

## SCHOOLS FORUM

20 JANUARY 2014

Present: Head Teacher Representatives: Richard Pilgrim, Gill Cocklin, Alison Penny, Nick Stevens, Ania Hildrey, Nathen Aspinell, Eileen Hinds, Heidi Swidenback.

Governor Representatives: Dan Jacoby, Cynthia Pitteway.

Non- School Representatives: Viv Robinson.

Officers: Alison Alexander, Edmund Bradley, David Scott and David Cook.

### **PART I**

#### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Gillian May, Helen McHale, Gill Labrum and Councillor Bicknell.

#### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were received.

#### MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2013 were agreed as a correct record.

#### 2014-15 INDICATIVE DSG SETTLEMENT AND UPDATE ON 2014-15 SCHOOLS BUDGET

Richard Pilgrim, Chairman of the Schools Forum, informed the Forum that he had agreed to take Agenda Item 05 prior to Item 04.

This report presented the updated proposals on the 2014-15 Schools Budget and included latest estimates of the funding available, RBWM's expenditure plans on services within the schools budget, movements between the 2013-14 base budget and proposed 2014-15 budget, the proposed 2014-15 formula budget and requested approval of the proposed de-delegated budget.

The Forum discussed the RBWM's per pupil unit of funding for the early years block which was higher than the Schools Block per pupil unit of funding. This is the rate set by the DfE to allocate Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) to RBWM. The Forum acknowledged that higher funding levels were required due to a much higher staff to pupil ratio for early years provision and the DfE confirming that the funding per pupil for early years would remain the same for 2014-15 as for 2013-14.

Edmund Bradley, Finance Partner (Children & Schools), informed the Forum that there had been amendments to the report since it had been published these were as follows:

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#### 4.7 Minimum Funding Guarantee and capping of gains

The Minimum Funding Guarantee ensures that schools receive a minimum of 98.5% of the per pupil funding they received in the previous year. The funding required under the 2014-15 new formula to bring schools up to this minimum is ~~£547k~~ £607k. This compares with £805k allocated through MFG in 2013-14. ~~20~~ 21 schools receive MFG top-up in 2014-15, ~~two~~ one fewer than last year. As before, the cost of MFG is funded by schools which gain under the new formula, by way of a cap on budget increases per pupil. In order to recover ~~£547k~~ £607k from gaining schools, this cap is set at ~~2.23%~~ 1.78%. This means that schools with gains of less than ~~2.23%~~ 1.78% per pupil will receive the full increase. Schools with increases of ~~2.23%~~ 1.78% and above will have those gains capped at ~~2.23%~~ 1.78%. The proposal to allocate headroom to schools, discussed later in this report, has the effect of further reducing the funding allocated through MFG and of increasing the amount by which gaining schools can gain (see table 19).'

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## 6 HEADROOM

The effect of this allocation on the ISB as a whole is shown in table 19:

<b>Table 19: Impact of allocation of £150k headroom on ISB</b>	Before allocation of headroom	After allocation of headroom	Change
Total Individual Schools Budget	£75.966m	£76.116m	£0.150m
MFG top-up required from top-slice of gaining schools	<del>£0.547m</del> £0.607m	<del>£0.540m</del> £0.565m	<del>(£0.037)</del> (£0.042)
Capping rate per pupil on gaining schools	<del>2.23%</del> 1.78%	<del>2.76%</del> 2.32%	<del>0.53%</del> 0.54%
Ratio of primary to secondary funding	1:1.28	1:1.28	No change

The Forum noted that there would be £150k shown under 'Headroom 2014-15' appendix C and this was not the same as the £150k remaining in the central DSG reserve following the one-off allocation to schools in 2014-15 through the formula.. There was also a question as to why 'Rates' had increased by £32k under 'Other Funding' appendix B and the Forum were informed this related to an increase in Business Rates.

The Forum were informed that representatives of primary and secondary maintained schools were required to approve, on behalf of their sector, the proposed de-delegated amounts and rates for 2014-15. It was proposed that maintained schools would de-delegate £514k from their individual budget shares to the central schools block for the services and at the rates described in table 12 of the report; this was an increase of £88k on the previous year's allocation.

**RESOLVED: That the de-delegation of each of the services detailed in table 12 of the report be approved.**

The Forum also considered the section on other centrally retained services where approval had to be given to retain central funding in the School Block for a number of services detailed in table 13 of the report. It was noted that the biggest change from the previous year was an increase in funding for pre 16 pupil growth, it was agreed that an update on how this funding was being allocated would be provided.

**RESOLVED: That the 2014-15 central schools block budgets detailed in table 13 of the report be approved.**

The Forum also voted on the 2014-15 proposed £210k central expenditure budget for Early Years as shown in table 16 of the report, as required by School Finance Regulations.

**RESOLVED: That the central expenditure of £210k, as shown in table 16, be approved.**

#### RBWM INDICATIVE SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA TO BE SUBMITTED TO EFA 21 JANUARY 2014

The Forum considered a copy of the 2014-15 pro forma that was due to be submitted to the EFA on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2014. It was noted that line 15, Minimum Funding Guarantee, would be amended prior to submission in line with the amendments made in the previous report.

The Forum thanked Edmund Bradley for his work on putting together the schools funding formula.

Arising from discussion on the two reports the Forum requested updates on two year old numbers, clarity on setting business rates, the allocation of pupil growth funding, the impact of the social care support funding and a discussion on free school meals.

#### DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Forum noted the future meeting date of Monday 3 March 2014 – 2.30pm.

#### MEETING

The meeting, which opened at 8.00am, ended at 9.05am.