

**MEETING OF WIGAN SCHOOLS FORUM  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> JUNE 2022 AT 11AM  
VIA MS TEAMS DIGITAL PLATFORM**

**MINUTES**

**Quorum: 40% (7) School/Non-School Members**

The meeting was **not quorate** until 11.14am.

**SCHOOLS MEMBERS**

**PRESENT**

Gary Hayes	Primary Headteacher
Julie Hassan	Primary Headteacher
Tracy Mingaud-Cunningham	Primary Governor ( <i>from 11.13am</i> )
Alan Birchall	Secondary Headteacher
Andy McGlown	Secondary Headteacher
Adrian Hardy	Secondary Governor/Chair

**NON SCHOOL MEMBERS**

**PRESENT**

Max Atkins	Wigan NUT Teacher Representative ( <i>from 11.14am</i> )
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**NOMINATED OBSERVERS**

**PRESENT**

Cllr Jenny Bullen	CYP Cabinet Member
Mike Wilkinson	Wigan NASUWT

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Mark Rotheram	LA Finance – Strategic Finance Manager
Anthony Meehan	LA Finance – Group Finance Manager (Schools)
Cath Pealing	LA Education – Assistant Director
Marie Collier	Wigan Governor Services Clerk

**1. APOLOGIES AND CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT TO ABSENCE**

Apologies were **received** and **accepted** for the following Members/Observers:

- Wendy Hughes – Primary Headteacher (nominated substitute attended)
- Peter McGhee – 16-19 Partnership
- Karen Parkin – NEU

**Post Meeting Note**

Retrospective apologies were submitted by PRU Headteacher, Anne Isherwood, Special School Headteacher, Louise Curran and Primary Headteachers Emily Ellis and Fiona Quinlivan.

The Chair advised Forum members that himself and Tracy Mingaud-Cunningham had been re-elected as Secondary and Primary Governor Representatives respectively at the recent meeting of Governors Forum. **Noted** by members.

## 2. URGENT/STRATEGIC ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of AOB requested for consideration.

## 3. PREVIOUS MINUTES

Approval of the minutes from the Schools Forum meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2022 was **deferred** to the next meeting.

### Matters Arising

## 4. DSG UNDERSPEND 2021/22

Members **received** the Central DSG Underspend 2021/22 Report, plus appendices, which had been circulated in advance. LA Group Finance Manager, Anthony Meehan shared the report on screen and provided a verbal overview.

- Central DSG overall underspend of 1.623M – large proportion was retained balances following academy conversion, plus underspend on growth and contingency and a couple of other miscellaneous areas retained centrally.
- LA required to consult with Schools Forum on the use of any underspends.
- Last meeting – discussed key risk areas, made some decisions and agreed to bring further recommendations. Agreed to commit £100,000 to support maintained nurseries, a proportion to support a school facing deficit (academising in near future) with contingency to support further requests.
- £1.4M remaining.
- High needs continued to be key pressure area - £100,000 overspend in the previous year. Also had significant increase in funding and contributions from Schools Block and DSG reserves.
- Current year – another increase in funding and agreement for allocation from DSG reserves and movement from Schools Block.
- Indication from Government that recent increases in funding would not be seen going forward.
- Proposal to ringfence £750,000 from DSG underspends to support High Needs in 2023/24 with anticipated reduced growth in funding. Would match £750,000 support agreed this year.
- Left £650,000 uncommitted – proposal to leave in reserves and go through consultation process for use in future.

**Question:** Would the £750,000 be used in 2023/24 before any request for further support from School Block in respect of High Needs?

**Answer:** Yes, that will be the plan.

School Forum members present **agreed to support the proposal in principle**, however, the meeting was not quorate for a formal decision.

**ACTION: Formal agreement regarding use of remaining DSG underspends to be taken to the 2022/23 Autumn 1 meeting of Schools Forum.**

*Primary Governor Representative Tracy Mingaud-Cunningham **joined** the meeting at 11.13am. Wigan NUT Teacher Representative, Max Atkins **joined** at 11.14am.*

The meeting was **quorate** from this point.

## 5. SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP AND SELF-ASSESSMENT

Members **received** the Schools Forum Self-Assessment Checklist and current constitution document, which had been circulated in advance. LA Group Finance Manager, Anthony Meehan shared the report on screen and provided a verbal overview.

- A meeting had been held between the LA Group Finance Manager, Assistant Director and the Clerk to review documentation around Schools Forum membership and constitution. The LA Group Finance Manager and the Clerk also met subsequently to review the self-assessment checklist.
- Satisfied that current representation met requirements of Schools Forum membership – fair, balanced and proportionate on phase/academy/maintained split based on pupil numbers. All requisite categories also represented.
- Where members represented more than one sector (for example, Maintained Primary or Secondary Academy) they were counted in both sectors for the exercise.
- Forum was currently carrying a vacancy previously occupied by a Maintained Secondary Headteacher.

Plea made by member to WASCL attendees to ensure vacancy included on upcoming WASCL agenda.

**Question:** Are pupil numbers based on the current year or next year?

**Answer:** They are based on the October 2021 Census which drives funding. There is an awareness that numbers will fluctuate each year, so it will need annual review.

The Chair informed Forum that there would be a second vacancy from September 2022 following the retirement of Andy Pollard as Academy Headteacher Representative. Replacement Academy Representative to be sought.

- The completion of the self-assessment checklist (Appendix One) had identified a number of suggested tweaks, although processes were generally considered to be in line with good practice:
  - Publication of minutes – reviewed and agreed draft minutes to be circulated and published (currently only published on approval at the next meeting).
  - Meeting documentation – suggestion in the checklist for all documents to be provided as a single PDF. To be further explored.
  - Constitution – last agreed 2015/16 (Appendix Two). Reviewed alongside self-assessment. Not explicit in terms of process for election – to be made clearer. No information included regarding tenure – good practice guidance suggests agreement of terms of office. Would provide the opportunity to review regularly to ensure proportionality. Process to be documented. Suggested process for dealing with non-attenders. Refresh of Constitution to be brought to Autumn 1 2022/23 meeting for approval.
  - Induction process to be introduced – new members to meet with Finance representative and the Clerk and documentation pack to be formulated.

The Chair invited comments.

Member comments:

- Agreement that processes needed tidying up with regards to terms of office and induction.

- Agreement that one PDF would be useful. Discussion on the balance between having documents in the most useful format and ensuring supplementary reports were still received even if only available closer to the meeting date.
- Suggestion for 2-year term of office with no limit on how many times members could be re-elected.
- Need to be mindful of everyone's term of office not coming to an end at the same time – to avoid the risk of losing experience all at once.

**ACTION: The Chair to meet with LA Finance Representative, Mr Meehan to review constitution – revised constitution to be presented at the 2022/23 Autumn 1 meeting of Schools Forum.**

**ACTION: New Members and Observers to be invited to comment on what they would have found useful in respect of an induction to Schools Forum.**

## 6. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of AOB for discussion.

## 7. FUTURE MEETING DATES

Members **received** the 2022/23 Proposed Meeting Schedule, which had been shared in advance. The Chair informed members that the dates had been circulated internally and agreed by the LA representatives. Attendees were invited to comment on any obvious date clashes or issues – none raised.

The 2022/23 Meeting Schedule was **agreed** as presented.

The Chair wished to record thanks to Academy Headteacher Representative, Andy Pollard (retiring in August) for his work with Schools Forum and contribution to school improvement across the borough.

Members present were also thanked for attendance at the meeting and contributions over the course of the year.

LA Assistant Director, Cath Pealing thanked the Chair for his work on Schools Forum over the year.

*The meeting **closed** at 11.32am.*

### **Background documents (available for public inspection)**

Appendices to the circulated briefing reports disclose important facts on which the reports are based and were relied upon in preparing the reports. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy, please contact the Schools Forum Clerk:

[m.collier@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:m.collier@wigan.gov.uk)