

# **DUDLEY SCHOOLS FORUM**

**TUESDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2012**

**AT 6.00PM  
AT HILLCREST SCHOOL  
AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
SIMMS LANE  
NETHERTON  
DUDLEY  
DY2 0PB**

**If you (or anyone you know) is attending the meeting and requires assistance to access the venue and/or its facilities, could you please contact Democratic Services in advance and we will do our best to help you**

**HELEN SHEPHERD  
ASSISTANT DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER**

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**You can view information about Dudley MBC on  
[www.dudley.gov.uk](http://www.dudley.gov.uk)**



## **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

### **MEETINGS AT THE HILLCREST SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

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College

In the event of the alarm sounding, please leave the building by the nearest exit. There are Officers who will assist you in the event of this happening, please follow their instructions.

There is to be no smoking on the premises in line with national legislation. It is an offence to smoke in or on these premises.

Please turn off your mobile phones and mobile communication devices during the meeting.

Thank you for your co-operation.

## Directorate of Corporate Resources

Law and Governance, Council House, Priory Road, Dudley, West Midlands DY1 1HF  
Tel: 0300 555 2345 Fax: 01384 815202  
www.dudley.gov.uk



Your ref:	Our ref:	Please ask for:	Telephone No.
	HS	Helen Shepherd	01384 815271

1<sup>st</sup> November, 2012

### **PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE**

Dear Member

#### **Dudley Schools Forum – Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2012**

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Dudley Schools Forum, which will be held at **Hillcrest School and Community College, Simms Lane, Netherton, Dudley, DY2 0PB** on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2012 at 6.00 pm, to consider the business set out in the Agenda below.

Light refreshments will be available from 5.30 pm.

Yours sincerely

Director of Corporate Resources

#### **Distribution:-**

All Members of the Dudley Schools Forum, namely:-

Mr Conway	Mr Dalloway	Mrs Garratt	Mr Harris	Mrs Hazlehurst
Mr Hudson	Mr Jones	Mr Lynch	Ms Pearce	Mrs Quigley
Ms Richards	Mr Ridley	Ms S Rogers	Mrs Ruffles	Mr Timmins
Mr Warren	Mrs Withers			

Appointments effective from 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2012: -

Mrs Belcher	Mr Derham	Mrs Hannaway	Mr Kirk	Mrs P Rogers
Mr Shaw	Mr Ward	Mr Weaver		

c.c - Councillor Crumpton – Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services;  
Councillor S Turner – Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee;  
Jane Porter – Director of Children's Services;  
Ian McGuff – Assistant Director of Children's Services;  
Dave Perrett – Assistant Director of Children's Services;  
Karen Cocker – Children's Services Finance Manager, Directorate of Corporate Resources;  
Sue Coates – Principal Accountant, Directorate of Corporate Resources.

## AGENDA

1. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

To elect a Vice-Chair of the Forum for the remainder of the 2012/13 municipal year.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.

3. APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

To report the appointment of any substitutes for this meeting of the Forum.

4. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2012 (attached).

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- Dudley Schools Forum Member Training – 29<sup>th</sup> January 2013
- Any other matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2012 not included on the agenda for this meeting.

6. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANTS OUTTURN 2011/12 (PAGES 1 - 11)

To consider the report of the Director of Children's Services.

7. COMBINED SERVICES BUDGET OUTTURN 2011/12 (PAGES 12 - 16)

To consider the report of the Director of Children's Services.

8. CONSULTATION ON EARLY YEARS SINGLE FUNDING FORMULA FOR TWO YEAR OLDS (PAGES 17 - 32)

To consider the report of the Director of Children's Services.

9. SCHOOL FUNDING REFORMS – UPDATE (PAGES 33 - 39)

To consider the report of the Director of Children's Services.

10. SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP – UPDATE (PAGES 40 - 68)

To consider the report of the Director of Children's Services.

11. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE FORUM

11 <sup>th</sup> December, 2012	Saltwells EDC, Bowling Green Road, Netherton, DY2 4LY
22 <sup>nd</sup> January, 2013	Saltwells EDC, Bowling Green Road, Netherton, DY2 4LY
12 <sup>th</sup> February, 2013	Saltwells EDC, Bowling Green Road, Netherton, DY2 4LY

## **DUDLEY SCHOOLS FORUM**

**Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2012 at 6.00 pm**  
**at Saltwells Education Development Centre,**  
**Bowling Green Road, Netherton, Dudley**

### **PRESENT:-**

Mr L Ridney - Chair

Mr J Conway, Mr I Dalloway, Mrs A Garratt, Mr P Harris, Mrs P Hazlehurst, Mr R Hinton, Mr S Hudson, Mr P Jones, Mr M Lynch, Ms T Pearce, Mrs A Richards, Mrs P Rogers, Mrs H Ruffles, Ms S Scott, Mr N Shaw and Mr G Withers.

Persons not a member of the Forum but having an entitlement to attend meetings and speak

Director of Children's Services

### **Officers**

Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education Services) (Directorate of Children's Services); Children's Services Finance Manager, Senior Principal Accountant and Miss H Shepherd (Directorate of Corporate Resources)

### **Member of the Public**

Mrs A Hannaway - Observing

#### **1. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

Following consideration it was

RESOLVED

- (i) That the election of Vice-Chair be deferred to the next meeting of the Forum.

#### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Mrs K Daley, Mr R Timmins, Ms S Rogers and Councillor Crumpton.

3. APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Ms S Scott was serving as a substitute member for Ms S Rogers.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2012, be approved as a correct record and signed.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

No issues were raised under this item.

6. SCHOOLS FUNDING REFORMS 2013/14 – CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

A report of the Director of Children's Services was submitted on consultation feedback to the Forum in order that the Forum could provide the Director of Children's Services with a view prior to implementation of the mainstream formula funding methodology for the 2013/14 financial year.

The Children's Services Finance Manager presented the report and in doing so informed the Forum that the closing date for the consultation had been 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2012. Sixty three responses had been received in total in relation to the consultation, fifty six of which had been from Primary Schools, five from Secondary Schools and two from Academy Schools. Copies of the final responses updating Appendix 1 to the report submitted were circulated at the meeting. It was the intention to take feedback from the meeting in relation to the eight consultation questions to enable and to assist the Director of Children's Services to make final decisions in completing the funding pro-forma, which needed to be returned to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2012.

The Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education Services) made reference to each of the eight questions individually and requested comments. He referred to the recommendations made by the Head Teachers Consultative Forum - Budget Working Group in relation to each question.

Members made comments in relation to question four of the consultation relating to the value of the lump sum allocated to schools in Dudley. A Primary Head Teacher representative stated that the £130k lump sum would maintain a 'status quo' especially for Primary Schools and would continue to enable the 'Early Intervention' scheme, which was considered to be important in identifying pupils' needs prior to entering into the Secondary sector.

A Secondary Head Teacher representative then expressed his concerns in relation to the impact the £130k lump sum would have on the larger secondary schools within the borough and considered that funding should be pupil driven.

Comments were made by a Primary Head Teacher representative in relation to question seven of the consultation relating to the capping of the maximum financial gain for each school. It was stated that this item had been discussed in depth at the Head Teachers Consultative Forum – Budget Working Group and it was considered that the new formula needed to be clear and transparent and reviewed following the first initial year, with further discussion to be had.

With reference to question eight of the consultation relating to the notional SEN budget, concerns were raised by a Special Schools Head Teacher representative with regards to Special Schools funding. The Director of Children's Service confirmed that discussions with regard to this were still being undertaken. She reminded members that this was a change in process and stated that it would be reviewed in the future. She also stated that the Government were trying to arrive at a fair funding formula for all schools and this would be a key piece of work for at least the next two years.

#### RESOLVED

- (i) That the information contained in the report, the appendices to the report submitted and the updates circulated at the meeting, on the Schools Funding Reforms 2013/14 – Consultation Feedback, be noted.
- (ii) That the comments made by the Schools Forum Members at the meeting in respect of the eight formula funding questions outlined in the School Funding Reform Consultation, be taken into consideration by the Director of Children's Services.



7. SCHOOL FUNDING REFORMS – DE-DELEGATIONS 2013/14

A report of the Director of Children's Services was submitted on consultation feedback in order that decisions regarding de-delegations could be made in preparation for the 2013/14 financial year.

The Children's Services Finance Manager presented the report, referring to the appendices submitted and the updated Appendix 3, which had been circulated at the meeting and explained the voting procedure to members. She stated that Academy Schools were unable to de-delegate funds however they were entitled to buy back into services provided by the Local Authority on a traded service basis.

The Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education Services) referred to each of the eleven services/budgets referred to in the consultation and the recommendations made at the Head Teachers Consultative Forum – Budget Working Group and requested comments from the members present.

In relation to question eight – EMAS Service – Community Languages Programme, there was discussion as to whether to delegate and offer a traded service. The Director of Children's Services accepted members comments but expressed the importance of this being explained correctly if it was to be agreed, as this service was used in other educational facilities as well as the community programme and requested that colleagues that were not present at the meeting needed to be informed.

Primary representatives expressed their gratitude to Secondary representatives for their support in relation to question nine – Library service for primary pupils, as this was considered to be a valued service within Primary schools.

With regards to question ten – Union facilities time in schools, it was stated that the Head Teachers Consultative Forum – Budget Working Group recommended that this service be de-delegated but it was felt that a review of Traded Union facility time was required and should take place before April 2013.

In response to a question raised the Director of Children's Services stated that all budgets de-delegated would need to be controlled and managed to ensure that there was no overspend, as the Directorate had no further funding to support these services other than the contingency fund. If the budget were to be exceeded, then the services currently being provided would need to be looked into and addressed as necessary.

In response to a question raised by a member it was stated that the Local Authority had a duty to support union facilities time in schools and that it was custom and practice across all Local Authorities to make time and support available.

The Director of Children's Services stated that it was important for the de-delegation of expenditure to be reviewed on a yearly basis.

**RESOLVED**

- (i) That the information contained in the report, the appendices to the report submitted and circulated at the meeting, be noted.
- (ii) That the recommendations outlined in the updated Appendix 3, circulated at the meeting, in respect of de-delegated budgets for maintained primary schools for 2013/14 financial year, be approved by primary school representatives who were entitled to vote in accordance with the Regulations.
- (iii) That the recommendations outlined in the updated Appendix 3, circulated at the meeting, in respect of de-delegated budgets for maintained secondary schools for 2013/14 financial year, be approved by secondary school representatives who were entitled to vote in accordance with the Regulations.

**8. SCHOOLS FORUM REGULATIONS 2012**

A report of the Director of Children's Services was submitted to advise the Forum that the Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2012 had been approved by Parliament and were effective from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012.

**RESOLVED**

That the information contained in the report, and appendices to the report, submitted on Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2012, be noted.

**9. SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP – UPDATE**

A report of the Director of Children's Services was submitted on an update on the current position in relation to Schools Forum Membership and future training for Schools Forum Members, which was proposed for early 2013.

In presenting the report the Children's Services Finance Manager informed the Forum that there were three new members, namely Mr M Weaver, Mrs J Belcher and Mr C Derham, currently in the process of being elected, but who were still subject to approval. However if the nominees were to be successful they would fill the two primary Governor vacancies for the Halesowen and Stourbridge Townships and the Pupils Referral Unit representative vacancy. It was anticipated that these appointments would be made in time for the next meeting of the Forum.

It was also stated that Mrs Hannaway had been nominated to be the representative of the Diocesan Schools Worcester Diocesan Board of Education, nominated by the Board, and that it was proposed that Mr D Ward would replace Mrs K Daley as a Primary School representative for Central Dudley township and Mr D Kirk would replace Mr R Hinton as a Special Education representative, all three nominations were subject to approval.

The Children's Services Finance Manager informed the Forum that the 'best practice' guidance had not yet been issued, but once received would be circulated to Forum members. She also referred to the proposed training for new and existing Forum members and stated that a date had not been confirmed, but dates currently being considered were 29<sup>th</sup> January 2013 and 5<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

#### RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, the appendix to the report submitted and the information presented at the meeting in relation to the Schools Forum Membership, be noted.

#### 10. EDUCATION FUNDING AGENCY LETTER TO CHAIRS AND CLERKS OF SCHOOLS FORUM

A report of the Director of Children's Services was submitted advising School Forum Members of correspondence received from the Education Funding Agency (EFA), a copy of which was attached as appendix A to the report submitted.

The Children's Services Finance Manager confirmed that the EFA Representative for the West Midlands Region would be Sue Reekie who would be able to attend, as an observer, future meetings of the Dudley Schools Forum.

Arising from a question raised it was stated that the purpose of the EFA representative attending meetings would be to ensure that the Forum was complying with the new regulations and to scrutinize the process.

The Senior Principal Accountant stated that the EFA could return the agreed pro-forma, following scrutiny, to the Local Authority, if they were not in agreement with its content.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and Appendix to the report, submitted, be noted.

11. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE FORUM

It was confirmed that the next meeting of the Forum would be held at Hillcrest School and Community College, Simms Lane, Netherton on Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2012.

RESOLVED

That the dates and venues of the remaining future meetings of the Forum in 2012/13 be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.05 p.m.

CHAIR

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**Schools Forum 13 November 2012**

**Report of the Director of Children's Services**

**Dedicated Schools Grant Outturn 2011/12**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To provide Schools Forum with financial data in respect of the Schools Budget for the 2011/12 financial year ended 31 March 2012.

**Budget Working Group Discussed**

2. Yes -7 November 2012.

**Schools Forum Role and Responsibilities**

3. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct Department for Education (DfE) grant: the Dedicated School Grant (DSG).
4. Schools Forum is the 'guardian' of the local Schools Budget, and its distribution among schools and other bodies, and therefore must be closely involved throughout the development process.

**Action for Schools Forum**

5. To note the 2011/12 financial outturn in respect of the Schools Budget summarised at Appendix A.
6. To approve the request for funding from the DSG reserve in respect of School Support Work under the combined budget regulations.
7. To note the new information required for the DfE in respect of their additional criteria to the DSG assurance system and the implications for Dudley.

**Attachments to Report**

8. Appendix A - DSG Outturn Statement 2011/12.
9. Appendix B - School Support Work proposal.
10. Appendix C - Additional criteria to the DSG assurance system.
11. Appendix D - Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS): 2012-13

Alan Shakespeare  
Principal Accountant  
30 October 2012

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**Schools Forum 13 November 2012**

**Report of the Director of Children's Services**

**Dedicated Schools Grant Outturn 2011/12**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To provide Schools Forum with financial data in respect of the Schools Budget for the 2011/12 financial year ended 31 March 2012.

**Background**

2. The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funds the Schools Budget. The Schools Budget is a combination of centrally retained budgets together with the ISB (Individual Schools Budget).
3. The DSG is a ring fenced grant and can only be applied to meet expenditure properly included in the Schools Budget, as defined by the School Finance (England) Regulations 2012.
4. At outturn stage, the local authority is required to append an additional note to the Statement of Accounts confirming the deployment of the DSG in support of the Schools Budget, as required by the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006. The Chief Finance Officer is also required to confirm final deployment of the DSG in support of the Schools Budget in connection with the section 251 outturn form.

**DfE Assurance System**

5. For 2011/12 the DfE have outlined additional criteria to the DSG assurance system which follows the Department's earlier consultation on improving the Local Authority (LA) assurance system for financial management in maintained schools. On receipt of the 2011 -2012 Outturn data the DfE will be approaching specific LAs to request information on how they are proposing to address the issue if the:
  - A: LA has over-spent its Dedicated Schools Grant by 2% or more (ie it is 2% or more in deficit)
  - B: LA has under-spent its Dedicated Schools Grant by 5% or more (ie it is 5% or more in surplus)
  - C: LA has 2.5% of its schools that have been in deficit of 2.5% or more for the last 4 years and their individual deficit must have been at least £10,000 each year. We will only ask LAs for more information where at least three schools in the LA meet the criteria

- D: LA has 5% of schools that have had a surplus of 15% or more for the last 5 years and their individual surplus must have been at least £10,000 each year. We will only ask LAs for more information where at least three schools in the LA meet the criteria
  - E: For 2011-2012, an LA's schools have not ever attained FMSiS and are still eligible, and at least one did not complete the SFVS by 31 March 2012.
  - F: For 2012-2013 onwards, if any eligible school has not either completed the SFVS by the end of March deadline, or met one of the acceptable reasons for exemption. A copy of the template that LAs will need to complete by 31st May 2013 is attached at Appendix D.
6. An analysis of Dudley's DSG out-turn data is attached at Appendix C. At this stage the DfE are unclear as to the interpretation of the local authority's data to be used for their assurance checks so Appendix C identifies three alternative options.

### **DSG Out-turn for 2011/12**

- 7. For the 2011/12 financial year the DSG was £216.553m. The year-end position recorded the DSG net expenditure at £214.378m. Thus the roll-forward of 2011-12 DSG is £2.175m and this relates to the centrally retained areas; Appendix A refers.
- 8. For the purposes of declaring the DSG outturn, the amount of Individual Schools Budget (ISB) actually distributed to schools is regarded, for DSG purposes, as spent by the authority once it is deployed to schools' budget shares. Thus whilst the ISB element of the DSG can be under-spent this is recorded as schools roll-forwards, which for 2011/12 is £5.4m; paragraph 13 refers.

### **Central DSG Expenditure**

- 9. If an authority's actual spend on central expenditure is less than its central expenditure budget, the under-spend must be carried forward to support the Schools Budget in future years. For 2011/12 the DSG roll-forward attributable to the centrally retained budgets is £2.175m.
- 10. During 2011/12, £0.036m of the 2010/11 accumulated roll-forward has been spent with commitments to spend the balance in 2012/13 and Table 1 summarises the cumulative position of the DSG central reserve.

Table 1 – Central DSG Reserve Summary

	£ m	£ m
<b>2011-12 Roll forward</b>		2.412
<b>Expenditure in 2012-13 from the carry forward</b>		
Astley Burf- servery refit & kitchen glazing	(0.010)	
Outreach at Pensmeadow School	(0.026)	
		(0.036)
Underspend from 2011-12 Centrally Retained DSG		2.175
<b>2011-12 Carry forward balance</b>		<b>4.551</b>
<b>Commitments in 2012/13</b>		
Loans pool facility for VA and Foundation schools- agreed in 2010 but not used to-date	(1.270)	
Township work – Fair Access Panel	(0.500)	
Educational staffing for Fair Access Panel project	(0.100)	
School Support Work*	(0.300)	
Pensnett security and support to close	(0.100)	
Looked after Children – Pupil Premium support	(0.050)	
Project to change over processes from statements of SEN	(0.100)	
Backscanning SEN & Early Years files	(0.090)	
		<b>(2.510)</b>
<b>Balance to be allocated**</b>		<b>2.041</b>

11. Schools Forum is requested to approve the expenditure of £300k earmarked for the School Support Work project in line with their powers under the Combined Budgets Regulations. The project relates to the development of primary school collaborative or co-operative trusts which is an integral element of the local authority's new school improvement plan for the Borough\*. The proposal at Appendix B refers.

12. The Director of Children's Services is giving consideration as to how the DSG balance remaining should be allocated\*\*.

#### **Individual Schools Budgets – DSG Expenditure**

13. Table 2 summarises the schools opening reserves at 1.4.2011 which were £14.72m. Of this £1.878m was utilised during 2011/12 before the 2011/12 roll-forwards of £7.326m were added at 31.3.2012. Giving the total school delegated reserves at 31.3.2012 of £20.2m; a net increase of £5.4m. .



Table 2 – School Reserves from Delegated Budgets

<b>Reserve Type</b>	<b>2010/11 £</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>Net Variance £</b>
General Contingency	10,191	10,191	0
Single Status & Equal Pay Reserve	6,274,179	6,412,334	138,155
Specific Contingency	6,148,096	9,020,105	2,872,009
VA/Foundation Capital Projects	1,919,229	2,627,588	708,359
LEA Capital Projects	324,796	2,396,757	2,071,961
Approved Loans	-25,000	-382,400	-357,400
Reserves to Balance Budget	70,688	84,305	13,617
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,722,179</b>	<b>20,168,880</b>	<b>5,446,701</b>

Table 3 – Standards Fund Roll-forwards

<b>Reserve Type</b>	<b>2010/11 £</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>Variance £</b>
Devolved Standards Fund	4,366,422	0	- 4,366,422

14. From 2011/12 the DfE has mainstreamed the school's Standards Fund grants into the school's delegated budgets; therefore any roll-forward of funds will be reflected in the schools' reserves shown in Table 2.

Table 4 – School Trading Accounts

<b>Reserve Type</b>	<b>2010/11 £</b>	<b>2011/12 £</b>	<b>Variance £</b>
School Trading Accounts	2,619,366	2,393,430	- 225,936

15. These reserves relate to activities such as before and after school clubs, extended school arrangements, cluster arrangements, children's centres, adult education and leisure activities.

## Finance

16. The funding of schools is prescribed by the Department for Education (DfE) through the School Finance (England) Regulations 2012 to be replaced in 2013 by the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2013.
17. Schools Forums are regulated by the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012.
18. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct grant: Dedicated School Grant (DSG).

## **Law**

19. Councils' LMS Schemes are made under Section 48 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Education Acts 1996 and 2002 also have provisions relating to school funding.

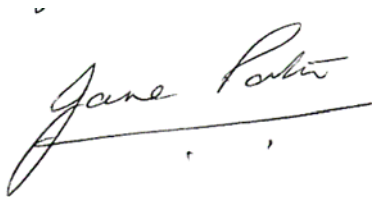
## **Equality Impact**

20. The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy is taken into account when considering the allocation of resources.

## **Recommendation**

21. Schools Forum to note the:

- a. 2011/12 Outturn in respect of the Schools Budget, which is funded by the DSG and the planned use of the roll forward as detailed in Table 2;
- b. Approve the use of £300,000 of the DSG reserve to allocate to the School Support Work project under the combined budget regulations outlined in Appendix B;
- c. Likely implications for Dudley when the DfE carry out their assurance system in respect of local authorities DSG reserve balances, as detailed in Appendix C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Jane Porter', with a horizontal line drawn underneath the name.

Jane Porter

### **Director of Children's Services**

Contact Officer: Karen Cocker, Children's Services Finance Manager  
[Karen.cocker@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:Karen.cocker@dudley.gov.uk) Tel: 01384 815382

**Appendix A**

**Dedicated Schools Grant Outturn 2011/12**

Director of Children's Services DSG Budget Area	2011/12 DSG Revised Budget £m	2011/12 DSG Outturn £m	2011/12 Variance ( ) =u'spend £m	Outturn to Budget %	Comments
ISB	196.669	196.669	0*	100%	*School roll-forwards from 2011/12 totalled £7.3m
Nursery Education Funding	3.680	3.680	0	100%	Early Years Single Funding Formula-contingency within centrally retained
Centrally Retained Budgets	19.536	17.361	(2.175)	89%	Under-spend relates to SEN and Early Years services: service vacancies; Extra District recoupment and specialist provision
YPLA 6 <sup>th</sup> form grant	(3.332)	(3.332)	0	100%	No variance
<b>Total</b>	<b>216.553</b>	<b>214.378</b>	<b>(2.175)</b>	<b>99.3%</b>	



**Directorate of Children's Services**

**Proposal**

1. To approve spending £300k of the Dedicated Schools Grant reserve on the development of primary school collaborative or co-operative trusts – an integral element of the local authority's new school improvement plan for the Borough.

**Background**

2. In the light of the National Government changes to the funding of governance and education, the Directorate is working with the Cabinet Member to implement a revised school improvement plan.

The focus for the plan is to improve educational outcomes and the quality of education provision in Dudley. The plan seeks to:

- Raise the % of primary schools rated good or better (OfSTED judgement) from its current level of 60% to be above both the regional and national averages.
- To raise the % of children attaining level 4 in English and Maths to above national averages.
- To reduce the number of schools at risk of Government intervention as a result of low standards or failing OfSTED inspection.

The revised plan outlines a strategy to develop closer school to school support and collaboration. This approach is in accord with national government policy. The revised school funding framework from April 2013 will also necessitate schools needing to share resources if longer term improvement is to be sustained.

The Directorate proposes to fund the implementation of school collaborative and co-operative trusts. These trusts will bring primary schools into formal networks. Each network will determine clear actions for improvement at both network and individual school level. Progress will be monitored by the individual governing bodies and a trust board made up of school representatives and external partners.

This approach enables the Directorate to become a strategic partner to the schools and maintains a close, yet redefined, working relationship with them.

The funding will also enable each network to develop effective working relationships with other external partners who bring additional and school improvement capacity to support them. The funding is a one year contribution to help realise this re-alignment of Dudley primary schools.

### **Financial Implications**

3. If this proposal is approved by Schools Forum under their Combined Budget powers then the one-off funding required of £300k will be provided from the Dedicated Schools Grant reserve.

Date: 25 October 2012

Prepared by: Dave Perrett  
Assistant Director  
Education Services

## Appendix C

<b>Additional criteria to the DSG assurance system</b>	<b>Option 1: Central DSG R'fwd as % of Total DSG Budget</b>	<b>Option 2: Central DSG R'fwd as % of Central DSG Budget</b>	<b>Option 3: Central DSG and Schools R'fws as a % of Total DSG Budget</b>
LA has over-spent its Dedicated Schools Grant by 2% or more (ie it is 2% or more in deficit)	N/A	N/A	N/A
LA has under-spent its Dedicated Schools Grant by 5% or more (ie it is 5% or more in surplus)	2.1%	23%	4.6%
LA has 2.5% of its schools that have been in deficit of 2.5% or more for the last 4 years and their individual deficit must have been at least £10,000 each year	The LA did not have any schools in deficit in 2011/12 and will not be required to provide further evidence.		
LA has 5% of schools that have had a surplus of 15% or more for the last 5 years and their individual surplus must have been at least £10,000 each year.	The LA has 3% (3) of schools that meet the criteria and will therefore not be asked to provide further data.		
For 2011-2012, an LA's schools have not ever attained FMSiS and are still eligible, and at least one did not complete the SFVS by 31 March 2012.	N/A		
For 2012-2013 onwards, if any eligible school has not either completed the SFVS by the end of March deadline, or met one of the acceptable reasons for exemption. A copy of the template that LAs will need to complete by 31st May 2013 is attached at Appendix C.	To note		

LA Name:

LA Number:

Name of CFO:

**The position as at 31 March 2013 was as follows:**

	Secondary	Primary	Special	Nursery
<b>1.</b> Total number of eligible schools in LA				

<b>2.</b> Number of eligible schools completed the SFVS				
---	--	--	--	--

<b>3.</b> Number of eligible schools that did not complete the SFVS (please give a breakdown below)				
---	--	--	--	--

List of reasons for non-completion of SFVS		
a.	School has opened in this financial year	
b.	School has closed in this financial year	
c.	School will be closing by 1 September 2013	
d.	School suffered fire/flood/natural disaster in this financial year	
e.	School has been issued with an Academy order	
f.	Schools have merged in this financial year or entered into a hard federation with a new governing body	
g.	Financial delegation has been withdrawn/suspended in this financial year	
h.	Governing body has been suspended and so cannot complete the SFVS in this financial year	
i.	Any other reason (please specify)	
	<b>TOTAL</b> (this figure should equal to Box 3)	

I can confirm that the information set out above is correct and a reflection of maintained schools with this local authority.

Signed.....

Date.....

**This statement should be signed by the CFO and hard copy returned by 31 May 2013 to:**

**Bharti Vakharia** - Department for Education, Education Funding Agency, Sanctuary Buildings, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Funding, Monitoring & Assurance Team, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

**Schools Forum 13 November 2012**

**Report of the Director of Children's Services**

**Combined Services Budget Outturn 2011/12**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To provide Schools Forum with financial data in respect of the Combined Services Budget for the 2011/12 financial year ended 31 March 2012.

**Budget Working Group Discussed**

2. Yes – 7 November.

**Schools Forum Role and Responsibilities**

3. The Schools Funding Regulations include a provision for "Combined Budgets" under the types of funding that can be retained centrally from the Dedicated Schools Grant; it is conditional that the Schools Forum agrees the amounts involved and ensures that there is an educational benefit to the pupils.
4. It is a requirement that the local authority provides an annual outturn report to the Forum in respect of the combined services budgets.

**Action for Schools Forum**

5. To note the 2011/12 financial outturn in respect of the combined services budgets.

Rebecca Yates  
Senior Principal Accountant  
28 October 2012



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**Schools Forum 13 November 2012**

**Report of the Director of Children's Services**

**Combined Services Budget Outturn 2011/12**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To provide Schools Forum with financial data in respect of the Combined Services Budget for the 2011/12 financial year ended 31 March 2012.

**Background**

2. The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funds the Schools Budget. The Schools Budget is a combination of centrally retained budgets together with the ISB (Individual Schools Budget).
3. The DSG is a ring fenced grant and can only be applied to meet expenditure properly included in the Schools Budget, as defined by the School Finance (England) Regulations 2012.
4. The Schools Funding Regulations include a provision for "Combined Budgets" under the types of funding that can be retained centrally from the Dedicated Schools Grant; it is conditional that the Schools Forum agrees the amounts involved and ensures that there is an educational benefit to the pupils.
5. Schools Forum has exercised its authority to allocate central funds for:
  - a. Astley Burf Outdoor Activity Centre
  - b. Staying Safe on School Trips
  - c. Pupil census work within the Data and Information Team
  - d. School Safeguarding Trainer
  - e. Place Planning Support Officer

6. Table 1 details the budgets allocated for 2011/12

Table 1 – Budget Allocations 2011/12 for Approved Combined Budgets

Details	2011/12 DSG Budget	2011/12 DSG Out-turn
Astley Burf Outdoor Activity Centre	10,200	10,200
Staying Safe on School Trips	30,700	30,700
Pupil Census	30,400	30,400
School Safeguarding Trainer	35,600	35,600
Place Planning Support Officer	33,000	33,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>139,900</b>	<b>139,900</b>

**2011/12 Update on Combined Budget Activities**

7. Astley Burf

The £10,200 contribution from the DSG has enabled the centre to offer the outdoor adventure experience to children who are eligible for free school meals at no charge, the centre has been able to remain financially viable. The centre has been fully utilised this year and is often referred to as the jewel in the crown. To see the enjoyment and excitement of the children who attend is a delight. This is an ongoing project therefore the DSG funding support from 2012/13 onwards will continue.

8. Staying Safe on School Trips

These funds provided the framework for the risk assessment of off-site educational visits by Dudley children and young people. The continuing costs of training with regards to service development and health and safety issues, and the maintenance of the on-line system used for reporting and recording the visits are also supported from these funds. Due to the continued effectiveness of the service there has not been a single serious incident within the last 12 months as all risks have been managed effectively. This is an ongoing project therefore the DSG funding support from 2012/13 onwards will continue.

9. Pupil Census

The £30,400 funding provided has been used during 2011/12 financial year to pay for staff to support the school census and school workforce census data collections. This enabled more detailed work to be performed and maximisation of the Pupil Premium funding for schools, in particular working with the Free School Meals team to highlight where pupils had been authorised to receive a free school meal but hadn't been included as such on their School Census return.

The funding was also used to fund staffing costs associated with the on-going development of the Co-ordinated Admissions computer system. This system was introduced in September 2010 and enables schools to see their new applicants on-line via the Schools Admissions (SAM) website. Schools can therefore see up

to date information rather than being sent out of date spreadsheet information. This is an ongoing project therefore the DSG funding support from 2012/13 onwards will continue.

#### **10. School Safeguarding Trainer**

The £35,600 funding has enabled the Schools Safeguarding Trainer to deliver safeguarding sessions in the school environment. During the 2011-12 financial year just over 2,500 training places were taken up by education staff. The funding has also enabled the Safeguarding Trainer to attend a small number of assemblies and e-safety sessions with parents.

As the ongoing support for this post was approved by Schools Forum in December 2011 the DSG funding from 2012/13 onwards will continue.

#### **Place Planning Support Officer**

The support analyst post has provided much needed resilience within the place planning function. The team only consisted of one member of staff so this post was needed in order to address this business issue and facilitate the acquisition of more data within Children's Services.

In addition to the school deprivation profiles, the team has undertaken some bespoke work with schools. This has involved looking at specific brackets of pupils from the information supplied by their census data (FSM, SEN, Ethnicity) and linking this with Super Output Areas of deprivation. The linkages with neighbouring authorities have been expanded to obtain out of borough pupil information to better inform migration hot spots and the impact on schools affected by this.

This is an ongoing project therefore the DSG funding support from 2012/13 onwards will continue.

### **Finance**

11. The funding of schools is prescribed by the Department for Education (DfE) through the School Finance (England) Regulations 2012.
12. Schools Forums are regulated by the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012.
13. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct grant: Dedicated School Grant (DSG).

### **Law**

14. Councils' LMS Schemes are made under Section 48 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Education Acts 1996 and 2002 also have provisions relating to school funding.

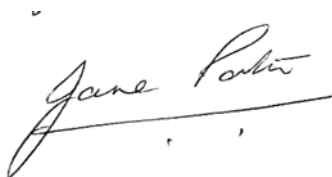
### **Equality Impact**

15. The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy is taken into account when considering the allocation of resources.

## **Recommendation**

16. Schools Forum to:

- a. Note the report in respect of the combined services budget for 2011/12.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane Porter". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the left of a vertical line.

**Jane Porter**  
**Director of Children's Services**

Contact Officer: Karen Cocker, Children's Services Finance Manager  
[Karen.cocker@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:Karen.cocker@dudley.gov.uk) Tel: 01384 815382

**Schools Forum 13 November 2012**

**Report of the Director of Children's Services**

**Consultation on Early Years Single Funding Formula for Two Year Olds**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To inform Schools Forum members of the consultation process in respect of implementation of the Government's proposed changes to funding the free entitlement to early education for two year olds.

**Discussed at HTCF – BWG**

2. Yes – 7 November 2012.

**Schools Forum Role and Responsibilities**

3. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct DfE grant: Dedicated School Grant (DSG).
4. The Forum is the 'guardian' of the local Schools Budget, and its distribution among schools and other bodies, and therefore must be closely involved throughout the development process.
5. A local authority must consult their Schools Forum and schools maintained by them about any proposed changes to the formulae in relation to the factors and criteria taken into account and the methods, principles and rules adopted.

**Actions for Schools Forum**

6. To note the contents of the draft consultation document in respect of implementation of an Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) for two year olds which is due to be issued on 26th November 2012

**Attachments to Report**

7. Appendix A – Draft consultation document on Early Years Single Funding Formula for Two Year Olds.

Sue Coates  
Senior Principal Accountant  
29<sup>th</sup> October 2012

**Schools Forum 13 November 2012**

**Report of the Director of Children's Services**

**Consultation on Early Years Single Funding Formula for Two Year Olds**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To inform Schools Forum members of the consultation process in respect of implementation of the Government's proposed changes to funding the free entitlement to early education for two year olds.

**Background**

2. Funding for free targeted early education for two year olds will, from 2013-14, be transferred from Early Intervention Grant funding to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), within the Early Years Block. The amount of funding intended to support development of and payment for two year old places will grow substantially over the next two years as the national programme develops. In 2012-13, nationally £291m is included within the Early Intervention Grant (EIG). Within the DSG this will increase to £530m in 2013-14 and £760m in 2014-15. Dudley's allocation should be announced in December.
3. The DSG funding is intended to support the delivery of targeted places for children meeting national eligibility criteria (both before the statutory entitlement starts in September 2013 and after); places for other children will be at local discretion, funding within the two year old allocation can also be used by the LA to build capacity and quality.
4. For the period between April and August 2013 the offer known as 'Time for Twos' in Dudley will continue to be funded aiming to achieve the DfE target of 600 places. August 2013 will see the end of the national pilot for the 2 year old project to deliver early learning and care to the most disadvantaged two year olds in the Borough. The local offer targets support for a specified number of children with a focus on economic deprivation, which is the mandatory criterion linked to benefits. From September 2013 the DfE target for Dudley will increase to 1000 places to be achieved by April 2014. This will be a statutory entitlement for disadvantaged two year olds which will be funded by the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) for two year olds.

### **Changes for 2013/14 from September 2013**

5. Local Authorities will be required to fund providers of free early education for two year olds through an Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) from September 2013. The necessary DfE changes to the Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations are now in draft and will give effect to the changes from 2013/14.
6. A summary of the changes is listed below for information;
  - Two year old targeted offer becomes a statutory entitlement from September 2013;
  - Free two year old places will be targeted to the children who will benefit most, with a primary focus on economic disadvantage;
  - Two year olds will be eligible if:
    - Their families meet the criteria also used to establish school-age children's eligibility for free school meals (FSM); or
    - They are looked after by the local authority;
  - The DfE launched a consultation which closed on 15th October 2012, on proposals to extend the free two year old entitlement to more two year olds on the proposed eligibility criteria for the second phase from September 2014.
  - Each LA to develop an EYSFF for early education for two year olds to be implemented from September 2013.
  - Delivery of free early education for two year olds from September 2013 to children eligible in the first (20%) phase of entitlement.
  - Delivery of free early education for two year olds earlier in the year to some children meeting the 20% criteria.
  - Delivery of free early education for two year olds to some children meeting the second (40%) phase eligibility criteria, in advance of introduction of the September 2014 entitlement.
  - Delivery of free early education for two year olds to some other children at the LA's discretion.

### **Purpose of the Consultation**

7. The consultation period will run from 26<sup>th</sup> November to 18<sup>th</sup> January 2013 and seeks views from stakeholders which will inform the process of calculating the unit rate for payment in respect of Dudley's EYSFF funding methodology for two year olds from September 2013.
8. In order to establish the cost of provision for two year olds an exercise has been undertaken to identify the range of actual costs for local providers in addition to a "theoretical cost model" for the provision.
9. For the current actual cost comparisons, the cost of provision data has been obtained from current providers. Responses were received from 9 Childminders and 34 Private and Voluntary providers out of a total of 280 providers. For the "theoretical cost " model this has been produced based on actual staffing ratios at average salary points and including average costs of overheads. The outcomes of this exercise are also shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Cost data for provision of Early Education for two year olds

Type of Provision	Maximum actual cost per hour	Minimum actual cost per hour	Cost per hour based on theoretical cost model
	£	£	£
Private & Voluntary	£3.66	£2.49	£3.91
Childminder	£4.54	£1.77	£3.85

10. Table 1 identifies that the range of actual costs varies significantly and the response rate from stakeholders surveyed was poor, therefore, in the light of the outcomes of the cost analysis exercise the consultation will propose, at this stage, to fund early years provision for two year olds at a basic rate of £4.00 per hour for all providers.
11. The final decision in respect of the rates payable for two year old provision will be based on the outcomes of this consultation and the level of funding provided by the DfE in respect of this provision. The funding allocation from the DfE should be known by December 2012 and the Director of Children's Services will then be in a position to make a final decision based on this information.
12. After the consultation close date of 18th January 2013 the provisional outcomes will be reported to Headteachers Consultative Forum - Budget Working Group (HTCF-BWG) on 6th February 2013 and to Schools Forum on 12th February 2013.
13. The Director of Children's Services will formalise decisions at the Directorate Strategic Leadership Team (DSLTT) before 31st March 2013 in order that budgets for 2013/14 can be produced and published by the statutory deadline of 31st March 2013.

## **Finance**

14. The funding of schools is prescribed by the Department for Education (DfE) through the School Finance (England) Regulations 2012 to be replaced in 2013 by the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2013.
15. Schools Forums are regulated by the regulated by the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012.
16. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct grant; Dedicated School Grant (DSG).



## **Law**

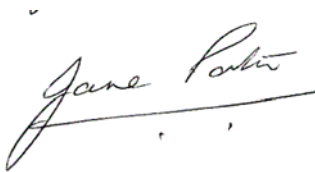
17. Councils' LMS Schemes are made under Section 48 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Education Acts 1996 and 2002 also have provisions relating to school funding.

## **Equality Impact**

18. The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy is taken into account when considering the allocation of resources.

## **Recommendation**

19. Schools Forum to note the information contained within this report with reference to the consultation process for an Early Years Single Funding Formula for the free entitlement to early education for two year olds. The outcomes of the consultation will be reported to Schools Forum at the February 2013 meeting.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Porter', with a horizontal line drawn underneath it.

**Jane Porter**

**Director of Children's Services**

Contact Officer: Karen Cocker, Children's Services Finance Manager

[Karen.cocker@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:Karen.cocker@dudley.gov.uk) Tel: 01384 815382

# **Consultation on Early Years Single Funding Formula for Two Year Olds**

***'Putting children and young people first in Dudley'***

***Monday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2012***

**Jane Porter  
Director of Children's Services**

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council  
Directorate of Children's Services  
Westox House  
1 Trinity Road  
Dudley  
West Midlands DY1 1JQ

**Directorate of Children's Services**

**Consultation Document**

**Consultation on:** Early Years Single Funding Formula for 2 Year Olds

**Summary:** To inform and consult on the Department for Education's proposal to introduce an Early Years Single Funding formula for 2 year olds effective from 1 April 2013.

**Deadline:** *All responses must be received **by 18<sup>th</sup> January 2013***

**Public Access** Consultations, plans and policies will be published as follows:

Public Libraries  
Dudley MBC website [www.dudley.gov.uk](http://www.dudley.gov.uk)  
Westox House

**Responses to:** CONSULTATION RESPONSES  
Executive Support Team  
Directorate of Children's Services  
Westox House  
1 Trinity Road  
Dudley DY1 1JQ  
[director.children@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:director.children@dudley.gov.uk)

*Your responses will be co-ordinated by this team.*

*Any responses will be provided by the appropriate responsible officer for this consultation.*

All responses may be published. A **large print version**, and translation into other languages is available on request to the above address.

Jane Porter  
Director of Children's Services

DRAFT

**Consultees:**

Chairs of Governors (LA maintained schools)  
Chairs of Governors (Academies)  
Children's Centres  
Councillors  
Private, Voluntary, and Independent Providers of Early Years Education  
Worcester Diocesan Board of Education

Headteachers (LA maintained schools)  
Headteachers (Academies)  
Roman Catholic Diocesan Schools Commission  
Unions and Professional Associations

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## **Glossary of Abbreviations**

<b>DfE</b>	<b>Department for Education</b>
<b>DSG</b>	<b>Dedicated Schools Grant</b>
<b>DSL</b>	<b>Directorate Strategic Leadership Team</b>
<b>EYSFF</b>	<b>Early Year's Single Funding Formula</b>
<b>HTCF – BWG</b>	<b>Head teachers Consultative Forum- Budget Working Group</b>
<b>LA</b>	<b>Local Authority</b>
<b>PVI</b>	<b>Private, Voluntary and Independent Provision</b>
<b>SEN</b>	<b>Special Education Needs</b>

DRAFT

## **Consultation on Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) for Two Year Olds.**

### **Purpose of EYSFF for Two Year Olds Consultation**

1. Local Authorities (LAs) will be required to fund providers of free early education for two year olds through an Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) from September 2013. The necessary Department for Education (DfE) changes to the Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations are now in draft and will give effect to the changes from 2013/14.
2. This consultation seeks responses to the proposed funding mechanism in respect of the EYSFF for two year olds.
3. Two year old places will be delivered by the private and voluntary childcare sector in close partnership with the network of children's centres across Dudley localities.

### **Proposals for the Dudley EYSFF for Two Year Olds.**

4. The LA is responsible for developing an EYSFF for two year olds to allocate funding to providers.
5. Since 2009 to date, the Two Year Old Offer known as 'Time for Two's' in Dudley, has funded over 1000 places of free early years education provision for less advantaged two year olds, meeting both the mandatory (economic disadvantage) and local (Looked After Children, children with child protection plans and children with significant additional needs) criteria. Funding has been allocated to providers in respect of 15 hours per child over three terms, commencing the term after the child's second birthday in order to enable a smooth transition into the three and four year old entitlement.
6. In order to establish the cost of provision for two year olds, an exercise has been undertaken whereby cost of provision data has been obtained from current providers. The response rate was low with responses received from 9 Childminders and 34 Private and Voluntary providers out of a total of 280 providers. Analysis of this data has shown that the cost of provision of early education for two year olds varies significantly from £1.77 per hour to £4.54 per hour.
7. In order to support the reported actual cost of provision a theoretical cost model has been produced based on actual staffing ratios at average salary points and including average costs of overheads. Theoretical model costs range from £3.85 per hour for Private and Voluntary providers to £3.91 per hour for Childminders.
8. Therefore the proposal for Dudley EYSFF for two year olds is to fund at an hourly rate that reflects the cost of provision for early education and supports the relevant staff: child ratios of 1:4.

9. As the free entitlement for early education for two year olds will only be directed to those less advantaged children then it is not proposed to fund deprivation as an additional supplement at this stage.
10. In the light of the outcomes of the cost analysis exercise it is proposed to fund early years provision for two year olds at a basic rate of £4.00 per hour for all providers.

***Question 1- Do you agree with the proposal for Dudley's EYSFF for two year olds to be based on a single hourly rate payable to providers?***

11. The final decision in respect of the rates payable for two year old provision will be based on the outcomes of this consultation and the level of funding provided by the DfE through the Dedicated Schools Grant in respect of this provision. The Director of Children's Services will then make a final decision based on this information.
12. Indicative funding allocations will be notified to providers at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013, however actual funding paid to providers will be based on actual take up and paid on a termly basis under the same process that is currently in operation for Nursery Education Funding for three and four year olds.
13. Local authorities will continue to be responsible for funding Academies for their early years provision.

**Outcomes of the Consultation**

- Consultation will close 18<sup>th</sup> January 2013.
- Provisional outcomes will be reported to Headteachers Consultative Forum - Budget Working Group (HTCF-BWG) on 6th February 2013 and to Schools Forum on 12th February 2013
- The Director of Children's Services will formalise decisions at Directorate Strategic Leadership Team (DSLTL) on or before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013.



## Consultation on School Funding Reform

Please return this form to:

### CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Westox House  
1 Trinity Road  
Dudley  
West Midlands DY1 1JQ

Email: [director.children@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:director.children@dudley.gov.uk)

Fax: 01384 814202

Name: ..... Organisation: .....

If you wish to receive an acknowledgement of receipt for your response please provide an email or postal address:

Contact address .....

.....

.....

**Question 1 – Do you agree with the proposal for Dudley’s EYSFF for two year olds to be based on a single hourly rate payable to providers ?**

Yes

☐

No

☐

No opinion

☐

Comments

## Customer Service feedback on the consultation for School Funding Reforms

We are grateful to your comments on the consultation.

To help us ensure that our community engagement and consultation process is working correctly and effectively we would be grateful if you would respond to the questions below and return with your consultation response.

Thank you for your help.

1. Did you find the information about community engagement easy to understand?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

2. Was the consultation document and any appendices easy to understand?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

3. If applicable, were the staff who dealt with your enquiry polite, friendly and helpful?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

4. Were you satisfied with the overall process?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

5. Do you have any further comments to make about the Council's Community Engagement and Consultation Process?

## Equality monitoring of DMBC consultations

The information you give on this form will be used to enable Dudley Council to assess the impact of its policies on all sections of the community.

The details you provide will be treated confidentially and will be used to ensure that the views of a wide range of groups and individuals are included in the consultation process and given the opportunity to shape Council policies.

If you are completing this form on behalf of an organisation please try to answer the questions in general terms about the people your organisation represents.

### 1. Please indicate whether you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Individuals response
<input type="checkbox"/>	Organisations response

### 2. I would describe my ethnic group, or the ethnic group/s represented by my organisation as:

#### ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH

<input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/> Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani
<input type="checkbox"/> Any Other Asian background		

#### BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH

<input type="checkbox"/> African	<input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/> Any Other Black Background
----------------------------------	------------------------------------	---

#### CHINESE OR OTHER

<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
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#### MIXED

<input type="checkbox"/> Asian & White	<input type="checkbox"/> Black African & White	<input type="checkbox"/> Black Caribbean & White
<input type="checkbox"/> Any Other Mixed background		

#### WHITE

<input type="checkbox"/> British	<input type="checkbox"/> Irish	<input type="checkbox"/> Any Other White Background
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#### RANGE OF ETHNICITIES

☐

**3. I would describe my religion/belief or the religion/beliefs of the people represented by my organisation as:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist	<input type="checkbox"/> No Religion
<input type="checkbox"/> Christian	<input type="checkbox"/> Sikh
<input type="checkbox"/> Hindu	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/> A range of religions/beliefs
<input type="checkbox"/> Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown

**4. My gender or the gender of the people my organisation represents is:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Male
<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed	

**5. My age or the age range of the people my organisation represents is:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Under 5 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>	26 – 35 years old
<input type="checkbox"/>	5 – 10 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>	36 – 45 years old
<input type="checkbox"/>	11 – 16 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>	46 – 55 years old
<input type="checkbox"/>	17 – 19 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>	Over 56 years old
<input type="checkbox"/>	20 – 25 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>	A range of ages

**6. I consider myself or many of the people my organisation represents to be:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Disabled	<input type="checkbox"/> Not disabled
-----------------------------------	---------------------------------------

**Note:**

The Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 defines a “disabled person” as having “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities”.

**Thank you for completing this form.**

**Please return this form with your consultation response**

---

**Schools Forum 13 November 2012**

**Report of the Director of Children's Services**

**School Funding Reforms - Update**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To update Schools Forum members of Dudley's progress in respect of the DfEs national school funding reforms for implementation in April 2013.

**Discussed at HTCF – BWG**

2. Yes – 7 November 2012.

**Schools Forum Role and Responsibilities**

3. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct DfE grant: Dedicated School Grant (DSG).
4. The Forum is the 'guardian' of the local Schools Budget, and its distribution among schools and other bodies, and therefore must be closely involved throughout the development process.
5. A local authority must consult their Schools Forum and schools maintained by them about any proposed changes to the formulae in relation to the factors and criteria taken into account and the methods, principles and rules adopted.
6. The 2013 School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations which are in draft form will also include responsibilities for financial Issues relating to Forum:
  - Giving a view as to:
    - Arrangements for pupils with special educational needs;
    - Arrangements for use of pupil referral units and the education of children otherwise than at school;
    - Arrangements for early years provision;
    - Administration arrangements for the allocation of central govt grants.
  - Deciding central spend as proposed by the LA on:
    - Funding for significant pre-16 pupil growth;
    - Equal pay back-pay;
    - Places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils;
    - Early years expenditure;
    - Admissions;
    - Servicing of schools forum;
    - Carbon reduction commitment;
    - Capital expenditure funded from revenue;
    - Contribution to combined budgets;

- Schools budget centrally funded termination of employment costs;
- Schools budget funded prudential borrowing costs.

### **Actions for Schools Forum**

7. To note the progress in respect of the national funding reforms.

8.

### **Attachments to Report**

9. Annex 1 – The Education Funding Agency proforma to be returned by 31 October (completed version to be tabled at the meeting).

Karen Cocker  
Children's Services Finance Manager

28 October 2012

**Schools Forum 13 November 2012**

**Report of the Director of Children's Services**

**School Funding Reforms - Update**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To update Schools Forum members of Dudley's progress in respect of the DfEs national school funding reforms for implementation in April 2013.

**Background**

2. Since the DfE issued their final proposals in June 2012 in respect of the schools' funding reforms, Dudley has formulated a number of changes to schools funding for 2013/14. These have been discussed at Schools Forum over recent months and include:
  - a. Schools Forum Constitution revision and membership appointments  
Dudley constitution is now in line with the DfEs revised Schools Forum 2012 Regulations: the agenda and minutes can be accessed via Dudley's public website and Dudley's Schools Forum currently has four vacancies from a membership of 29.
  - b. School Formula Funding Review for mainstream Schools agreed  
The eight consultation questions were discussed at Schools Forum in October. The Director has agreed that for 2013/14 the lump sum will be set at £130,000.
  - c. Delegations and De-delegations for mainstream maintained schools agreed  
The thirteen budget lines for delegations were discussed at the October Schools Forum and agreement reached in respect of the items for de-delegation. Further operational details will be discussed at Budget Working Group before 1 April 2013. All Academies will be contacted and invited to buy back into the de-delegated services before 1 April in order that the level of service provision can be established.
  - d. High Needs Block Planned Places  
All Local Authorities were required to submit a return to the Education Funding Agency in August to agree the number of planned places the local authority would be funded for 2013/14.

- e. Special Education Needs (SEN) banded framework for element 3 'top up' in progress  
Dudley has established a draft banded framework which identifies a continuum of funding for pre 16 SEN. Further work is required in relation to the equivalence of funding compared with other local authorities and also the post 16 element will need further discussions when the data is made available by the Education Funding Agency.
- f. Special Schools funding framework for 2013/14 in progress  
The seven special schools budgets for 2012/13 have been aligned to the new funding framework applicable for 2013/14 in order that potential funding issues can be identified at an early stage.
- g. Alternative Provision review in progress  
Dudley's alternative provision ranges from: The Mere for key stage 1 and 2, Sycamore Centre for key stage 3, Abberley St and external providers such as Dudley College for key stage 4 and Cherry Trees for home/hospital education. Given the changes in the funding arrangements for the High Needs Block (HNB) of the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2013/14 then a review of alternative provision in Dudley is required.
- h. Pupil Referral Unit delegations and governance in progress  
All PRUs will have delegated budgets from 2013/14 in addition to being funded at £8,000 per place plus top up per pupil.
- i. Special Education Needs (SEN) Units in mainstream schools funding review is underway  
Dudley commissions 135 SEN places in mainstream schools. The DfE proposed regulations from 2013 will amend the funding which can be allocated for each pupil via the delegated budget and from 2013/14, the funding must be available from the High Needs Block, therefore a funding review is underway. Given the extent of the change programme for schools in 2013/14, it is proposed that this review is undertaken during 2013/14 for implementation in 2014/15 therefore SEN unit budgets will remain on a centrally commissioned basis for 2013/14.
- j. Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LDD) funding review is underway.  
The Education Funding Agency is responsible for funding pupils aged 16-25. The funding data in respect of this element of change is still under discussion and will be integrated into the DSG and other frameworks as soon as it is available.
- k. Review of the statementing process with the introduction of the Education, Health and Care Plans is under review.  
The SEN and Disability Green Paper proposes a new approach to special educational needs and disability which will include new single assessment process and Education, Health and Care Plan by 2014. With the option of a personal budget by 2014 for all families with children with a statement of SEN or a new Education, Health and Care Plan.



- l. Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) baseline reinstatement for 2012/13 in to the three blocks for 2013/14 is complete.  
This will allow for financial modelling to be undertaken in respect of the Schools Block, the Early Years Block and the High Needs Block in preparation for 2013/14 changes. This will be an agenda item for Forum shortly.
- m. Education Funding Agency (EFA) proforma at 31 October 2012 completed.  
The DfE have requested a copy of each Local Authorities mainstream funding formula methodology for 2013/14 for scrutiny purposes. A copy is attached at Annex 1, the final version will be tabled at the meeting.
- n. October 2012 census data - now preparing for 2013/14 detailed schools budgets  
School census pupil data will allow financial modelling to be undertaken to calculate mainstream school budgets based on current pupil numbers with the estimated DSG for 2013/14.
- o. Early Years Single Funding Formula for two year olds  
Consultation to be issued at the end of November 2012 for implementation September 2013. A separate agenda item for this meeting.
- p. Dedicated Schools Grant announcement 2013/14  
Expected December 2012 – with provisional data for all three block – but where the Early Years Block will be updated after the January 2013 and January 2014 census.

## **Finance**

- 3. The funding of schools is prescribed by the Department for Education (DfE) through the School Finance (England) Regulations 2012 to be replaced in 2013 by the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2013.
- 4. Schools Forums are regulated by the regulated by the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012.
- 5. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct grant; Dedicated School Grant (DSG).

## **Law**

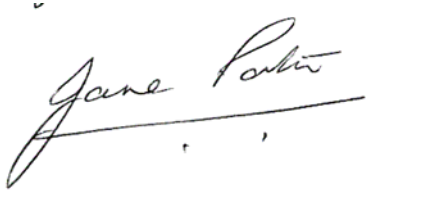
- 6. Councils' LMS Schemes are made under Section 48 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Education Acts 1996 and 2002 also have provisions relating to school funding.

## **Equality Impact**

- 7. The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy is taken into account when considering the allocation of resources.

## **Recommendation**

8. Schools Forum to note Dudley's progress in respect of the national school funding reforms for implementation in April 2013 and the Education Funding Agency proforma, to be tabled and discussed at the meeting.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Jane Porter', is written over a horizontal line. A vertical line is positioned to the right of the signature.

**Jane Porter**

**Director of Children's Services**

Contact Officer: Karen Cocker, Children's Services Finance Manager

[Karen.cocker@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:Karen.cocker@dudley.gov.uk) Tel: 01384 815382

## Draft pro-forma for Schools Block

LA Name DFE County Council								
1) Basic Entitlement Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU)	Description	Amount per pupil (£)		Number of Pupils	Sub Total (£)	Total (£)	Proportion of funding	
	Primary (including reception)				0.00	0	0.00%	
	Key Stage 3				0.00			
	Key Stage 4				0.00			
2) Deprivation	Description	Primary amount per pupil (£)	Secondary amount per pupil (£)	Number of eligible primary pupils	Number of eligible secondary pupils	Sub Total (£)	Total (£)	Proportion of funding
	FSM					0.00	0	0.00%
	IDACI Score 0.2 - 0.25					0.00		
	IDACI Score 0.25-0.3					0.00		
	IDACI Score 0.3- 0.4					0.00		
	IDACI Score 0.4-0.5					0.00		
	IDACI Score 0.5-1					0.00		
3) Looked After Children (LAC)	Description	Amount (£)	Unit	Number of Pupils	Total (£)		Proportion of funding	
	please specify the duration and method used e.g. per child attending a school, looked after for 6 months or more.		per pupil		0		0.00%	
4) Low cost, high incidence SEN	Description	Amount (£)	Unit	Number of Pupils	Sub Total (£)	Total (£)	Proportion of funding	
	Primary pupils- please specify if using a threshold lower than 78 points on EYSFP Secondary pupils not achieving (KS2 level 4 English and Maths)		per pupil		0.00	0.00	0.00%	
5) English as an Additional Language (EAL)	Description	Amount (£)	Unit	Number of Pupils	Total (£)		Proportion of funding	
	please specify if funding EAL pupils for 1, 2 or 3 years.		per pupil		0		0.00%	
6) London fringe pay bands (only applicable to Buckinghamshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent and West Sussex)	Description	Uplift amount (%)	Unit	Number of schools	Total (£)		Proportion of funding	
	Specify uplift		per pupil				0.00%	
7) Lump Sum	Description	Amount (£)	Unit	Number of	Total (£)		Proportion of funding	
	Lump Sum		per school		0		0.00%	
8) Split Sites	Description					Total (£)	Proportion of funding	
	please provide an explanation of how amounts for any split site factors are allocated.						0.00%	
9) Rates	Description	Amount (£)				Total (£)	Proportion of funding	
	Total Rates amount for maintained schools Total Rates amount for Academies					0	0.00%	
10) PFI funding	Description	Amount (£)				Total (£)	Proportion of funding	
	Total PFI amount for maintained schools Total PFI amount for Academies					0	0.00%	
Exceptional circumstances (can only be used with prior agreement of EFA)	Description	Amount (£)	Unit (e.g. per pupil or lump sum per school)	Number of Units (e.g. Pupils/ Schools)	Sub Total (£)	Total (£)	Proportion of funding	
					0.00	0.00	0.00%	
					0.00			
TOTAL FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS BLOCK FORMULA (£) :					-			
PRIMARY/SECONDARY RATIO :								

**Schools Forum 13 November 2012**

**Report of the Director of Children's Services**

**Schools Forum Membership - Update**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To update Schools Forum members on the current position relating to the new appointments, current vacancies, the DfE Best Practice Guide and future training to be carried out for Schools Forum members in early 2013.

**Budget Working Group Discussed**

2. No.

**Schools Forum Role and Responsibilities**

3. Schools Forum is responsible for ensuring that the constitution and membership meet the legislative requirements detailed in the School Forum (England) Regulations 2012, which have now been laid before Parliament and are effective from 1 October 2012.

**Action for Schools Forum**

4. To note the membership update and welcome new members.
5. To note future training to be carried out on 29 January 2013.
6. To note that the DfE have updated and re-issued a best practice guide for Schools Forum together with a roles and responsibilities template.

**Attachments to Report**

7. Appendix A – Membership Update.
8. Appendix B – DfE Best Practice Guide
9. Appendix C - DfE Roles and Responsibilities template.

Karen Cocker  
Children's Services Finance Manager  
30 October 2012

**Schools Forum 13 November 2012**

**Report of the Director of Children's Services**

**Schools Forum Membership - Update**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To update Schools Forum members on the current position relating to the new appointments, current vacancies, the DfE Best Practice Guide and future training to be carried out for Schools Forum members in early 2013.

**Schools Forum Membership**

2. Since the Forum meeting on 16 October 2012 the following members have been nominated and their appointment will be formalised through the Council's democratic process on 7 November 2012:
  - a. Mr M. Weaver, (Our Lady and St Kenelm Catholic Primary school) was elected to the position of primary Governor for the Halesowen township. This post is for the three year term of office to expire 30 April 2015.
  - b. Mrs J. Belcher, (Peters Hill Primary School) was elected to the position of primary Governor for the Stourbridge township. This post is for the two year term of office to expire 30 April 2014.
  - c. Mr C Derham, the PRU (Pupil Referral Unit) manager was appointed to as a Schools Member to represent the Pupil Referral Units.
  - d. Mr D. Kirk, (Rosewood Special School) was elected at the Special Headteachers meeting on 2 October 2012 to the position of Special School Headteacher representative to replace Mr R. Hinton. This post is for the three year term of office to expire 31 October 2015.
  - e. Mr N. Shaw (Leasowes Community College) was elected at the Secondary Headteachers meeting on 27 September 2012 to continue in post as the Secondary Headteacher representing the Halesowen township. This post is for the three year term of office to expire 31 October 2015.
  - f. Mr D. Ward (Sledmere Primary) was elected to the position of Central Dudley Primary Headteacher representative to replace Mrs. K Daley from 1 October 2012. This post is for a three year term of office and to expire 31 October 2015.
  - g. Mrs P. Rogers (Hasbury Primary) is to continue in post as the Primary Headteacher representing the Halesowen township. This post is for the three year term of office to expire 31 October 2015.

- h. Mrs A. Hannaway (Halesowen Primary School) was elected to represent the Worcester Diocesan Board of Education. Mrs Hannaway replaces Mrs L Griffiths who recently resigned from this position. This post is for a three year term of office to expire 30 April 2015.
3. Four vacancies remain:
- a. One representative from the secondary Governors, within the Brierley Hill township or the Central Dudley township.
  - b. One representative of the Catholic Schools Commission, nominated by the Commission.
  - c. One representative of Dudley 14–19 Strategic Partnership, nominated by the Partnership.
  - d. One representative of the Academy schools, nominated by the governing bodies of the Academies in Dudley's area.

### **Best Practice Guide**

4. The best practice review of the role of schools forum has now been released by the DfE. This is attached at Appendix B together with a roles and responsibilities template at Appendix C.

### **Schools Forum Training**

5. Training for new and existing Forum members, which will cover the requirements of their role and the latest funding position in respect of the Dedicated School Grant, will be hosted by the Children's Services Finance Manager on the evening of 29 January 2013 commencing at 6pm Saltwells EDC. Further details will be circulated to all Members regarding this training event.

### **Finance**

6. The funding of schools is prescribed by the Department for Education (DfE) through the School Finance (England) Regulations 2012 to be replaced in 2013 by the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2013.
7. Schools Forums are regulated by the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012.
8. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct grant; Dedicated School Grant (DSG).

## **Law**

9. Councils' LMS Schemes are made under Section 48 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Education Acts 1996 and 2002 also have provisions relating to school funding.

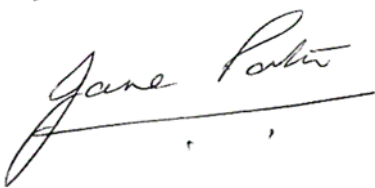
## **Equality Impact**

10. The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy is taken into account when considering the allocation of resources.

## **Recommendation**

11. To note the contents of the report provided in respect of the:

- Membership update;
- Schools Forum best practice guide; and
- Timescale for future School Forum member training to cover their roles and responsibilities and an update of the Dedicated Schools Grant funding arrangements.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Jane Porter', with a horizontal line drawn underneath it.

**Jane Porter**  
**Director of Children's Services**

Contact Officer: Karen Cocker, Children's Services Finance Manager  
[Karen.cocker@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:Karen.cocker@dudley.gov.uk) Tel: 01384 815382

APPENDIX A

<u>SCHOOL MEMBERS</u>	<u>DUDLEY SCHOOLS FORUM CONSTITUTION</u>	<u>GOVERNORS - 3 year term of office</u>					<u>Date of Appointment</u>	<u>HEADTEACHERS - 3 Year Term of Office</u>			
		<u>1 May 2009 to 30 April 2011</u>	<u>1 May 2009 to 30 April 2012</u>	<u>1 May 2010 to 30 April 2013</u>	<u>1 May 2011 to 30 April 2014</u>	<u>1 May 2012 to 30 April 2015</u>		<u>1 November 2009 to 31 October 2012</u>	<u>1 November 2010 to 31 October 2013</u>	<u>1 November 2011 to 31 October 2014</u>	<u>1 November 2012 to 31 October 2015</u>
<u>Nursery School Headteachers</u>	<u>One nursery headteacher</u>										
<u>Netherton Park Nursery</u>	Mrs Helen Ruffles, Netherton Park Children's Centre, Netherton, Dudley DY2 9QF						Jun-10		√		
<u>Primary School Headteachers</u>	<u>One primary school headteacher for each of the five townships</u>										
Brierley Hill	Mr Steve Hudson, Ashwood Park Primary School, Off Bells Lane, Ashwood Park Estate, Wordsley, Stourbridge, DY8 5DJ						Oct-11		√		
Central Dudley	Mr Damien Ward, Sledmere Primary, The School Drive, Buffery Road, Dudley, DY2 8EH						Oct-12				√
Halesowen	Mrs Pauline Rogers, Hasbury CE Primary School, Hagley Road, Hasbury, Halesowen, B63 4QD						Oct-12				√
North Dudley	Mrs Pat Hazlehurst, Christ Church Primary School, Church Road, Coseley, Bilston, WV14 8YB						May-10		√		
Stourbridge	Mrs J Quigley, Wollescote Primary School, Drummond Road, Wollescote, Stourbridge, DY9 8YA						Jun-12			√	
<u>Primary School Governors</u>	<u>One primary school governor for each of the five townships</u>										
Brierley Hill	Mr R Timmins, Crestwood Park Primary School			√			May-10				
Central Dudley	Ms T Pearce, Northfield Road Primary School					√	May-12				
Halesowen	Mike Weaver, Our Lady and St Kenelm Catholic School					√	Oct-12				
North Dudley	Mr Philip Harris, Christ Church Primary School				√		May-11				
Stourbridge	Mrs Jill Belcher, Peters Hill Primary School				√		Oct-12				
<u>Secondary School Headteachers</u>	<u>One secondary school headteacher for each of the five townships - up to a maximum of four</u>										
Brierley Hill	Mr Ben Warren, The Summerhill School, Lodge Lane, Kingswinford, DY6 9XE						Feb-12			√	
Central Dudley	Mrs April Garratt, Hillcrest School and Community College, Simms Lane, Dudley, DY2 0PB						May-10		√		
Halesowen	Neil Shaw, Leasowes Community College, Kent Road, Halesowen, B62 0PB						Oct-12				√
North Dudley	Idle township until next elections (ex M Elwiss)						Oct-12				
Stourbridge	Mr Peter Jones, Oldswinford Hospital School, Heath Lane, Stourbridge Dudley, DY8 1QX						Oct-11			√	
<u>Secondary School Governors</u>	<u>One secondary school governor for each of the five townships up to a maximum of four</u>										
Brierley Hill	Vacancy ( Bhill - ex Mr C Wassall, Sumerhill Secondary School; Central - vacant)					√	No app as at Sep 12				
Central Dudley											
Halesowen	Mrs Gill Withers, Leasowes Secondary School				√		May-11				
North Dudley	Mr L Ridney, Coseley Secondary School					√	May-12				
Stourbridge	Mr Jim Conway, Ridgewood High School				√		May-11				



<u>SCHOOL MEMBERS</u>	<u>DUDLEY SCHOOLS FORUM CONSTITUTION</u>	1 May 2009 to 30 April 2011	1 May 2009 to 30 April 2012	1 May 2010 to 30 April 2013	1 May 2011 to 30 April 2014	1 May 2012 to 30 April 2015	Date of Appointment	1 November 2009 to 31 October 2012	1 November 2010 to 31 October 2013	1 November 2011 to 31 October 2014	1 November 2012 to 31 October 2015
<b>Special School Headteacher</b>	<b>One special school headteacher for all townships</b>										
All townships	Mr David Kirk, Rosewood School, Bell Street, Coseley, West Midlands, WV14 8XJ						Oct-12				√
<b>Special School Governor</b>	<b>One special school governor for all townships</b>										
All townships	Mr I Dallaway, Pensmeadow School					√	Mar-12				
<b>ACADEMY MEMBER</b>											
1 Representative	Ms S Rogers appointed from Windsor at June 2011						May-11			√	
1 Representative	Vacancy - request representative from Academies						Oct-12				√
<b>Pupil Referral Units</b>											
<b>All PRUs</b>	<b>Chris Derham - PRU Manager</b>						Oct-12				√
<b>NON SCHOOL MEMBERS</b>	<b>Representatives from Bodies Approved By Schools Forum</b>										
Unions and Professional Associations, nominated by the staff side of the Directorate Joint Consultative Committee	Mr Martin Lynch, Dudley National Union of Teachers, The Kahan Centre, High Street, Kingswinford, DY6 8AP			√			Nov-10				
Worcester Diocesan Board of Education, nominated by the Board	Angela Hannaway Ex. Lucy Griffiths, Headteacher, Halesowen CE					√	Nov-12				
Catholic Schools Commission, nominated by the Commission	Vacancy EX Mrs Brenda Beale , (ex headteacher St Josephs Primary School, Stourbridge)			√			May-10				
Early Years Provider Reference Group, nominated by the Group	Ann Richards, Cradley Play Nursery, 12 - 18 Lyde Green, Cradley, Halesowen, B63 2PG					√	May-12				
Dudley 14-19 Strategic Partnership, nominated by the Partnership	Vacancy	√					Feb-08				



Department  
for Education

# **Schools Forums:**

## **Operational and Good Practice Guide**

### **September 2012**

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## Introduction

1. This guide is designed to provide members of Schools Forums, local authority officers and elected members with advice and information on good practice in relation to the operation of Schools Forums.
2. It is organised in four sections:
  - Section 1 provides information on the constitutional and procedural requirements as set out in the Schools Forums Regulations<sup>1</sup>.
  - Section 2 covers a number of key aspects of the operation of Schools Forums at local level, drawing on good practice from a number of Schools Forums.
  - Section 3 provides information on the kinds of induction, training material and activities that local authorities should consider providing to members of their Schools Forum.
  - Section 4 contains information on sources of further information and Departmental contact details.
3. The guide draws on the experience and knowledge of Schools Forum members, local authority members and officers and the Department and its partners. Other than where it is describing requirements set out in the Regulations it is not designed to be prescriptive – what is good practice in one Schools Forum may not be appropriate in another, given the diverse circumstances of local areas. However, it is hoped the guide will stimulate some debate within Schools Forums and contribute to their ongoing development.
4. The Department hopes that Schools Forums and local authorities find this guide useful. It has been the subject of consultation with a wide variety of external partners. In particular, members of the Department's School Funding Implementation Group, made up of representatives of head teachers and governors, the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), the Local Government Association and the Academies Funding Reference Group have provided valuable input and advice on the content of the guide. The Department is grateful for their assistance.

<sup>1</sup> Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/2261)

# Section 1 – Schools Forum Regulations: Constitution and Procedural Issues

## Regulations

- 1.1. National regulations govern the composition, constitution and procedures of Schools Forums. Local authorities can provide Schools Forum members with a copy of these regulations or alternatively they can be accessed at:

[Schools Forums - The Department for Education](#)

## Membership

- 1.2. The regulations provide a framework for the appointment of members, but allow a considerable degree of discretion in order to accommodate local priorities and practice.
- 1.3. There is no maximum or minimum size of a Schools Forum. Authorities will wish to take various issues into account in deciding the actual size, including the need to have full representation for various types of school, and the authority's policy on representation of non-schools members. However, care should be taken to keep the Schools Forum to a reasonable size to ensure that it does not become too unwieldy.
- 1.4. Types of member. Schools Forums must have 'schools members' (para 1.8-1.25), Academy member(s) if there is at least one Academy in the authority's area (para 1.26-1.28) and 'non-schools members' (para 1.29-1.32). . Schools and Academy members together must number at least two-thirds of the total membership of the Schools Forum and the balance between primary, secondary and academies members must be broadly proportionate to the pupil numbers in each category.

## Term of Office

- 1.5 The term of office for each schools member should be stipulated by the authority at the time of appointment. Such stipulation should follow published rules and be applied in a consistent manner as between members. They need not have identical terms – there may be a case for varied terms so that there is continuity of experience rather than there being a complete change in the membership at a single point. The term of office should not be of a length that would hinder the requirement for the structure of Schools Forum to mirror the type of provision in light of the pace of academy conversions.
- 1.6 The length of term of office for non-schools members is at the discretion of the authority. Schools and Academies must be informed, within a month of the appointment of any non-schools member, of the name of the member and the name of the body that that member represents.

- 1.7 As well as the term of office coming to an end, a member ceases to be a member of the Schools Forum if he or she resigns from the Schools Forum or no longer occupies the office by which he or she became eligible for election, selection or appointment to the Schools Forum. For example, a secondary schools member must stand down if their school converts to an Academy. A schools member representing community primary school governors who is no longer a governor of a community primary school in the relevant authority must cease to hold office on the Schools Forum even if they remain a governor of a school represented by another group or sub-group. Other situations in which membership of the Schools Forum ends are if a member resigns from the Schools Forum by giving notice in writing to the authority and, in the case of a non-schools member, the member is replaced by the authority, at the request of the body which the member represents, by another person nominated by that body.

## **Schools members**

- 1.8. Schools members represent specified phases or types of maintained schools within the authority. At the least, Schools Forums must contain representatives of two groups of schools: primary and secondary schools. The numbers of members in each group must be proportionate to the ratio of pupils registered at them. Middle schools are treated according to their deemed status.
- 1.9. Where a local authority maintains one or more special schools the Schools Forum must have at least one schools member from that sector. The same applies to nursery schools and pupil referral units (PRU's).
- 1.10. The authority then has discretion to divide the groups referred to in paragraph 1.8 into one or more of the following sub-groups–
- head teachers or head teachers' representatives in each group;
  - governors in each group;
  - head teachers or head teachers representatives and governors in each group;
  - representatives of the particular school category.
- 1.11. Head teachers can be represented by other senior members of staff within their school. Governors can include interim executive members of an interim executive board. The sub-groups do not have to be of equal size – for example, there may be more representatives of head teachers of primary schools than governors of such schools, or vice versa. It is good practice for Schools Forums to aim for a membership structure based on an equal proportion of head teachers and governors, or failing that to ensure there is sufficient representation of each type of schools member in each group to ensure debate within the Schools Forum is balanced and representative. As a minimum, there must be at least one representative of head teachers and one representative of governors among the schools' members.
- 1.12. Whatever the membership structure of schools members on a Schools Forum, the important issue is that it should reflect most effectively the profile of education provision across the authority to ensure that there is not an in-built bias towards any one phase or group.

## Election and nomination of schools members

- 1.13. The relevant group or sub-group is probably best placed to determine how their schools members should be elected.
- 1.14. It is good practice for those who draw up the scheme that a vacancy amongst a community primary school head teachers' group would be filled by a nominee elected according to a process that has been determined by all the community primary school head teachers in the local authority and in which all community primary school head teachers had the opportunity to stand for election and/or vote in such an election.
- 1.15. Similarly, if a local authority's Schools Forum has, say, a sub-group of Voluntary Aided and Foundation secondary school governors, we would recommend that all governors of such schools are eligible to stand for election and all can vote in any such election.
- 1.16. It is not appropriate for a single person to be elected to represent more than one group or sub-group concurrently, i.e. if they were a governor at a primary and secondary school. They can stand for election from either group but can be appointed to represent only one of those groups.
- 1.17. The purpose of ensuring that each group or sub-group is responsible for their election process is to guarantee that there is a transparent and representative process by which members of Schools Forums are nominated to represent their constituents.
- 1.18. Appropriate support to each group or sub-group to manage their election processes should be offered by the clerk of a Schools Forum, or the committee/democratic services of a local authority. This may just include the provision of advice but may also consist of providing administrative support in actually running the elections themselves.
- 1.19. As a minimum, we would recommend that the clerk of a Schools Forum make a record of the process by which the relevant schools within each group and sub-group elect their nominees to the Schools Forum and be able to advise the Chair of the Schools Forum and local authority on action that needs to be taken, where necessary, to seek new nominees.
- 1.20. In determining the process by which elections should be operated it is perfectly legitimate for a local authority to devise, in consultation with their Schools Forum, a model scheme for the relevant schools within a group or sub-group to consider and be invited to adopt. However, such a model scheme cannot be imposed on that body of schools: adaptations and /or alternative schemes may be adopted. A single scheme need not be adopted universally.

- 1.21. In fact, schemes are very likely to differ in substance between different sized groups or sub-groups or between those sub-groups that have an existing 'parent' group and those that do not. For instance, within most local authorities there are head teacher associations. These may serve as an appropriate vehicle for the organisation of elections. However, care should be taken to ensure that every possible eligible member of a group or sub-group has an opportunity to be involved in the determination of their group's election process and is given the opportunity to stand for election if they choose to do so.
- 1.22. It would not be compliant with the Regulations for the steering committee or chair of a 'parent' group simply to make a nomination to represent their group or sub-group on a Schools Forum. Schools members must be elected (but see below).
- 1.23. The local authority may set a date by which the election should take place and must appoint the schools member if the election has not taken place by that date. The person appointed should be a member of the relevant group.
- 1.24. We would recommend that any scheme takes into account a number of factors;
- a. the process for collecting names of those wishing to stand for election;
  - b. the timescale for notifying all constituents of the election and those standing;
  - c. the arrangements for dispatching and receiving ballots;
  - d. the arrangements for counting and publicising the results;
  - e. any arrangements for unusual circumstances such as only one candidate standing in an election; and
  - f. whether existing members can stand for re-election.
- 1.25. In the event of a tie between two or more candidates, then the local authority must appoint the schools member instead. The authority may decide to appoint someone else rather than one of the candidates and might wish to take into account the experience or expertise of the individuals, and the balance between the different types of school represented on the Forum.

## **Election and nomination of Academies members**

- 1.26. Academies members must be elected by the proprietor bodies of the Academies in the authority's area, and they are probably best placed to determine the process. Academies members are there to represent the proprietor bodies of Academies and are, therefore, not necessarily restricted to principals, senior staff or governors. The same factors should be taken into account as for the election of schools members, set out in paragraph 1.24. For the avoidance of doubt, Free Schools, University Technical Colleges and Studio Schools count as Academies for this purpose. There is no distinction between sponsored, non-recoupment and converter Academies, and no requirement for separate primary and secondary Academy representation.
- 1.27. Where there is only one Academy in the authority's area, then their proprietor body must select the person who will represent them.



- 1.28. As with schools members, the local authority may set a date by which the election should take place and must appoint an Academies member if the election does not take place by that date, or if an election results in a tie between two or more candidates.

## **Non-schools members**

- 1.29. Non-schools members may number no more than a third of a Schools Forum's total membership (excluding observers – see paragraph 1.39). The authority must appoint at least one person to represent the local authority 14-19 partnership and at least one person to represent early years providers from the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector. Early years PVI settings need to be represented because funding for the free entitlement for three and four year olds comes from the Schools Budget, and all settings are funded through the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) and from 2013-14, funding for the free entitlement for two-year-olds will also come from the Schools Budget through the EYSFF.
- 1.30. Before appointing additional non-schools members to the Schools Forum, the local authority must consider whether the Church of England and Roman Catholic dioceses situated in the authority's area; and, where there are schools or Academies in the area with a different religious character, the appropriate faith group, should be represented on the Schools Forum. If diocesan authorities nominate members for appointment as non-schools members they may wish to consider what type of representative would be most appropriate – schools-based such as a head teacher or governor, or someone linked more generally with the diocese.
- 1.31. It is also good practice for local authorities to ensure that the needs and interests of all the pupils in the local authority are adequately represented by the members of a Schools Forum. The interests of pupils in maintained schools can be represented by schools members. Some pupils in a local authority, however, are not in maintained schools but instead are educated in, hospitals, independent special schools and non-maintained special schools. Certain types of non-schools members can play an important role in representing the interests of these groups of pupils. They can also play a role in representing the interests and views of the services that support those groups of vulnerable and at-risk pupils who nevertheless are on the roll of maintained schools, such as looked after children and children with special educational needs.
- 1.32. The purpose of non-schools members is also to bring greater breadth of discussion to Schools Forum meetings and ensure that stakeholders and partners other than schools are represented. Organisations which typically provide non-schools members are trades unions, professional associations and representatives of youth groups. Parent groups could also be considered. However, as there are clearly limited numbers of non-schools members able to be on a Schools Forum, care should be taken to ensure that an appropriate representation from wider stakeholders is achieved.

## Restrictions on membership

- 1.33. There are three restrictions placed on who can be a non-schools member of a Schools Forum. The local authority cannot appoint:-
- an elected member of the local authority who is appointed to the executive of that authority (a lead member/portfolio holder) 'executive members',
  - the Director of Children's Services or any officer employed or engaged to work under the management of the Director of Children's Services, and who does not directly provide education to children (or manage those who do) ('relevant officer' (a) and (b)),
  - other officers with a specific role in management of and/or who advise on funding for schools ('relevant officer' part (c)).
- 1.34. Schools Forums have the power to approve a limited range of proposals from their local authority: the restrictions ensure that there is no conflict of interest between the proposing body (the local authority) and the approving body (the Schools Forum).
- 1.35. However, non-executive elected members and those officers who are employed in their capacity as head teachers or teachers and those who directly manage a service which provides education to individual children and/or advice to schools on, for example, learning and behavioural matters are eligible to be members of Schools Forums.
- 1.36. In the case of non-executive elected members, they may be either a schools member (by virtue of them being a school governor), an Academies member or a non-schools member. As a non-schools member they would be well placed to fulfil the broader overview and scrutiny role they have within the local authority in general.
- 1.37. However, the inclusion of non-executive elected members and certain officers is not a requirement. Many Schools Forums do not have such members on them and it is for each local authority and Schools Forum to consider how best to ensure the right balance of school and non-school representation on the Schools Forum, taking into account their local circumstances and preferences.

## Recording the composition of Schools Forums

- 1.38. Each local authority must make a written record of the composition of its Schools Forum detailing the numbers of schools members and by which group or sub-group they were elected, the number of Academies members and the number of non-schools members, their terms of office, how they were chosen and whom they represent. This record should also indicate the term of office for schools and Academies members.

## Observers

- 1.39. The Regulations provide that the Secretary of State can appoint an observer to attend and speak at Schools Forum meetings, e.g. a representative from the Education Funding Agency (EFA). This allows a conduit for national policy to be discussed at a local level and provide access for Schools Forum to an additional support mechanism, e.g. where there are highly complex issues to resolve.

## Procedures

- 1.40. Many procedural matters are not prescribed in the Regulations and are at the discretion either of the authority or the Schools Forum itself. However, there are requirements in the Regulations relating to:
- a. quorum: A meeting is only quorate if 40% of the total membership is present (this excludes any observers, and it is 40% of the current membership excluding vacancies). If a meeting is inquorate it can proceed but it cannot legally take decisions (e.g. election of a chair, or a decision relating to funding conferred by the funding regulations). An inquorate meeting can respond to authority consultation, and give views to the authority. It would normally be good practice for the authority to take account of such 'unofficial' views, but it is not legally obliged to do so. In practice, the arrangements for meetings should be made to reduce the chance of a problem with quora. The quorum stipulation is in the Regulations to help ensure the legitimacy of decisions;
  - b. election of a chair: Under the Regulations, if the position of chair falls vacant the Schools Forum must decide how long the term of office of the next chair will be. This can be for any period, but the Schools Forum should consider carefully whether a period exceeding two years is sensible. A long period will also cause problems if the member elected as chair has a term of office as a member which comes to an end before their term of office as chair ends. The Schools Forum should then elect a chair from amongst its own members except that any non-executive elected member or eligible officer who is a member of a Schools Forum may not hold the office of chair;

- c. voting procedures: The Regulations provide that a Schools Forum may determine its own voting procedures save that voting on:-
  - the funding formula is limited to schools members and PVI representatives
  - de-delegation will be limited to the specific primary and secondary phase of schools members.

The powers which Schools Forums have to take decisions on a range of funding matters increase the importance of clear procedures, e.g. decisions are made on a simple majority or the threshold to be met if higher. These procedures should take account of any use of working groups by the Schools Forum – for example a decision might be taken by voting to accept and adopt a report by a working group (see also below). As part of any voting procedure there should be clarity in the procedures for recording the outcome of a vote, and any resolutions a Schools Forum makes in relation to any vote taken;

- d. substitutes: the local authority must make arrangements to enable substitutes to attend and vote at Schools Forum meetings. This applies to schools members, Academies members and non-schools members. The arrangements must be decided in consultation with Schools Forum members.
- e. defects and vacancies: the Regulations provide that proceedings of the Schools Forum are not invalidated by defects in the election or appointment of any member, or the appointment of the chair. Nor does the existence of any vacancy on the Schools Forum invalidate proceedings (see paragraph 1.40(a) on quorum).
- f. timing: Schools Forums must meet at least four times a year

1.41. Where the Regulations make no provision on a procedural matter, local discretion should be exercised. It is for the authority to decide how far it wishes to establish rules for the Schools Forum to follow, in the form of standing orders. While it is entitled to do so, it is of course good practice to allow the Schools Forum to set its own rules so far as possible.

## Public access

- 1.42. Schools Forums are more than just consultative bodies. They also have an important role to play in approving certain proposals from their local authority and are therefore involved in the decision making process surrounding the use of public money at local level. As a result Schools Forums are required to be open to the public. Furthermore papers, agendas and minutes must be publicly available.
- 1.43. Some Schools Forums already operate very much along the lines of a local authority committee. This is perfectly legitimate where there is such local preference and will provide a consistent framework for the running of meetings that are open to the public, and the publishing of papers and agendas well in advance of the meeting and minutes published promptly.

## Working Groups

- 1.44. It is open to a Schools Forum to set up working groups of members to discuss specific issues, and to produce draft advice and decisions for the Schools Forum itself to consider. The groups can also include wider representation - for example, an early years reference group can represent all the different types of provider to consider the detail of the early years single funding formula. The reference group would then be able to give its considered view on the local authority's proposals to the Schools Forum. It is not good practice for the Schools Forum to delegate actual decisions or the finalisation of advice to a working group, as this may have the effect of excluding legitimate points of view.

## Urgent business

- 1.45. It is good practice for the local authority to agree with its Schools Forum an urgency procedure to be followed when there is a genuine business need for a decision or formal view to be expressed by the Schools Forum, before the next scheduled meeting. The authority may of course call an unscheduled meeting; but it may also wish to put in place alternative arrangements such as clearance by email correspondence or some other means. Such instances should be avoided so far as possible but are legitimate provided all members of the Schools Forum have an opportunity to participate, the logistics provide a reasonable opportunity for consideration and the local authority policy on data security is not compromised.
- 1.46. It is not legal for the chair to take a decision on behalf of the Schools Forum, no matter how urgent the matter in question; but a Schools Forum may wish to put in place a procedure for the Chair to give the authority a view on an urgent issue.

## Section 2 – Effective Schools Forums

### Introduction

- 2.1. As the previous section outlined, local authorities have responsibility for establishing Schools Forums. They also have an ongoing responsibility to provide them with appropriate support, information and guidance in carrying out their functions and responsibilities.
- 2.2. The following outlines some aspects of what local authorities and Schools Forums should consider in ensuring that their Schools Forums are as effective as possible. The pace of Academy conversions in particular means that this significant sector must be properly represented and feel that it is able to play a meaningful part in the discussions of the Schools Forum.
- 2.3. Central to the effectiveness or otherwise of a Schools Forum will be the relationship between it and its local authority. The local authority will have a significant influence on this: the support it provides; the resources it devotes and the weight it gives to the views of Schools Forums all contribute to the nature of the relationship. There are therefore a number of characteristics of this relationship that are particularly important:
- 2.4. *Partnership:* The work of the Schools Forum is likely to be most effective when there is a genuine partnership between all its members and its local authority. In practice this means having a shared understanding of the priorities, issues and concerns of schools, Academies and the local authority. However, it also means being honest and open where there are some tensions or disagreements over priorities. Overall there should be a shared commitment to working together on the agreed priorities and understanding of the contribution that can be made by each side to their achievement.
- 2.5. *Effective Support:* The local authority is the main source of support and guidance to a Schools Forum. It is vital therefore that the business of the Schools Forum is supported by the local authority in an efficient and professional manner. The management of meeting cycles, production of papers and the provision of good quality advice and guidance all contribute to the effectiveness of Schools Forums.
- 2.6. *Openness:* It is important that a Schools Forum feels it is receiving open, honest and objective advice from its local authority. In the vast majority of cases this is the situation, but there will inevitably be some issues about which a local authority and its Schools Forum may disagree. This can cause tension but a Schools Forum should be able to feel that it is receiving all the information it needs to reach necessary decisions or informed views.

2.7. *Responsiveness*: Local authorities should as far as possible be responsive to requests from their Schools Forums and their members. These may include requests to discuss particular topics or issues as well as requests for information, data or other support. However, Schools Forums themselves should also be aware of the resource implications of their requests. The resources (both officer time and other resources) that a local authority devotes to the Schools Forum are a local matter that ideally should be discussed and agreed between the local authority and Schools Forum. Within the resources available, Schools Forums should have substantial control over the issues they consider and information provided. Beyond this, local authorities will want to support their Schools Forum as far as they are able but Schools Forums should also take a realistic view of the resource implications of any requests they make.

2.8. *Strategic view*: Schools Forums are most effective when they take a strategic view of the issues they are considering. While members of a Schools Forum are representatives of their specific sector or phase, they should be able to consider the needs of the whole of the educational community, rather using their position on a Schools Forum to advance their own sectional or specific interests. Schools Forum chairs have a particularly important role in ensuring that this is the case: they can influence the kinds of issues and topics discussed and should set the tone for the discussions at meetings. Equally, local authorities have a role in ensuring that all members of a Schools Forum are well briefed and able to participate fully in discussions.

Furthermore, the representatives on Schools Forum should be well known across the full remit of education providers, be easily contactable, pro-active in raising the profile of issues and communicate decisions, and the reasons behind them, effectively.

2.9. *Challenge and Scrutiny*: Schools Forums may be asked to agree to proposals from their local authority that will have an effect on all schools and Academies in the local area. The extent to which Schools Forums can scrutinise and challenge such proposals is an important aspect of their effectiveness. Many local authorities and Schools Forums pride themselves on the collegiate nature of their relationship and the consensus by which they operate: others may be less concerned about this. Whatever the nature of the relationship, however, there will be instances where it is incumbent on a Schools Forum to challenge and scrutinise a local authority's decisions, proposals or existing arrangements. Effective local authorities and Schools Forums manage this well and while agreement can often be reached under relatively informal circumstances, it is vital that there are formal procedures in place to ensure that any decisions the Schools Forum makes are reached in an appropriate and transparent manner.

2.10. The characteristics identified above are just some of the aspects that will contribute to an effective Schools Forum. The following provides more detail on some of the specific issues that local authorities and Schools Forums may wish to consider in thinking about their own arrangements.

## **The role of Executive Elected Members**

- 2.11. A Schools Forum needs to ensure that there are systems in place for executive members of the Council to be aware of its views on specific issues and, in particular, any decisions it takes in relation to the Schools Budget and individual budget shares.
- 2.12. Executive members with responsibility for education/children's services or resources of the authority are able to attend Schools Forum meetings. By doing so such elected members are able to contribute to the discussion and receive first-hand the views of the Schools Forum: it is clearly good practice for this to be the case and the regulations provide the right for executive members to attend and speak at Schools Forum meetings. However, there is no requirement for this to happen so at the very least there should be clear channels of communication between the Schools Forum and executive members.

## **Attendance of local authority officers at meetings**

- 2.13. Only specific officers who can speak at meetings of the Schools Forum are eligible to attend. These officers are:-
- Director of Children's Services or their representative
  - Chief Financial Officer or their representative
  - Any person invited by Schools Forum to provide financial or technical advice
  - Any person presenting a paper to Schools Forum but their ability to speak is limited to the paper that they are presenting.
- 2.14. In the majority of cases Schools Forums are supported by a specific officer. In the course of their work, however, Schools Forums will be required to consider a whole range of issues and they may consider it appropriate that other officers attend for specific items of business. Where this is the case, the local authority should meet the Schools Forum's requests as far as possible.

## **Administration of the business of Schools Forums**

- 2.15. The vast majority of a Schools Forum's business will be transacted on the basis of prepared papers. It is therefore important that these are of a high standard and produced in a timely and consistent manner.
- 2.16. It is good practice for the Schools Forum and local authority to agree a standard for these. It is usual for papers to be dispatched at least one week prior to the meeting at which they will be discussed to allow members to consider them and if necessary canvass views from the group they are representing. Papers should be published on the local authority's website at this time to enable representations to be made to Schools Forum members.
- 2.17. Consistency in the presentation of papers also contributes to the effectiveness of meetings: it helps set the tone of meetings, facilitate the engagement of all members and signal the importance the local authority attaches to the work of the Schools Forum. Ideally such a standard should be agreed between the Schools Forum and local authority.



## Clerking the Schools Forum

- 2.18. Clerking of a Schools Forum should be seen as more than just writing a note of the meeting. A good clerk provides an invaluable link between the members of the Schools Forum, the chair and the local authority. It is a role often undertaken by an employee of the local authority though we would recommend consideration be given to the use of an independent clerk.
- 2.19. Clerks should manage the logistics of the meeting in terms of ensuring dispatch of papers and producing a note from the meeting. In considering the style of meeting notes consideration should be given to making them intelligible enough for non-attendees to get a sense of the discussion as well as clearly indicating the conclusion and action agreed in relation to each agenda item. Verbatim reports of a Schools Forum's discussion, however, are unlikely to be very useful. Schools Forums may consider whether a simple action log should be maintained by the clerk to ensure all action points agreed are followed up.
- 2.20. Beyond this a good clerk can:
- a. provide the route by which Schools Forum members can access further information and co-ordinate communication to Schools Forum members outside of the formal meeting cycle;
  - b. respond to any queries about the business of the Schools Forum from head teachers, governors and others who are not on the Schools Forum themselves;
  - c. be responsible for ensuring contact details of all members are up to date;
  - d. maintain the list of members on the Schools Forum and advise on membership issues in general;
  - e. assist with the co-ordination of nomination/election processes run by the constituent groups;
  - f. keep the Schools Forum website up to date: e.g. by posting latest minutes and papers etc;
  - g. monitor, on a regular basis, the Schools Forum and general Schools Funding section of the Department for Education (DfE) website; and arrange for the distribution of any relevant DfE information to Schools Forum members;
  - h. if appropriate, provide technical advice in relation to the Schools Forum regulations and in relation to the operation of a Schools Forum's local constitution; and
  - i. organise, operate and record any voting activity of the Schools Forum in line with the provisions of its local constitution.
- 2.21. Not all of these tasks may be able to be undertaken by the Schools Forum clerk. However, each one is important and there should be arrangements in place to ensure they are discharged adequately.

## Meeting notes and recording of decisions

- 2.22. A vital part of the effective operation of Schools Forums is to ensure that an accurate record of the meeting is taken. This must include the clear recording of votes where there are contrary views. Recommendations to, and decisions of, Schools Forum must be clearly set out.
- 2.23. Notes or minutes of each Schools Forum meeting should be produced and put on the website as soon after the meeting as possible to enable members and others to see the outcome of any discussions and decisions/votes. It is good practice to formally agree the accuracy of the note/minutes at a subsequent meeting but the publication of the minutes should not be delayed as a result.

## Resources of the Schools Forum

- 2.24. The costs of a Schools Forum fall in the centrally retained budget portion of the Schools Block of local authorities. Nationally there is variation in the level of funding local authorities identify against Schools Forum expenditure: the median expenditure in 201/12 was £21,431.
- 2.25. It is legitimate to charge the running costs of Schools Forums to this budget including any agreed and reasonable expenses for members attending meetings, the costs of producing and distributing papers and costs room hire and refreshments and for clerking of meetings. Beyond these costs some Schools Forums have a budget of their own to use for activities such as commissioning research or other reports. The draft 2013 School Finance Regulations propose that the level of resource devoted running Schools Forums should be limited to 2012-13 levels and no new commitments or increases in expenditure should be allowed in future years.

## Agenda Setting

- 2.26. The process by which the agenda for a meeting or cycle of meetings is set is in many respects one of the key determinants of the effectiveness or otherwise of a Schools Forum.
- 2.27. The frequency and timing of meetings of the Schools Forum should be agreed in advance of each financial or academic year. In drawing up this cycle of meetings, in consultation with the Schools Forum, the local authority should provide a clear overview of the key consultative and decision-making points in the school funding cycle. These will be drawn from a combination of national and local information and should inform the basic agenda items that each meeting needs to cover. For instance meetings will need to be scheduled at appropriate points to enable the Schools Forum to consider the outcomes of local consultations and national announcements.

- 2.28. Regulations state that the local authority must consult the Schools Forum annually in connection with various schools budget functions, namely:
- amendments to the school funding formula, for which the voting is restricted by the exclusion of non-schools members except for PVI representatives
  - arrangements for the education of pupils with special educational needs
  - arrangements for the use of pupil referral units and the education of children otherwise than at school
  - arrangements for early years provision
  - administrative arrangements for the allocation of central government grants paid to schools via the authority
- 2.29. Consultation must also take place when a local authority is proposing a contract for supplies and services which is to be funded from the Schools Budget and is in excess of the EU Procurement thresholds. The consultation must cover the terms of the contract at least one month prior to the issue of invitations to tender.
- 2.30. The Schools Forum has the responsibility of informing the governing bodies of all schools maintained by the authority of the results of any consultations carried out by the authority relating to the issues in paragraphs 2.28 and 2.29.
- 2.31. Schools Forums generally have a consultative role. However, there are situations in which they have decision-making powers. The respective roles of Schools Forums, local authorities and the DfE are summarised in Table 1. The overarching areas on which Schools Forums make decisions on local authority proposals are:
- De-delegation from mainstream school budgets (approval will be required by the relevant phase members of Schools Forum), for prescribed services to be provided centrally.
  - To create a fund for significant pupil growth in order to support the local authority's duty for place planning and agree the criteria for maintained schools and Academies to access this fund.
  - Funding for prescribed historic commitments where the effect of delegating this funding would be destabilising.
  - Funding for local authority in order to meet prescribed statutory duties placed upon it. Approval is required to confirm the amounts for each duty and no new commitments or increases in expenditure from 2012/13 are permitted.
  - Funding for central early years expenditure, which will include funding for checking eligibility of pupils for an early years place and/or free school meals.
  - Authorising a reduction in the schools budget in order to fund a deficit arising in central expenditure that is to be carried forward from a previous funding period.

In each of these cases, the local authority can appeal to the DfE if the Schools Forum rejects its proposal.

- 2.32. For 2013-14, local authorities will need to discuss any proposals to vary the MFG with the Schools Forum but they will need to be approved by the Secretary of State.

## Chairing the Schools Forum

- 2.33. The chair of a Schools Forum plays a key role in setting the tone, pace and overall dynamic of the Schools Forum. They should provide an environment within which all members are able to contribute fully to discussions and guide the Schools Forum to making well informed decisions.
- 2.34. The relationship between the chair and the local authority is therefore vital. The chair should be very clear on the substance of the agenda items, understand the issues involved and the decisions and/or actions that need to be taken in respect of School Forum business. It is good practice for there to be a pre-meeting between the senior officer of the authority supporting the Schools Forum and the chair and vice-chair of the Schools Forum to ensure that all the issues are clearly understood.
- 2.35. Equally, the chair has the responsibility of representing the views of the Schools Forum back to the local authority: for instance, they should, where appropriate, take the initiative to make suggestions for improvements to the way the business is conducted, and, in exceptional cases and with support of the members of the Schools Forum take the view that they do not have sufficient information on which to base a decision and ask that an item is deferred until further information is available. However, in doing so, the Chair and Schools Forum should be fully aware of the consequences of deferral.

## Communication

- 2.36. Communication to the wider educational community of the discussions and debates of, and decisions made by, Schools Forums is fundamental to their effective operation. The more schools and other stakeholders know about the proceedings of Schools Forums, the more their work will be an important and central part of the context of local educational funding. This is particularly important given the decision making role that Schools Forums have.
- 2.37. Each Schools Forum should therefore be clear what its channels of communication are. One channel is the requirement that all its agenda, minutes and papers are publicly available on the local authority's website. However, the Schools Forum should also consider additional communication processes. These could include:
  - a. an annual report on the proceedings of the Schools Forum;
  - b. the reporting back by Schools Forum members to their 'parent' group of the business of the Schools Forum. This can be a particularly useful method of ensuring that Schools Forum members have an ongoing dialogue with the constituents of their group or sub-group and are therefore well able to represent their views at Schools Forum meetings;
  - c. attendance by the chair, or other Schools Forum member, at other relevant consultative or management groups such as any capital working group; or senior management meetings of the Children's Services Department; or
  - d. a brief email to all schools, early years providers and other stakeholders after each Schools Forum meeting informing them of the discussions and decisions with a link to the full papers and minutes for further information.

## Section 3 – Induction and Training

### Induction of new members

- 3.1. When new members join the Schools Forum appropriate induction materials should be provided. These might include material relating to the operation of the Schools Forum together with background information about the local and national school funding arrangements. Typically they might comprise:
  - a. the constitution of the Schools Forum
  - b. a list of members including contact details and their terms of office
  - c. any locally agreed terms of reference explaining the relationship between the Schools Forum and the local authority
  - d. copies of minutes of previous meetings
  - e. the programme of Schools Forum meetings for the year
  - f. the local Schools Forum web address
- 3.2. This Operational and Good Practice Guide, suitably supplemented by local material, should also be provided to new members on their appointment.
- 3.3. Where there is sufficient turnover of School Forum members in any particular year the authority may wish to organise a one-off induction event to brief new members. Such an event would usefully include an outline of the role of the Schools Forum and the national funding arrangements for schools and local authorities. It might also include an explanation of the local funding formula and any proposals for review. The opportunity could also be taken to explain the main reporting requirements for school and local authority expenditure.

### Training

- 3.4. Ideally Schools Forum members should be able to use some of the budget set aside for Schools Forum running costs for accessing relevant training activities. Some training will be provided by officers of the local authority but members may wish to attend national or regional events, the costs of which where necessary can be supported from the Schools Forum budget.
- 3.5. Training will need to be provided in response to any changes in the role of the Schools Forum and national developments in respect of school funding.

### News updates

- 3.6. Most, but not all, members of the Schools Forum will already be in receipt of regular information on school funding matters from the local authority and DfE. Other Schools Forum members should be copied into such information flows so that they can be kept abreast of developments between meetings.
- 3.7. Many local authorities have already established dedicated Schools Forum websites on which they post key information for Schools Forum members and other interested parties.

## Section 4 – Further Information and Contact Details

### Web links

- 4.1. The Department's website contains details of all the announcements, documents and other information relating to school funding and Schools Forums. This website also has a range of useful links to other sites that may be of relevance to Schools Forum members.
- 4.2. The following address links to the main school funding page which has links to the latest news items on schools funding and all the latest information.

[Schools revenue funding - The Department for Education](#)

- 4.3. The following address links to the dedicated Schools Forum pages on the website.

[Schools Forums - The Department for Education](#)

### Contact details

- 4.4 Members of the Education Funding Agency are able to provide advice on the operation of Schools Forums:

[reformteam.funding@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:reformteam.funding@education.gsi.gov.uk)

The postal address of the Department is:  
Education Funding Agency  
Department for Education  
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Department  
for Education

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This document is also available from our website at [Schools Forums - The Department for Education](#).

TABLE 1 - SCHOOLS FORUMS: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES 2013-14

Appendix C

	Function	Local Authority	Forum	DfE Role
1	Formula Change (including redistributions)	Proposes and decides	Must be consulted. [Voting restricted to schools members plus PVI members]	None
2	Contracts	Propose at least one month prior to invitation to tender, the terms of any proposed contract	Gives a view	None
3	Financial Issues relating to: arrangements for pupils with special educational needs; arrangements for use of pupil referral units and the education of children otherwise than at school; arrangements for early years provision; administration arrangements for the allocation of central govt grants.	Consult annually	Gives a view and informs the governing bodies of all consultations carried out in lines 1, 2 & 3	None
4	Minimum funding guarantee	Proposes any exclusions from MFG for application to DfE	Gives a view	Approval
5	De-delegation for mainstream schools for: contingencies administration of free school meals insurance licences/subscriptions staff costs - supply cover support for minority ethnic pupils/underachieving groups behaviour support services library and museum services	Will propose	Primary and secondary school member representatives will decide for their phase.	Will adjudicate where Forum does not agree LA proposal
6	Central spend on funding for significant pre-16 pupil growth equal pay back-pay places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils early years expenditure	Proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where Forum does not agree LA proposal
7	Central spend on admissions servicing of schools forum carbon reduction commitment capital expenditure funded from revenue contribution to combined budgets schools budget centrally funded termination of employment costs schools budget funded prudential borrowing costs	Proposes up to the value committed in 2012/13 and where expenditure has already been committed	Decides for each line	Adjudicates where Forum does not agree LA proposal
8	Carry forward a deficit on central expenditure to the next year to be funded from the schools budget	Proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where Forum does not agree LA proposal
9	Scheme of financial management changes	Proposes and consults GB and Head of every School	Approves	Adjudicates where Forum does not agree LA proposal
10	Membership : length of office of members	Decides	None (but good practice would suggest that they gave a view)	None
11	Membership: appointment of Schools and Academies Members	Appoints those elected by members of the relevant sub groups. Facilitates election where required and appoints member if there is a tie or the election does not take place by a date set by the LA	None	None
12	Membership: Non Schools Members	Seeks nominations from the relevant bodies then appoints	None (but good practice would suggest that they gave a view)	None
13	Voting Procedures	None	Determine voting procedures	None
14	Chair of Forum	Facilitates	Elects (may not be an elected member of the council or officer)	None