

## Walsall Council Schools Forum

**Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday, 17 October, 2023 at 4.00 pm**

Digital Meeting via Microsoft Teams

### **Schools Forum Members Present:**

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Mrs C. Draper   | Primary Maintained Head Teacher, Short Heath Federation            |
| Mrs A. Arnold   | Primary Head Teacher, Delves Infant School                         |
| Mrs J. Garratt  | Primary Maintained Head Teacher, Walsall Wood                      |
| Mr S. Davies    | Primary Maintained Head Teacher, Christ Church CE (C) JMI School   |
| Mrs S. Bowen    | Secondary Maintained Head Teacher, St. Thomas More Catholic School |
| Mr M. Moody     | Primary Academy Representative, Goldsmiths and Rivers Academies    |
| Mr A. Seager    | Secondary Academy Head Teacher, Bloxwich Academy                   |
| Mr James Ludlow | Secondary Academy Head Teacher, Joseph Leckie Academy              |
| Mr David Smith  | Secondary Academy Head Teacher, Blue Coat Academy                  |
| Ms M. Turley    | Nursery Head Teacher, Ogley Hay Nursery                            |
| Mr C. Bury      | Principal, The Ladder School, Alternative Provision                |

### **Officers Present:**

S. Kelly – Director – Access and Inclusion  
L. Haynes - Head of Finance – Technical & Transactional  
R. Walley – Technical Accounting, Treasury Management & Education Finance Manager  
L. Meredith – Interim Lead Accountant, Education  
N. Picken – Principal Democratic Services Officer  
R Thomas – Head of Access

### **Observers Present:**

Ms S. Guy (National Education Union)

|                |   | <b>Action</b> |
|----------------|---|---------------|
| 1.<br>17.10.23 | <b>Welcome</b><br><br>Mr Seager (Vice Chair) chaired the meeting in the absence of the Chair, Mr M. Vlahakis.<br><br>The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and explaining and rules of procedure and |               |

|                |   |       |
|----------------|---|-------|
|                | <p>legal context in which the meeting was being held. He also directed members of the public viewing the meeting to the papers, which could be found on the Council's Committee Management Information System (CMIS) webpage.</p> <p>A roll call was taken of those members present who confirmed they could both see and hear the proceedings.</p> |       |
| 2.<br>17.10.23 | <p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Mr Vlahakis, Mr Baker and Mr Downie.</p>   | Noted |
| 3.<br>17.10.23 | <p><b>Minutes</b></p> <p>The Schools Forum received the Minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2023 (see annexed).</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2023 were approved as a true and correct record.</p>   | Noted |
| 4.<br>17.10.23 | <p><b>Matters Arising from the Minutes of 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2023</b></p> <p>None.</p>  |       |
| 5.<br>17.10.23 | <p><b>Late Item/s (urgent) to be introduced by the Chair</b></p> <p>None.</p>   |       |
| 6.<br>17.10.23 | <p><b>Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)</b></p> <p>There were no items for consideration in the private session.</p>   |       |
| 7.<br>17.10.23 | <p><b>Proposed Early Years Supplement Grant 2023/24</b></p> <p>A report was submitted: -</p> <p>(See annexed)</p> <p><b>Resolved (by roll call)</b></p>   |       |

|                |  |                            |
|----------------|--|----------------------------|
|                | <p>That Schools Forum notes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The work undertaken by officers and recommends that the Early Years Supplementary Grant (EYSG) allocation is passed on to childcare providers in full for 2023/24 at the end of the autumn 2023 and spring 2024 terms following a reconciliation; and</li> <li>2. That this recommendation will then be reported to Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023 to seek approval.</li> </ol>  | Noted                      |
| 8.<br>17.10.23 | <p><b>Proposed Schools Local Funding Formula 2024/25</b></p> <p>A report was submitted: -</p> <p>(See annexed)</p> <p>During debate, it was suggested that communication be sent to schools to make them aware of the impending changes. The Head of Finance, Technical &amp; Transactional confirmed that this would be actioned following the meeting of Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2023.</p> <p><b>Resolved (by roll call)</b></p> <p>That Schools Forum notes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the recommendation for the basis of the local mainstream schools funding formula for 2024/25 is to implement the NFF rates in full from that year, which is in line with the full consultation exercise undertaken in 2022 and the endorsement of Schools Forum and approval of Cabinet following that in December 2022.</li> <li>2. The provisional Schools Block allocation of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding that the modelling for 2024/25 has been based on.</li> <li>3. That, once the final Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations for 2024/25 have been issued in December 2023, a further report will be presented to Schools Forum at their meeting in January 2024 confirming the final allocation and funding factor values; and</li> </ol> | LH to issue communication. |

|                |  |  |
|----------------|--|--|
|                | 4. That the recommendation from this report will then be reported to Cabinet on 18 October 2023 to seek their approval   |  |
| 9.<br>17.10.23 | <p><b>Maintained Schools De Delegation 2024-25</b></p> <p>A report was submitted: -</p> <p>(See annexed)</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p><b>By Assent (all)</b></p> <p>1. That Schools Forum note the insurance options available under the DfE's 'Risk Protection Arrangement', and the work that has been undertaken by the council to seek to be able to offer a comparative insurance package.</p> <p><b>By Roll Call (Secondary maintained head only)</b></p> <p>2. That Maintained Secondary School members of Schools Forum <b>approve</b> de-delegation of the Free School Meal Eligibility Service (estimated at £19.08 per free school meal eligible pupil).</p> <p>3. Maintained Secondary School members of Schools Forum <b>approve</b> de-delegation of Insurance Services (estimated at £24.00 per pupil).</p> <p>4. Maintained Secondary School members <b>do not approve</b> utilisation of the DfE's Risk Protection Arrangements for insurance cover (set at £23 per pupil for the 2023/24 financial year but subject to potential increase for 2024/25).</p> <p>5. Maintained Secondary School members of Schools Forum <b>do not approve</b> de-delegation of Staff Costs – Teaching Union and Public Duties (estimated at £4.99 per pupil).</p> <p>6. Maintained Secondary School members of Schools Forum <b>do not approve</b> de-delegation of Behaviour Support Services (estimated at £4.70 per pupil).</p> |  |

|     |   |  |
|-----|---|--|
|     | <p>7. Maintained Secondary School members of Schools Forum <b>approve</b> de-delegation of Additional School Improvement Services (estimated at £6.00 per pupil).</p> <p><b>By Roll Call (Primary maintained heads only)</b></p> <p>8. Maintained Primary School members <b>approve</b> de-delegation of Free School Meal Eligibility Service (estimated at £19.08 per free school meal eligible pupil).</p> <p>9. Maintained Primary School members <b>approve</b> de-delegation of Insurance services (estimated at £24.00 per pupil).</p> <p>10. Maintained Primary School members <b>do not approve</b> utilisation of the DfE's Risk Protection Arrangements for insurance cover (set at £23 per pupil for the 2023/24 financial year but subject to potential increase for 2024/25).</p> <p>11. Maintained Primary School members <b>approve</b> de-delegation of Staff Costs – Teaching Union and Public Duties (estimated at £4.99 per pupil).</p> <p>12. Maintained Primary School members of Schools Forum <b>approve</b> de-delegation of Behaviour Support Services (estimated at £4.70 per pupil).</p> <p>13. Maintained Primary School members of Schools Forum <b>approve</b> de-delegation of Additional School Improvement Services (estimated at £6.00 per pupil).</p> <p><b>By Roll Call (Maintained heads only)</b></p> <p>14. Maintained Primary and Secondary School members recognise that library services, maternity support and contingency are not being offered under de-delegation and they will have to purchase individually any service they require.</p> |  |
| 10. | <b>Review of Maintained Schools Balances 2022/23</b>  |  |

|                 |   |  |
|-----------------|---|--|
| 17.10.23        | <p>A report was submitted: -</p> <p>(See annexed)</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>   |  |
| 11.<br>17.10.23 | <p><b>Review of Dedicated Schools Grant – update on 2023/24 Forecast Position</b></p> <p>A report was submitted: -</p> <p>(See annexed)</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>   |  |
|                 | <p><b>Dates for 2023/24 Meetings</b></p> <p>The Forum considered a report of the Principal Democratic Services Officer (annexed)</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>That the Schools Forum agrees to hold its meetings on the following dates at 4.00pm:</p> <p><b>2023</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monday 18 December</li> </ul> <p><b>2024</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tuesday 16 January</li> <li>Tuesday 5 March</li> <li>Tuesday 18 June</li> </ul> |  |
| 11.             | <p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Walsall Trade Union Support Service –</b><br/>Forum noted a letter from Unions with regard to funding the Trade Union Support Service through de-delegation.</li> </ul>  |  |

|     |  |       |
|-----|--|-------|
|     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Resignation</b> – Forum noted that Mr Mike Fox had tendered his resignation.</li> </ul>  |       |
| 12. | <p><b>Forward Plan</b></p> <p>A copy of the Forward Plan was submitted (annexed)</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>That the Forward Plan be noted.</p>   | Noted |
| 13. | <p><b>Late Items</b></p> <p>Schools Forum noted that this would be the Head of Finance – Technical &amp; Transactional’ s final meeting as he has been successful in securing a new role at another authority. Schools Forum wished the Head of Finance – Technical &amp; Transactional well in his new role and thanked him for his support to the Forum.</p> |       |
| 14. | <p><b>Date of Future Meeting</b></p> <p>The next meeting of the Schools Forum is scheduled for Monday, 18 December 2023 at 4:00pm</p>  |       |

The meeting terminated at 4.33 pm.

Signed .....

Date .....