

**Meeting of the Schools Forum  
Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2016 at 1.30 p.m.  
at Hawkley Hall High School**

**Members:** A.P. Hardy (Chair) S. Bruen, F. Quinlivan, V. Birchall, G. Hayes, A. Pollard (Deputising for H. Phillips). A. McGlown, R. Halford, A. Isherwood, P. McGhee and A Wells.

**Observers:** M. Wilkinson (NAS/UWT) and K. Winnard (UNISON)

**LA Officers:** A. Lindsay (Assistant Director) K. Rufo (Service Manager) C. Myers (Group Finance Manager) and F. Gore (Clerk)

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from E. Loftus , D. Winstanley, H. Phillips, A. Birchall, K. Pilkington, R. Lewis, J. Holland, and T. Warren (members) and Cllr J. Platt, M. Atkins and C. Gore (observers): and J. McDonald (Strategic Finance Manager)

**2. Welcome to New Representatives**

The Chair extended a warm welcome to Mr Alan Lindsay (Assistant Director - Education) and Mr Mike Wilkinson (NAS/UWT) who were attending their first meeting of the Forum.

**2. Items for inclusion under AOB**

**None.**

**3. Minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 22 March 2016:**

**It was agreed:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2016 be approved as a true and correct record.

**Matters Arising:**

It was confirmed that responses had been made to the government's consultation papers on a National Funding Formula and High Needs Funding.

**4. Supplementary Funding 2016-17:**

Mr Myers presented a report (circulated prior to the meeting) giving details of the outcome of the bids by schools to the Supplementary Fund 2016/17

Schools had been required to submit a business case detailing the amount of funding required and the how the required funding would deliver a sustainable budget. In considering each application the LA had taken account of the following factors:

- a) The year on year budget reduction as an absolute value and as a percentage
- b) The current level of balances held by the school
- c) The demographic projections specific to the area involved
- d) The sustainability of the proposal

The fund covered the following areas.

- growth
- falling rolls
- disproportionate SEN
- contingency
- redundancy

There had been a total of £2,198,000 bids against a total fund of £1,300,000. The approved allocations were set out in Appendix 1 to the report and totalled £1,271,000. This left a small contingency and further bids would be considered throughout the year under exceptional circumstances only.

Member's were asked to consider the future funding arrangements for additional pupils so that it better reflected the average funding per pupil when including all factors rather than simply the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU). Reference was made to the fact that under the DFE funding arrangements funding for additional pupils was only received retrospectively and this would have a disproportionate impact on academies because their financial year ran from 1<sup>st</sup> September to 31<sup>st</sup> August.

Reference was also made to the recently agreed changes in the funding of redundancy costs in schools and early retirement benefits (Minute 8B of January 2016 refers) and the need for schools to be aware of the changes.

**It was agreed:** (1) That the report and allocations made be accepted.

(2) That with regard to a growth in school numbers with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 the allocation per pupil be based on the total value of factors divided by an average value (based on total funding less lump sum divided by the number on roll multiplied by the increase in the Pupil Admission Number).

(3) That the impact of the changes on academies be considered and reported to the next meeting.

(4) That a briefing note be circulated to all schools summarising the impact of the recent changes in the funding of redundancy costs and early retirement benefits for school based staff.

## **5. Out-Turn 2016-17:**

Mr Myers presented a report (circulated prior to the meeting) informing members of the level of Schools balances held as at 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2016. The report showed the following movement of balances, analysed by sector in the 2015/16 financial year.

## Summary of School Balances

| Balances                           | Nursery<br>&<br>Primary<br>(£) | Secondary<br>(£) | Special<br>(£) | Total (£)  |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|----------------|------------|
| As at 31/3/15                      | 8,755,712                      | 4,533,335        | 906,782        | 14,195,829 |
| As at 31/3/16                      | 9,219,203                      | 5,546,210        | 1,131,081      | 15,896,494 |
| Annual Increase / Decrease (+/-)   | 463,491                        | 1,012,875        | 224,298        | 1,700,665  |
| Annual % Increase / Decrease (+/-) | 5.29%                          | 22.34%           | 24.74%         | 11.98%     |

|                   |    |    |   |     |
|-------------------|----|----|---|-----|
| Number of Schools | 96 | 13 | 6 | 115 |
|-------------------|----|----|---|-----|

|                         |        |         |         |         |
|-------------------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Average Balance 31/3/16 | 96,033 | 426,632 | 188,513 | 138,230 |
| Average Annual Increase | 4,828  | 77,913  | 37,383  | 14,788  |

Members noted the increase in balances which they believed reflected a level of concern by schools on future funding and the increasing demands being placed on schools. It was also noted that many schools held balances for committed projects to be carried out this financial year.

It was suggested that when presenting this information the LA should also give a narrative to inform the data and explain why schools held balances, including future commitments and potential reductions in revenue due to falling roles or potentially reduced DfE allocations etc.

**It was agreed:** That report be accepted.

### 6. Update on National Funding Consultation:

Mr Myers reported that further information was awaited on the next phase of the government's planned consultations on a National Funding Formula.

The Chair referred to the next planned meeting of the Forum on 7 July and confirmed that if there was an announcement made and the deadline for responses required a meeting earlier or later than that date then the meeting would be re-arranged accordingly.

**It was agreed:** That report be accepted.

### 7. Ms Klare Rufo:

The Chair reminded members that this would be the last meeting of the Forum that Ms Klare Rufo would be attending prior to her taking up a new appointment. On behalf of the Forum he thanked Ms Rufo for her contribution to the work of the Forum and to education in general in Wigan and wished her well in her future career.

### 8. Mr Steve Wilson:

The Chair informed members that Mr Steve Wilson, a long-standing representative to the Forum had recently retired. On behalf of the Forum he wished Mr Wilson a long and happy retirement.

9. **Date and Time of Next Meeting:** 7 July 2016 at Bedford High School commencing at 1.30 p.m.

meeting closed at 2.10 p.m.