

Friday, 13 January 2023

Democratic and Members' Services

Linda Walker
Monitoring Officer

10:00

New Shire Hall
Alconbury Weald
Huntingdon
PE28 4YE

**Virtual meeting
[Venue Address]**

AGENDA

Open to Public and Press

1. **Apologies for absence and declarations of interest**
2. **Schools Forum Minutes - 14 December 2022** **3 - 10**
3. **Proposed Future Dates for Schools Forum 2023-24** **11 - 12**
4. **Schools Budget Setting 2023-24 Covering Report - January 2023** **13 - 18**
Appendix A,B and C to follow
5. **Schools Forum Agenda Plan - January 2023** **19 - 20**
6. **Any other business**

Meetings of the Schools Forum will be held virtually for Committee members and for members of the public who wish to participate. These meetings will held via Zoom and Microsoft Teams (for confidential or exempt items). For more information please contact the clerk for the meeting (details provided above).

Clerk Name:	Tamar Oviatt-Ham
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Cambridgeshire Schools Forum - Minutes

Date: Wednesday 14 December 2022

Time: 10:00am – 11:02am

Venue: Red Kite Room, New Shire Hall, Alconbury

Present:

Maintained Primary – Nicki Brown

Maintained Special Schools - Joanne Hardwick

Maintained Governor - Paul Stratford (Vice-Chair)

Academy Sector Appointments - Adrian Ball, Simon Bainbridge, Christopher Bennet, Jon Culpin (Chair), Jo Gillman (Sub) Ryan Kelsall, John King, Duncan Ramsey, Richard Spencer, and Carin Taylor.

Cambridgeshire County Council - Councillors Claire Daunton, Bryony Goodliffe and Simone Taylor.

Officers - Jonathan Lewis - Service Director Education, Tamar Oviatt-Ham – Democratic Services Officer and Martin Wade, Strategic Finance Business Partner.

33. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies received from Mark Vickers (Jo Gillman attending as substitute), Nadine Gooding-Hébert, Alex Pearson, Andrew Read, Clare Clark, Susannah Connell, Jon Duveen, Lesley Birch and Sasha Howard.

The Chair, Jon Culpin, and Richard Spencer declared an interest in relation to Minute 36: School Budget Setting, as both represented schools sited in the Growth Policy.

34. Schools Forum Minutes – 04 November 2022

With regard to actions from the last meeting, the Chair noted that, following the release of the Autumn Statement, he and the Director: Education had agreed to postpone discussion of how to take forward the concerns about funding.

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2022 were approved as a correct record.

35. School Budget Setting 2023-24

The Schools Forum received a presentation that outlined the 2022-23 Schools Budget setting process, which was based upon national budget allocations and 2021-22 pupil numbers. The presentation covered;

- 2023/24 DSG Funding Arrangements
- Notional SEN / High Needs Contingency
- Retained Funding and De-Delegations (Maintained Primary only)
- Growth Funding / New Schools
- Next Steps

Officers raised the following points in the presentation in relation to the schools funding update;

- The £2bn awarded to schools in the Autumn Statement relieved but did not resolve pressures on the education sector. While the high needs block would be in receipt of a £400m over two years to meet inflationary costs, pupil growth, post-16 education and early-years would not receive an uplift. The energy bill relief scheme was scheduled to stop and pay awards for teachers would also challenge the service.

Individual members raised the following points in relation to the schools funding update;

- Queried what had instigated funding arrangements from central government. The officer responded that there had been a prioritisation of resource for further funding arrangements. Ministers had decided to proceed with a sector-led model for early years. This concerned officers as it resulted in the sector being market dependent.
- Confirmed that sixth form colleges and maintained nurseries would receive additional capital funding in December 2022, most likely as a continuation of the supplementary grant. Whilst the funding criteria linked funding to energy schemes, spending would be at the school's discretion.
- Acknowledged that the service was considering mitigating the energy crisis through framework development, loans, webinars and information provided to schools.

Officers raised the following points in the presentation in relation to Notional SEN / High Needs Contingency;

- The movement towards the direct national funding formula would create a cliff edge for the local authority. This would be mitigated by a stepped increase. The Schools Forum had requested the service move to a hybrid methodology for high needs contingency allocations. The local authority

anticipated providing current financial year funding to schools as a one-off payment in January 2023.

Individual members raised the following points in relation to notional SEN increases;

- Confirmed that allocation percentage splits had been calculated by scaling up the free school meal funding formula to align with statistical neighbours.
- Agreed officers would write to schools with information regarding high needs contingency allocations in the new year. Currently, the local authority had allocated £469k to schools, rather than the £450k available, to meet need. Therefore, the local authority would be revisiting calculation methods for high needs contingency funding going forwards.
- Learned that modelling for specific school profiles was not possible as schools were dependent upon individual statistics and factors. However, smaller primary schools with higher percentages of EHCPs and revised data from the DfE would be considered in future contingency funding allocations.
- Acknowledged that children from out of county attending Cambridgeshire schools had an effect on certain schools' levels of need which proved difficult to calculate or resolve.

Officers raised the following points in the presentation in relation to Retained Funding and De-Delegations (Maintained Primary only);

- Retained duty funding and de-delegations for maintained primary schools were scheduled to remain the same.

Individual members raised the following points in relation to retained funding and de-delegations;

- Asked that a funding break down was made available prior to voting on this matter. **Action Required.**
- Learned that the local authority had met with a trade union on 14 December 2022 to discuss the lack of change in charges. The officer recommended Schools Forum review this decision in 2023 to improve the transparency of decision making. **Action Required.**

It was agreed to defer recommendation d) until the number of maintained school representatives was quorate.

Officers raised the following points in the presentation in relation to Growth Funding / New Schools;

- Final data would be supplied by the DfE imminently, however, demographers' forecasts revealed an increase of individuals joining

secondary schools, and a reduction in primary school growth. This would impact individual schools, their funding levels and growth funding allocations.

- The proposed growth fund policy would give lump sum to schools with a 5% uplift for staffing. It would be formulaic to reduce bureaucracy in the application process. This policy would be shared with Schools Forum and the Headteacher Panel prior to release.

The Director for Education suggested Schools' Forum strategic planning looked further ahead when considering growth funding due to the need to build additional secondary schools in Cambridgeshire. Strategic planning would mitigate the impact of school building costs on existing schools in Cambridgeshire. A report on this was planned for 2023 and the officer may also consult the Department for Education on Cambridgeshire's growth.

The officer also agreed to amend the policy to include when schools identified for funding would be notified. This would be in February to allow for the schools' recruitment period. **Action Required.**

It was resolved to:

Funding Formula

- a) Schools Forum are asked to note and comment on the updates to the Dedicated Schools Grant following the Autumn Statement.

Notional SEN / High Needs Contingency.

- b) Schools Forum are asked to comment on the proposed increases to the % of delegated budget identified as notional SEN.
- c) Schools Forum are asked to comment on the revised option for allocating the available £450k high needs contingency fund in 2022/23.

Growth Funding and New Schools

- e) Schools Forum are asked to approve the proposed changes to the Growth Funding policy and criteria to apply to 2023/24 only.
- f) Schools Forum are asked to note the proposed variations to pupil numbers.

36. Any Other Business

The following items had been added to the agenda plan:

- 13 January 2023 - Safety Valve Update;
- 24 March 2023 - Growth Funding.

The Director for Education and Chair of the Schools Forum advised full or high attendance (either by the representative or their substitute) for the meeting scheduled 13 January 2023.

Chair
(13th January 2023)

Schools Forum Minutes Action Log

The Action Log was updated following the December 2022 Forum meeting and captures the actions from meetings of the Cambridgeshire Schools Forum requiring a response / or the response undertaken and completed since the last Action Log update.

Minutes 14 December 2022

	Agenda Item	Officer	Action	Response	Status
35.	School Budget Setting 2023-24	Jonathan Lewis/Martin Wade	Retained funding and de-delegations - Asked that a funding break down was made available prior to voting on this matter.	See report for this meeting	Closed
		Jonathan Lewis	Retained funding and de-delegations - Learned that the local authority had met with a trade union on 14 December 2022 to discuss the lack of change in charges. The officer recommended Schools Forum review this decision in 2023 to improve the transparency of decision making.	Verbal update in the meeting	
		Martin Wade	Growth Funding Policy - The officer also agreed to amend the policy to include when schools identified for funding would be notified. This would be in February to allow for the schools' recruitment period.	Updated Policy circulated to the Board following the meeting	Closed

Proposed Future Schools Forum Dates 2023-24

To: Cambridgeshire Schools Forum

Date: 13 January 2023

Recommendation: The Schools Forum is requested to:

Approve the dates for future forum meetings as set out
section 3 of the report.

Officer Contact:

Name: Tamar Oviatt - Ham Democratic Services

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The dates for future Schools Forum meetings are currently scheduled until July 2023 as originally agreed at the January 2022 Forum meeting. There is now a need to agree future dates from the next Autumn term until July 2024 to help with forward planning and this also includes suggestions for some potential training / workshop dates. The latter, and also any Formal Forum dates that are agreed at this meeting can always be cancelled nearer the time if deemed as no longer being required. The important issue is to get dates in diaries as much in advance as possible.

2. Current agreed dates for Forum meetings

- 2.1 The following were agreed last January and the intention is to keep to them unless nearer the time they are deemed as not being required for a formal meeting or a training / workshop session.
- Friday 13th January 2023
 - Friday 24th February 2023 (Reserve or workshop date)
 - Friday 24th March 2023
 - Wednesday 24th May 2023 (Reserve or workshop date)
 - Friday 14th July 2023

3. Proposed dates for Forum meetings

- 3.1 Proposed dates for Schools Forum and training / workshop dates are listed below (School holidays and CYP meeting dates have been taken into account) All meetings have been scheduled for 10.00 a.m -1.00 p.m. unless otherwise stated
- Friday 3 November 2023 (2pm – 5pm)
 - Friday 24th November 2023 - Additional reserve date
 - Wednesday 13th December 2023
 - Friday 12th January 2024
 - Friday 23rd February 2024 (Reserve or workshop date)
 - Friday 22nd March 2024
 - Wednesday 22nd May 2024 (Reserve or workshop date)
 - Friday 12th July 2024

Schools Budget Setting 2023-24

To: Schools Forum

Meeting Date: 13 January 2023

From: Jonathan Lewis – Service Director: Education
Martin Wade – Strategic Finance Business Partner

Recommendations: **Schools Funding Formula**

- a) Schools Forum are asked to note and comment on the final schools funding formula proposals following the December announcements.

Education Functions and De-Delegations – Maintained Primary only

- b) Maintained Primary School representatives on Schools Forum are asked to approve:
 - i. the continued retention of £10 per pupil from maintained schools for services specifically provided to maintained schools.
 - ii. the continuation of the de-delegation in respect of Contingency.
 - iii. the continuation of the de-delegation in respect of Free School Meals Eligibility.
 - iv. the continuation of the de-delegation in respect of Maternity and Paternity Cover.
 - v. the continuation of the de-delegation in respect of Trade Union Facilities Time.

High Needs Block

- c) Schools Forum are asked to note and comment on the high needs block following the December announcements.

Central Schools Services Block

- d) Schools Forum are asked to note and comment on the final central schools services block proposals following the December announcements.

Early Years

- e) Schools Forum are asked to note and comment on the final early years block proposals following the December announcements.
- f) Schools Forum are asked to approve the early years centrally retained funding amounts for 2023/24.

Officer contact:

Name: Martin Wade

Post: Strategic Finance Business Partner

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1. Background

- 1.1 The presentation (**Appendix A**) accompanying this report provides information to support the 2023-24 Schools budget setting process and will cover the following areas:
- National Funding Announcements
 - Final Schools Budget Proposals
 - Retained Funding and De-Delegations (Maintained Primary only)
 - High Needs Block
 - Central Schools Services Block
 - Early Years Block
 - Next Steps
- 1.2 During the presentation by Officers, Members of Schools Forum will have opportunity to ask questions. Schools Forum will then be asked to comment / vote on the recommendations as required.
- 1.3 **Please note: Appendix B** provides illustrative school level figures based on the latest datasets provided by the Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) in December, and reflects the approach agreed by Schools Forum at the November meeting. **Appendix C** shows the distribution of funding across all funding factors applied. All figures remain draft until further data validation has been undertaken and the formula has been approved at Children and Young Peoples (CYP) Committee, and subsequently by the ESFA.
- 1.4 The table on the following pages shows the main decision making powers and responsibilities for items relevant at this meeting (other powers such as decisions in respect of deficits, contracts and changes to the Scheme of Financial Management do not apply to the items covered above.)

Schools Forum Roles and Responsibilities

Function	Local education authority	Schools forum	DfE role
Formula change (including redistributions)	Proposes and decides	Must be consulted	Checks for compliance with regulations
Movement of up to 0.5% from the schools block to other blocks	Proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal
Minimum funding guarantee (MFG)	Proposes any exclusions from MFG for application to DfE	Gives a view	Approval to application for exclusions
De-delegation for mainstream maintained schools	Proposes	Maintained primary and secondary school member representatives	Will adjudicate where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal
General Duties for maintained schools - Contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for maintained schools	Proposes	Would be decided by the relevant maintained school members (primary, secondary, special and PRU).	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal
Central spend on and the criteria for allocating funding from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth - pre-16 pupils, including new schools set up to meet basic need, whether maintained or academy 	Proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Falling rolls - funding for good or outstanding schools with where growth in pupil numbers is expected within three years 			
Central spend on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> early years block provision funding to enable all schools to meet the infant class size requirement back-pay for equal pay claims remission of boarding fees at maintained schools and academies places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils admissions servicing of schools forum Contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for all schools 	Proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal
Central spend on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> capital expenditure funded from revenue – projects must have been planned and decided on prior to April 2013 so no new projects can be charged contribution to combined budgets – this is where the schools forum agreed prior to April 2013 a contribution from the schools budget to services which would otherwise be funded from other sources existing termination of employment costs (costs for specific individuals must have been 	Proposes up to the value committed in the previous financial year and where expenditure has already been committed.	Decides for each line	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal

<p>approved prior to April 2013 so no new redundancy costs can be charged)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prudential borrowing costs – the commitment must have been approved prior to April 2013 			
<p>Central spend on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high needs block provision • central licences negotiated by the Secretary of State 	Decides	None, but good practice to inform forum	None

Cambridgeshire Schools Forum – Forward Agenda Plan

All meetings will be held at 10.00am unless otherwise specified. Some of the dates below may be retained as workshops / training sessions if a formal meeting of Forum is not required.

Date of meeting	Agenda Item	Report author	Reports due to reach Democratic Services by:
Wednesday 14 December 2021	Budget setting for 2023-24	Jon Lewis/Martin Wade	Monday 5 December 2022
Friday 13 January 2023	Future Schools Forum dates	Democratic Services	Wednesday 4 January 2022
	Final Budget Proposals for 2023-24	Jon Lewis/Martin Wade	
	Safety Valve	Jon Lewis/Martin Wade	
Friday 24 February 2023 (Reserve or workshop date)			
Friday 24 March 2023	Growth Funding update	Jon Lewis/Martin Wade	
Wednesday 24 May 2023 (Reserve or workshop date)			

Friday 14 July 2023	Review Terms of Reference	Jon Lewis/Democratic Services	
	Review of Proportionality and Membership	Jon Lewis/Democratic Services	

To be scheduled: