 Mr J Dovey – Primary Sector Governor Representative  
 Mrs L Law – Academies Sector Representative  
 Mr J Hopkins – Primary Sector Headteacher Representative  
 Ms G Draycott – Academy Sector Representative  
 Cllr C Darke – Cabinet Responsibility for Schools, Skills & Learning  
 Mrs D Clarke – Non-School Member Early Years (PVI Sector)

**Absent**

Mr S Smith – Primary Sector Governor Representative  
 Mrs C McNally – Diocesan School Representative  
 Ms K Elliot – Primary Sector Representative  
 Ms L Turner – Primary Sector Governor Representative

**550 Welcome and Introductions**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

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**551 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Mrs G Morris, Mr I Browne, Mr J Dovey, Mrs L Law, Mr J Hopkins, Ms G Draycott, Cllr C Darke and Mrs D Clarke.

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**552 Declaration of Interest/Confidentiality**

Members were reminded that care should be taken to ensure that items of a confidential nature were treated as such. In addition, they were advised that the clerk would strive to ensure that minutes of their meetings did not include information of a confidential nature as, once approved, these became public documents.

There were no declarations of interest for items listed on the agenda

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**553 Minutes of previous meeting – to be approved**

Page 335 Mrs S Lacey highlighted that Mrs E Smith is a Nursery Sector Substitute and should not be recorded as “Absent”.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 11 January 2018 be approved as a correct record with the above amendment.
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**554 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

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**555 Schools Block Funding Formula Ratification**

Mrs Boniface presented a detailed report on the allocation and ratification of the Schools Block budgets for Wolverhampton in 2018-2019. She added that schools’ budgets have been revised and calculated by applying the local funding formula as agreed by School Forum in the previous meetings and as per guidance provided by Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Application of these agreements resulted in £179.88 million to be distributed through the funding formula. Detailed allocation of this figure was provided to the members.

It was confirmed that political ratification had been received.

The Chair invited questions/comments.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) Members noted Individual schools' budget settlements for 2018-2019.

**556 Early Years Block Funding Formula**

Mrs Boniface provided a report on the summary of the Early Years funding block of the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2018-2019. As agreed by Forum previously this has been calculated by adopting the National Funding Formula for Early Years from its onset.

The indicative allocation for 2018-2019 is £19.053 million, and the report detailed how this would be distributed to providers. SEN inclusion Fund for 2017-2018 was £191,092, with a current balance of £68,600. Members were asked to note that one payment remains for the Summer term, and there may be further adjustments to make. Mrs Boniface also confirmed that any surplus at the end of the year will be kept in a reserve for the sole purpose of reinvestment into Early Years. Should there be an overspend, this will be borrowed from next year's budget.

The grant for maintained nursery schools was discussed, and Mrs Boniface reported that the guidance was vague and the DfE stated 'local authorities protect 2016-2017 funding rates for maintained nursery schools'. It is however, unclear as to whether this match funding should be for the overall amount, or whether it is calculated against the hourly rate. The City of Wolverhampton Council had liaised with other Local Authorities and opinion differed. Mrs Boniface presented a number of models to members, however it was suggested that a further meeting be held with all nursery schools present, to decide which formula to recommend to Schools Forum.

Mr Bond asked when this was likely to happen and it was agreed that it would be within the next two-weeks as decisions needed publishing by the end of March.

The Chair invited questions.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) Members agreed to the local authority proposal to maintain the base hourly rates at the levels agreed for 2017-2018.
- (ii) Members noted use of centrally retained funding (SEN Inclusion) from 2017-2018.
- (iii) Members agreed to delegate the decision on which formula to use to Nursery schools.

**ACTION:**

Representatives from all Nursery Schools to be invited to discuss different options ready for publications by 31/03/2018

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**557 High Needs Block Funding**

Mrs Boniface reported on this historic overspend and the move of £1.7 million from the 18/19 budgets to further finance 17/18, as well as the £130,000 to further support alternative provision. It is the aim by end of the 17/18 that no further forward borrowing would be required. Mrs Teasdale reminded colleagues that the caveat on the agreement for no further forward-borrowing was the understanding of the changes required across the high-needs provision as a whole.

Mr Bond confirmed that the number of places for special schools has not been agreed for 18/19 and finance colleagues concurred.

The formula for special schools will continue to be paid at £10,000 per pupil, plus the locally agreed matrix which will also remain unchanged

Mrs Boniface advised that a High Needs Review Sub-Group is being established by Adrian Leach and part of the groups responsibility will be to review matrix funding. Mrs Teasdale asked for representatives. Mrs Whittington & Mr Otero volunteered to be part of this group.

Mrs Boniface presented the claw back agreed from mainstream and maintained schools; mainstream would contribute £26 per pupil, and the Council would apply the DfE recommend multiplier of 4.25% for special schools, and 3.75% for alternative provision.

Mrs Whittington enquired about the Special School Advisor post. Mrs Teasdale advised that the recent recruitment campaign had been unsuccessful but confirmed that an alternative solution has been found and will be shared in the near future.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) Members noted the anticipated settlement for 2018-2019
- (ii) Members noted the areas of overspend on the DSG High Needs Block 2017-2018 and as previously approved by Schools Forum to treat this as first call for 2018-19 allocation.
- (iii) High Needs expenditure approved by the members.
- (iv) Members approved total per place contribution of £97.50 for PRU's and £110.50 for Special Schools to support the delivery of LA retained education functions previously funded by Education Services Grant
- (v) Members approved the establishment of a High Needs Review Sub-Group.

**558 Central Schools Services Block Budget**

Mrs Boniface presented the allocation for 2018-2019, calculated at £31.77 per pupil which replaces the former centrally retained funding, and the ESG. It was reported that whilst it is not a statutory requirement to seek the Forum's approval for this, the City of Wolverhampton Council considered it best practice to do so.

Mr Bond asked about the copywriting licensing and whether these are all required. Mrs Boniface reported that a return is required annually to receive the discounted rates and Mrs Teasdale reported that this is a national requirement and not something dictated by City of Wolverhampton Council

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) Members noted and agreed the individual lines of the proposed budget allocation of the Central Schools Services Block 2018-19

**559 Review of Schools Forum Operations**

Chair advised members that there is a need to review the current membership & constitution that was presented at the 1st Forum meeting of this academic year. He is proposing to do this with Mr Hague and the Clerk. He asked for members views on this and suggested it would be a good idea for a small group to be set up to undertake this piece of work and asked for any volunteers. Mr Welton & Mr Thompson volunteered to assist with the review.

**558 Any Other Business**

Clerk shared an item sent in by a representative from City of Wolverhampton College with regards to Skills and Apprenticeship Show in 2018. (Details attached

to the minutes) It was agreed for this to be shared via our weekly HT's Bulletin and via Connect Ed Newsletter.

MT advised members the City is mourning the death of Mayor Cllr Mattu, and that the Flags at the Civic Centre have been lowered to half - mast.  
Chair added that this was sad news and the loss of a committed and dedicated Councillor.

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**559 Date of Future Meetings**

- Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2018
- Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2018

The meeting closed at 4:40pm

Signed: .....  
(Chair of Forum)

Date: .....