

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Schools Forum on 22 May 2024

Schools Forum meeting held remotely on Wednesday 6 March 2024

To view the archived recording of this meeting, please see here:
<https://bradford.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

Commenced 08:00
Concluded 09:10

RECORD OF MEETING ATTENDEES, APOLOGIES AND ABSENCES

Schools & Academies Members

IN ATTENDANCE

Member	Membership Group
Ian Morrel (Chair)	Maintained Secondary Schools – Headteacher
Ashley Reed (Vice Chair)	Academies Member
Amanda Sloney	Academies Member
Rowena Dixon	Academies Member
Matthew Hill	Academies Member
Brent Fitzpatrick OBE	Academies Member
Sarah Murray	Academies Member
Melanie Saville	Academies Member
Helen Williams	Academies Member
Michael Thorp	Academies Member
Wahid Zaman	Academies Member
Isabel Peat	Academies Member
Victoria Birch	Academies Member
Lyndsey Brown	Academies Member - Special School Academies
Bev George	Maintained Nursery Schools – Governor
Kathryn Swales	Maintained Primary Schools - Headteacher
Victoria Merriman	Maintained Primary Schools - Headteacher
Helen Willett	Maintained Special Schools

APOLOGIES RECEIVED

Member	Membership Group
Richard Bottomley	Academies Member – Alternative Provision Academies
Graham Swinbourne	Maintained Primary Schools - Headteacher

NOT IN ATTENDANCE (WITHOUT APOLOGIES RECEIVED)

Member	Membership Group
Kirsty Ratcliffe	Pupil Referral Unit (maintained)
Jonathan Nixon	Academies Member
Sian Hudson	Maintained Nursery Schools - Headteacher
Gareth Baterip	Maintained Primary Schools - Headteacher

Non-Schools Members

IN ATTENDANCE

Member	Membership Group
Tom Bright	Teaching Unions

APOLOGIES RECEIVED

Member	Membership Group
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NOT IN ATTENDANCE (WITHOUT APOLOGIES RECEIVED)

Member	Membership Group
Junaid Karim	Council for Mosques (Bradford)
Ruth Terry MBE	Officer Representing Vulnerable Children

Substitute Members present at the meeting as a Member (not as an Observer)

Substitute Member	Membership Group
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Substitute Members present at the meeting as an Observer (not as a Member)

Substitute Member	Membership Group
Alison Kaye	Academies Member

Local Authority Officers present at the meeting

Officer	Position
Andrew Redding	Business Advisor (Schools)
Asad Shah	Committee Secretariat
Dawn Haigh	Principal Finance Officer (Schools)
Marium Haque	Strategic Director, Children's Services

40% of the School Forum's membership (filled membership positions) must be present for a meeting to be quorate. This meeting was quorate, with 67% of members present (18 out of 27 currently filled membership positions).

In introducing the meeting, the Chair explained that the annual exclusions report that would normally be presented is not available and is deferred to the May meeting. The Chair emphasised the importance of the Forum receiving this information and the importance of Alternative Provision being identified as a separate specific strand of discussion within High Needs Block strategy and deficit review work, especially in the context of the significant growth in the number of permanent exclusions in Bradford and the increase in the AP provision cost within the 2024/25 planned budget. The Strategic

Director explained that this is just due to unfortunate timing. The report is currently being taken through Council procedures and also is being shared at headteacher briefings. This morning there is an important AP subgroup meeting taking place with headteachers.

754. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest.

755. MINUTES OF 10 JANUARY 2024 & MATTERS ARISING

The Business Advisor (Schools) reported on progress made on “Action” items from the 10 January meeting. He reported that:

- **Item 746 (DSG Growth Fund Allocations):** The agreed allocations have been paid.
- **Item 747 (Early Years Consultation):** The consultation was completed. An email was sent to Members at the beginning of February explaining this, and the outcomes. This is also included in Document RF, presented under agenda item 8.
- **Item 753 (Final Decisions and Formal Recommendations 2024/25 DSG):** Further update on this is presented under agenda item 8. Following an amended timetable, the Council on 7 March will decide on the Forum’s recommendations on the 2024/25 DSG and formula funding arrangements. Our Schools Block APT return for 2024/25 was submitted to the ESFA well before the deadline. The Business Advisor reported that, at the Executive meeting that was held on 5 March, Cllr Khan expressed his thanks to the Schools Forum for its significant work in pulling together the 2024/25 Schools Budget.

Resolved –

- (1) That progress made on “Action” items and Matters Arising be noted.**
- (2) That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2024 be signed as a correct record (with the amendment to correctly record apologies for one member).**

756. MATTERS RAISED BY SCHOOLS

It was reported that no matters have been raised by schools. The Chair explained that a communication was received regarding the Council’s proposed closure of Ingleborough Hall. The communication asked whether the Schools Forum can help prevent the closure, including by allocating financial resources. The Chair reported to the Forum that we determined that, whilst schools and academies may have comments that they wish to feed into the Council’s consultation, this is a matter that is out of the School Forum’s scope and remit. The Strategic Director added that the Hall is protected by a number of covenants. She recognised that

feelings on this proposal are strong. She emphasised that the proposal to sell is not a reflection on the value that the Council places on this provision or on the benefit of it but is the result of the Council's financial position and the value of capital investment that is required (also that the Hall will need to be closed for an extended period for maintenance works).

No resolutions were passed on this item

757. STANDING ITEM - DSG GROWTH FUND ALLOCATIONS (a)

No resolutions were passed on this item

758. SCHOOLS BLOCK FALLING ROLLS FUND ALLOCATIONS 2023/24 (a)

The Business Advisor (Schools) presented a report, **Document RD**, which provided an update for the Schools Forum on the application, in the 2023/24 financial year, of the Schools Block Falling Rolls Fund for mainstream primary phase-maintained schools and mainstream primary phase academies.

Forum members did not have any comments and did not ask any questions.

Resolved –

- (1) The Schools Forum noted that, as set out in Document RD and following the agreed established criteria, there are no allocations to be made from the Schools Block Falling Rolls Fund in 2023/24.**
- (2) The Forum noted that the sum of £500,000 is confirmed as unspent within the Schools Block and is carried forward into 2024/25 as a ring-fenced sum.**

LEAD: Business Advisor, Schools

759. MATTERS CONCERNING THE DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (i)

The Business Advisor (Schools) presented a report, **Document RE**, which provided an update on a number of matters relating to the Dedicated Schools Grant, including:

- A reminder of the work that needs to be progressed relating to 'mitigating action' around our projected High Needs Block deficit. A reminder that we will shortly contact the ESFA on this issue and expect to get response, which will influence / define our workstreams and actions.
- The outcomes of the Early Years consultation.
- That the DfE has resolved the unfunded 4 weeks issue in the Early Years Block, meaning that we shouldn't overspend the Early Years Block by the £1.2m assumed in the 2024/25 planned budget.

- That we are likely to have amendments to make to our entitlement delivery counting arrangements in 2024/25 for the new entitlements, which we will need to work through once the DfE's guidance has been published.
- The changes that we already identify we will need to consider for our 2025/26 DSG and formula funding decision making cycle, as well as the changes that might come that we currently do not have sight of.

The Chair reminded the Forum of how challenging we have previously forecasted the next 2 years to be. Forum members did not have any comments and did not ask any questions.

Resolved –

That the information presented in Document RE be noted.

760. MATTERS CONCERNING SCHOOL AND ACADEMY BUDGETS (i)

The Business Advisor (Schools) presented a report, **Document RF**, which provided an update on matters concerning school and academy budgets. This included an update on the position of the conversion of maintained schools to academy status and on the general forecasted position of school and academy budgets over the 2024-2027 3-year period.

Members did not have any comments and did not ask any questions.

Resolved –

That the information presented in Document RF be noted.

761. SCHOOLS FORUM STANDING ITEMS (i)

No resolutions were passed on this item.

762. AOB / FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The Forum expressed its thanks to Wahid Zaman, who is retiring from the Schools Forum after this meeting, for his significant input into the work of the Forum over many years.

No resolutions were passed on this item.

763. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Please see the published schedule of meetings – the next Forum meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 22 May 2024 (to be held remotely).

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Forum.

THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER

Chair

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