

Schools Forum
Wednesday, 10 January 2024 at 8.00 am
VENUE: Council Chamber - City Hall, Bradford

PLEASE NOTE

All meetings will be held in public; the agenda, decision list and minutes will be publicly available on the Council's website and Committee Secretariat, Room 112, City Hall, Bradford.

The taking of photographs, filming and sound recording of the meeting is allowed except if Councillors vote to exclude the public to discuss confidential matters covered by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Recording activity should be respectful to the conduct of the meeting and behaviour that disrupts the meeting (such as oral commentary) will not be permitted. Anyone attending the meeting who wishes to record or film the meeting's proceedings is advised to liaise with the Forum Clerk asad.shah@bradford.gov.uk (01274 432280) who will provide guidance and ensure that any necessary arrangements are in place. Those present who are invited to make spoken contributions should be aware that they may be filmed or sound recorded

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Business Advisor (Schools) will report the names of alternate Members who are attending the meeting in place of appointed Members.

2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

To receive disclosures of interests from Members on matters to be considered at the meeting. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest.

An interest must also be disclosed in the meeting when it only becomes apparent to the member during the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF 6 DECEMBER 2023 AND MATTERS ARISING

1 - 12

That the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 6 December 2023 be signed as a correct record.

(Asad Shah – 01274 432280)

4. MATTERS RAISED BY SCHOOLS

Members will be asked to consider any issues raised by schools.

5. **STANDING ITEM - DSG GROWTH FUND ALLOCATIONS (a)**

13 - 16

As presented in **Document QV**, Forum Members are asked to agree newly proposed allocations, from the 2023/24 Schools Block Growth Fund, to maintained secondary schools and secondary academies. **Document QV** replaces Document QM, which was presented on 6 December. The six allocations that were estimated in Document QM are now confirmed.

Recommended –

- (1) **The Schools Forum is asked to agree to allocate a total of £770,431 from the Growth Fund in 2023/24 to maintained secondary schools and secondary academies, as set out in Document QV.**
- (2) **Members are asked to note that an indicative total sum of £1,149,175 of surplus balance of Growth Fund is ring-fenced and is forecasted to be carried forward into 2024/25 within the Schools Block.**

(Andrew Redding – 01274 432678)

6. **CONSULTATION - EARLY YEARS BLOCK FUNDING ARRANGEMENT (a)**

17 - 70

The Business Advisor (Schools) will present a report, **Document QW**, which presents the Authority's consultation on proposals for Bradford's 2024/25 Early Years Single Funding Formula. Subject to the Forum's agreement, this consultation will go live immediately following this meeting and will have a closing date for responses of 5 February 2024.

Recommended –

- (1) **The Forum is asked for its formal feedback on the proposals. Members are asked to provide their feedback under agenda item 12. The outcomes of the consultation will be presented to the Forum on 6 March. However, this will be after Council has taken its final decisions on DSG arrangements for 2024/25 on 22 February.**
- (2) **Members are asked to note that the recommended allocation of the 2024/25 Early Years Block, and Early Years Single Funding Formula arrangements, presented to this meeting are put forward on the basis that the Authority's proposals are implemented. Any variance from this in the final arrangements, as agreed by Council, including changes as result of consultation feedback, will be presented to the Forum on 6 March.**

(Andrew Redding – 01274 432678)

7. UPDATED 2024/25 DSG POSITION (i) 71 - 74

The Business Advisor (Schools) will present a report, **Document QX**, which updates Forum Members on the position of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for the 2024/25 financial year. This is a main reference document for this meeting.

Recommended –

The Forum is asked to note the information provided. This will inform decisions and recommendations to be made under agenda item 12.

(Andrew Redding – 01274 432678)

8. UPDATED 2023/24 DSG SPENDING AND BALANCES FORECAST (i) 75 - 78

The Business Advisor (Schools) will present statements, **Document QY** Appendices 1 and 2, which update Forum Members on the forecasted spending positions of each of the DSG Blocks for 2023/24, on the estimated values of balances to be carried forward into 2024/25, and on the proposed uses of these balances.

These statements replace the initial indicative forecasts that were presented to the Schools Forum on 6 December (in Document QS).

Recommended –

The Forum is asked to note the information provided. This will inform decisions and recommendations to be made under agenda item 12.

(Andrew Redding – 01274 432678)

9. CENTRALLY MANAGED AND DE-DELEGATED FUNDS 2024/25 (i) 79 - 86

The Business Advisor (Schools) will present statements, **Document QZ** Appendices 1, 2 and 3, which set out proposed Schools Block, Central Schools Services Block and Early Years Block centrally managed and de-delegated funds for the 2024/25 financial year.

The statements at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 replace the indicative information that was presented to the Schools Forum on 6 December (in Document QU).

Appendix 3 newly presents the contributions to be made by each

maintained primary and secondary school to de-delegated funds held within the Schools Block and how these compare with the contributions made in 2023/24.

Recommended –

The Forum is asked to note the information provided. This will inform decisions and recommendations to be made under agenda item 12.

(Andrew Redding – 01274 432678)

**10. INDICATIVE BUDGETS, FUNDING RATES & PRO-FORMAS
2024/25 (i)**

87 - 114

The Principal Finance Officers (Schools) and the Business Advisor (Schools) will present a report, **Document RA**, with Appendices 1-5.

Appendices 1a, 1b and 1c show the indicative values of allocations to be delegated to individual primary and secondary maintained schools and academies within the Schools Block.

Appendix 1d provides an analysis of the change in cost of Schools Block formula funding following the use of the data collected in / based on the October 2023 Census. Modelling previously presented to the Forum has been based on October 2022 Census data.

Appendices 2a, 2b and 2c show the proposed indicative rates of funding for early years settings for the 2024/25 financial year. These rates are shown, prior to the completion of the consultation on our Early Years Single Funding Formula (which closes on 5 February).

Appendix 3 provides a more detailed analysis of how the High Needs Block planned budget has been constructed at individual setting level. Please note that Appendix 3 does not show the values of allocations that high needs providers will actually receive in 2024/25 (as these will be based on monthly occupancy during the year).

Appendices 4 and 5 show the draft Primary and Secondary and Early Years pro-formas, which summarise the Authority's proposed formula funding arrangements. Please note that these pro-formas are subject to the final decisions and recommendations to be made by the Schools Forum, under agenda item 12, as well as to the finalisation of our early years funding arrangements, following the closure of the consultation.

Recommended –

The Forum is asked to note the information provided. This will inform decisions and recommendations to be made under agenda item 12.

11. UPDATED DSG MANAGEMENT PLAN (i)

115 -
134

The Business Advisor (Schools) will present a report, **Document RB**, which is an update of the Authority's Management Plan for the Dedicated Schools Grant.

The Plan explains the general management principles that guide our decision making and then focuses on High Needs Block matters. Alongside this Plan is presented a list of specialist places planned to be commissioned in 2024/25 and a future year forecast of the High Needs Block.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) now expects that every authority will present to their Forums a Management Plan, which explains their DSG's financial position, the risks of overspending and deficit, and the actions that an authority is taking either for deficit avoidance or for deficit recovery, as appropriate. The plan should include benchmarking and demand-led data, to provide context to the financial picture and which enables a focus to be retained on value for money. A plan is specifically required where an authority's DSG account is in deficit. In these circumstances, an authority is required to submit its plan to the ESFA. This is not the case in Bradford, as our DSG account is in surplus.

Recommended –

The Forum is asked to note the information provided. This will inform decisions and recommendations to be made under agenda item 12.

12. FINAL DECISIONS AND FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS 2024/25 DSG (a)

135 -
150

The Business Advisor (Schools) will present **Document RC**, which summarises the decisions and recommendations that the Schools Forum is asked to make in supporting the Local Authority to set the allocation of the DSG and formula funding arrangements for the 2024/25 financial year. The Forum is asked to take decisions (as required by the Regulations), and to make its final formal recommendations, on the Authority's proposals under the following main headings:

- Schools Block Centrally Managed Funds
- Early Years Block Centrally Managed Funds
- The Central Schools Services Block
- The High Needs Block (including high needs formula funding)

- models)
- The Allocation & Retention of forecasted Balances Brought Forward
- Early Years Block Early Years Single Funding Formula and Pro-Forma
- Schools Block Primary & Secondary Formula Funding and Pro-Forma

Recommended -

- (1) The Forum is asked for its final decisions on identified items as required by the Regulations.**
- (2) The Forum is asked to give its final formal recommendations on the Authority's proposals for the allocation of the 2024/25 DSG, 2024/25 formula funding arrangements, and the treatment of balances forecasted to be carried forward from 2023/24. The Forum's recommendations will be presented to the Council's Executive on 20 February, and then, subject to the Executive's resolution, to full Council on 22 February, as part of the Council's final decision-making process.**

(Andrew Redding – 01274 432678)

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS / FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Members will be asked for any additional items of business, for consideration at a future meeting.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

A provisional meeting has been planned (subject to this being needed to complete agenda item 12) to take place on Wednesday 17 January.

The next substantive Forum meeting is planned for Wednesday 6 March 2024 (remote).

For planning purposes, the provisional schedule for Schools Forum meetings for the 2024/25 academic year has now been set, as follows:

- Wednesday 11 September 2024, 8am
- Wednesday 9 October 2024, 8am
- Wednesday 4 December 2024, 8am
- Wednesday 15 January 2025, 8am
- Wednesday 22 January 2025, 8am PROVISIONAL MEETING
- Wednesday 12 March 2025, 8am
- Wednesday 21 May 2025, 8am
- Wednesday 9 July 2025, 8am

(a) Denotes an item for action (including where a formal view or recommendation is required).

(i) Denotes an item for information.

SIGNPOSTING OF HIGH NEEDS INFORMATION

As per the schedule presented on 14 October 2020, “Forum members are expected to access ‘outside of the Forum meetings’ wider SEND information that is presented to other groups and that is already published, including information presented to the SEND Partnership. The Authority will signpost this information (webpage links) for Forum members at the bottom of agendas.”

SEND Partnership Board (minutes of meetings):

<https://localoffer.bradford.gov.uk/coproduction--feedback/send-strategic-partnership-board->