

Schools Forum 16 September 2015: Summary of Decisions

Schools Forum met on 16 September 2015. There were seven reports considered at the meeting:

- Dedicated Schools Grant Outturn 2014-15 and Control Total for 2015-16
- Schools Capital Programme
- Growth Fund Considerations for 2016-17
- Report of the High Needs Block Task and Finish Group
- Report of the Schools Block Task and Finish Group
- Trade Union Facility Time Funding
- Early Closure of Schools Accounts 2015-16

Please see below for a summary of Schools Forum decisions. We invite and encourage all constituents to contact their representatives on Schools Forum by the end of October if they have any comments on these decisions, so that these comments can be considered by Schools Forum and the Local Authority at the next meeting on 11 November 2015. A list of representatives can be found as an appendix to this document.

All Schools Forum reports and minutes are published at:

<http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/pages/services/schools-forum.aspx>

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Schools Forum 16 September 2015

Summary of Decisions

1. Welcomes were extended and apologies noted

2. Minutes of Schools Forum 10 June 2015

Schools Forum agreed the minutes with some amendments for accuracy

3. Dedicated Schools Grant Outturn 2014-15 and Control Total for 2015-16

Schools Forum noted:

- The final outturn position for 2014-15 of an under spend of £6.543 million.
- The balances brought forward of £8.161 million, giving a total of £14.704 million carried forward into 2015-16.
- The areas of underspend, brought forward balances, commitments and proposed usage.
- The latest announced Dedicated Schools Grant allocation for 2015-16 of £244.507 million.
- Maintained schools' reserves at 31 March 2015 of £11.635 million and projected outturn for reserves at 31 March 2016 of £3.597 million.

In addition, Schools Forum noted that:

- The Early Years Block Task and Finish group will report back to the November meeting.

4. Schools Capital Programme

Schools Forum noted:

- The information in the report and the appendices, including that, in future, the Schools Admissions and Advisory Board (SOAB) minutes will be distributed to Schools Forum members.

5. Growth Fund Considerations for 2016-17

Schools Forum agreed the recommendations of the Schools Block Task and Finish Group:

- To cap the Growth Fund of 2016-17 at £3.75 million.
- The revised Growth Fund allocation for 2015-16.
- That existing criteria for support from the Growth Fund be retained, but with the following amendments:
 - Leadership and Management Support will apply in future for 1FE permanent expansions
 - Class size protection for new bulge classes will be capped when the shortfall reaches 10 pupils

In addition, Schools Forum agreed that:

- Where as a result of an appeal or the Local Authority asks a school to take a child (e.g. looked-after or with SEN) which takes the number in the reception or Key stage class to over 30, the Local Authority will meet the cost of an additional teaching assistant.

6. Report of the High Needs Block Task and Finish Group

Schools Forum agreed the recommendations of the High Needs Task and Finish Group:

- To recommend to the Local Authority that when it sets the notional SEN in the Schools Block budgets and the distribution of funding in the High Needs Block for 2016-17:
 - The factors used in the calculation of notional SEN in the local funding formula should remain unchanged.
 - The proportion applied in the calculation of notional SEN on the targeted pupil support factors should remain unchanged in each phase.
 - The proportion applied in the calculation of notional SEN on the additional pupil support factors should remain unchanged in each phase.

- The Local Authority makes recommendations on the distribution of the High Needs Block based on its awareness of local demand and need for high needs funding.
- The High Needs Task and Finish Group continues to hold further meetings to make informed decisions with a view to further considering recommendations for changes to be implemented for 2017-18.

7. Report of the Schools Block Task and Finish Group

Schools Forum agreed the recommendations of the Schools Block Task and Finish Group:

- To adopt the following principles to be applied to funding decisions:
 - Transparency
 - Fairness
 - Stability
 - Support for vulnerable students
- To recommend to the Local Authority that when it sets the Schools Block budgets for 2016-17:
 - The factors used in the local funding formula are not changed.
 - The proportion of funding allocated to deprivation should remain the same in each phase (Primary 8%, Secondary 14%).
 - The rates applied to deprivation factors should be changed when necessary to maintain the proportion of funding allocated to deprivation.
 - The rates applied to the factors other than deprivation factors are not changed.
 - The primary to secondary ratio is not changed.
 - The cap and 100% scale method to fund the Minimum Funding Guarantee is not changed.
 - AWPU is adjusted to balance resources following any changes to factor rates.

In addition, Schools Forum agreed that:

- The Schools Block Task and Finish Group should be reconvened to hold further meetings to make informed decisions with a view to further considering recommendations for changes to be implemented for 2017-18.

8. Trade Union Facility Time Funding

Schools Forum noted:

- De-delegated and pooled funding collection to date.
- That further reports will be presented to the November meeting. These will be on Trade Union Facility time funding and Occupational Health Service funding. These November reports will be seeking decisions from maintained Primary and Secondary schools around de-delegation of funds for 2016-17.

9. Feedback from Schools Forum Self-Assessment Survey

Schools Forum noted:

- The Key Findings.
- The LA's actions.
- Action required to be taken by Schools Forum Members.

10. Early Closure of Schools Accounts 2015-16

Schools Forum noted:

- The new requirements for the earlier closure of maintained schools' accounts.

Appendix - Schools Forum Membership

Schools Representatives – Maintained Schools	
Primary Headteachers	Jane Harris (Edinburgh) Kate Jennings (Mission Grove) Lindsey Lampard (Chingford CofE) Maureen Okoye (Davies Lane) <i>Vice-Chair</i>
Primary Governors*	Greta Akpeneye (Thorpe Hall) Cllr Aktar Beg (Edinburgh) Thomas Goodall (Edinburgh)
Secondary Headteachers	John Hernandez (Norlington) Lynette Parvez (Kelmscott) Shona Ramsay (The Lammas) <i>Chair</i>
Secondary Governors*	Ian Moyes (Heathcote)
Schools Representatives – Academies and Free Schools	
Primary	Matts Hanks (Roger Ascham) Lynn Harrowell (Larkswood) Anne Powell (Riverley)
Secondary	Mark Morrall (Rushcroft / Chingford Foundation) Jon Ashwell (Highams Park)
School Representatives – Other	
Nursery	Sandra Campbell (Church Hill)
Special School and Special Academies	Gary Pocock (Hornbeam Academy)
PRU	Julian Lee (Hawkswood Group)
Non School Members	
Early Years Providers	Sarah Kendrick (Redwood Pre-School)
16-19 Providers	Paolo Ramello (Sir George Monoux college)
Trade Unions	Steve White (NUT)
Diocesan	Moira Bishop (Brentwood Diocese)

*A Community Forum for Chairs of Governing Bodies and the Governor Representatives has been set up on The Hub: <https://thehubcommunity.walthamforest.gov.uk/groups/chairs-governors-waltham-forest>