

## Schools Forum

### ANNUAL REPORT 2010/2011

1.0	<u>Purpose of Report</u>	
1.1	The purpose of the report is to provide an annual report of the work of the Forum covering the period 15 <sup>th</sup> June 2010 to 29 <sup>th</sup> March 2011.	
2.0	<u>Revised Guidance on the Balance Control Mechanism and Indicative Balances Out Term Position as at 2010</u>	
2.1	The Forum received the latest guidance on school balances and the report on the 2009/2010 indicative year end balances for Walsall. The Forum noted the content and that there had been a significant reduction in the total level of school balances as of 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010 for the second consecutive year.	15.6.10
2.2	The School Balances Working Group considered the percentages that schools were allowed to carry forward as an uncommitted which at present were looked at as total resources. It was recommended that from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2010 all Standard Fund Grants would be treated as delegated funds to schools and be subject to the same balance control mechanism subject to any specific requirements. The Forum supported the recommendations of the School Balances Working Group and the draft consultation document.	28.9.10
3.0	<u>Single Status and Equal Pay</u>	
3.1	The Forum received an update on the present position relating to single status and equal pay.	15.6.10
3.2	The Forum received information on the equal pay claims relating to support staff in schools and that meetings would be taking place on single status and the financial consequences. Schools would not be expected to meet the full costs of equal pay from their revenue budgets in 2011 or in 2012 and that in some cases schools could take out a licensed deficit. There would not be an issue in carrying sums forward to meet these costs.	19.10.10

3.3	The Forum received an update in private session on Equal Pay and Pay and Grading.	7.12.10
3.4	The Committee noted that some schools would need to show balances for equal pay as properly assigned sums as not all staff had yet signed up .	29.3.10
4.0	<u>Financial Arrangements to Support the Transfer of Sneyd Pupils during the Closure Period</u>	
4.1	The Forum received a update on the Support for the transfer of Sneyd pupils during the closure period; there would be no charge on the DSG but the situation could change.	15.6.10
5.0	<u>Consultation on the Future Distribution of School Funding</u>	
5.1	The Forum noted possible changes to the distribution of school funds as a result of proposal to introduce a new formula which would see the main streaming of a number of grants and changes to the local pupil premium which would lead to a increase in deprivation funding.	15.6.10
6.0	<u>Harnessing Technology Grant</u>	
6.1	The Forum agreed to the use of retained harnessing technology grant 2010/2011 to cover the service and warranties for broadband, staffing costs for broadband in respect of the administration of the service level agreement, supplies and key performance indicator information where required; a contribution to the regional broadband consortium to cover the costs of membership which also included a number of resources available to schools to use primarily around curriculum and E-safety and hardware and new costs for broad band.	15.6.10
6.2	The Forum has agreed to support the allocation of funding to replace internet circuits to schools .	28.9.10
7.0	<u>Short Stay School (Pupil referral unit) provision.</u>	
7.1	A re-organisation of staffing at the Ruis and New Leaf Centres had resulted in expenditure savings following the introduction of the new short stay school provision model in Walsall.	15.6.10

8.0	<u>Review of the special school funding formula</u>	
8.1	The Forum noted proposals for changes to the special schools funding formula for the 2011/2014 period.	15.6.10
9.0	<u>Transforming Learning in Walsall –Financial Update</u>	
9.1	The Forum received information relating to the transforming learning in Walsall programme including the building schools for the future long term programme of investment.	15.6.10
9.2	The Forum agreed to the money contributed by schools to BSF be returned to schools as soon as possible.	28.9.10
9.3	The Forum received information relating to the final account for the Transforming Learning Programme and the cash expenditure on the BSF project. It was confirmed that funding had been returned to schools with the exception of interest payments which would be distributed in the near future.	19.10.10
10.0	<u>Impact of the 2010-2011 Emergency Budget on the Music Service</u>	
10.1	The Forum agreed to financial support from the central element of the schools budget for 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 (up to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2012) in order to retain the music service.	28.9.10
11.0	<u>Pensions Policies-Local Government and Teachers</u>	
11.1	The Forum agreed to consult on proposed changes to the premature retirement, dismissal and resignation costs in respect of school closures.	28.9.10
12.0	<u>Early Years Single Funding Formula</u>	
12.1	The Forum noted the current funding position issues in respect of the early years single funding formula pilot scheme, the methodology for the distribution of the standards fund grant was agreed and £90,000 was allocated to pilot innovative work with the remaining grant being allocated to schools and other settings using actual school numbers for the financial year. A sub group was established to consider innovative work for suggestions to schools.	28.9.10

13.0	<u>Revised Constitution.</u>	
13.1	The Forum received a copy of the constitution and agreed revisions as appropriate.	28.9.10
14.0	<u>Consultation on School Funding 2011/2012 and Introducing a Pupil Premium</u>	
14.1	The Forum agreed the consultation responses in respect of school funding 2011/2012 and the introduction of a pupil premium subject to the inclusion that and option that demonstrated the effect of the average IDACI score of pupils educated within a local authority area would provide better determination of deprivation.	28.9.10
15.0	<u>Dedicated Schools Grant 2010/2011 Final Settlement</u>	
15.1	The Forum confirmed the final settlement of dedicated schools grant to be paid to the local authority for 2010/2011.	28.9.10
16.0	<u>Forward Plan</u>	
16.1	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.	28.9.10
17.0	<u>Section 106 Funding</u>	
17.1	The Forum received information regarding Section 106 funding which related to capital monies, the Council and SERCO were involved in negotiations with developers and it was necessary to demonstrate where resources were required. Walsall did benefit from capital funding from Section 106 agreements.	28.9.10
18.0	<u>14-19 Funding Update</u>	
18.1	The Forum received information on the proposals to amend the 14-19 Funding Formula and the need to ensure that the October census was as up to date as possible as the figures would be used to draw down post 16 funding in the future.	19.10.10

19.0	<u>Consultation on the Schools Finance (England) Regulations 2011</u>	
19.1	The Forum received information on the proposal to stream line the number of grants together with new or existing formula to be used to include sums in the DSG.	19.10.10
20.0	<u>Formula Review 2011/2012</u>	
20.1	The Forum approved the inclusion of the practical learning fund in with the individual school budgets and the delegation of these to secondary schools via a separate formula factor for the 2011/2012 financial year. The existing formula would be used to devolve the funding in the new formula factor that is a fixed sum for key stage 4 pupils.	19.10.10
20.2	In the event of the local authority incurring a penalty in year one for the carbon reduction commitment, this would be met by top slicing the individual schools budget or via the central expenditure element of the schools budget.	
20.3	Approval was given to the principal of introducing a factor to ensure that the maximum benefits were achieved from the resources available for the funding of schools.	
21.0	<u>Pensions Policies – Local Government and Teachers</u>	
21.1	The Forum received a brief update and noted that legal advice on the draft consultation following changes in the work paper was awaited. Any amendments to the scheme for financing schools would be referred to the Forum for consultation.	7.12.10
22.0	<u>Changes to the Balance Control Mechanism</u>	
22.1	The Forum agreed to maintain a Balance Control Mechanism and approved the changes which were in line with the results of the consultation and agreed the percentages of uncommitted balances within the Balance Control Mechanism. A number of grants were also included in the Balance Control Mechanism calculation for the 2010/2011 financial years.	7.12.10

22.2	The Forum agreed that with effect from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2011 and relating to the 2011/2012 financial year, the total annual resources within the Balance Control Mechanism be defined subject to any changes by a new national claw back mechanism.	
23.0	<u>Early Years Funding Sub Group – 9<sup>th</sup> November 2010</u>	
23.1	The Forum approved a one term secondment of an early years specialist to deliver on any number of identified issues which required investigating or reviewing in respect of early years provision. It was agreed that the contingency fund would be used for this purpose.	7.12.10
24.0	<u>2011/2012 School Funding</u>	
24.1	The Forum was requested to consider whether to formulate bids for funding sources included in the white paper relating to the Education Endowment Fund and the new collaborative incentive. A working group was set up to consider this matter.	7.12.10
25.0	<u>Analysis of Current Walsall Formula Factors which included Free School Meals to allocate Funding</u>	
25.1	The Forum agreed that funding be calculated on actual eligibility and be annually driven rather than based on an historic formula with the funding following the needs of the child. The Forum considers modelling to change free schools in personalised learning to free schools and IDACI.	7.12.10
26.0	<u>EMAG</u>	
26.1	The Forum agreed in principle to consider EMAG funding being delegated 100% to schools.	7.12.10
27.0	<u>Changes to Grants 2011/2012</u>	
27.1	The Forum noted a confidential report relating to funding changes introduced by central government for 2011/2012.	18.1.11

28.0	<u>Revised Scheme for Financing Schools</u>	
28.1	Schools Forum agreed to consult schools on proposed changes to the draft scheme for financing schools which reflected the policy of the current government and legislative changes. This included amendments to increase amounts for orders to be countersigned by the schools finance team in the event of closing schools and a monthly monitoring report being provided to the local authority during the closure period. This was to enable the process to be more manageable and to protect schools budgets from absorbing a deficit balance at the point of closure.	1.3.11
29.0	<u>Central Retention of a Proportion of the Allocation which was with the former Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant</u>	
29.1	The Forum agreed that the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant monies be 100% devolved to schools.	1.3.11
30.0	<u>Financial Arrangement to support the Transfer of Sneyd Pupils during the closure period</u>	
30.1	The Forum agreed to funding to follow Sneyd Community School Pupils from years 8 & 9 to the destination Walsall Schools in September 2011 and to the retention sum of approximately £94,000 in the 2011/2012 school specific contingency for this purpose, the sum comprising traditional budget and new mainstreamed grants.	1.3.11
31.0	<u>Free School Meals Data</u>	
31.1	The Forum received a presentation on proposals to improve the exchange of data between the Council and SERCO in order to provide a more organised and secure exchange facility. Liaison would be taking place with schools with a view to introducing processes that would assist in increasing the free school meal activities in view of funding adjustments.	1.3.11
32.0	<u>Central Retention of Former National Strategies Grant Matched Funding</u>	
32.1	The Forum agreed to additional funding to be held in the schools specific contingency in respect of primary, special and nursery	16.3.11

	<p>schools, to be used to support named schools initially up to £10,000 each with schools being authorised to approve for one year and if necessary to support other schools that came forward.</p> <p>The Forum agreed that funding for secondary schools be delegated to the schools at £10,000 per school.</p>	
33.0	<u>School Finance (England) Regulations 2011</u>	
33.1	The Forum agreed to rename the “National Strategies Funding Combined Services” to “ School to School Support Services”.	
33.2	Approval was also given to the Schools specific contingency of £1.178 million which include the retention of the former national strategies funding to allow schools budgets to be managed effectively and all midyear school funding adjustments to be made.	16.3.11
33.3	Approval has been given to the retention of £258,000 of former national strategies funding to allow the local authority to continue to support all schools at risk or schools causing concern in the primary, special and nursery phase.	
33.4	Approval has been given to a breach to the 2011/2012 central expenditure limit subject to the central retention referred to above.	
34.0	<u>Membership of the Forum</u>	
34.1	The Forum noted that, in view of the number of schools applying for academy status, the membership of the Forum would need to be reviewed.	16.3.11
35.0	<u>Scheme for Financing Schools 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011</u>	
35.1	The Forum agreed the revised scheme for Financing Schools 2011 for implementation with affect from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2011 as no consultation responses had been received.	16.3.11