

## SCHOOLS FORUM

28 November 2017

Commenced: 10.00am Terminated: 10.45am

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Karen Burns (Chair)</b>	<b>Primary Schools – Academies</b>
	<b>Steve Marsland</b>	<b>Primary Schools – L/A Maintained</b>
	<b>Maire Wright</b>	<b>Primary Schools – L/A Maintained</b>
	<b>Bev Allford</b>	<b>Primary Schools – L/A Maintained</b>
	<b>Susan Marsh</b>	<b>Governor, Primary Schools – L/A Maintained</b>
	<b>Anthony McDermott</b>	<b>Governor, Primary Schools – L/A Maintained</b>
	<b>Janet Burns</b>	<b>Secondary Schools – L/A Maintained</b>
	<b>Richard O’Regan</b>	<b>Secondary Schools – L/A Maintained</b>
	<b>Angela Ogden (for Betty Jones)</b>	<b>Governor, Secondary Schools – L/A Maintained</b>
	<b>Brendan Hesketh</b>	<b>Secondary Schools - Academies</b>
	<b>Gill McFadden</b>	<b>Secondary Schools - Academies</b>
	<b>Robin Elms</b>	<b>Special Schools – L/A Maintained</b>
	<b>Maureen Brettell</b>	<b>Pupil Referral Services</b>
	<b>Elaine Horridge</b>	<b>Diocesan Representative</b>
	<b>Alison Hampson</b>	<b>TCC</b>
	<b>Councillor L Travis</b>	<b>Executive Member – Lifelong Learning</b>
	<b>Bob Berry</b>	<b>Assistant Director, Learning</b>
	<b>Christine Mullins</b>	<b>Finance Business Partner</b>
	<b>Louisa Siddall</b>	<b>Senior Accountant</b>

### Apologies for absence:

<b>Councillor J Fitzpatrick</b>	<b>First Deputy (Performance and Finance)</b>
<b>Lisa Gallagher</b>	<b>Primary Schools – L/A Maintained</b>
<b>Betty Jones</b>	<b>Governor, Secondary Schools – L/A Maintained</b>
<b>Jeffrey Mellor</b>	<b>Governor – Academy Special Schools</b>
<b>Pam Hirst</b>	<b>Governor, Primary Schools – L/A Maintained</b>
<b>Anton McGrath</b>	<b>14-19 Sector</b>

## 6. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 17 October 2017, having been circulated, were approved as a correct record.

In respect of Minute 3, Final Schools Outturn Balance 2016/17, the Chair explained that following the last meeting of the Forum, she and the Deputy Chair had met to discuss possible strategies going forward to address the issue of schools’ excess balances. The Chair gave details of their discussions, including the viability of the retention of surplus balances above the threshold by the Local Authority for the School, for an agreed period of time. There were however difficulties with this, as the Local Authority, legally, would not be able to retain monies. The Chair informed members that they would continue to explore possible strategies including procedures adopted by other Local Authorities, and report further to a future meeting of the Forum.

## 7. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA

Consideration was given to a report of the Assistant Director, Finance, providing an update on the indicative national funding figures released by the Education & Skills Funding agency for schools’ consultation.

It was explained that the Department for Education (DfE) carried out consultation in 2016/17 in relation to proposals surrounding national Funding Formula to allocate the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The report provided an update on the indicative figures for 2018/19 to 2020/2021 and the impact for Tameside. It was noted, at this stage, that the figures would be subject to change for pupil census and had been illustrated by DfE using October 2016 census data.

It was further explained that the DSG was the primary source of funding for schools. The estimated total target funding to be allocated to Tameside at the end of the proposed changes was £181.374 million. The estimated allocation of DSG funding for 2018/19 was £179.594 million. The equivalent baseline value in 2017/18 was £173.359 million. The year on year increase represented an estimated increase of £3.234 million (4.62%). The timescale for reaching the final target figure was, at this stage, expected to be 202/2021. The indicative figures provided by DfE were set out in the report.

The report summarised the effect of the National Funding Formula on each block of funding within the elements of the DSG covered by this consultation. Details of the individual school level effects of the target funding and 2020/2021 funding compared to the baseline funding in 2017/18, were appended to the report. It was further explained that a further report with more detailed information would be brought to Forum once final confirmation of funding had been received from DfE.

Forum members were informed that Central Services Block was the terminology used by the DfE to refer to the element of the DSG that councils were expected to access to fund statutory duties they carried out on behalf of schools. The total value of the grant for this block of funding was £0.882 million for 2018/19 under the proposals, compared to the £0.860 million baseline from 2017/2018 which was an increase of £0.022 million.

The DfE had indicated that the target National Funding Formula calculation of this element of funding for Tameside should be £1.116 million, which was based primarily on per pupil rates and a small element of historic commitments.

The central school services block provided funding for local authorities for other responsibilities in respect of education services, these responsibilities included the provision of home to school transport, assessing pupils with SEN, and planning for and supply of sufficient school places.

In relation to the Schools Block, it was reported that the element of the total DSG figure that related to the Schools block was £156.242 million for 2018/2019 under the proposals, compared to the £153.795 million baseline for 2017/2018, which was an increase of £2.629 million or 1.9% (these totals included the two new and growing schools (Inspire and Discovery). This was a significant change from the minimum funding levels exercise that the DfE conducted in 2014/2015 that was reported to Schools Forum and suggested that Tameside Schools were overfunded by approximately 3.52%. On the assumption that the increase in funding in the Schools Block proved to be accurate, then the 2018/2019 National Funding Formula funding for Schools across Tameside resulted in a net increase of £2.621. Individual school level implications of the proposals including the 2017/18 baseline, the eventual target funding amount and the amount in the first year of the implementation in 2018/19, were appended to the report.

It was further reported that the DfE had targeted a ratio of funding in the proposed national funding formula between Primary and Secondary Schools of 1:129 meaning that on average Secondary Schools should receive 29% more funding per pupil than a Primary School. This matched the national average and Tameside's 2016/17 baseline equivalent ratio was 1:130, so this was not a significant change from the average distribution of funding already in place. The government proposed that all schools would receive an additional 0.5% of pupil led funding, per pupil.

The proposed full implementation of the national funding formula would start in 2020/2021 and was referred to as the hard formula by the DfE. Local authorities would still be able to agree local schemes during 2018/19 in the same manner as they did now, referred to as the soft formula.

Consideration needed to be given to switching to a funding formula in 2018/19 that more closely matched the 2019/20 formula.

Reference was also made to the High Needs element of the estimated DSG grant, which was £19.287 million for 2018/19 under the new proposals, compared to £18.704 million in the baseline year of 2017/18, which was an increase of £0.583 million or 1.87%. The total potential gain in target funding in this area of £2.195 million was based on the DfE's revised assessment of needs in Tameside and should eventually result in a total of £22.02million of High Needs funding. However the annual gains were capped at 3% per year initially and therefore it resulted in an increase of £0.583 million in additional funding in the first year 2018/19.

As part of the National Funding Formula, DfE had made a switch of funding from the High Needs Block to the Schools Block for core funding for pupils in SEN units or resource unit. The total amount of the switch a Tameside was £0.324 million. Schools with SEN or resource units would see a reduction in the high needs place funding from £10,000 per place to £6,000 per place to recognise this.

It was further reported that the number of children and young adults accessing High Needs provision had been increasing annually for several years whereas significant elements of the DSG funding since April 2013 had been allocated based on data from 2011 and earlier years. Therefore this additional funding was essential in order to fund the cost of the increasing numbers of Pre and Post 16 High Needs placements.

Discussion ensued with regard to the above and the indicative national funding figures and it was confirmed that finalised figures would be sent to schools before the Christmas break, however if there were no changes forthcoming from DfE, then the figures, as appended to the report would be the estimated figures for consultation.

Further discussion ensued in respect of special schools and the difficulties in calculating figures for special schools was acknowledged.

Members sought clarification in respect of the Central Services Schools Block and Admissions and School Appeals services. It was agreed that further information be provided to a future meeting of the Forum.

Further information was also sought with regard to Tameside Teacher's Model Pay Policy and how this impacted on budgets going forward. It was requested that updates be provided to the Forum in respect of this.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (i) That the content of the report be noted;**
- (ii) That further information in respect of Admissions and School Appeals services, be submitted to a future meeting of the Forum; and**
- (iii) That an update be provided to the next meeting of the Forum in respect of Tameside Teachers' Model Pay Policy.**

#### **8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

#### **RESOLVED**

**To note the date of the next meeting of the Schools Forum as Tuesday 13 February 2018 at 10.00am, Discovery Academy, Porlock Avenue, Hyde.**