

# BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

**SCHOOLS FORUM**  
**19 JANUARY 2023**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON**  
**THURSDAY, 19 JANUARY 2023 AT 1400 HOURS ONLINE VIA MS TEAMS**

**PRESENT:-**

Simon Bartlett, Secondary Mainstream Governor  
Julie Beattie, Finance Manager, BCC  
Shyla Begum, Business Analyst- Schools and Fair Funding Team, BCC  
Tim Boyes, Technical Advisor  
Maxine Charles, Maintained Primary School Headteacher representative  
Sean Delaney - Maintained Nursery Schools Governor  
Janet Dugmore, Unison  
Lucy Dumbleton, Pupil Place Planning Officer, BCC  
Mike Dunn, Mainstream Secondary Head  
Helen Ellis, Director of SEND & Inclusion  
Denise Fountain – Headteacher, Maintain Special School representative  
Patrick Grant, ESFA Observer  
Pam Garrington, Maintained Primary Governor  
Gillian Gregory, Maintained Special School Governor Representative  
Malcolm Green, DSG Advisor, Herefordshire Council  
Catherine Griffiths, Chair of Governors The Oaks Primary School  
Stephen Hampson, Senior Business Analyst. BCC  
Rebecca Hemsley, Assistant Director People Services, BCC  
Claire Henebury- Garretts Green Nursery School and Resource- Maintained  
Nursery School Rep  
James Hill, Academies Representative (Chair)  
Steve Howell, Head Teacher City of Birmingham School representing Pupil  
Referral Unit  
Jaspal Madahar, Finance & Resources Manager, Education Infrastructure, BCC  
Mandeep Marwaha, Committee Manager, BCC  
Councillor Karen McCarthy, Cabinet Member Children, Young People &  
Families, BCC  
Ben Patel-Sadler, Interim Senior Committee Manager, BCC (observing)  
Anna Pendleton, Rednal Hill Infant School and Longbridge and Northfield  
Consortium  
Kate Reynolds, Director of Lifelong Learning & Employability, BCC  
David Room, Teacher Unions representative  
Clare Sandland, Finance Business Partner, BCC  
Terry Shaw, Schools Funding Manager, BCC  
Christopher Wilson, Executive Headteacher Queensbury School (Special  
School Academy Rep)

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**WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1 The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting. Prior to the meeting starting, the Chair advised, and the members noted, that this meeting would be uploaded onto the Council's You Tube site. With members agreement, the meeting was recorded.

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Lisa Fraser, Dave Worledge, Anna Cosimetti, Paul Crossley (Rebecca Hemsley to represent Paul Crossley), Heather Wheeler-Jones, Lana Forrester, Colin Townsend, and Les Lawrence for their inability to attend the meeting.

A further apology was noted from the chat facility of the MS Teams meeting from Jaswinder Didiaily for her in ability to attend the meeting.

**The business of the meeting and all discussions in relation to individual reports was available for public inspection via the web-stream.**

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2022**

2 **RESOLVED**

The minutes of the 15 December to be updated to include the initials of members throughout the document.

Subject to the above note, the public minutes of the last meeting of the 15 December, having been circulated these were agreed by the School's Forum.

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3 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**Action (15/12/2022): Page 6, Item 8 – De-delegation LA Schools Consultation update - Director Lifelong Learning & Employability, the Chair and The Senior Business Analyst to look at the De delegation consultation process.**

Key points made:

- The Teacher Unions representative (DR), referred to questions raised at a previous meeting. Reference was made as to how and why information on de-delegation was circulated to all Birmingham Schools. Members were reminded to feedback to their constituents, sectors they represented (i.e., Maintained, Primary etc). New members of the forum would need to be informed of the process involved with de-delegations.
- The Director of Lifelong Learning & Employability had been appraised by the Chair of how de-delegations should be progressed. It was noted, that during the miscommunication to all schools, the Director of Lifelong Learning & Employability was not covering this area. A sincere apology

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was provided to Birmingham Schools and members of the forum for not adhering to the correct process.

- The Chair proposed a vote should be taken on the three areas of delegations at the end of the meeting. This would allow the authority proforma toolkit to be completed. Members of the forum agreed to this proposal.

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### Page 2, Action 5.5 (15/12/2022):

Key points made:

- (i) **Information regarding the High Needs block for 21/22 and 22/23 to be circulated to the invitees - Update 19/01/23** – It was important to ensure the forum were consulted upon the High Needs Block budget in a timely manner. This had been brought to the forum retrospectively.  
**Action: To be presented at the next Schools Forum meeting (March).**
- (iv) **Clare Sandland to set up an Oracle focussed technical group Update 19/01/23 from the Assistant Director of People Services:**
  - A discovery workshop took place before Christmas where twenty-one Business Support Managers attended and provided input and engagement. The IT&D department were working on the feedback and reporting to the Business Forum in due course. A further follow up workshop would take place with the Business Support Managers to provide an update on the progress and timelines.
  - 31<sup>st</sup> January, a wider Business Forum would be taking place to share how to move forward with Oracle.

Members of the forum commented and asked questions which the Assistant Director of People Services and Finance Business Partner responded to;

Key points noted:

- The Teacher Unions representative (DR) queried if Oracle was functioning at the level, it should be. Furthermore, he questioned when Oracle would be fully operational as headteachers had concerns. These concerns had been raised during the summer term and the progress was very slow. It was noted, progress on Oracle was improving however, this was still in a transition phase. The concerns raised would be communicated to finance colleagues and timelines would be shared to headteachers to provide assurances.
- The Headteacher, Maintain Special School representative (DF), highlighted further problems which was causing concerns around end of year reporting and setting new budgets. As a result, appropriate reporting had not taken place. Concerns would be feedback to the Director of Finance (Sara Pitt), as the budget setting for schools was a critical priority. It was suggested a written update/briefing note could be provided at a future meeting.

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- The charges would be reviewed and potential additional capacity to support schools (where required). An email communication would be shared to schools outlining details of compliance and deadlines.
  
- The Chair emphasised Oracle was not part of the forum's direct business however, appreciated indirectly this had an impact on schools managing their budgets. On the 31<sup>st</sup> January, the Business Forum meeting would be the most appropriate place for a wider discussion with the Business Managers and in future a short update to be shared with the schools forum.

**(Item 3, Action 1 - 19/01/23): A briefing note on Oracle to be provided at future forum meeting.**

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**Page 2, Action 6.7:**

**(Outstanding from last meeting) monitoring the impact of and the accountability for the use of the DLP funding to be part of the SEND report at the December meeting. Action Carried forward to the next meeting.**

**Action: Director for SEND and Inclusion to action at the March meeting.**

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**Page 2, Action 9.1:**

**(Outstanding from last meeting) Director for Education and Early Years to arrange an induction for new Schools Forum members before the next meeting- Induction dates set, invites sent out.**

**Action: Director Lifelong Learning & Employability to look into this.**

**Update 19/01/23 provided by the Director Lifelong Learning & Employability:**

- Nine tasks were identified around the schools forum during the induction session.

**(Item 3, Action 2 – 19/02/23) - A response to these tasks would be shared at the March meeting. Action: Director Lifelong Learning & Employability**

- It was proposed to hold an annual workshop, at the end of each academic year (summer term) for members of the forum (to include new members and existing members). This would enable members to refresh their understanding and knowledge on their roles and responsibilities.
  
- The Headteacher, Maintain Special School representative (DF) thanked the Director Lifelong Learning & Employability for delivering the induction training as this was very useful.  
**(Item 3, Action 3 – 19/02/23) – Presentation slides from the induction training to be shared with the members of the forum.  
Action: Committee Services to circulate.**

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**Page 2, Action 15/12/22: Work programme to be added as a permanent item to the agenda – Action Carried forward**

**Update 19/01/23 provided by the Director Lifelong Learning & Employability:** Work had started to take place with the Chair, Director Lifelong Learning & Employability and Schools Funding Manager and this was ongoing.

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**Page 3, Action 15/12/22: Clerk to send out meeting papers one week in advance of meetings via email**

**Update 19/01/23 provided by the Chair:** The papers had been circulated on time and members had made had positive feedback in relation to this.

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**Page 6, Action 15/12/22: Item 7 CSSB Provisional Budget for 2023/24**

**Action: Director Lifelong Learning & Employability to meet with The Senior Business Analyst to discuss reliance on reserves and commitments**

**Action: Director Lifelong Learning & Employability to meet with the Chair to discuss strategic approach to management of reserves**

Key points noted:

**Update 19/01/23 provided by the Chair:**

- Initial discussions had taken place with the Director Lifelong Learning & Employability to the strategic approach on the management of reserves. At present, a solution had not been identified and this was ongoing work.

At this juncture, the Maintained Special School Governor Representative (GG) referred page 4 of the minutes, moving from initials to indicating members names. The Chair requested for only the members titles and initials to be indicated in future minutes.

**(Item 3, Action 4 – 19/02/23) – Committee Services to ensure future minutes to include titles of members of the forum and initials only.**

The Chair of Governors, The Oaks Primary School (CG), referred to the discussions around management of the reserves. Concerns were raised as several the decisions at this meeting required consideration of reserves. Furthermore, it was felt there was a lack of transparency to the overall financial position (i.e. the non-recurrent and future financial position). Members expressed that they should be a part of these ongoing discussions to make informed decisions.

- The Schools Funding Manager informed this was in relation Dedicated School Grant (DSG) reserves these should not be retained. Any DSG allocation provided to Birmingham City Council for the year is expected

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to be used within that year (as advised by the Education Schools Funding Agency). On occasion there would be reasons for reserves to be built up however, there was no expectation to have a reserves plan on DSG reserves policy. This could be taken place on general funds but not on DSG. The reserves are recurrent costs, and they would eventually run out. There was an expectation to have a zero balance on the DSG at the end of each year.

- The £9.2 million reserves from the Schools Block DSG and from the Central Schools & Services Block (CSSB) had to be used for ongoing commitments.
- There was a national issue where most of the local authorities had a deficit within the school's block for 2023/24.

The Mainstream Secondary Head, (MD), supported comments and echoed concerns made by the Chair of Governors, The Oaks Primary School (CG) around making informed decisions without having sight of the future projections.

The Chair recognised comments made and the lack of transparency around what the reserves were, the rationale to the allocation and the impact on subsequent years. It was suggested to review the individual reserve items whilst discussions took place during the meeting.

No further comments were made by the members of the forum.

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### **Page 6, Action 15/12/22: Item 7 CSSB Provisional Budget for 2023/24**

**Action: Finance Business Partner and The Senior Business Analyst to look at the contribution to combined budgets- Birmingham seems to be £50 per pupil over the average**

#### **Update 19/01/23 provided by the Schools Funding Manager:**

- 2021/22 and years prior to this, an extra £10 million was provided to Birmingham City Council to cover the Equal Pay.

**(Item 3, Action 5 – 19/02/23) - A paper to be shared with the Schools Forum around the process for de-delegation.**

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### **LOCAL AUTHORITY UPDATE**

A verbal update was provided by the Director of Lifelong Learning & Employability.

Key points noted:

- (i) **Warm Welcome Initiative** – Birmingham City Council made a commitment to support citizens with cost-of-living crisis. Since the 05 December 2022, over 20,000 citizens had benefited from the Warm welcome visit across the Community libraries and Library of Birmingham.

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The Director of Lifelong Learning & Employability encouraged all families to maximise the access to this initiative.

- (ii) **School organisation (expansion and admission numbers)** – This was discussed at the last forum meeting and the paper would be shared with Cabinet for consideration.
- (iii) **February Half Term** – Several activities were scheduled to take place funded via the Holidays Activities Fund. Information would be shared with schools in due course.
- (iv) **Inclusion Strategy** – This was currently in the process of being finalised.
- (v) **National Apprenticeship Week** – Scheduled to take place 06 – 10 February 2023. Several activities would be taking place by the careers service. On the 08 February, the Ladder Academy would be launching a new facility in Mill Street, Aston. Schools and young people were welcomed to find out more about apprenticeships.

**Upon consideration, it was:**

4

**RESOLVED:-**

**That the Schools Forum noted the local authority update provided by the Director of Lifelong Learning & Employability.**

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At this juncture, the Chair notified members that the Director of SEND & Inclusion had requested for item 5, SEND update to be discussed later in the meeting due to a prior commitment. Item 6, Dedicated Schools Grant Settlement 2023/24 was next discussed.

### **DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT SETTLEMENT 2023/24**

The following report of the Schools Funding Manager was submitted: -

(See document No.1)

An overview to the report was provided by the Schools Funding Manager. Details around the four blocks of funding (Schools Block; Central Schools Services Block (CSSB); High Needs Block and the Early Years Block) was shared. A further breakdown of the DSG allocation for 2023/24 and a comparison with the DSG allocation for 2022/23 was highlighted.

It was noted, the Dedicated Schools Grant Allocation 2023/24 announced by DfE 16 December 2022, was set at £1,457.6m for 2023/24.

Further details around the Dedicated Schools Grant Funding (for all schools); Additional DSG Grant Allocations 2023/24; Schools Block; Central Schools Services Block; High Needs Block and the Early Years Block was shared with members.

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Birmingham City Council had provisionally been awarded £37.6m funding for schools for the 2023/24 financial year in addition to the main Schools Block DSG settlement for 2023/24 to further support schools with the costs of inflation and wider costs. School level allocations would be confirmed in Spring 2023.

Details of the proposed High Needs Block budget would be shared with the Schools' Forum sub-groups prior to the main March 2023 Forum meeting. The Early Years budgets would be determined and communicated to providers in full by the mandatory deadline of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

The Chair queried and the Schools Finance Manager confirmed that no decisions had to be made on this paper as this report was outlining the allocation only.

No further comments were made by the members of the forum.

**Upon consideration, it was:**

6

**RESOLVED:-**

**That the Schools Forum approved the dedicated Schools Grant Settlement 2023/24.**

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### **DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT SCHOOLS BLOCK BUDGET 2023/24**

The following report of the Schools Funding Manager was submitted: -

(See document No.2)

An overview to the report was provided by the Schools Funding Manager.

Members were reminded a decision had to be made to this report i.e. approval for the allocation of the national funding formula factor values and the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) at either 0.0% or 0.5% as part of the mainstream school funding formula for Birmingham City Council for 2023/24.

In addition, members to consider the preferred option of utilising a proportion of the DSG balance of £9.2m brought forward from 2022/23 to offset the shortfall of in the DSG schools block funding for 2023/24 after applying the National Funding Formula (NFF), MFG and growth fund requirements in the Authority Proforma Tool (APT).

The report referred to Growth Fund and Falling Rolls Fund however, these items would be discussed separately later during the meeting.

In addition, the de-delegation amount would be included in the Authority Proforma Tool (APT) which required approval from the forum.

There were three areas of contingencies for Primary and secondary schools of £15.23 per pupil (as highlighted in the October meeting paper).



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- The facilities time/ staff cover for primary was £4.32 per pupil
- The facilities time/ staff cover for secondary was £3.55 per pupil
- Behaviour support services for Primary pupils - £4.79

These were included in the APT based on the paper which was shared at the October Forum meeting.

There were two options were available to the Council. These were noted as;

- (i) to use the maximum allowable Minimum Funding Guarantee factor of 0.5% or
- (ii) to use the minimum allowable Minimum Funding Guarantee factor of 0.0%

Both options resulted in a shortfall for 2023/24. Further details around each of the options was provided to the forum for consideration.

The Chair referred to the ESFA requesting for local authorities to use their reserves in year however, it was noted the carry forward for reserves was much greater. It was felt transparency was required to the longer impact of the reserves and carry forwards.

At this juncture, the Chair queried if the forum were comfortable voting on a decision with the lack of transparency on the reserves.

### Comments made by members:

- The Head Teacher City of Birmingham School representing Pupil Referral Unit (SH) – (i) The monies allocated for DSG should be for the children now and not for the future (ii) Concerns around schools' budgets and sustainable funding were raised, (iii) further clarity was required on how the underspend built up over time.  
As a result of the concerns raised above the Head Teacher City of Birmingham School representing Pupil Referral Unit (SH) would be voting against based on the information provided.
- Chair of Governors, The Oaks Primary School (CG) reiterated earlier comments around transparency and committing monies without no view of sustainability. She proposed for a financial strategy/ state of play to be shared at the March meeting in order for members to have sight of a projected forecast (i.e. Issues that had been dealt with non-recurrently through reserves and a plan to make these recurrent). This would provide confidence to members in making decisions.
- The Director of Lifelong Learning & Employability noted the comments made by members however, highlighted the local authority would not know what recurrent costs were and what the budgets would look. However, on behalf of the forum, she would raise the concerns with the DfE for the need for stability within this area. An update to the DfE visit at the December 2022 forum meeting would also be provided at the next meeting.

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- The Schools Funding Manager indicated further work would take place around this area.
- Teacher Unions representative (DR) thanked the Schools Funding Manager for the clear information shared within the report however, echoed concerns raised by other members around reserves and it was crucial to get clarity on this area.
- Maintained Nursery Schools Governor (SD), queried if there was an underspend for 2022/23. It was confirmed there was no underspend for 2022/23.

At this juncture, the Chair sought advice from the Dedicated Schools Grant Advisor, Herefordshire Council (MG) as to which forum members had voting rights on these decisions.

The Dedicated Schools Grant Advisor, Herefordshire Council (MG) advised the following;

- Decision on approving the 0.5% MFG factor - all members of the forum could vote on this decision.
- Decision on de-delegation areas; iii) only local authority-maintained schools to vote. Primary and secondary to vote separately. There was no provision for special schools to vote on this decision. Governors can vote if they were representing a school.
- Decision on de-delegation areas; (iv) only for Primary Schools to vote upon. There was no provision for special schools to vote on this decision. Governors can vote if they were representing a school.

**Upon consideration, it was:**

7

**RESOLVED:-**

**Upon being put to a vote it was 10 in favour and 2 against;**

- (i) **That the Schools Forum approved for the local authority to apply the maximum 0.5% MFG factor to provide schools with the additional funding protection and to utilise the £3.1m of the £9.2m DSG Schools Block balance brought forward at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to offset the shortfall in 2023/24.**

**The decision made at resolution (7i) would be based on the commitment that officers will produce a draft a Financial Strategy to indicate the projected forecast for the next two to three years (i.e. Issues that had been dealt with non-recurrently through reserves and the plan to make these recurrent).**

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### De-delegation areas

Note: Based on the report to Schools Forum, 20 October 2022. Both Primary and Secondary Forums have already agreed these in principle.

That the Schools Forum;

### Contingencies to fund residual costs:

Upon being put to a vote it was 6 in favour and 0 against;

- (ii) **Agreed for the local authority to fund residual costs arising from the opening/closing of schools, deficits of discontinued schools, schools in financial difficulties, and other expenditure where the circumstances were unforeseen.**

### Facilities Time:

Upon being put to a vote it was 6 in favour and 0 against;

- (iii) **Agreed for Facilities Time: this enables the costs of releasing city-wide union representatives to be shared between schools, so that they do not fall disproportionately on the staffing of a small number of schools with these representatives.**

### Behavioural Support Services:

Upon being put to a vote it was 4 in favour and 0 against;

- (iv) **Agreed for Behavioural Support Services: this is part of helping to sustain inclusion. The budget will allow resourcing of short-term programmes and preventative type work via the City of Birmingham School to continue while alternative models are developed for future years.**
- (v) **Agreed the de-delegations to be included in the APT for 2023/2024.**
- (vi) **Agreed for the Director of the of Lifelong Learning & Employability to provide a report at the March meeting following the visit from the DfE at the December 2022 meeting and to liaise with the DfE to raise concerns around reserve matters and the need for stability within the system.**

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### GROWTH FUND 2023/24

The following report of the Finance & Resources Manager (EDI) was submitted:

(See document No.3)

An update on the budget for 2022-2023 funding that the forum had agreed was shared by the Finance & Resources Manager, (JM).

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- January 2022 – £5,717,000 funding was agreed. £3,488,000 related to implicit funding which had been paid to the schools.
- The in-year implicit funding for individual schools was listed and shared via the screen, highlighting growth, or falling pupil roll.
- In addition, several business cases were approved.
- There was a total spend of £5,827,000, however, two of the schools did not qualify for the funding.
- Projected overspend of £110,000, this was now forecasted at an overspend of £10,000 therefore, within the budget the forum had agreed for 2022-2023 (of £5,717,000).

No questions or comments were made by the members of the forum.

Following the update, an overview to the report was provided by the Finance & Resources Manager, (JM) which included a summary of the following areas;

- Funding for growth to meet Basic Need; increased births and in-year cohort growth from migration.
- Funding for growth in pupil numbers resulting from school closure.
- Funding for new schools or new school phases to meet Basic Need.  
Overall funding requirements to meet Basic Need (including new schools) and school or school phase closures. The figures within the report were based on estimates.
- Appendix A – Growth Fund 2023/24 - BCC Modelling 2023/24

The Local Authority were awaiting a decision from the DfE to the disapplication; funding for eight schools (less than good). Further funding was being sought for ten schools (good/outstanding schools). The DfE's rationale was for all schools to be good/outstanding.

Members raised concerns around less than good/ outstanding schools. These schools required extra support however, this case would need to be presented to the DfE. It was noted, a single case was submitted for all eight schools.

The Director of Lifelong Learning & Employability suggested for a case to be presented to the forum to vote upon. This would outline a request to apply the disapplication for less than good/outstanding schools.

At this juncture, the Chair sought advice from the Dedicated Schools Grant Advisor, Herefordshire Council (MG) as to which forum members had voting rights on these decisions.

The Dedicated Schools Grant Advisor, Herefordshire Council (MG) advised all members of the forum were able to vote and there were no voting restrictions.

**Upon being put to a vote it was 10 in favour and 0 against;**

**Upon consideration, it was:**

**RESOLVED:-**

- (i) That the Schools' Forum agreed the criteria and the Growth Fund of £6.359m as set out within the report and in Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (ii) The growth fund of £6.359m will be subject to changes in the event of school closures or school phase closures (as outlined in Part B of the report). It was noted reports will be presented to school forum detailing any changes in the growth fund budget.

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**FALLING ROLLS FUND 2023/24**

The following report of the Finance & Resources Manager (EDI) was submitted:

(See document No.4)

The report covered the following areas;

- Proposed Criteria
- Proposed Allocation
- Decision Requested

The Finance & Resources Manager (EDI) highlighted the two options for the forum's consideration for 2023-24. These were noted as;

- a. Decision on whether to fund:
  - i) good or outstanding schools only **or**
  - ii) allow a request for disapplication of Ofsted criterion
- b. Decision to fund the rate at:
  - i) 100% AWPU **or**
  - ii) 75% AWPU

Option A		Option B	
Good/outstanding schools only		including schools less Good (disapplication of Ofsted criterion)	
i	ii	i	ii
100% AWPU	75% AWPU	100% AWPU	75% AWPU
£0.849m	£0.637m	£1.527m	£1.145m

The Chair informed all members of the forum were able to vote and there were no voting restrictions.

**Upon being put to a vote it was noted:**

- Option A – for good/ outstanding schools only – **0 votes**

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- Option B – including schools less than Good (disapplication of Ofsted criterion – **9 votes**
- Option B i) – 100% AWPU at £1.527m – **6 votes**
- Option B ii) – 75% AWPU at £1.145m – **1 vote**

Upon consideration, it was:

9

**RESOLVED:-**

That the Schools Forum;

- Agreed for the Falling Pupils fund for 2023/24 to include less than Good (disapplication of Ofsted Criterion) as it places schools that were ‘not good’ at a disadvantage into improving the standards as they require the funding the most.**
- Agreed for the Falling fund for 2023/24 to be funded at 100% AWPU at £1.527m with the DfE agreement this to include schools that were less than Good.**

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At this juncture, the Chair suggested item 11 – Early Years Funding Formula and Central Costs 2023/24 to be discussed.

### **EARLY YEARS FUNDING FORMULA AND CENTRAL COSTS 2023/24**

The following report of the Head of Early Years, Childcare and Children’s Centres was submitted:

(See document No.5)

A presentation accompanying the report would be shared with the forum following the meeting.

A summary of the report was provided by the Head of Early Years, Childcare and Children’s Centre. The report covered the following areas;

- Annual Review Process 2023/2024
- Centrally Retained Funding
- Rates to Providers:
  - i) Supplements – Deprivation and Free School Meals
  - ii) Supplements – Use of the Teachers Pay and Pensions Grant contribution
  - iii) Inclusion Funding – ISEY
  - iv) Disability Access Fund (DAF)
  - v) Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)
  - vi) Base Rates for 3 and 4 Year Olds for Providers
  - vii) Rates for 2-year old’s – Straight in/out for all providers

The Maintained Nursery Schools Governor, (SH) confirmed this report had been to the Early Years Forum and supported the recommendations.

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The Chair thanked the Head of Early Years, Childcare and Children Centres for the detail within the report and the process of consultation was appreciated.

The Chair informed all members of the forum were able to vote on this decision.

**Upon being put to a vote it was 9 in favour and 0 against;**

**Upon consideration, it was:**

10

**RESOLVED:-**

**That the Schools Forum;**

- i) Noted the increase in funding that will be retained centrally to support the Councils delivery of the Statutory Duties for early years, incrementally increasing over 2 years to the 5% the LA is able to retain (as set out in section 4 of the report).**
- ii) Maintained the current level of Deprivation supplements and increase the Free School Meals supplement as set out in section 5.1 of the report.**
- iii) Noted a further report to be considered on the use of the former Teachers Pay & Pensions Grant funding following a task and finish co-design workgroup as set out in 5.2 of the report.**
- iv) Agreed to increase the amount allocated to ISEY over the next 2 years by increasing to £1.5m in 23/24 and 1.75m in 24/25 as set out in section 5.3 of the report. To also note the request for the increase to be maintained from the High Needs Block and matched in 24/25.**
- v) Agreed the funding rates to be applied to providers as set out for the next year in sections 5.6 and 5.7 of the report.**
- vi) Noted the requirement for all rates for 24/25 to be confirmed as part of an annual review in line with the Early Years block allocation from the DfE.**

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### **SEND UPDATE**

At this juncture, the Director of SEND & Inclusion suggested the updates were included in the minutes/ circulated after the meeting. The Chair agreed with this, and it was agreed for the SEND update to be placed first on the agenda of the next meeting.

(See document No.6)

The Chair requested for any direct SEND queries to be emailed to him ahead of his meeting with the Director of SEND & Inclusion. A written submission to be shared at the next meeting in March.

**Upon consideration, it was:**

11

**RESOLVED:-**

**That the Schools Forum noted the SEND update to be circulated and for a written submission to be presented first on the agenda of the March meeting.**

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**CENTRAL SCHOOLS SERVICES BLOCK BUDGET 2023/24**

The following report of the Schools Funding Manager was submitted:

(See document No.7)

Member were informed, £8.245 million was received in 2023/24 as part of the DSG settlement. The funding allocation within the CSSB allocation had increased by 2.42%. To fund the remaining historic commitments at the same level as 2022/23, it would need to utilise £1.125 million of the £8.245 million (ongoing commitments).

The following options were shared to the forum:

(There were provisionally two options that could be taken when allocating the remaining budget). These were noted as:

1. Fund copyright licences in full at the amount notified by DfE on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2022 and all other remaining ongoing commitments are funded at the 2022/23 rate. This requires use of an amount of £0.149m from CSSB Reserves to fund the £1.125m needed for historic commitments by transferring from the ongoing responsibilities allocation.

(This was an increase of 15% when comparing to the 2022/23 rate)

2. Fund copyright licences in full at the amount notified by DfE on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2022 and all other remaining ongoing commitments are increased by 2.42%. This requires use of an amount of £0.275m from CSSB Reserves to fund the £1.125m needed for historic commitments by transferring from the ongoing responsibilities allocation. There is an expectation to use the CSSB Reserves fund to smooth the 20% loss in historic commitments going forward and provide some contingency against potential shortfalls in ongoing commitments as historically these budgets have not been increased for some time. Work will need to be undertaken during 2023/24 to review and validate spend in this area.



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At this juncture, the Finance Business Partner added a commitment had been made to look at the historic commitments with a view to reducing them over time and to ensure there was no deficit. This report would be shared at a future meeting.

**Upon being put to a vote it was 6 in favour and 0 against the recommendation indicated within the report.**

**Upon consideration, it was:**

12

### **RESOLVED:-**

- (i) **That the Schools Forum agreed for the Local Authority to increase each element of the ongoing responsibilities by 2.42% that had been provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency in the 2023/24 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocation, thus reducing projected carried forward DSG Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) Budget reserves to £1.439m at the end of 2023/24. This decision was based on the level of DSG CSSB Budget reserves of £1.714m projected in 2022/23.**
- (ii) **A report to be shared at a future meeting around the historic commitments with a view to reducing them over time and to ensure there was no future deficit.**

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At this juncture, item 10 on the agenda was discussed.

### **COMMISSIONED NUMBERS FOR SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND RESOURCE BASE**

A verbal update was provided by the Finance Manager (Children & Families) (JB). This would be circulated to members following the meeting.

#### **Commissioned Place numbers**

The number of agreed commissioned places is limited by the existing physical capacity within Birmingham. The number of places agreed to date does not reflect the number of places required. It includes any expansion scheme that is currently in progress, BCC will be working with both Special Schools and Mainstream Schools – Primary and Secondary throughout 2023 to grow this provision as part of its sufficiency strategy.

Changes to commissioned place numbers are reported to the ESFA as follows:

- Academies – via the Place Change Notification November 2022
- Mainstream – via the APT – due for submission January 2023

Appendix 1 – Special School Commissioned Places 2023/24  
Appendix 2 – Resource Base Commissioned Places 2023/24

It should be noted that the attached does not currently include the proposed age range expansion at Hamilton Special School and if this report was

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approved, this would add an additional 24 places commissioned places from September 2023. As any change would be too late for budget setting purposes it is proposed that a budget equivalent to 7/12 place funding for Hamilton School is set aside within the Top Up funding allocation for 2023/24.

The Headteacher, Maintain Special School representative, (DF) requested for this information to be shared at the Special Schools Forum.

**Upon consideration, it was:**

13

**RESOLVED:-**

**That the Schools Forum noted the verbal update on the Commissioned Numbers for Special Schools and Resource Base.**

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14

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None

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**DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

15

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday, 16 March 2023 at 1400 hours via MS Teams (online).

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The meeting ended at 1614 hours

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CHAIR