

Schools Forum

ANNUAL REPORT 2007/2008

1.0	<u>Purpose of Report</u>	
1.1	The revised Constitution, approved by the Forum on 13 th June, 2006, requires that an annual report of the work of the Forum shall be submitted to the Forum at its meeting in June of each year. This report is in response to that requirement, and covers the period 12 th June, 2007 to 11 th March, 2008.	
2.0	<u>Delegation of Funds for Schools Meals</u>	
2.1	The Forum has noted that one meeting of the Jamie Oliver Group had been held and it was looking at whether the current system was profitable or not. It was noted that if there were proposals for change, officers would report back to the Forum in due course. The Forum agreed that this item would remain on the Forward Plan.	12.6.07
3.0	<u>Staff Side Associations - Request for representation on Forum</u>	
3.1	The Forum noted that it was constitutionally correct to amend the Constitution with immediate effect, to include a Staff Side Association representative, in consequence of which, Ms. M. Letts had been invited to attend future meetings of the Forum as a non-school Member.	12.6.07
4.0	<u>Budget 2007/08</u>	
4.1	The Forum noted that the budget for 2007/08 had now been finalised, with a shortfall of £200,000, which would be carried forward to next year.	12.6.07
5.0	<u>Maintained Specialist Provision for Children and Young People in Walsall</u>	
5.1	The Forum received a report and noted that a formal review would be undertaken next term. The Forum also noted that good progress	12.6.07

	<p>had been made on enacting the changes to maintained provision for pupils with special educational needs. The Forum was advised that the service was hoping to get in to early intervention so that some pupils could eventually go back to their own schools. The Forum noted that there will be financial implications as a result of the changes and agreed to add consideration of the changes to the debate on the allocation of the ISB for the 2008 - 2011 funding period.</p>	
6.0	<p><u>Deprivation Review</u></p>	
6.1	<p>The Forum received a report, together with the formal Deprivation Funding Review consultation document. The Forum noted that every Head Teacher in the Borough had received a copy of the consultation, as had every Chair of Governors, and that responses were requested by the end of the Summer Term. The Forum noted that due to difficulties in accessing the Education Walsall website, an executive decision had been made not to have on-line consultation. It was noted that the Forum would be able to study the responses before taking any decisions affecting the budgets for the 2008 - 2011 period.</p>	12.6.07
6.2	<p>The Forum has received a report updating Members on responses received from schools connected with the Deprivation Review and informing them of expectations of the Department for Children, Schools and Families with regard to deprivation funding. The DCSF had requested all Authorities to complete a Deprivation Funding template, based on DCSF formula factors, showing clearly which funding streams are to address the cost of deprivation and clarifying the percentage of funding allocated for deprived pupils that is directed towards them. The Forum received a copy of the Authority's completed template, which showed that Walsall's current percentage of identified spending delegated to schools specifically for deprivation was 54%, whereas the DCSF required this to be at least 80%. The Authority's Children's Services Adviser for Government Office West Midlands was due to visit Walsall to discuss progress on the Deprivation Review. The Forum asked that a further report be submitted to a future meeting detailing discussions with the Government Adviser and options for the formula review so that resources delegated to address the cost of deprivation move towards the 80% figure currently recommended by the DCSF.</p>	11.9.07
6.3	<p>Avril Walton subsequently advised Forum that she had had a meeting with Tony Stainer and the Authority's Children's Services Adviser to discuss details of the deprivation template, and that the</p>	9.10.07

	Children's Services Adviser had confirmed that additional funding must be targeted to deprivation over the next three years to meet DCSF minimum requirements. In funding terms, this translated to an additional £6.5m of new funding and if Walsall showed commitment, this would be supported by Government Office.	
7.0	<u>Properly Assigned Projects</u>	
7.1	The Forum received a report regarding the application of the Balance Control Mechanism in Walsall Schools. The Forum noted that if, after the closedown of the Council's accounts on 31 st May, 2007, any school carries balances above agreed limits and no properly assigned projects had been agreed, the Authority was obliged to reduce the schools balance to the maximum agreed level. Any monies deducted from schools have to be returned to the ISB. Forum agreed to forward a copy of the report to the Primary Head Teachers and Secondary Head Teachers.	12.6.07
7.2	The Forum has received a further report indicating that two schools had been found to have reserves in excess of the levels agreed under the Schools Forum protocol and has noted that, when the system was established, the Secretary of State had made clear that there would be no appeals system for schools having excess levels removed from their budgets.	11.9.07
8.0	<u>Forward Plan</u>	
8.1	The Forum has continued to receive and update, on a regular basis, the Forward Plan of decisions the Forum intends to take over the subsequent four month period.	
9.0	<u>Exceptional Use of Contingency Funding</u>	
9.1	The Forum has received a report and endorsed the use of contingency funding in respect of a number of schools which had appointed newly qualified teachers after the beginning of the academic year, details of which were not known at budget setting time and consequently, it was not possible to fund the schools in question with appropriate termly funding through their formula allocations.	11.9.07

10.0	<u>DfES response to the 14 - 19 and Early Years Consultation</u>	
10.1	<p>The Forum was advised that there had been wide-scale consultation with schools on the future of School, Early Years and 14 - 16 funding and received a report setting out a summary of the key decisions resulting from this, as follows:-</p> <p>(a) <u>Early Years</u></p> <p>The Forum was advised that Early Years funding reforms were designed to bring the funding systems for private, voluntary and independent (PVI) and maintained sectors into better alignment. By April, 2010, all Local Authorities would be required to use a single local formula for funding the free entitlement in maintained and PVI sectors, but the DCSF wanted Local Authorities to introduce this earlier if possible. Government recommendation was that Local Authorities should establish a mechanism to consult with providers about local changes to Early Years Funding.</p> <p>The Forum agreed that representatives from nursery and primary schools work with the Early Years Team to set up a Forum for working with PVI representatives with a view to inviting a PVI representative to join Schools Forum as a non-school Member.</p> <p>The Forum subsequently noted the establishment of an Early Years Funding Review Sub-Group to consider and develop funding strategies associated with the implementation of the early years funding reforms, including the extension of free early years learning and child care from 12.5 hours per week for 38 weeks, to 15 hours per week for 38 weeks by September, 2010; increased flexibility of the free offer across providers; the application of a consistent pupil count and development of a single local funding formula across maintained and the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sectors by April, 2010. The Forum noted that it was anticipated that the Group would first meet in the Spring Term 2008.</p>	<p>11.9.07</p> <p>11.9.07</p> <p>4.12.07</p> <p>4.12.07</p>

	<p>(b) <u>14 - 16</u></p> <p>The Forum was advised that there were three options for the routing and managing of diploma funds in respect of Key Stage 4 diplomas. The Government had favoured Option 1, which was for diploma funds to be held by the 14 - 19 Partnership on behalf of the Local Authority. All options would be considered at a meeting of the Secondary Heads Forum, the results of the discussions to be reported to the next available Schools Forum meeting. The Forum agreed to support Option 1 and to ask the Secondary Heads Forum to bear this in mind when considering the options.</p> <p>(c) <u>School Funding</u></p> <p>The Forum was advised that the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) would continue to give schools a minimum increase in their per pupil funding each year. The Government was keen to minimise the funding guarantee and the level of the guarantee for the next three years would incorporate an expectation that schools would make significant improvements in efficiency. The Forum was advised that the Government was taking action to ensure that school revenue balances were used for educating present day pupils. The DCSF was also requiring Local Authorities to apply a 5% level to all surplus balances of schools, the recovered funding to be re-distributed within the Schools Budget.</p> <p>The Forum received a report, together with an extract from 'Teachernet' entitled 'School Revenue Balances' and agreed to receive a further report at a future meeting on the Re-distribution of Balances.</p> <p>The Forum received a report on the settlement for 2008/09 to 2010/11 and noted that with regard to Core Funding, the indicative DSG allocations for Local Authorities had been calculated using the same method applied to 2006/08 DSG settlements i.e. spend plus model which comprises a basic increase in DSG plus funding for Ministerial priorities. The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) would deliver a minimum per pupil increase for all schools in each of three years reflecting the average cost pressures, both pay and non-pay, schools will face. It was noted that</p>	<p>11.9.07 22.1.08</p> <p>11.9.07</p> <p>9.10.07</p> <p>4.12.07</p>
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	allocations would be based on the Department's projection of Walsall's likely pupil population over the next three years and that Walsall was strongly encouraged to use the notified guaranteed funding per pupil unit (GFU) with its own projections. The Forum was advised that there was a strong focus on personalised teaching and learning and that Local Authorities, and their Schools Forum, were expected to consider DCSF priorities when making decisions on allocations.	
11.0	<u>Schools Forum Review</u>	
11.1	The Forum was visited by Margaret Judd, DCSF Schools Funding Policy Adviser, who was attending the Forum as an observer, but also to seek the Forum's views on how they felt the Forum was working.	9.10.07
12.0	<u>Software Presentation by HCSS Education</u>	
12.1	The Forum received and noted a presentation by Nick Ratcliffe and Matt Birch, from HCSS Education, on their bespoke software management information system. The Forum asked that arrangements be made for Head Teachers and Bursars to view the presentation.	9.10.07
13.0	<u>Schools Meals - Service Level Agreements</u>	
13.1	The Forum was addressed by Chris Holliday and Catherine Waite, from Walsall Council, on this issue. The Forum heard that the current budget for Catering Services to schools was £659k which involved delivery to 101 schools at no cost to those schools and noted that, following the focus on healthier meal options, there had been a decline in the take up of school meals Boroughwide.	9.10.07
13.2	<p>The Forum heard that an investment bid for next year had been submitted in respect of primary schools but this had been affected by the fact that take up of meals was much lower than anticipated. A number of options had been considered, namely:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no catering service offered to schools in future; - cutting other Leisure and Community services; - charging for 'extras'; - charging a management fee; 	9.10.07

	- closure of some kitchens	
13.3	The Catering DSO had looked at ways to address a £500k possible shortfall by reworking the budget. £200k had been generated from changes to staff conditions of service and new procurement arrangements for provisions and it was anticipated that income of £300k from a management fee to schools would reduce the deficit. For this fee, the Service would provide the catering service for each school, including marketing support and ensuring nutritional standards are met. Advice, support and health and safety co-ordination would also be offered. Letters were being sent out to all schools to gauge the level of buy back from schools. The Forum asked for a report detailing impact on schools and costs to individual schools, the report to be shared with both the Primary and Secondary Head Teacher Forums prior to submission to the Schools Forum.	9.10.07
13.4	A further report to the Forum indicated that the Primary Heads Forum was unhappy with the implementation of a management fee, that they felt it was a serious issue given the workload head teachers were currently working under and that they would like to see the item referred to Cabinet for consideration.	4.12.07
13.5	It was subsequently reported to Forum that Cabinet had decided against implementing a management fee. This would present the Service with financial problems as it would not be possible to close the gap. A letter would be sent to all Head Teachers notifying them of the decision but no guarantee could be given that the introduction of a management fee would not be revisited later in the year if the financial position of the Service necessitated it.	22.1.08
14.0	<u>Schools Budget 2006/07 - Closedown</u>	
14.1	The Forum received and noted an annual statement document which showed how the budget was allocated compared to the actual expenditure. Overall, the outturn 2006/07 DSG had an underspend of £196k and this, with an additional £77k DSG provided in final calculations, would be added to next years DSG.	9.10.07
15.0	<u>Provisional breakdown of cost pressures for the 2008/2011 multi-year period</u>	
15.1	The Forum received and noted a document identifying spending pressures over the next three years and agreed that this be a standing item on the Forum's agenda.	9.10.07

16.0	<u>Funding Formula - data changes across the multi-year period</u>	
16.1	<p>The Forum received notification that, currently, following agreement by the Forum, once budgets across a multi-year period had been published, the only data changes made in finalised budgets would be pupil numbers, business rates, incidence of NQTs, statementing provision and FSM numbers. A request had been made in regard to changes in floor area data where projects not known at the beginning of the multi-year period impact on a school. The Forum asked for a further report giving details of how an in year adjustment might be triggered.</p> <p>The Forum, on receipt of the further report, agreed to the request to add floor area changes to the permitted data item to be uprated when actual budgets are calculated. The Forum also gave approval, with regard to use of school specific contingency, to include a contingency payment which will be triggered where a floor area increases by more than 5%, the payment pro-rata to the months of the financial year remaining. In addition, the Forum also gave approval, with regard to the new funding factor within the funding formula, to the proposal to introduce from April, 2008, an additional element within the school specific factors, which will enable the application of a funding mechanism to generate or reduce a school's individual funding to recognise the change in character and responsibilities.</p>	<p>9.10.07</p> <p>4.12.07</p>
17.0	<u>Practical Learning - Future</u>	
17.1	The Forum noted that it would not be possible to progress this matter until the whole issue of the 14 - 19 Partnership had been addressed.	9.10.07
18.0	<u>Draft School Finance (England) Regulations</u> <u>Draft Schools Forums (England) (Amendment) Regulations, 2007</u>	
18.1	The Forum received a report detailing consultation by the DCSF on the above draft Regulations and noted that the purpose of the draft Regulations was to give effect to the Government's decision on the school, early years and 14 - 16 funding arrangements for 2008 - 11 which were the subject of consultation earlier in the year. The point was made that the draft Regulations might cause difficulties since there was no Forum for Governors in Walsall and there might be difficulties in electing representatives to the Schools Forum. The	9.10.07

	point was made that it would be left to individual Authorities to decide how to implement the Regulations.	
19.0	<u>Benchmarking</u>	
19.1	The Forum received a report and noted that the DCSF did an annual benchmarking exercise to compare Section 52s. The Forum also noted that the design of Section 52 allowed for a degree of subjectivity that could result in sums used for similar activities being placed in different parts of the return by different Local Authorities.	4.12.07
19.2	In discussing the item, the Forum referred to two services which were included in the report but did not form part of the Education Contract. These were the Music Service and Outdoor Education. The Forum was advised that Education Walsall did not hold the budgets for these and that Walsall Council would direct the monies to the appropriate areas. Reference was also made to the powers and responsibilities of Schools Forum and the fact that there had been disquiet about the possibility of School Bursars attending Forum meetings as substitutes for Head Teachers. The Forum agreed to refer the issue to the Primary and Secondary Heads Forums for consideration and to receive their responses in due course.	4.12.07
20.0	<u>Servicing of the Schools Forum</u>	
20.1	The Forum received a report on this issue and noted that Education Walsall had indicated that the Forum needed more support than Education Walsall or the Council could provide to support Members to acquire the skills needed to understand the responsibilities they have and that a cost pressure of £30k was being sought for servicing the Forum. Officers agreed to undertake a comparison with other Local Authorities to see how they operate their Schools Forum and what they spent in terms of administration of their Forum. The Forum re-visited this item at a later meeting and agreed to remove the cost pressure of £30k in relation to servicing the Forum and that the expenses of the Forum be more effectively managed from the existing budget of £10k.	4.12.07
21.0	<u>Diplomas - 14 - 16 Funding Review</u>	
21.1	The Forum was advised that there would be two Secondary Schools, linked with the College, who will offer a diploma from September, 2008, namely, Pool Hayes and Blue Coat; and a small	4.12.07

	<p>amount was required to fund these pressures for 2008/09, in the region of £30k. Three possible options for implementing this were put forward, namely:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Authority to retain the money and hold any risks; 2. A 'half-way house'; 3. Schools to have the money and hold any risks. <p>A consultation exercise was undertaken with Secondary Head Teachers. Only four replies had been received, the consensus being to start with Option 1 and move to Option 3. The Forum subsequently agreed unanimously to adopt Option 3 with delegation to participating schools procuring and paying providers and undertaking reconciliations.</p>	11.3.08
22.0	<u>School Development Grant</u>	
22.1	The Forum received a report and noted that the Authority's allocation had been increased in line with the MFG for each year but, as the funding guaranteed to schools was lower than the increase overall to the Authority, there would be some headroom for distribution and that distribution of the headroom would be determined locally but it would be a condition of grant that the differential in funding between the most and least deprived schools in the Authority should not be narrowed from its 2007/08 level. It was noted that the deprivation differential would be monitored by the DCSF by comparison with the Authority's Section 52 statement for the next three years with 2007/08.	4.12.07
22.2	The Forum noted that with regard to balances for 2007/08, a small residual amount of standards fund grant had been identified and this would be distributed across all schools on a per pupil basis.	4.12.07
23.0	<u>Cost Pressures</u>	
23.1	The Forum received a report on cost pressures for the 2008/11 multi-year period, a copy of which is attached as an Appendix to this report. The Forum was asked to consider an additional cost pressure of Rate Relief because the Council was removing the 20% discretionary rate relief, in view of which, it would be necessary to find in the region of £225,000. About 10 of the denomination schools would be affected and it would be necessary to change the formula to allow the Forum to meet the cost.	4.12.07 22.1.08

23.2	<p>The Forum agreed cost pressures for Funding Period 1 (2008/09) as follows:-</p> <table><tr><th><u>Description</u></th><th><u>Regained/Delegated</u></th><th><u>Cost</u> <u>£</u></th></tr><tr><td>Inflation - Pay and general</td><td>Delegated</td><td>3,232,215</td></tr><tr><td>Inflation - Pay and general</td><td>Retained</td><td>400,000</td></tr><tr><td>Deprivation Review</td><td>Delegated</td><td>1,625,000 (minimum)</td></tr><tr><td>Personalised Learning</td><td>Delegated</td><td>1,940,000 (Government priority)</td></tr><tr><td>Looked After Children</td><td>Retained</td><td>217,500 (Statutory requirement)</td></tr><tr><td>Business Rates</td><td></td><td>225,000</td></tr></table>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Regained/Delegated</u>	<u>Cost</u> <u>£</u>	Inflation - Pay and general	Delegated	3,232,215	Inflation - Pay and general	Retained	400,000	Deprivation Review	Delegated	1,625,000 (minimum)	Personalised Learning	Delegated	1,940,000 (Government priority)	Looked After Children	Retained	217,500 (Statutory requirement)	Business Rates		225,000	22.1.08
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23.3	<p>The Forum agreed to the removal of the cost pressure in relation to increase in Union Support and agreed the remaining cost pressures in the following order of priority:-</p> <table><tr><th><u>Description</u></th><th><u>Retained/Delegated</u></th><th><u>Cost</u> <u>£</u></th><th><u>Priority</u></th></tr><tr><td>Increase in places - Mary Elliot</td><td>Delegated</td><td>500,000</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Increase in places - new Primary/ Secondary</td><td>Delegated</td><td>115,000</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Education Recording Licence</td><td>Retained</td><td>10,000</td><td>3</td></tr></table>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Retained/Delegated</u>	<u>Cost</u> <u>£</u>	<u>Priority</u>	Increase in places - Mary Elliot	Delegated	500,000	1	Increase in places - new Primary/ Secondary	Delegated	115,000	2	Education Recording Licence	Retained	10,000	3	22.1.08					
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23.4	<p>With regard to Funding Periods 2 and 3 (2009/10 and 2010/11 respectively), the Forum agreed the cost pressures on the same lines as 2008/09 and agreed an additional cost pressure for</p>	22.1.08																					

	Secondary Sensory ARP as a Priority 4 for each of those periods.	
24.0	<u>Standards Fund - ICT - Harnessing Technology Grant</u>	
24.1	<p>The Forum received a report on this issue and agreed that additional funding over and above the 25% retention amount be held centrally to allow the following projects to be undertaken:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - E-safety - Upgrade of network circuits to schools - £70k - £105k 	22.1.08
24.2	<p>The Forum agreed to give further consideration to, and subsequently approved, the following projects:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self Review Framework - Community Wireless (contribution only towards cost - Partners to be included) - £40k - £22k 	11.3.08
24.3	The Forum initially deferred consideration of SiF (Schools Interoperability Framework) and subsequently noted that this project had been withdrawn for 2008/09 and that it was proposed that this amount would form part of that allocated to schools.	11.3.08
24.4	The Forum agreed that schools allocations be based on a lump sum of £1,000 plus a per free pupil amount and that, wherever possible, Service Level Agreements be negotiated.	22.1.08
25.0	<u>Standards Fund - School Lunch Grant</u>	
25.1	The Forum received a report seeking consideration of three possible options as to how the grant might be distributed to all establishments accessing school lunches.	22.1.08
25.2	<p>The options were:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Option 1 - schools undertaking their own school meals provision either by employing their own catering staff or via an external catering company will have their allocation calculated and paid across to them; where the Local Authority's Catering Service undertakes the provision of meals for remaining schools, the balance of the grant would be allocated directly to the service; funds will be allocated 70% pupil numbers and 30% Free School Meals eligibility; 	22.1.08

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Option 2 - the Free School Meals (FSM) element of the grant will be calculated for remaining schools and credited to Schools Budgets. The balance of the grant will be allocated to the Local Authority Catering Service to offset the increased direct costs of providing a paid meals service; - Option 3 - the remaining grant available will be allocated directly to schools using pupil numbers and free school meals numbers. Catering Services invoices sent to schools for Free School Meals provision will reflect higher costs and schools will meet these costs using part of their School Lunch Grant. The remainder of grant each school will have available should be used in meeting increased costs of paid meals. 	
25.3	The Forum noted that, with Option 3, there was uncertainty how schools who do not have producing kitchens, would be charged for the additional costs of their paid meals and subsequently agreed to adopt Option 3 for the distribution of the School Lunch Grant.	22.1.08
26.0	<u>Funding Formula 2008/11 - 'Change in Character'</u>	
26.1	The Forum received and noted a report clarifying the term 'Change in Character' in relation to the Funding Formula 2008/11. The Forum noted that the term related to any change other than the establishment or discontinuation of a school which requires the publication of statutory proposals. The Forum further noted that such changes would include changing the age range; enlargement of premises; increasing the number of places; establishing/removing designated SEN provision; moving to a new site/closure of a site; change in gender if single sex or end of selection, etc.	22.1.08
27.0	<u>Annual Report - 13th June, 2006 to 13th March, 2007</u>	
27.1	The Forum received and noted the Annual Report for the period 13 th June, 2006 to 13 th March, 2007 and agreed that it be circulated to all schools.	22.1.08
28.0	<u>Key points and dates for schools for budget planning</u>	
28.1	The Forum received a report and noted that the core elements of the local funding formula for the allocation of budget shares to schools	11.3.08

28.2	<p>would increase at 2.1% over the next three years in line with the budget settlement to the Authority, which continues with the delivery of a Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG).</p> <p>The Forum noted that schools would be notified of their individual budget share allocation for 2008/09 by 31st March, 2008 and budget shares for 2009/10 and 2010/11 would be notified by 23rd May, 2008. The Forum noted that it was now a statutory requirement that Governors set budget plans across all years of a multi-year cycle and provide the Local Authority with their plans by 1st June. The Forum noted that, as schools would not receive their allocations for the 2nd and 3rd funding period until the end of May, 2008, the date by which Governors must submit their plans had been put back to 18th July, 2008 and that the timing of relevant Governors meetings should take account of these key dates.</p>	11.3.08
29.0	<p><u>School Organisation</u></p> <p>(a) <u>Academies</u></p>	
29.1	<p>The Forum received and noted a report informing them of potential changes to the status of two Secondary Schools that could have financial consequences for Walsall. The Forum noted that the Cabinet had agreed that Expressions of Interest would be submitted to the DCSF to explore the possibility of Shelfield Sports and Community College and Darlaston Community Science College becoming Academies.</p>	11.3.08
29.2	<p>The Forum noted that Academy Schools are revenue funded directly from the DCSF and this would impact directly on the Aggregated Schools Budget. In addition, Central Services would be required to market their services to such schools on the basis of local knowledge, continuity of service as well as commercially competitive price and quality. Non traded central services could also be affected if the new Academies and Trust Schools chose not to 'buy in' to a wide range of Local Authority services. It was noted that Local Authority supported 'community' Academies would have representation on the governing body and the influence that this would bring to the decision making process. The Forum asked to be kept informed of future developments on this issue.</p> <p>(b) <u>Funding of Early Years Provision</u></p>	11.3.08
29.3	<p>The Forum has received a report and has noted that the Sub-Group of the Forum established to review early years funding had set the dates of its first two meetings. The Forum noted that the Primary</p>	11.3.08

29.4	<p>Capital Programme was a 15 year project, during which time, the Government would make available capital sums to rebuild approximately 15% of Walsall Primary/Primary Special Schools and to refurbish 35%. The Forum noted that a requirement of receiving the Capital Funding was that a strategy for Primary Education be produced and that this would include a review of the pattern of Early Years Education in the Borough.</p> <p>The Forum agreed to receive feedback from the Sub-Group on this issue.</p>	11.3.08
30.0	<p><u>Scope of School Specific Contingency</u></p>	
30.1	<p>The Forum has received a report and has given consideration to varying the types of expenditure that could be met from this budget.</p>	11.3.08
30.2	<p>The Forum noted that the current agreed types of expenditure were as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SEN - new and above average increases - Changes to business rates liability - Appointment of newly qualified teachers outside academic year - Correction of data within allocation formula 	11.3.08
30.3	<p>The Forum was informed that changes in regulation provided Local Authorities with the ability to direct any maintained school to admit a child in their care even where the admission would take them above their standard admission number and that where such an admission was in either a reception or Key Stage 1 class and results in a class size over 30, funding would need to be made available to the school until such time as the pupil moves into Key Stage 2 or the class size reduces to 30.</p>	11.3.08
30.4	<p>As such events were not going to be known 'in advance' of budget setting, the Forum agreed to broaden the scope of school specific contingency to cover such instances, the allocation to each school being equal to the cost of a mainscale teacher pro rata for the remaining months of the financial year or sooner should class size reduce and be subject to provision, from school, of the costs incurred.</p>	11.3.08

31.0	<u>Standards Fund</u>	
	(a) <u>National Grid for Learning</u>	
31.1	The Forum noted that, from the original commencement of the National Grid for Learning, the broadband service in Walsall, branded as the Walsall Grid for Learning, had been offered on 12 month contracts, commencing September 1 st each year, which reflected the initial funding timelines.	11.3.08
31.2	The Forum noted that funding was now on a cycle from April and that the service would be aligned to the same timescales and that the next agreement would run from 1 st September, 2008 to 31 st March, 2010, annually thereafter.	11.3.08
31.3	The Forum noted that, in order to ensure that school budgets are not adversely affected, the transitional agreement would be invoiced, pro rata, in two parts at 1 st September, 2008 and 1 st April, 2009 to ensure expenditure falls in the appropriate financial year.	11.3.08
	(b) <u>Computers for Pupils</u>	
31.4	The Forum received a report and noted that the DCSF had recently announced Computers for Pupils funding until August, 2008 to provide additional devices and that Walsall would receive £192,300 capital and £37,900 revenues.	11.3.08
31.5	In the previous 2 years of the project, 579 laptops plus 3g connectivity had been distributed across 11 Secondary Schools. Those schools had also received a one-off amount of £10,000 for additional support in deploying and supporting these devices as well as providing training for parents.	11.3.08
31.6	The Forum noted that two schools received significantly more laptops than any other schools but the same one-off amount and agreed that these two schools would receive an additional £10,000 from the new allocation.	11.3.08
31.7	The Forum subsequently agreed the following as the basis for distribution of the grant:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing schools within the project to identify any pupils meeting the original deprivation criteria but have internet connectivity are offered a device where suitable 	11.3.08

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review is then made of any further pupils that meet the initial criteria but are in establishments that have under the minimum of 30 and an allocation made (this will also include complementary education units such as Pupil Referral Units, Hospital educated, Looked After Children). In order to maximise the number of devices, these establishments will not receive one-off support funding • In any households with more than 2 qualifying pupils, a second device is issued • Any remaining funding is then allocated on a sliding scale across the same original criteria, looking at 12% and then 15% most deprived areas <p>(c) <u>Post LIG Transition Funding</u></p>	
31.8	The Forum received a report and was reminded that Post LIG Transition Grant had been an element of Standards Fund since 2006 and was allocated to schools originally in receipt of Post LIG Deprivation Funding but no longer met the grant criteria when, in 2006/07, their number of eligible FSM pupils fell below 20%.	11.3.08
31.9	The Forum noted that the number of schools attracting transitional grant had reduced over the past two years and was now paid across to only two schools.	11.3.08
31.10	<p>The Forum was advised that Standards Fund guidance for 2008/11 provided for Local Authorities, in consultation with their Schools Forum, to determine the ongoing distribution of this element and was asked to consider the following options:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Option 1 - Continue to allocate the grant at the same level to the two schools that currently receive it; - Option 2 - Begin to taper down the allocation for those schools and re-distribute the released grant to other schools and that current allocations be reduced by 50% in 2008/09 and 50% in 2009/10; - Option 3 - To make no further allocations of transitional funding and to distribute the grant across all schools. 	11.3.08
31.11	The Forum subsequently identified Option 3 as the preferred option for the distribution of Post LIG Transition funding.	11.3.08

32.0	<u>Dedicated Schools Grant Formula</u>	
32.1	The Forum received a report and noted that the DCSF had announced a review of the distribution formula for the DSG. The Forum noted that the aim of the review was to develop a single, transparent formula for the distribution of DSG that would be available from April, 2011 and that the development phase of the review would be between February, 2008 and September, 2009 and consultation on specific proposals from January to March, 2010.	11.3.08
32.2	The Forum agreed to note that the review was taking place and to follow its progress, assessing the impact that the results would have on the funding of Walsall schools.	11.3.08
33.0	<u>Schools Forum Membership - Terms of Office</u>	
33.1	The Forum received a report and noted that the Constitution contained a provision to stagger the terms of office to maintain continuity of experienced Forum Members but that this provision had never been invoked, in consequence of which, the terms of office of all Members would expire on 31 st March, 2010.	11.3.08
33.2	<p>The Forum subsequently agreed that, to maintain continuity of experienced Forum Members, the terms of office of the following be extended until 31st March, 2011:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 Special School Head Teacher (Heather Lomas) - 1 Nursery Head Teacher (Elaine Stringer) - 1 Early Years Development Childcare Partnership (Rhoda Poyser) - 1 Catholic Diocese representative (Steve Haywood) - 1 Staff side representative (Marion Letts) - 2 Primary Head Teachers } - 2 Secondary Head Teachers } <p style="text-align: right;">to be identified through their respective Forums</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 Primary Governors } - 2 Secondary Governors } <p style="text-align: right;">to be identified by way of consultation direct with all Governors</p>	11.3.08

34.0	<u>Schools Forum (England) (Amendment) Regulations, 2008</u>	
34.1	The Forum received a report and noted that new Regulations issued by the DCSF regarding the composition of Schools Forums now provided for representatives of 14 - 19 Partnerships and of private, voluntary and independent (PVI) early years providers with a consequential change to the ratio of schools to non-schools Members. The Regulations also allowed for representation of Head Teacher Members by other senior school staff; substitutes for School Members of the Forum and clarification of representation of faith bodies.	11.3.08
34.2	The Forum noted that Kim Delaney was the PVI representative on the Forum; that representation was being sought from the 14 - 19 Partnership; and that the Forum was already operating on a ratio of 5:1 for Schools/non-Schools Members. The Forum was of the view that there should be no change to this ratio.	11.3.08
34.3	The Forum noted the options for Head Teachers to be represented at Forum meetings by Senior Schools staff and for faith body representatives to be included other than Church of England or Roman Catholic Church, depending on the proportion of pupils represented by those bodies.	11.3.08
34.4	With regard to substitute Members for Schools Members on the Forum, the Forum agreed to request the respective organisations to identify named substitutes for their Members.	11.3.08
35.0	<u>Venues for future meetings</u>	
35.1	The Forum has received a report and has agreed dates and venues for meetings for Summer and Autumn terms for 2008 and Spring term 2009.	11.3.08
36.0	<u>Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAg)</u>	
36.1	The Forum has received a report on proposed revisions to the current methodology for Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant. The Forum noted that the DCSF had announced the Authority's EMAg funding for the 2008/09 financial year and officers were now in a position to evaluate its effectiveness in raising standards.	11.3.08

36.2	The Forum was advised that consultation had taken place but a lot of people had not responded on the proposals and more clarification was needed about the use of the money and possible outcomes in respect of the preferred Model 1.	11.3.08
36.3	The Forum was advised that with regard to commissioning, the establishment of a Steering Group had been suggested. This approach was endorsed by Forum Members. Members felt that there was also a need to clarify the use of centrally retained funds and that the Steering Group should look at this and the possible staging of the threshold increase.	11.3.08
37.0	<u>Recommendation</u>	
37.1	The Forum is asked to note the report.	