

Cheshire West & Chester Council

Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum

Monday 8 July 2019
4.30pm – 6.30 pm

To be held at

Queen's Park High School
Queen's Park Road
Handbridge
Chester CH4 7AE

Refreshments will be available from 4pm

Schools Forum Clerk
Children and Families
Cheshire West and Chester Council
Telephone 01244 972901



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Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum

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Agenda for Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum 8 July 2019

1.	4.30	Introductions and apologies		
2.	4.35	Minutes and matters arising of last meeting 2.1 To agree the minutes from part two of the meeting held 11 February 2019 2.2 Matters arising		Page 3-8
3.	4.45	F40 School Funding Update	Councillor Meardon	Separate documents
4.	4.55	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2018-2019 – Final Outturn	Natalie Cole	Page 9-12
5.	5.05	Maintained School Balances Financial Year 2018-2019 and Academy Balances 2017-2018	Natalie Cole	Page 13-17
6.	5.20	Review of Growth Fund Criteria for Schools and Academies	Natalie Cole	Page 18-20
7.	5.40	Directed Revisions to Schemes for Financing Schools for 2019-2020	Natalie Cole	Page 21-27
8.	5.50	Call for evidence on Government consultation on SEND and AP provision	John Murray	To follow
9.	6.10	Annual review of Schools Forum membership, constitution and terms of reference	Charlotte Fenn	Page 28-40
10.	6.20	Any Other Business SEND Consultations	Mark Parkinson	Verbal
11.	6.30 Finish	Next meeting: Tuesday 8 October 2019 Queen's Park High (tbc) Schools Forum and finance sub group meeting schedule and forward plan		Page 41-42

**Cheshire West and Chester
Schools Forum
8 July 2019**

Agenda Item 2

**Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum, Queen's Park High School,
Chester 11 February 2019**

Present:

Marie Allen
Sue Anderson
David Curry
Sarah Curtis
John Freeman
Kate Docherty
Carol Gahan
Phil Hopwood
Mike Holland
Luci Jones
Kath Lloyd
Mike McCann
John Murray (Chair)
David Rowlands
Andy Stewart
Katie Tyrie
Lyndsay Watterson
Susan Yarnall

Representing:

Academies - Special
PVI
Secondary headteachers
Primary headteachers
Secondary governors
Primary headteachers
Primary governors
Special governors
Secondary headteachers
Academies - Primary/Secondary
Primary governors
Special headteachers
Academies - Primary/Secondary
Secondary governors
PRU
Nursery headteacher
Academies - Primary/Secondary
Primary governors

Officers:

Natalie Cole
Charlotte Fenn (Clerk)
Mark Parkinson

1. Introductions and apologies

Apologies were noted from Hilary Berry, David Bradburn, Greg Foster, Amanda Harrison, Duncan Haworth, Jason Lowe, Councillor Meardon, Ian Devereux Roberts, Sarah Worthington, Caroline Vile (not reported at meeting) and Harry Ziman.

2. Minutes and matters arising of last meeting

2.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

2.2 Matters arising

2.3 Item 1. Introductions and apologies

It was noted that Luci Jones was covering the Academies vacancy while elections were taking place. Elections were due to end on 1 March. It was also noted that CWAPH would confirm who would be taking over from Cheryl Bullen by the next CWAPH meeting in March.

3. Special Educational Needs (SEN) Funding for Mainstream and Special Schools – Funding from the High Needs Block 2019-2020

Natalie Cole, Finance Manager, introduced the report and took Forum members through the proposed changes to allocations from the High Needs Block for 2019-2020 for commissioned places and top up funding.

Natalie Cole drew Forum members' attention to appendix A which detailed the proposed special school band funding rates for 2019-2020, which in effect was a staged implementation of the original planned tapered reduction.

John Murray sought comments from Forum on the proposals outlined and declared an interest in respect of the proposed interim additional resource provision funding as his school was a resource provision school.

Mike McCann reported that CWASSH had raised concerns regarding the band three funding for special schools and was meeting with Debbie Steele to discuss the funding gap between the actual costs and the contribution from health.

Mark Parkinson informed Forum that the resources released, as a result of these proposals, would be made available to CWASSH, in order to produce an action plan on outreach work proposals to support inclusion in line with the current direction of travel.

Natalie Cole acknowledged there were issues as to how the banding rates had been set and suggested that it might help if special schools met to look at staffing and how schools were structuring provision and how different levels of need were supported.

John Murray drew Forum members' attention to paragraph 11 and the timeframe for implementation of the revised descriptors for mainstream pupils.

4. Early Years Funding for 2019-2020

Natalie Cole took Forum through the report which detailed the proposed budget allocation for the early years block, Early Years Funding Formula (EYFF) and Early Years Inclusion Fund (EYIF) and sought Forum's view on the proposed changes.

Natalie referred Forum to paragraph three and the recommendations from the Finance sub group which had been approved by Cabinet in November, following the consultation. Forum's attention was drawn to the changes to rurality eligibility criteria and further measures to the eligibility criteria to access the quality supplement.

It was noted that the changes were due to be implemented from April 2019 and the current payment methodology to providers would be retained but reviewed during the year to incorporate some improvements.

Forum members' attention was drawn to the budget proposals outlined in appendix A and the increase in the base rate.

Natalie referred Forum members to paragraph six which detailed the budgets held as central spend. It was noted that the only change was the additional post to implement the Leuven Scales. It was also noted that central spend funding was subject to a cap but the stated funding was well within the limit.

Natalie took Forum members through paragraphs seven and eight which detailed the changes to the Early Years Inclusion funding and key principles for the proposed banding levels. Forum members sought clarification regarding band B and C figures in the table under paragraph eight. It was noted that 30 hours entitlement in receipt of band B or C would receive double that of the amount received at 15 hours entitlement.

Mark Parkinson informed Forum members that the proposal to automatically fund the first two terms in reception for children already in receipt of funding was to help with transition and give schools time to review the needs of the child. A framework would be produced mapping out the banding descriptors and values.

Sue Anderson asked if any work had been done on who would be the winners and losers as a result of the changes in supplements. Natalie responded that the impact of the changes would be reviewed once the January pupil data was available and the base rate would be increased if possible.

Sue Anderson questioned whether the LA would be able to enforce the submission of the required paperwork for receipt of the quality factor supplement. Mark Parkinson responded that the supplement would not be paid without receipt of the necessary data. The data needed to be analysed to ensure funding was being targeted correctly.

5. Central Spend budgets 2019-2020

Natalie Cole introduced the report which outlined the proposed level of prescribed central spend budgets for 2019-2020 which required Forum's approval.

Forum's attention was drawn to appendix B which outlined two proposed changes to the centrally held budgets; the increase for expenditure on children under five due to the Leuven Scales implementation and the reduction to the falling rolls fund for the third year of capped allocation. There were no comments from Forum members regarding the proposed changes.

Resolved that the Schools Forum approve the proposed changes to the level of central spend budgets for 2019-2020 for the activities defined in the Section 251 statement.

6. Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum draft response to funding increases to teachers' pensions employer contributions Government consultation

John Murray introduced the paper and informed Forum that the response, to the consultation, had been drafted following discussions with the Finance sub group at their January meeting. John sought comments and amendments to the response which was due to be submitted by the 12 February deadline. Forum members agreed the draft response and no amendments were put forward.

Resolved that the Schools Forum task the Schools Forum Clerk to submit the response, as drafted, on behalf the Schools Forum.

7. Increase funding for schools petition

John Murray introduced the item which referred to a petition which the f40 group were encouraging schools, governors and Schools Forums to support. It was noted that an email had been circulated by the Clerk on behalf of the Schools Forum Chair drawing schools and governors' attention to the petition.

Sue Anderson made a plea that when colleagues petitioned against underfunded schools that they did likewise in support of the PVI sector which was also underfunded and made reference to a separate petition to increase early years funding. Sue agreed to circulate information to Forum members regarding the early year's petition.

David Rowlands endorsed Sue Anderson's plea for colleagues to support an increase in early years funding as the early years provided an essential foundation for pupils' education.

Mark Parkinson raised the question as to, whilst the f40 group were campaigning for schools, why had they not picked up the early years agenda and agreed to write to the f40 group on this matter.

John agreed to remind CWAPH and CWASH to circulate the petition to governors and encourage them to sign up individually.

It was noted that the petition ended on 19 May 2019.

8. Any other business

8.1 Fischer Family Trust (FFT) Licence

Natalie Cole reported that an opportunity had arisen to sign a two or three year contract with FFT. Prices would be frozen for the duration of the contract with discount of five percent on a two year contract and 10 percent on a three year contract. It was noted that FFT was funded through the combined budgets which government was phasing out.

David Rowlands asked how useful was FFT data now compared to three years ago; was it still relevant? Several head teachers confirmed that FFT data was of value and would become more relevant as the data sets grew.

John Murray put to the vote agreement for a three year contract.

Resolved that the Schools Forum agree to a three year contact with FFT (vote: unanimous).

8.2 Retirement of Chair

John Murray informed Forum that he was retiring as Headteacher at the end of summer, the next meeting would be his last and a new chair would need to be sought in time for the Autumn term meeting.

8.3 School Forum meetings

John Murray informed Forum that a proposal had been put forward to move Forum from a Monday to a Tuesday for the next academic year's meetings. The Clerk would be circulating an email to Forum members to canvas opinions on this change.

9. Next meeting

Monday 8 July 2019.

Agenda Item 4

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2018-2019 – Final Outturn

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of the report is to report on the 2018-2019 final outturn position for the centrally held DSG budget and to seek a recommendation from Schools Forum as to how the underspend is allocated.

Recommendations

2. The Forum is asked:-
 - (i) To note the final outturn on the 2018-2019 centrally held DSG.
 - (ii) To endorse the planned allocation and retention of the unspent reserve as recommended by the Schools Forum Finance Sub Group and detailed in paragraph 8.

Final Outturn

3. The final reported outturn for the centrally held DSG for 2018-2019 is an underspend of £1.012m. This is a significant change from the position reported at Third Review (November 2018) when an underspend of £0.1m was reported.
4. The main reason for the change in variance is due to the £0.703m of additional high needs funding made available to the local authority late into the financial year in December 2018. Additional funding accrued for the early years block based on take up in January 2019 accounts for a further £0.079m. Therefore a total of £0.782m of additional income has been achieved to the budget set for 2018-2019.
5. In terms of planned expenditure, there has been further slippage of £0.130m to expenditure budgets to the position reported at Third Review. The main variances at final outturn compared to Third Review are summarised in the table below.

	Third review (November 2018) £000	Final outturn £000
Independent and non maintained schools placements	400	233
16-25 top up payments	300	230
Mainstream top up payments	-300	-132
Inter authority recoupment	-100	-133
Additional high needs funding for training		-105
Alternative provision		157
Non SEN independent school fees		-65
Staffing vacancies	-100	-180
Rates	-100	-148
Early years block		-41
Additional high needs funding		-703
Additional early years funding		-79
Other		-47
Total	-100	-1012

6. The net underspend is due to the following primary variances.

- (i) An overspend of £0.178m on high needs budgets which is slightly lower than £0.3m forecast at third review. The net outturn position is mainly due to:
- a. the increase in demand for Independent and Non Maintained School placement fees (£0.233m overspend)
 - b. significant growth in the number of pupils requiring top up funding post 16 (£0.230m overspend)
 - c. an increase in top up payments for Alternative Provision arising from an increase in exclusions (£0.157m).
 - d. a reduction in top up payments pre-16 (-£0.132m) which is mainly due to funding ceasing following the introduction of the two year review for top up payments without an EHCP
 - e. fewer children placed in other Authority's schools (underspend of £0.133m).
 - f. an underspend on the budget for non-SEN independent school places which have not been required in year (-£0.065m)
 - g. funding set aside for workforce inclusion training not being progressed in year (-£0.105m).
- (ii) There is a slight underspend of £0.041m on the early years block based on the actual take up of the free and extended entitlement against the grant which is based on January census day alone. Payments to providers for the entitlement hours have overspent on the allocation but this has been more than offset by under allocations on early years pupil premium, disability access funding and SEN inclusion funding.

(iii) Current year rates rebates accounts for an underspend of £0.148m which is an increase from Third Review. However, early in 2019-2020 some corrections have been made to 2018-2019 rates charges for new school buildings which need to be addressed from this underspend position and this is included in the use of reserves recommendation below.

(iv) Staff savings arising from vacancy management accounted for an underspend of £0.180m which is an increase to the £0.1m reported at Third Review.

Position of the DSG Reserve

7. At the end of 2018-2019, the unapplied grant reserve from underspends on centrally held budgets is £2.131m. The breakdown of this cumulative position is detailed in the table below.

Budget heading	Variance 2016-17	Variance 2017-18	Variance 2018-19	Cumulative total
	£000	£000	£000	£000
S251 Misc budget (CWEIB allocation)	-58	-46	-24	-128
Staffing vacancies	-126	-206	-180	-512
Designated teacher funding	-10	-7	-5	-22
Personal Education Allowances	-68	2	0	-66
PFI contributions	-6	-58	82	18
School improvement advisers	-57	-268	0	-325
Growth fund	-30	-63	-24	-117
Rates	-406	-185	-148	-739
High Needs Block	147	408	-464	91
Non SEN Independent Sch Fees	-120	-120	-65	-305
Early years Block	61	31	-120	-28
Total	-671	-512	-948	-2,131

8. In 2018-2019 Schools Forum endorsed the reversal of the schools block transfer to high needs and committed £1.026m of the reserve to support budget setting for 2019-2020. Commitments were also agreed for reserves to be used to fund work on transition and averting exclusions which have not progressed during 2018-2019 and remain in the reserve. The uncommitted balance on the reserve in to 2019-2020 is £0.8m which is under 2% of the annual centrally held DSG allocation.

Proposal	Use of reserves £000
Reinstate high needs transfer for 2019-20	1026
S251 Misc (CWEIB allocation) Carry forward for CWEIB to carry out planned work on transitions	104

School intervention - Allocate funding to support the work of the Averting Exclusions Task Group in developing strategies to reduce the number of exclusions in the Borough.	200
Balance remaining	-801

View of the Schools Forum Sub Group

9. At the Schools Forum Sub Group meeting of 18 June 2019, the group discussed the variances that have arisen. The group also discussed the uncertainty surrounding allocations in the next comprehensive spending review, the outcome of the strategic high needs review consultation and final confirmation of the current year grant due in July. As it is also not permissible to allocate any funds to schools during the financial year, the group recommended that the uncommitted reserve be retained and reviewed in the autumn term alongside funding and consultation outcomes. The Sub Group also discussed requests for unspent funding to be made available for workforce inclusion training and special school outreach in 2019-20. The costs of these initiatives are to be determined and can be included in the autumn term review.

Next Steps

10. Subject to the views of Schools Forum, unspent DSG will be allocated as per paragraph 8 and reported to Council at First Review.

Agenda Item 5

Maintained School Balances Financial Year 2018-2019 and Academy Balances 2017-2018

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform Schools Forum of the final outturn position of maintained schools in the Borough for the 2018-2019 financial year. Also, as requested by Schools Forum, this report also includes academy balances for the latest reported position for the 2017-2018 academic and financial year accounts.

Recommendations

2. For Schools Forum to note the outturn position and movement in balances for both schools and academies and the mechanisms in place to support schools with deficit balances (maintained schools only).

Background

3. Under the Scheme for Financing Schools, schools can carry forward from one financial year to the next any surplus or deficit relative to the school's budget share. Following the closure of accounts for the financial year, a cumulative surplus or deficit is determined for each school to be transferred to the school in the following financial year. This balance represents the funds available to an individual school at a determined point in time at the end of the financial year.

Outturn Position 2018-2019 for maintained schools

4. The net surplus in maintained school balances for 2018-2019 is £8.9m. A summary of the balances by sector is shown in the table below with individual school balances included as an annex to this report.

School Balances outturn position 2018-2019 (subject to audit)

	Primary Schools	Secondary Schools	Special Schools	Alternative Provision	All Schools
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Revised Budget	116,493	54,485	18,324	1,591	190,893
Net Expenditure	110,419	53,248	16,925	1,401	181,993
Net Surplus	-6,074	-1,237	-1,399	-190	-8,900
% surplus to budget	-5.2%	-2.3%	-7.6%	-11.9%	-4.7%

5. The net surplus is made up of £10.5m of surplus balances across 105 schools and £1.6m of deficit balances. There are 25 schools with deficit balances which is an increase of four on 2017-2018. A breakdown by sector and the number of schools with surplus and deficit balances is shown in the table below.

	Primary Schools	Secondary Schools	Special Schools	Alternative Provision	All Schools
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Total Surplus	-6,782	-2,104	-1,464	-190	-10,540
Total Deficit	708	867	65	0	1,640
Net Surplus	-6,074	-1,237	-1,399	-190	-8,900

Number of schools with a surplus balance	89	7	7	2	105
Number of schools with a deficit balance	22	2	1	0	25
Total number of maintained schools	111	9	8	2	130

Movement in School Balances

6. The overall position shows a decrease in school balances of £1.4m since the end of 2017-2018 when the net surplus balance was £10.3m. The movement in balances held by sector is included in the table below.

Financial Year	Primary Schools	Secondary Schools	Special Schools	Alternative Provision	All Schools
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
2018-2019	6,074	1,237	1,399	190	8,900
2017-2018	7,709	990	1,457	135	10,291
Change	-1,635	247	-58	55	-1,391
% change	-21%	25%	-4%	41%	-14%

7. Primary school balances have decreased by £1.6m. There are three schools who converted to academy on 1 May 2018 and account for £0.6m of the reduction in LA balances as these have been transferred to the academy trust. Of the maintained schools, 22 primary schools have a deficit balance which is an increase to the 18 from the previous year. Balances range from a deficit of £162,752 to surplus of £301,012.
8. Secondary school balances have increased by £0.2m. Two secondary schools have deficit balances, unchanged from 2017-2018. Balances range from a deficit of £551,532 to surplus of £589,679.
9. Balances for special and alternative provision schools have been maintained with one school ending the year in a deficit position. Balances range from the deficit of £65,020 to £588,409.

Balance Control Mechanism

10. In agreement with Schools Forum in 2015, the Balance Control Mechanism (BCM) and requirement for schools to submit plans for unspent balances was not operated in the 2018-2019 financial year. This was largely a decision based on equity with academies who are not subject to caps on balances or clawback.

However, it was agreed that Officers would continue to review schools with excessive balances and liaise with those schools around spending plans. There are now 31 schools that have held balances in excess of the BCM thresholds for the last three years (8% for primary and special schools, 5% for secondary schools), up from 28 last year. The forward plans for these schools will be reviewed in the autumn term and for those projecting sustained balances going forward, they will be contacted for spending plans to demonstrate that whilst acting prudently to keep surpluses for future financial pressures, are also planning on spending their allocated funding on current pupils.

Maintained Schools with Deficit Balances

11. The number of schools ending the year with deficit balances has increased from 2017-2018 to 25. Most of these schools are set to recover those balances in the next financial year. There are 10 schools that do not recover in 2019-2020. Three of those schools have recovery plans agreed and are progressing with those plans whilst seven are currently unable to set a balanced position for future years. All schools setting an overall deficit budget for 2019-2020 are having their budgets approved individually where they need to demonstrate that setting a balanced budget would be detrimental to the operation of the school. Schools with approved deficit budgets are being issued with a Notice of Concern which is an internal control on the agreed budget plan. These school budgets will be monitored regularly and deviations approved by the Local Authority. There are currently 12 Notices issued, increasing from nine last year.

Academy Balances

12. At the meeting in July 2017, Forum requested that the balances for academies in the Borough as reported in their audited accounts be presented on an annual basis along with those of maintained schools. In order to present a comparable balance to that of maintained schools, the balances reported are only for the general unrestricted and restricted funds and exclude pension and fixed asset funds. The balances for 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 are included in appendix A.

13. Forum members should note that in the same way as the balances for maintained schools, these are balances held at a defined point in time (i.e. at the end of the academic and financial year). They do not represent the financial viability of the academy and in the absence of further context, do not explain the way the academy is operating or represent future spending plans or pressures.

Next Steps

14. To publish maintained school balances on the Schools Forum internet site.

Appendix A – Cheshire West and Chester academy reported balances for general restricted funds (excluding pension reserve) and unrestricted funds for 2016-2017 and 2017-2018

Provider Name	Academy Trust	Opening Date	2016/17 (31/08/2017) £	2017/18 (31/08/2018) £	Movement in funds £
Boughton Heath Primary School	Cheshire Academies Trust	01/01/2015	196,727	59,000	-137,727
Kelsall Primary School	Cheshire Academies Trust	01/09/2012	404,599	465,000	60,401
Mill View Primary School	Cheshire Academies Trust	01/01/2015	157,515	131,000	-26,515
Cheshire Academies Trust Total (including CAT and CLTA)			1,017,000	861,000	-156,000
Christleton High School	Christleton Learning Trust	01/04/2011	75,000	0	-75,000
Queen Park high	Christleton Learning Trust	01/04/2017	14,000	27,000	13,000
International School	Christleton Learning Trust	01/09/2017	0	16,000	16,000
Christleton Learning Trust Total			1,022,000	928,000	-94,000
Delamere Cof E Academy	North West Academies Trust	01/04/2011	308,000	22,000	-286,000
The Oak View Academy	North West Academies Trust	01/04/2014	2,000	28,000	26,000
St Martin's Academy Chester	North West Academies Trust	01/09/2013	103,000	64,000	-39,000
North West Academies Trust Total				98,000	98,000
Neston High School	Neston High School	01/07/2012	901,135	449,546	-451,589
Tarporley High School	Tarporley High School & Sixth Form	01/08/2012	245,078	943,338	698,260
The Bishops' Blue Coat CofE High School	The Bishops' Blue Coat CofE High School	01/04/2011	1,053,897	964,808	-89,089
The Catholic High School	The Chester Catholic Academies Partnership Trust	01/03/2013	40,062	-94,188	-134,250
Cloughwood Special School	Cloughwood Academy Trust	01/09/2013	427,595	505,570	77,975
Rudheath Primary Academy	Focus Trust	01/04/2013	257,000	184,000	-73,000
St Bernard's Roman Catholic Primary School	Holy Family Multi Academy Trust	01/06/2014	37,000	34,000	-3,000
The County High School Leftwich	The County High School Leftwich	01/09/2012	750,000	809,000	59,000
Over Hall Academy	Over Hall Academy	01/09/2013	62,942	145,187	82,245
The Winsford Academy	Fallibroome Trust	01/09/2010	695,423	789,176	93,753

Provider Name	Academy Trust	Opening Date	2016/17 (31/08/2017) £	2017/18 (31/08/2018) £	Movement in funds £
University Cathedral Free School	University of Chester Academies Trust	01/09/2013	-25,000	-235,000	-210,000
University of Chester Academy Northwich	University of Chester Academies Trust	01/01/2012	35,000	-759,000	-794,000
University of Chester Ellesmere Port Academy	University of Chester Academies Trust	01/09/2009	-450,000	-1,197,000	-747,000
University Primary Academy Weaverham	University of Chester Academies Trust	01/01/2014	-27,000	-175,000	-148,000
University of Chester Academies Trust Total			-358,000	-3,561,000	-3,203,000
The Russett School	The Russett Learning Trust	01/09/2015	1,660,983	2,091,232	430,249
Victoria Road Primary	The Aspire Educational Trust	01/04/2017	5,000	10,000	5,000
Barnton Primary	Weaver Trust	01/04/2017	65,000	364,000	299,000
Wolverham Primary	Concordia Trust	01/05/2018		418,000	
Parklands Primary	Concordia Trust	01/05/2018		48,000	
Childer Thornton Primary	Concordia Trust	01/05/2018		210,000	
Concordia Trust Total				864,000	
Upton Heath Primary	The Samara Trust	01/03/2018		124,000	
Little Sutton Primary	The Samara Trust	01/03/2018		24,000	
Clutton Primary	The Samara Trust	01/03/2018		139,000	
The Samara Trust Total				263,000	

Agenda item 6

Review of Growth Fund criteria for schools and academies

Purpose of the Report

1. To review the Growth Fund criteria in the context of the need for increased capacity in the secondary sector and pressure on the current budget.

Recommendation

2. The Schools Forum is asked to approve the revisions to the Growth Fund criteria in paragraph 8 for submission to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as a revision to the Schools Block Funding Formula submission.

Background

3. The Growth Fund is a topslice from the School Block of the DSG to support expansion in a few schools where pupil growth cannot be reflected in the school's formula funding until the next financial year. The purpose of the Growth Fund is to retain funding to support:
 - Growth in pupil numbers age 5-16
 - To meet basic need growth in both schools and academies
 - To support additional classes needed to meet the infant class size regulation
 - To meet the costs of new schools
 - To fund the lead in costs in order to admit pupils (i.e. to fund the appointment of staff and other purchases)
4. The funding can only be allocated on a temporary basis, in accordance with a specified criteria agreed by the ESFA and Schools Forum. The methodology for distributing funding can be a lump sum payment with clear parameters and/or an amount per pupil. It cannot be used to support any general changes in pupil numbers following the October census which determines funding for the following financial year.

Current criteria

5. In 2015-2016 the following criteria for growth funding was agreed with Schools Forum and submitted to the ESFA.
 - (A) A school or academy will be eligible for support where it has been agreed with the authority to provide an extra class in order to meet basic need in certain areas of the Borough (either as a bulge class or as an ongoing commitment). The school or academy will receive the primary AWPU rate per pupil for the proportion of the year which is not funded within the school's budget share.

(B) Funding will also be made available where the Local Authority requests that a school/academy increase by an agreed number of extra classes to meet demand from new housing developments in the catchment area. A lump sum payment will be available for each new class that has not otherwise been funded by varying estimated pupil numbers.

Funding of £40,000 will be allocated for up to one year for each additional class to allow additional provision to be created. The £40,000 is based on a teacher at M5 on the payscale and £4,000 towards furniture and equipment. The actual deployment of funding is for the school to decide.

Need for review of the current criteria

6. The current growth fund was established to support the growth in the primary sector and refers specifically to funding the primary AWPU. As the population growth has stabilised in primary, the growth in capacity is now needed in the secondary sector. As such, a number of secondary schools have been asked by the LA to increase their PAN either as a bulge class or permanent increase from September 2019.
7. The fund was created at £300k and remains at this amount. To date, it has been slightly underspent and been able to meet the growth in primary capacity under the current criteria. The need for primary growth is now much reduced and the need for funding is moving to the secondary sector. This will create a pressure on the growth fund budget for two reasons:
 - a number of academies have been approached to increase their PAN who will need to be funded for a full academic year rather than the seven months for maintained schools as their funding is lagged to the next academic rather than financial year.
 - the difference in primary and secondary AWPU
 - there are still some primary schools being funded for housing expansions rather than population growth.

Recommended revisions to the criteria

8. The potential budget pressures highlighted above would require an increase to the topsliced budget from £300k to £644k based on the current requests made by the LA to expand schools. This was discussed by the Schools Forum Sub Group at the June meeting and it was agreed that although the secondary sector needed to be funded for the expansion in pupil numbers, the burden of increasing the topslice on all schools needed to be mitigated. As such the following revisions to the current criteria are proposed:
 - that the criteria is revised to reflect the KS3 AWPU for secondary expansion in year seven
 - to include an affordability criteria relating to school carry forwards such that if any school has held surplus balances above the Balance Control Mechanism (BCM) thresholds for the last three years, they would not be

eligible for funding. The BCM thresholds are 8% for primary and 5% for secondary and these would also be applied to academy balances as per their published accounts for balances held in restricted and unrestricted general funds (excluding pension reserves) against funding for the academy's educational operations.

9. It is intended that the Growth Fund will continue to support short term changes to school capacity. Permanent changes will be funded by varying the pupil numbers used in the funding formula so that the increase in funding is not delayed until the following year. This will be included in the funding formula submission for Schools Forum and the ESFA to approve in January.

Next Steps

10. Subject to the approval of the Schools Forum, ratification of the changes in the Growth Fund criteria are to be submitted to the ESFA for approval before allocations are agreed for September 2019.

Agenda Item 7

Directed revisions to Schemes for Financing Schools for 2019-2020

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Schools Forum on the Directed Revisions to Schemes for Financing Schools issued by the Department for Education (DfE) in March 2019 which are to be incorporated in the Cheshire West and Chester Scheme.

Recommendations

2. The Schools Forum (maintained schools only) is asked to:
 - i. approve the revisions to the scheme which will be reflected in the updated Scheme to be published July 2019; and
 - ii. provide a view on changing the dates for budgets to be submitted to the local authority in line with the Scheme guidance (paragraph 8).

Background

3. The DfE issues statutory guidance on local authority Schemes for Financing Schools which is updated as required. The guidance includes provisions which a local authority's scheme must, should or may include. Schools Forum approval must be obtained for changes made to the local published schemes.

Changes for 2019

4. There are a number of updates required to reflect current policy positions and changes in legislation. These are detailed in appendix A alongside the current Cheshire West and Chester scheme reference and the proposed revision.

Updates to wording

5. Additional updates made to the scheme guidance include:
 - change from “Efficiency and Value for Money” to “School Resource Management”
 - change from “achieve efficiencies” to “effective management of resources”
 - change “Criminal Records Bureau” to “Disclosure Barring service”
 - removed advice that all local authorities with a delegated budget must submit the schools financial value standard form before 31 March 2013 and annually

thereafter; replaced with advice that the form should be submitted before the end of the financial year

Updates to references to legislation

6. Additional updates made to the scheme guidance include:
 - To add “It is also possible for the Secretary of State to make directed revisions to schemes after consultation. Such revisions become part of the scheme from the date of the direction”
 - To remove generic references to legislation “School Premises Regulations and DfE Construction Standards, and health and safety legislation”, added references to specific legislation

Proposed revision to date for submission of budget plans

7. Statutory guidance states that the scheme should contain a provision requiring each school to submit a plan to the authority by a stipulated date showing its intentions for expenditure in the current financial year and the assumptions underpinning the budget plan. Authorities may insert in their schemes a requirement that provisional budget plans be submitted by a certain date; but these should be differentiated from the formal budget plan which should not be required before 1 May.
8. In the current scheme for Cheshire West and Chester, the formal budget plan is required by 1 June. This has not been revised since the Funding Reforms of 2013 which brought forward the school budget share allocations to February. To ensure that schools are planning ahead in sufficient time to manage their budget and effect any necessary changes, it is proposed to bring forward the formal budget submission deadline to 1 May. In addition, an initial budget plan will be required from each school, approved by the Governing Body by the end of the spring term such that only revisions arising from a change in carry forward position need to be revisited by 1 May.

Next Steps

9. Officers to publish the revised Scheme for Financing Schools on the Council’s website and Schools Finance intranet site in July 2019 to reflect the directed revisions and a communication to schools to be included in the next School Bulletin. Schools Forum is also responsible for communicating revisions to maintained schools.
10. Subject to views of Schools Forum, a consultation with all schools will follow in the autumn term on amending the date for submission of budget plans.

Appendix A – Revisions to the Cheshire West and Chester Scheme for Financing Schools

Current scheme	Directed Revision	Revised scheme
3.2.2. Schools must determine their own arrangements for assets worth less than £1000, but a register must be kept in some form.	paragraph 2.1.4 Control of Assets: added “The scheme should encourage schools to register anything that is portable and attractive, such as a camera”	3.2.2. Schools must determine their own arrangements for assets worth less than £1000, but a register must be kept in some form for anything that is portable and attractive, such as a camera.
No current clauses regarding approved supplier lists	<p>paragraph 2.10 Purchasing, tendering and contracting requirements: removed “A scheme may invite schools to nominate suppliers for inclusion on lists of approved suppliers. The intention is to ensure that schools do not have to be subjected to unreasonable requirements as to authority counter-signature or use of an approved list, but also ensures that they should obtain at least three tenders or quotations for orders above a certain threshold”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> paragraph 2.10: removed “Authorities may issue lists of approved suppliers; but schools must not be compelled either directly or indirectly to use them. Authorities may wish to point out the advantages of using lists of approved suppliers, eg assurance on health and safety issues” paragraph 2.10: added “Schools may seek advice on a range of compliant deals via Buying for schools” 	<p>Revise paragraph at 5.2.10</p> <p>It is recommended that a Governing Body obtains legal advice before entering into any contract based on a supplier’s standard terms and conditions. If the School buys into the Local Authority’s legal helpline service, initial advice can be obtained through this helpline. Schools may also seek advice on a range of compliant deals via Buying for schools</p>
Use of credit or charge cards not currently offered in CWAC	paragraph 3.6 Borrowing by schools: added “Schemes may also wish to permit the use of credit or charge cards. However, no interest charges should be incurred by the school, with balances fully cleared on a monthly basis”	No change proposed.
9.1.2. Income from the	paragraph 5.1 income from	9.1.2. Income from the

<p>lettings of school premises owned by the LA should not be payable into voluntary or private funds held by the school.</p>	<p>lettings: added “However, where land is held by a charitable trust, it will be for the school’s trustees to determine the use of any income generated by the land”</p>	<p>lettings of school premises owned by the LA should not be payable into voluntary or private funds held by the school. However, where land is held by a charitable trust, it will be for the school’s trustees to determine the use of any income generated by the land</p>
<p>10.2.2. Other expenditure incurred to secure resignations where the school has not followed the Local Authority’s advice.</p>	<p>paragraph 6.2.2 Circumstances in which charges may be made: changed “Other expenditure incurred to secure resignations where the school had not followed authority advice” to “Other expenditure incurred to secure resignations where there is good reason to charge this to the school (see Annex B)”</p>	<p>10.2.2. Other expenditure incurred to secure resignations where there is good reason to charge this to the school (see Annex D)</p>
<p>12.1.2 The Local Authority will not discriminate in its provision of services on the basis of categories of schools except where such discrimination is justified by differences in statutory duties.</p>	<p>paragraph 8.1 Provision of services from centrally retained budgets : changed to explain the scheme should contain a provision barring the authority from discriminating in its provision of services on the basis of categories of schools, except in cases where this would be allowable under the school and early years finance regulations or the dedicated schools grant (DSG) conditions of grant</p>	<p>12.1.2 The Local Authority will not discriminate in its provision of services on the basis of categories of schools except in cases where this would be allowable under the school and early years finance regulations or the dedicated schools grant (DSG) conditions of grant</p>
<p>12.3.1. Where funding for a service has been delegated, and the Local Authority is offering the services on a buyback basis, this will be in a way which does not unreasonably restrict schools’ freedom of choice among the services available.</p>	<p>paragraph 8.2 Packaging of services: clarification provided on provisions to limit the term of agreement with a school to buy services or facilities from the authority</p>	<p>12.3.1. Where funding for a service has been delegated, and the Local Authority is offering the services on a buyback basis, this will be in a way which does not unreasonably restrict schools’ freedom of choice among the services available. and where practicable, this will include provision on a service-by-service basis as well as in packages of services.</p>
<p>12.5.1 In order to ensure that the performance of the duty on</p>	<p>paragraph 8.4 Teachers’ Pensions: revised quoted</p>	<p>12.5.1 In order to ensure that the performance of the duty on</p>

<p>the authority to supply Teachers Pensions with information under the Teachers' Pensions Regulations 1997, the following conditions are imposed on the authority and governing bodies of all maintained schools covered by this Scheme in relation to their budget shares.</p> <p>12.5.4 A governing body of any maintained school which directly administers its payroll shall supply salary, service and pensions data to the authority which the authority requires to submit its annual return of salary and service to Teachers' Pensions and to produce its audited contributions certificate.</p>	<p>legislation and updated expectation of monthly not annual returns</p>	<p>the authority to supply Teachers' Pensions with information under the Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014, the following conditions are imposed on the authority and governing bodies of all maintained schools covered by this scheme in relation to their budget shares.</p> <p>12.5.4 A governing body of any maintained school which directly administers its payroll shall supply salary, service and pensions data to the authority which the authority requires to submit its monthly return of salary and service to Teachers' Pensions and to produce its audited contributions certificate</p>
<p>1.7.1 The Governing Body shall ensure that any contractor chosen to provide services , has adequate insurance cover for any claims made against the contractor by a third party, or other liabilities which could arise from their contract with the Governing Body. Insurance levels should be in line with the requirements of E14 of the Contract Procedure Rules and where necessary the School should seek advice from the Authority's Audit and Risk team.</p>	<p>paragraph 10.1 Insurance Cover : added "The evidence required to demonstrate the parity of cover should be reasonable, not place an undue burden upon the school, nor act as a barrier to the school exercising their choice of supplier"</p>	<p>1.7.1 The Governing Body shall ensure that any contractor chosen to provide services , has adequate insurance cover for any claims made against the contractor by a third party, or other liabilities which could arise from their contract with the Governing Body. Insurance levels should be in line with the requirements of E14 of the Contract Procedure Rules and where necessary the School should seek advice from the Authority's Audit and Risk team. In demonstrating the parity of cover. Evidence should be reasonable, not place an undue burden upon the school, nor act as a barrier to the school exercising their choice of supplier</p>
<p>Covered in Annex D</p>	<p>paragraph 11.11Redundancy / early retirement costs: clarification on how to fund early retirement and redundancy costs; changed "If the authority proposes to depart from this, then the</p>	<p>Already included in Annex D</p>

	<p>scheme should contain a provision setting out the circumstances in which exceptions will be made” to “If the authority proposes to make local arrangements in accordance with the act, then the scheme should contain a provision setting out how this will work”</p>	
<p>Annex A The Funding Framework: Main Features The Local Authority is obliged to publish each year a statement setting out details of its planned Schools Budget and other expenditure on children’s services, showing the amounts to be centrally retained and funding delegated to school. After each financial year the Local Authority must publish a statement showing out-turn expenditure at both central level and for each school, and the balances held in respect of each school.</p> <p>The detailed publication requirements for financial statements are set out in regulations issued by the Secretary of State, but each school must receive a copy of each year’s budget and out-turn statements so far as they relate to that school or central expenditure.</p>	<p>Annex A: removed advice that each school must receive a copy of each year’s budget and outturn statements so far as they relate to that school or central expenditure</p> <p>Annex A: removed advice that an authority must publish a statement showing outturn expenditure “at both central level and for each school, and balances held in respect of each school”</p>	<p>Paragraphs removed</p>
<p>16.16.1. Schools which choose to exercise the power conferred by s.27 (1) of the Education Act 2002 to provide community facilities will be subject to a range of controls. First, regulations made under s.28 (2), if made, can specify activities which may not be undertaken at all under the main enabling power. Secondly, the school is obliged to consult</p>	<p>Community facilities annex C: updated in line with section 13: updated to reflect changes to the Children and Families Act 2014; a school is no longer required to consult before establishing community facilities, and there is no longer a need for a school to be mindful of a local authority’s advice, under section 27 of the Education Act 2002.</p>	<p>16.16.1. Schools which choose to exercise the power conferred by s.27 (1) of the Education Act 2002 to provide community facilities will be subject to controls under those regulations. Regulations made under s.28 (2), if made, can specify activities which may not be undertaken at all under the main enabling power. To reflect changes to the Children and</p>

<p>its LA and have regard to advice from the Local Authority. Thirdly, the Secretary of State Issues guidance to Governing Bodies about a range of issues connected with exercise of the power, and a school must have regard to that. See Annex E.</p>		<p>Families Act 2014; a school is no longer required to consult before establishing community facilities, and there is no longer a need for a school to be mindful of a local authority's advice, under section 27 of the Education Act 2002. See Annex E.</p> <p>Annex E (also to be updated as above)</p>
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Agenda item 9

Annual review of the Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum's membership, constitution and terms of reference

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to review the Schools Forum's membership, constitution and terms of reference and ensure that the composition of the Schools Forum is compliant with the regulations.

Appendix 1: Schools Forum Membership

Appendix 2: Constitution and terms of reference

Appendix 3: Finance sub group terms of reference and membership

Appendix 4: High Needs sub group terms of reference and membership

Recommendations

The Schools Forum is asked to

- i. note that there are no changes to the constitution and terms of reference; and
- ii. review membership on the sub groups.

Background

2. The Schools Forum's constitution requires that the membership, constitution and terms of reference be reviewed annually.
3. Officers have reviewed the pupil numbers based on the current make up of schools and academies to ensure that the composition of the Schools Forum is compliant with the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 which states that 'primary schools, secondary schools and academies must be broadly proportionately represented on the forum, having regard to the total number of pupils registered at them'.
4. Officers have determined that the pupil ration does not warrant a revision in the Schools Forum membership at this time.
5. No formal revisions to the schools forum regulations have been issued by the DfE, therefore no amendments to the current constitution and terms of reference are proposed.
6. Following a number of changes to the Schools Forum membership, Forum may wish to review the membership of the sub groups (appendix 3 and 4).

Next Steps

7. Schools Forum clerk to update sub group membership as agreed.

Appendix 1

Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum Membership

Chair: John Murray **Vice chair:** tbc

The Cheshire West and Chester model comprises 33 members in total, representing both schools and non-schools sectors and is constituted as follows:

School members (18)

Primary heads (five)		Term of office ends
Alan Brown	Oldfield Primary School	March 2023
Sarah Curtis	Meadow Primary	December 2020
Ian Devereux Roberts	Frodsham Manor House Primary	September 2021
Kate Docherty	Rivacre Valley Primary	September 2023
Sarah Worthington	Malpas Alport Endowed Primary School	September 2019

Substitutes

Kerry Forrester Tarporley Church of England Primary

Primary governors (five)

David Bradburn	Wincham Community Primary School	November 2022
Duncan Haworth	Woodfall Primary	December 2020
Kath Lloyd	Westminster Community Primary	December 2020
David Nield	Lostock Gralam CE Primary School	June 2023
Susan Yarnall	Lache Primary	January 2023

Substitutes

Heather Lewis Meadow Primary
Vacancy

Secondary heads (two)

David Curry	Bishop Heber High	November 2021
Mike Holland	Hartford CE High	January 2023

Substitute

Vacancy

Secondary governors (two)

John Freeman	Weaverham High	June 2023
David Rowlands	Upton High School	January 2021

Substitute

Vacancy

Special school head and governor (two)

Mike McCann	Greenbank School	March 2020
Philip Hopwood	Greenbank School	November 2020

Substitute

Alison Ashley	Hebden Green School Head	
Peter Gaskell	Hebden Green School Governor	

Nursery school (one)

Katie Tyrrie	St Mary's Community Nursery	
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Pupil referral units (one)

Andy Stewart	The Bridge Short Stay School	July 2021
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Substitute

Sian Thomas	Ancora House School	
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Academies (including Free Schools) members (seven)**Primary/Secondary (six)**

Stephanie Cade	Childer Thornton Primary	March 2023
Amanda Harrison	The Winsford Academy	September 2022
Jason Lowe	Tarporley High School	March 2022
John Murray	The Catholic High School, Chester	August 2019
Lyndsay Watterson	Queens Park High School	January 2023
Harry Ziman	Kelsall Primary School	September 2020

Substitutes

Steven Ellis	Boughton Heath Academy	
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Special (one)

Marie Allen	The Russett School	June 2021
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Substitutes

Vacancy		
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Non-schools members (eight)**Chair of Primary Headteachers Association (one)**

Hilary Berry	CWAPH	August 2019
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Diocesan authorities (two)

Kathryn Magiera	Witton Church Walk CE School	October 2023
Caroline Vile	Ellesmere Port Catholic High School	April 2020

Private, voluntary and independent early years' providers (two)

Paula Adolph	Whitby Heath Pre-school	September 2020
Sue Anderson	The Beeches Pre-school	January 2021

Substitute

Vacancy		
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Trade unions (two)

Greg Foster Joint Consultative Negotiating Panel
Geoff Wright Joint Consultative Negotiating Panel

December 2020
May 2021

Substitute

Bevanie Robinson

16-19 providers (one)

Vacancy

Total: 33

Non-voting observers

Councillor Nicole Meardon, Cabinet Member for Children and Families
Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) representative

Clerk Charlotte Fenn, Schools Monitoring Officer

Appendix 2

Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum

Constitution and Terms of Reference

Definitions

The Forum is the Schools Forum for the area covered by Cheshire West and Chester Council. The Constitution complies with The Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2012, and in its procedures and terms of reference takes account of advice issued by the Department for Education (DFE).

The Council is Cheshire West and Chester Council in its role as Local Authority.

Membership

1. The Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum (the Forum) will consist of 33 Members made up of 25 school members and academies members and eight non-school members made up as follows:-

School Members (19)

- one representative from St Mary's Nursery School
- 10 primary representatives (five headteachers, five governors)
- five secondary representatives (three headteachers, two governors)
- two special school representatives (one headteacher, one governor)
- one Pupil referral units representative

Academy (including free schools) Members (six)

- five primary/secondary representatives
- one special representative

The proportion of school members and academy members will always be at least two thirds of the membership of the forum.

Non School Members (eight)

- one Roman Catholic Diocese representative
- one Church of England Diocese representative
- two Private, voluntary or independent sector provider representatives

- one 16-19 provider representative
- two Trades Union representative
- one Chair of the Association of Primary Headteachers (if not a serving headteacher)

In addition the following are entitled to attend and speak at meetings of the School Forum, but are not members and have no voting rights:

Observers

- The Education and Children Portfolio Holder of the Council
 - The Resources Portfolio Holder of the Council
 - Director of Children’s Services of the Council or their nominated representative
 - Chief Finance Officer of the Council or their nominated representative
 - Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) representative
2. The term of office for Forum Members will be four years from the date of appointment/election at which time elections will take place for school and academy members and nominations will be sought for the non-school members. Should a resignation be tendered from the Forum, an election (or nominations where appropriate) will be held for the vacancy which will ensure that the representational balance is maintained or improved. Each representative group (Headteachers and Governors by phase) will be responsible for the method by which they elect and nominate school and academy member representatives.
 3. The Academy members represent the governing bodies of the Academies situated in the authority’s area, so do not necessarily have to be a Principal or a governor. It is for the governing bodies of the Academies concerned to elect their members; if there is only one Academy in the authority’s area, its governing body will select the member.
 4. The Council will maintain a written record of the composition of the Schools Forum including the method by which representatives are elected or nominated. The Council will inform all schools of the membership of the Forum and will provide details of any non-school Member appointed to the Forum within one month of appointment. This will be carried out when constituting the Forum and after the appointment of any new or replacement Member.
 5. Elected Members who hold an executive role within the Council and officers who have a role in strategic resource management of the authority are unable to be members of the Forum (these restrictions do not apply to officers employed as teachers or who work for, and those who directly manage, a service which provides education to individual children and/or advice to schools on learning and behavioural matters).

6. The Education and Children Portfolio Holder of the Council and a representative of the Education Funding Agency will be invited to attend meetings of the Forum as observers.

Meetings and proceedings of the Schools Forum

7. There will be a minimum of four meetings per school year.
8. The meetings of the Forum will be open to the public. Exceptionally, the Chair of the Forum may determine that a meeting or part of a meeting will be held in private. Prior to making any such determination, the Chair must take legal advice and the determination must be in accordance with this legal advice. The reasons for this determination must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
9. Participation by local authority members and officers will be limited to a Lead Member for education and children's services, a Lead Member for resources, Director of Children's Services (or their representative), Chief Finance Officer (or their representative) or officers who are providing specific financial or technical advice to Schools Forum. Other individuals (including Council officers) will be able to participate where they are presenting a report, but their participation must be limited to their specific agenda item.
10. The meetings are quorate if at least 40% of the total membership (excluding vacancies) is present at the meeting. In the event of a meeting not being quorate, members present may by majority vote decide to continue the meeting and thus be able to offer advice to the Council and/or respond to any consultation, but will be unable to exercise any of the decision making powers of the Forum.
11. The Council will consult the Forum annually on arrangements for substitutes.
12. Each group of Schools Members will agree two named substitutes and provide this information to the clerk. Agendas and papers for meetings will be sent to named substitutes as a matter of course. It is up to individual members of the Forum to contact a substitute if they are unable to attend meetings.
13. In exceptional circumstances Headteachers' substitutes can be drawn from senior members of staff (a deputy headteacher, bursar or other person responsible for the financial management of the school).
14. Members of the Forum are required to make declarations of interest on appointment and when, for example, the Forum is considering matters relating to contracts.
15. Meetings of the Forum will be called allowing at least two weeks notice. Supporting papers will be sent out at least five working days before the meeting.
16. The Council shall appoint a Clerk for the Schools' Forum who shall be in attendance at each meeting of the Forum and will take minutes. Meetings may be recorded for the purposes of the accuracy of the minutes only.

17. Minutes of meetings will be placed on the Council's website and all schools and associated groups will be informed when new minutes are available. All schools and associated groups will be informed of action taken by the Council on Forum advice.
18. Claiming of expenses for Forum Members will be in accordance with the Forum expenses policy document and claims will be made on the specific claim forms and duly authorised. In case of dispute, the official record of attendance signed at the meeting will be used to determine attendance, and mapping tools used to determine mileage claimed.
19. An appropriate budget will be available for each financial year for costs associated with the operation of the Forum e.g. hiring a venue, refreshments and other expenses and clerking costs. This will be a charge against the Council's Schools Budget within the centrally retained budgets. The level of the budget will be reviewed annually by the Council in consultation with the Forum.
20. The Schools Forum may convene various task and finish sub groups to look at specific topics for discussion and consultation and to report back with outcomes and recommendations. The membership of any sub group to be agreed by Schools Forum.

Items for Forum Discussion

21. The Forum will discuss and be consulted upon the following matters:-

Consultation on School Funding Formula

- a) The Council shall consult the Forum on any proposed changes in relation to the factors and criteria that were taken into account, or the methods, principles and rules that have been adopted, in their formula made in accordance with regulations made under section 47 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, and the financial effect of any such change.
- b) Consultation shall take place in sufficient time to allow the views expressed to be taken into account in the determination of the Council's formula and in the initial determination of schools' budget shares before the beginning of the financial year.

Consultation on Contracts

22. The Council shall, at least one month prior to the issue of invitations to tender, consult the Forum on the terms of any proposed contract for supplies or services being a contract paid or to be paid out of the Council's schools budget where the estimated value of the proposed contract is not less than the threshold which applies to the authority for that proposed contract pursuant to regulation 8 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006.

Consultation on Financial Issues

23. The Council shall consult the Forum annually in respect of its functions relating to the schools budget, in connection with the following:

Financial issues relating to:

- arrangements for pupils with special educational needs, in particular the places to be commissioned by the LA and schools and the arrangements for paying top-up funding;
- arrangements for use of pupil referral units and the education of children otherwise than at school, in particular the places to be commissioned by the LA and schools and the arrangements for paying top-up funding;
- arrangements for early years provision;
- administration arrangements for the allocation of central government grants

Consultation on other matters

24. The Council may consult the Forum on such other matters concerning the funding of schools as they see fit.

25. The Forum shall also have the following powers:

a) De-delegation for mainstream primary/secondary 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
- School improvement

b) in exceptional circumstances only:

to recommend changes to the Council's funding formula subject to approval by the Education and Skills Funding Agency

26. Should a judgment be necessary on whether a matter falls within the remit of the Forum, for example whether an item has financial implications, the Council's Chief Finance Officer and The Director of Education and the Chair of the Forum shall jointly make the necessary determination.

27. For decision-making purposes each Forum member will be entitled to 1 vote on all matters put to the vote other than matters relating to the funding formula in which case only schools members (which includes mainstream schools, Academies, special schools and PRUs) and representatives of the Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) sector will be able to vote. In the case of an equal number of votes for and against a proposal, the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

28. Where an urgent proposal needs to be considered in advance of a meeting, the Forum may be consulted via post or e-mail.
29. The Constitution, Terms of Reference and Membership of the Forum will be reviewed annually.
30. A Chair and Vice-Chair will be elected by the Forum from its voting membership every two years, or at the first meeting following any resignation. A voting Member who is also an elected Member or officer of the Council may not be elected Chair or Vice-Chair. At any meeting where both the Chair and Vice-Chair are absent, the Forum shall elect, from those voting Members present, a person to take the Chair for that meeting only.

Appendix 3

Schools Forum Finance Sub Group

Terms of Reference:-

1. To keep under review the formula and allocation of the DSG..
2. To act as a point of scrutiny and interrogation regarding policy options in the DSG, Government consultations and policy.
3. To provide detailed examination of issues identified by the Schools Forum.
4. To make recommendations to the Schools Forum.

Membership:

Chair of Schools Forum	John Murray
Primary Headteacher	Kate Docherty
Secondary Headteacher	
Special Headteacher	Mike McCann
Two Governors	Duncan Haworth / John Freeman
Trade Union Representative	Greg Foster

If not included in any of the above, an academy representative and a maintained school representative.

Local Authority officers as appropriate.

Observers:

Chairs of the Headteacher and Governor Associations, if members of the Schools Forum.

Appendix 4

Schools Forum High Needs sub group

Terms of Reference:

1. To find alternative proposals to address the high needs block overspend.
2. To provide detailed examination of issues identified by the Schools Forum.
3. To make recommendations to the Schools Forum.

Membership

Secondary Headteacher

Secondary Headteacher

Primary Headteacher

Primary Headteacher

CWASSH Chair

Secondary Governor

Primary Governor

Sarah Curtis

Kate Docherty

Mike McCann or Alison Ashley (vice chair)

John Freeman

Observers:

CWAPH Chair

Nurse School

Hilary Berry

Katie Tyrie

Local Authority Officers as appropriate.

**Cheshire West and Chester
Schools Forum
8 July 2019**

Agenda Item 11

Schedule of meetings 2019-2020

Schools Forum – all meetings 4.30pm – 6.30pm (refreshments at 4pm) unless otherwise stated.

Date	Venue	Proposed agenda
Tuesday 8 October 2019	Queen's Park High School - tbc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final allocation of the DSG 2019-2020 • DSG 2019-2020 Forecast Outturn at First Review • School Funding Arrangements 2020-2021 • Basic needs capital programme
Tuesday 10 December 2019	Queen's Park High School - tbc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DSG 2019-2020 Forecast Outturn at Mid Year Review • Initial Planning for DSG Allocations for 2020-2021 and Budget Setting
Tuesday 14 January 2020	Queen's Park High School - tbc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined Budgets and Miscellaneous Expenditure • DSG Allocations for 2020-2021 and Budget Setting • Draft of 2020-2021 School Funding Formula for January submission • De-delegation – Proposals for 2020-2021 • DSG 2019-2020 Forecast Outturn at Third Review • SEND High Needs Consultation outcomes
Tuesday 11 February 2020	Queen's Park High School - tbc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years funding formula for February submission • Special Educational Needs (SEN) Funding for Mainstream and Special Schools – Funding from the High Needs Block 2020-2021 • Central Spend budgets 2020-2021
Tuesday 7 July 2020	Queen's Park High School - tbc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School funding arrangements –national data comparison 2020-2021 • School funding arrangements for 2021-2022 • Directed revisions to schemes for financing schools • DSG 2019-2020 outturn • Financial year 2019-2020 analysis of schools balances (including Academies) • Annual review of Schools Forum membership, constitution and terms of reference

Schools Forum finance sub group – all meetings 2pm – 4pm unless otherwise stated

Date	Venue
Tuesday 17 September 2019	Nicholas House G2
Tuesday 19 November 2019	Nicholas House G2
Tuesday 17 December 2019	Nicholas House G2
Tuesday 21 January 2020	Nicholas House G2
Tuesday 16 June 2020	Nicholas House G2