



Schools Forum

Date: Monday, 24 September 2018

Time: 4.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Level 2, Town Hall Extension

Everyone is welcome to attend this committee meeting.

Access to the Council Chamber

Public access to the Council Chamber is on Level 2 of the Town Hall Extension, using the lift or stairs in the lobby of the Mount Street entrance to the Extension. That lobby can also be reached from the St. Peter's Square entrance and from Library Walk. **There is no public access from the Lloyd Street entrances of the Extension.**

Membership of the Schools Forum

Secondary Sector Headteachers (1) Gillian Houghton

Secondary Sector Governors (1) vacancy

Primary Sector Headteachers (4) Patricia Adams, Mike Cooke, Sarah Navin, Saeeda Ishaq

Primary Sector Governors (4) Brendon Jones, x 2 vacancies, Michael Flanagan

Special School Headteachers (1) Alan Braven

Special School Governor (1) vacancy

Academy Representative (6) Elizabeth Fritchley, Andy Park, Emma Merva, Ian Fenn, Joshua Rowe, Micheal Carson

Pupil Referral Unit Representative (1) Helen McAndrew

Nursery School Representative (1) Joanne Fenton

Non-School Members (9) Isobel Booter, Councillor Stone, Cath Baggaley, John Morgan, Elizabeth Cummings, Antonio de Paola

Agenda

1. **Urgent Business**
To consider any items which the Chair has agreed to have submitted as urgent
2. **Appeals**
To consider any appeals from the public against refusal to allow inspection of background documents and/or the inclusion of items in the confidential part of the agenda
3. **Minutes** 5 - 8
To note as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting
4. **Notes of the last meeting** 9 - 10
To note as a correct record the notes of the meeting held on 16 July 2018
5. **Dedicated Schools Grant pressures and plan for recovery** 11 - 20

Information about the Forum

Schools are represented on the Forum by headteachers and school governors, elected to reflect all categories of school. In Manchester; there are non-school representatives from the teacher associations; additional non-voting places are reserved for invited elected members and representatives of other interested bodies.

The Forum members work together to provide a clear consensus of professional advice to education decision-makers, to achieve a transparent deployment of available resources. The Forum provides a formal channel of communication between the Council and schools for consultation concerning the funding of schools, and aims to agree recommendations which present the best possible compromise between competing claims on limited resources; has strategic oversight of ALL funding decisions affecting schools, and is involved in annual consultation in respect of the Council's functions relating to the schools budget in connection with the following:

- pupils with SEN (Special Educational Needs)
- early years
- revisions to the Council's scheme for the financing of schools
- administration of central government grants to schools including Standards Funds
- arrangements for free school meals

The Forum must be consulted on any proposed changes to the Council's school funding formula, and the financial effects of any proposed changes.

Smoking is not allowed in Council buildings.

Joanne Roney OBE
Chief Executive
Level 3, Town Hall Extension,
Albert Square,
Manchester, M60 2LA

Further Information

For help, advice and information about this meeting please contact the Committee Officer:

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This agenda was issued on **Friday, 14 September 2018** by the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit, Manchester City Council, Level 6, Town Hall Extension (Mount Street Elevation), Manchester M60 2LA

Manchester Schools Forum

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2018

Present:

Secondary Sector Headteachers: Gillian Houghton

Secondary Sector Governors: -

Primary Sector Headteachers: Mike Cooke, Sarah Navin,

Primary Sector Governors: Brendon Jones, Michael Flanagan

Special School Headteachers: Alan Braven,

Special School Governor: -

Academy Representatives: Emma Merva, Michael Carson

Pupil Referral Unit Representative: -

Nursery School Representative: Helen McAndrew

Non-school members: Councillor Stone, Isobel Booter (Head of Inclusion)

PVI Sector Representative: Elizabeth Cummings

Council Officers: Reena Kohli, (Directorate Financial Lead, Children and Families),

Apologies: Ian Fenn, Andy Park, Patricia Adams, Joanne Fenton, Elizabeth Fritchley, Joshua Rowe, Michael Carson, Amanda Corcoran (Director of Education)

SF/18/04 Appointment of Chair

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, and following a nomination which was duly seconded, the Forum agreed to appoint Councillor Stone as Chair for this meeting.

Decision

To appoint Councillor Stone as Chair for this meeting of the Forum.

SF/18/05 Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were submitted for consideration as a correct record. Michael Flanagan highlighted that his attendance had not been recorded.

Decision

To agree the minutes subject to the amendment above.

SF/18/06 Dedicated Schools Grant Outturn 2017/18 and Schools Balances

The Forum considered a report of the Head of Finance for Adult Services Directorate and Children's Services Directorate which discussed the outturn position on the school balances and the final outturn position on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), including the centrally retained element. The Forum was invited to note the DSG deficit balance carried forward in to the current financial year and consider whether this may be off-set against a growth in the Schools Block Fund, should it be

found to have underspent at the end of the financial year.

The Directorate Lead Children and Families Finance told the Forum that the provisional outturn position for maintained schools ('Schools Balances') was an overall revenue surplus of £25.127m (a £2.371m increase on maintained school balance compared with 2016/17). She said that most schools are in surplus however four schools were found to be in deficit (one primary and three special sector). She explained that excess in this regard had been defined as the school having a surplus of more than 8% surplus of the overall budget share for primary schools and over 5% surplus of the budget share for secondary sector schools. The Directorate Lead Children and Families Finance advised that officers had written to schools to ask what they planned to do with their balances and once collated, this information would be brought back to the Forum for future consideration.

Discussions then moved to the Dedicated Schools Grant, how it is allocated and the purpose of the centrally retained element. The Directorate Lead Children and Families Finance explained that there was a DSG overspend of approximately £769,000 in the last financial year which had been attributed to pressures within the High Needs Block. The 2017/18 overspend had been offset by underspends in the Early Years Block (due to an underclaim of the Working Parents Offer) and Schools Block (largely attributed to the Growth Fund). It was anticipated that the High Needs Block pressures for the 2018/19 budget would amount to approximately £875,000. The Forum was asked to note that it was unlikely that this deficit may offset with an Early Years underspend due to the anticipated 'clawback' of funding. However, it was felt that there was likely to be some uncommitted money in the Schools Block this financial year due to an underspend in the Growth Fund which may be offset against the deficit should that be that case.

The Forum then proceeded to vote on the proposal to offset the DSG 2017/18 deficit against the Schools Block Growth Fund. The vote was carried.

There was a discussion about the allocation for alternative provision funding within the High Needs Block. A member, told the Forum that the Department for Education good practice guidance recommended that a report on the Council's proposed strategy for funding allocation to alternative provision is brought to the Forum for consideration. The Forum noted that a report on alternative provision was recently considered by the Executive and asked officers to circulate this to members of the Forum for information. The Forum also agreed to add a report on the strategy for the allocation of funding for alternative provision to its Work Programme.

Decisions

1. To note the maintained school balances as at 2017/18.
2. To note the Dedicated Schools Grant deficit for 2017/18 shall be carried forward into 2018/19.
3. To agree that Dedicated Schools Grant 2017/18 deficit can be offset against the Schools Block Growth Fund if it underspends at the end of the financial year.
4. To agree to add a report on the Council's allocation strategy for alternative provision to the Forum's future work programme.

SF/18/07 Free School meal eligibility and checking

The Forum considered a report of Head of Finance for Adult Services Directorate and Children's Services Directorate which discussed current Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility in the city and the need to change the way eligibility is indicated in schools. The report also made reference to the City Council's Welfare Fund which had been specifically created to aid schools in supporting children who experience the impact of extreme poverty.

The Directorate Lead Children and Families Finance introduced the report and set out the way that schools are funded for FSM as well as how eligibility has been determined in the city until now. As the Universal Credit regime continues to be rolled out, alongside changes to the established FSM eligibility criteria, the Forum noted the Council would have a reducing role in determining eligibility as households move from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit. It was therefore suggested that the approach to checking FSM eligibility had to change in order to support schools in capturing entitlement for as many pupils as possible in the city.

To address this the Council had purchased a licence for a piece of software that had been specifically designed to capture FSM and Pupil Premium eligibility for pupils in maintained schools. The Council had successfully negotiated a 50% discount for the license, subject to a commitment that it is purchased for three years. As a result, the Forum would be asked to consider a proposal to allocate funding from another source later in the year to finance this. It was also said that the Council would endeavour to secure a discounted-rate for the licences for Academies who had missed the recent deadline for a similarly discounted rate

The Forum was informed that some schools had been trialling the software and that feedback was positive, in that the software was not onerous to use and that some schools had been able to highlight additional children who were eligible for FSM as a direct result of that software. A member commented on the importance of utilising software that reduced the bureaucratic burden for parents / carers. The matter of consent was also discussed.

Discussions then moved to the implication of the changes to eligibility criteria and the impact on children who were currently receiving FSM. The Directorate Lead Children and Families Finance explained that children who were no longer eligible would continue to receive FSM until they left the sector. It was also noted that this could potentially leave some households with a mixture of children who were eligible and ineligible for FSM.

The Directorate Lead Children and Families Finance advised the Forum that officers had undertaken an analysis of FSM, eligibility across the city and their findings indicated that a greater number of Manchester children than those already claiming may be eligible for FSM under the new regime. An overview of the analysis of schools was attached as an appendix to the report. She stressed the importance of schools checking eligibility to help shield schools from ongoing funding cuts. She told the Forum that the findings of the analysis would be shared with schools who would be given access to the software to enable them to review eligibility within the school.

A member noted that the analysis had not captured children who attend Pupil Referral Units and stressed the importance of identifying those in that particular cohort given the high proportion of pupils within that sector that are 'single-registered'. The Directorate Lead Children and Families Finance agreed to address that and share the analysis with schools. She also said that the analysis would be used as a baseline to determine the efficacy of the software in increasing take-up across the city's school population.

Decision

1. To note the implications of the Universal Credit regime roll out on Manchester Schools' ability to identify pupil entitlement to Free School Meals.
2. To note the activity being undertaken to increase take-up across the city, through the means of designated software.
3. To note that members will be invited to consider a funding proposal for the designated software at a future meeting of the Forum.

Manchester Schools Forum

Notes of the meeting held on 16 July 2018

Present:

Secondary Sector Headteachers:

Secondary Sector Governors: -

Primary Sector Headteachers: Mike Cooke, Patricia Adams

Primary Sector Governors: Brendon Jones

Special School Headteachers: Alan Braven,

Special School Governor: -

Academy Representatives: Ian Fenn (Chair), Andy Park, Michael Carson

Pupil Referral Unit Representative: -

Nursery School Representative:

Non-school members: Councillor Stone, Isobel Booler (Head of Inclusion)

PVI Sector Representative:

Also present: Amanda Corcoran (Director of Education), Natasha Lenihan (DfE)

Apologies: Michael Flanagan, Joshua Rowe, Cath Baggaley, Reena Kohli

SF/18/08 Meeting Not Quorate

Only nine members of the Forum were present at the meeting. Therefore the meeting was not quorate, meaning that no formal business was conducted by the Forum, nor any decisions made. All items would therefore be brought back to the next meeting. There was however a discussion of items brought to the meeting.

Item 3 (Minutes of the last meeting) – those present did not highlight any issues relating to accuracy of the minutes. It was noted that this item would be put forward for consideration at the meeting.

Item 4 (Analysis of Excessive School Balances) – the balance had increased by £2.1M (not including Academies). Largely attributed to planned work which had not yet been completed or ‘rainy day money’. There was a discussion about the explanations for the excess, the viability of 3 year financial projections, the impact on the assessment of balances on federated schools and the influence of the National Funding Formula. Aspects of the ‘clawback’ were also discussed alongside the intention that officers will go out to schools to discuss the terms in more detail. It was noted that this item would be put forward for consideration at the meeting.

Item 5 (2019/20 School Funding Arrangements) - Following a recent meeting with the DfE, the following changes to school funding were outlined:

- Schools Block - planned increase to the schools led element

- Change to the Growth Fund element
- Changes to mobility
- Plans to pay National Non Domestic Rates on historic rates
- High Needs Block - changes to the 6th Form fund
- Central Services Block - historic commitments
- Self-assessment tool
- No significant changes to the Early Years block

There was a discussion about the chronic nature of High Needs Block pressures in view of the static nature of funding. It was highlighted that the recent percentage increase to funding which was specifically for the creation of new places. It was felt that top up funding outside of the current arrangement was unlikely. It was noted that this item would be put forward for consideration at the meeting.

Manchester City Council**Report for Resolution****Report to:** **Schools Forum****Subject:** **Dedicated Schools Grant pressures and plan for recovery****Report of:** **Directorate Finance Lead – Children’s and Education**

Summary

This report provides the position on the centrally held Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) provisional outturn for 2018/19. It also identifies the expected position with regard to the DSG in 2019/20 onwards.

The forecast year end position on the centrally retained DSG is a net overspend of £2.9m mainly due to pressures in the high needs block. The financial risk within the high needs service has been previously notified to Schools Forum. The current high needs block pressures are believed to be on-going, this has been recognised nationally by the Department for Education (DfE).

In order to bring the high needs block into balance the Local Authority has provided a number of options. Forum is asked to consider and provide a view on the options presented.

Recommendations

All School Forum members are asked to:

- Note and comment on the 2018/19 DSG budget monitoring position and the anticipated deficit position.
- Note and comment on the plan for funding and addressing the high needs deficit and the need to consider the options as set out in this report.
- Note the intention to undertake a consultation with schools.

Contact Officers:

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 It is a requirement for the Schools Forum to agree that any deficit from a previous funding period is carried forward and addressed in the following funding period.
- 1.2 A proposal is made that an element of the expected deficit carry forward at the year-end is funded from the schools block element of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Other proposals to fund the DSG and the options for making ongoing savings are considered in the report in which Schools Forum is asked for views on.

2. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (DSG) POSITION

- 2.1 The DSG funds schools and is ring fenced for school pupil activity. The current projected overspend 2018/19 of £2.9m, this mainly relates to overspends in the high needs block. The early years block is also overspent, this is off-set by underspends in the schools block and central schools block. The position in each of the DSG block is outlined in table one below.

Table one: DSG Outturn 2015/16 – 2019/20

DSG Block:	Early Years	Schools	Central Schools Block	High Needs	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Year					
2015/16	(0.7)	0.7		(0.3)	(0.3)
2016/17	(0.2)	(1.0)		1.2	0.0
2017/18	(1.6)	(0.7)		3.1	0.8
2018/19 Projected	1.6	(1.5)	(0.1)	2.9	2.9
2019/20 Projected	0.4	(0.4)	0.0	2.4	2.4
2018/19 DSG Grant Allocation	40.83	398.47	3.99	73.48	516.77

High Needs Block Overspend

- 2.2 The high needs block budget of £73m is to support specialist and alternative provision. It is made up of place and top up funding for pre 16 direct provision in mainstream and special schools, specialist units and pupil referral units, independent post 16 placements and central services provided on behalf of all schools and academies. It also includes the top up funding for post 16 students in all settings.

- 2.3 Manchester has recognised the need to grow high needs placements both in mainstream and special schools due to increase in the number of special educational needs (SEN) within the school population. Most local special schools have been expanded and are operating at capacity, see table two below.

Table two: Numbers on roll (NOR) Special schools

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
NOR Special Schools	1,130	1,181	1,262	1,332	1439
% of overall school population	1.51%	1.53%	1.56%	1.6%	1.7%

- 2.4 There has also been growth in the number of pupils in mainstream schools with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) and Post 16 EHC budgets, please see table three below.

Table three: EHCP Growth

Block	Number of EHCP	EHCP as a % of School Population
2015/16	2,339	2.90%
2016/17	2,556	3.10%
2017/18	2,833	3.30%

- 2.5 Part of the high needs block pressure relates to the block not being adjusted line with the demographic changes impacting the City. The high needs block grant allocation has increased 3.4% and 1.8% in 2018/19 and 2019/20 respectively compared to 5% increase in population 2018/19 and 2019/20, see table four below.

Table four: Expected Demographics changes

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Population Estimates (NOR 5-18 years)	81,590	85,608	89,888	92,585	93,511
Increase year on year	4,085	4,018	4,280	2,697	926
Increase % year on year	5%	5%	5%	3%	1%
Special School Places increase year on year(1.9% of population)	78	76	81	51	18
EHCP/SEN statement increase year on year (2.8% of population)	114	113	120	76	26
Post 16 increase year on year	21	20	20	12	4

- 2.6 The high need block forecast overspend is estimated to be £2.9m and £2.4m 2018/19 and 2019/20 respectively based on current trends and expected DSG allocations.

Early Years Block Overspend

- 2.7 Funding for Early Years block in 2018/19 is £40m, after July adjustment based on updated census data, which is mainly allocated to schools, other private, voluntary and independent early year's education providers and childminders through the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) for three and four year olds or for two year old offer.
- 2.8 The early years block is projecting £1.6m overspend 2018/19 due to the number of children accessing early years offer being lower than the amount of grant funding allocated by the Department for Education (DfE).
- 2.9 The DfE adjusted early years block funding in July 2018 based on early years census changes between January 2017 and January 2018. The adjustment of £2.877m is detailed in Table five below:

Table five: Adjustment July 2018 Early Years

DfE adjustment July 2018:	Adjustment reduction 2018/19	Clawback 2017/18
	£m	£m
2 year old offer	0.397	0.232
3& 4 year old Universal Entitlement	0.402	0.247
3& 4 year old working parents offer	1.070	0.504
Early Years Pupil Premium	0.025	0
Total	1.894	0.983

This overspend is mostly off-set by underspends on the growth fund in the schools block and the central schools block. The 2018/19 grant allocation has been adjusted by the DfE accordingly. At this stage it is not anticipated that this deficit is on-going, but is due to the 2018/19 grant being realigned to actual level of take-up.

3. RECOVERY OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Local Authority has undertaken an analysis of the high needs block. The financial pressures within the Council means there will be no funding available from the Local Authority. Forum is asked to comment on the following recovery proposals, summary see table eight below.

i) Transfer 0.5% from the schools block funding to the high needs block

3.2 Local Authorities are able to transfer up to 0.5% from their schools block funding to the high needs block, with agreement from their Schools Forum and schools. The Local Authority is expected to demonstrate to School Forum that they have consulted locally with all maintained schools and academies when seeking approval to transfer funds from the schools block.

3.3 The 0.5% would be top sliced from schools block before calculating allocation at school level. It is anticipated that the top slice would be required on a permanent basis pending the outcome from DSG funding settlement from government.

3.4 In 2018/19 all but three Greater Manchester LAs (GM) transferred from the school block to high needs block (HNB). Two LAs transferred up to 1% after gaining secretary of state approval, see table six below. NW LAs have confirmed that due to rising HNB pressures a similar transfer will be undertaken in 2019/20.

Table six: North West and Greater Manchester Authorities HNB transfers 2018/19

Authority	2018/19	
	Transfer from school block to High Needs	% of the transfer to HNB
Bolton	Y	1.0%
Oldham	Y	1.0%
Salford	Y	0.5%
Blackburn	Y	0.5%
Blackpool	Y	0.5%
Cheshire East	Y	0.5%
Stockport	Y	0.5%
Wirral	Y	0.5%
Rochdale	Y	0.5%
Trafford	Y	0.5%
Cheshire West	Y	0.5%
Sefton	Y	0.5%
Wigan	Y	0.25%
Lancashire	Y	circa 0.1%
Bury	N	-
Tameside	N	-
Manchester	N	-
Calderdale	N	-
Knowsley	N	-

(GM LAs are in bold)

3.5 The Council is aware that schools have planned on 0.5% per pupil related funding increase and if the 0.5% is approved this increase will not be passported through individual school budget shares. There is some mitigation for this:

- Many schools have medium term budget planning and is based on teachers' pay award being between 2-3%. The DfE has confirmed that all but 1% of the pay increase will be funded by a separate grant - Teachers Pay Grant: 2018/19 and 2019/20.
- Schools have also received confirmation of transitional grant protection following roll out Universal credit. Once Universal Credit is fully rolled out, any existing pupil who no longer meets the eligibility criteria for free school meal at that point will continue to receive free school meals until the end of their current phase of education, i.e. primary or secondary, please see following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/free-school-meals-supplementary-grant-2018-to-2019>.

- Manchester has purchased free school meal checking software for maintained schools in order to ensure free school meal funding income is maximised. The Early Years clawback indicates that number of primary schools in the City have not yet fully claimed the additional 15 hours working parents' entitlement despite provision of a full time offer. Primary schools can ensuring this funding is claimed will off-set the impact on of the proposed 0.5% schools block to high needs block transfer.
- Schools now receive an increased pupil premium of £2,300 for each child who is in care or has left the care of a local authority because of a special guardianship order, or a child arrangements order. Schools need to ensure LAC or post-LAC is indicated in their census return. In order to ensure grant income is maximised the Local Authority will provide updates and briefings to all schools at headteachers, governor and business managers briefings on an on-going basis.

ii) Review of Out of City Residential Placements

3.6 Currently, discussions are also taking place around reducing costs, on independent special school placements, through a planned joint social care, health and education review panel.

iii) Review of Commissioned Services

3.7 There are a number of commissioned services with special schools. The services will be reviewed and assessed to see if the outcomes match the funds being invested. At this stage it is anticipated that saving will be achieved.

v) Central high needs block line by line review

3.8 The local authority will undertake a detailed line by line review of the high needs central services to identify potential savings and efficiencies.

vi) Post 16 years De-designated to 25 years

3.9 By developing in house provision to extend to 25 year olds in the high needs block is anticipated to generate savings at the same time providing better continuous academic, technical and professional education for our young people, to improve their opportunities and transition into adult life.

Table eight: Summary DSG Proposed Recovery Plan

	2018/19 £ m	2019/20 £ m	2020/21 £ m	2021/2 2 £ m	2022/23 £ m
Balance deficit/(surplus)	0.8	2.7	2.0	0.8	0.0
Recovery In Year deficit/(surplus)	(1.0)	(3.1)	(3.2)	(2.8)	(2.0)
Recovery Position deficit/(surplus)	(0.2)	(0.4)	(1.2)	(2.0)	(2.0)
Forecast In Year Outturn deficit/(surplus)	2.9	2.4	2.0	2.0	2.0
Estimated Balance deficit/(surplus)	2.7	2.0	0.8	0.0	0.0

- 3.10 High needs block, modelling forecasts a £2.4m overspend in 2019/20. One option available to help mitigate the overspend is to transfer from the schools block. Funding regulations allow up to 0.5% of the Schools Block to be transferred, subject to the agreement of the Schools Forum and consultation with schools. The Local Authority intends to undertake an urgent consultation with schools at the start of this term.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Work has been, and continues to be, undertaken in order to address the ongoing deficit on the Centrally Managed DSG budget. The most significant issue remains the cost of additional special school places, post 16 and education, health and care plans
- 4.2 Table eight (in section 3) shows the proposed DSG Recovery Plan, this will be developed further, bringing together all of the actions, responsibilities, timescales and savings targets.
- 4.3 By 2019/20 it is anticipated that savings will be delivered in order to close the gap on the DSG budget deficit built up in 2017/18.
- 4.4 The savings targets identified to manage the 2018/19 and onwards anticipated deficits are judged to be stretching but realistic. If the DSG 2018/19 closes on a higher deficit than anticipated these actions alone will not be sufficient to recover the deficit within a 5 year period.
- 4.5 With savings at this level a £2.4m annual structural deficit will remain. The Local Authority will therefore continue to consider how it can work with schools to ensure that future funding can be put on to a sound and sustainable financial footing.

4.6 **All** School Forum members are asked to:

- Note and comment on the 2018/19 DSG budget monitoring position and the anticipated deficit position.
- Note and comment on the plan for funding and addressing the high needs deficit and the need to consider the options as set out in this report.
- Note the intention to undertake a consultation with schools.