

## Schools Forum Meetings Schedule & Work Programme for the 2023/24 Academic Year

### Schedule of Meetings

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| • Wednesday 13 September 2023, 8am                          | REMOTE           |
| • Wednesday 11 October 2023, 8am                            | CITY HALL        |
| • Wednesday 6 December 2023, 8am                            | REMOTE           |
| • Wednesday 10 January 2024, 8am                            | CITY HALL        |
| • <i>Wednesday 17 January 2024, 8am PROVISIONAL MEETING</i> | <i>CITY HALL</i> |
| • Wednesday 6 March 2024, 8am                               | REMOTE           |
| • Wednesday 22 May 2024, 8am                                | REMOTE           |
| • Wednesday 10 July 2024, 8am                               | REMOTE           |

### Proposed Work Programme

#### Autumn Term 2023

##### **Key Dates / Announcements**

- 8 September – Deadline for responses to the DfE's Early Years Block 2024/25 consultation.
- October to December - expected announcements, following the autumn spending settlement, covering post 16 funding for 2024/25, as well as wider recurrent grants e.g. Pupil Premium Grant, and teacher pay and pensions support funding.
- Autumn - expected further guidance, consultations and announcements on the outcomes of the DfE's national SEND and Alternative Provision system and funding reviews.
- Autumn – expected further announcements and consultations on the development of the Schools Block (and Central Schools Services Block) 'hard' National Funding Formula.
- 5 October 2023 – Schools' October Census.
- Mid-December – ESFA publication of the dataset from the October 2023 Census, on which 2024/25 financial year allocations for mainstream primary and secondary schools / academies will be calculated.
- Mid-December – DfE expected to confirm Early Years Block and entitlement funding arrangements for 2024/25.
- Mid-December – DfE to confirm our 2024/25 DSG allocation.

##### **Key Planned Business**

- Consideration of the 2024/25 Schools Block, Early Years Block, High Needs Block and Central Schools Services Block settlements for 2024/25 and operational guidance for formula funding. Key messages for schools, academies and other providers.
- Consideration of the implications of the 'hard' National Funding Formula reforms. Work-streams from any further announcements.
- Consideration of the implications of the SEND and Alternative Provision system and funding reviews. Work-streams from any further announcements.
- Consideration of the autumn spending review & implications for e.g. post 16 funding and for the position of recurrent grants in 2024/25.
- High Needs Block affordability (deficit mitigation), strategic development of places and alternative provision. High Needs Block places commissioning for 2024/25. Consideration of the annual places sufficiency statement. Continued detailed work on the High Needs Block funding, deficit projection and provision matters (strategic multi-year financial planning & forecasted deficit mitigation and management planning).
- Early Years Single Funding Formula review for 2024/25, and other early years funding matters, including the impact and financial management of the extension of the entitlements and the position of the protected funding of maintained nursery schools.
- Bradford's Primary, Secondary, Early Years and High Needs 2024/25 formula funding consultations & consideration of responses. The Schools Forum to agree the formulae for the 2024/25 financial year.
- The review of items to be de-delegated / held centrally within the DSG for 2024/25.
- Consideration of the Council's wider (Children's Services) budget position 2024/25.

- Presentation on the work of the Children's Trust.
- Update on 2023/24 DSG contingencies and central funds actual and forecasted spending (view on values of DSG balances to be held at the end of 2023/24).
- Continued discussion on matters relating to falling rolls in mainstream primary & secondary schools and academies. Consideration of the DfE-led changes to the Falling Rolls and Growth Funds in 2024/25 and our response.
- Growth Fund allocations for the 2023/24 academic year (secondary phase).

## Spring Term 2024

### **Key Dates / Announcements**

- 18 January – Schools' January Census & Early Years Census.
- 22 January – deadline for the submission of the final APT to the ESFA, with values of the Schools Block mainstream formula factors fixed at this point.
- 28 February – deadline for publication of 2024/25 budgets for maintained schools (not including early years funding).
- March - publication of final Post 16 allocations for 2024/25.
- 31 March – deadline for publication of 2024/25 Early Years Single Funding Formula allocations.
- 30 April – completion of S251 Budget Statement to the DfE.

### **Key Planned Business**

- Matters carried from the Forum's autumn term meetings.
- The Forum's final and formal recommendations on all aspects of DSG funding for 2024/25, including school & early years budgets, high needs and centrally managed items. The Forum to exercise its statutory powers. Evaluation of the anticipated impact of 2024/25 DSG recommendations.
- Further consideration of the implications of the 'hard' National Funding Formula reforms. Continuation of work-streams.
- Further consideration of the implications of the national SEND and Alternative Provision system and funding reviews. Continuation of work-streams.
- Continued consideration of our early years entitlement funding arrangements and the financial position of the Early Years Block, including / especially in the context of the extension of the entitlements beginning April 2024.
- Update of Bradford's DSG management plan.
- Continued detailed work on the High Needs Block funding, deficit projection and provision matters (strategic multi-year financial planning & forecasted deficit mitigation and management).
- Consideration of the 2022/23 Exclusions Report.
- Review of Scheme for Financing Schools for 2024/25 (and directed revisions).
- Review of Schools Forum membership and composition for September 2024. Responses to any directed Schools Forum Regulations changes (including from the National Funding Formula review).
- Continued discussion on issues related to falling rolls (in particular across early years and primary phases).
- Agreement of allocations from the 2023/24 Schools Block Falling Rolls Fund.
- Further information, discussion and consideration of the financial impact of the conversion of maintained schools to academy status.
- Consideration of wider DSG and school / academy budget-level cost pressures in 2024/25, implications and strategies for supporting these.

## Summer Term 2024

### **Key Dates / Announcements**

- 1 April – closedown of maintained school accounts for the 2023/24 financial year (carry forward balances).
- 1 April – planned beginning of the extension of the early years entitlements for working parents.
- 15 May – deadline for submission of Governor Approved Budgets (maintained schools) for 2024/25 to the Local Authority.
- 16 May – Schools' May Census.
- Early Years DSG Block updated for January 2024 pupil numbers. The Early Years Supplementary Grant will also be confirmed at this point.

### **Key Planned Business**

- Matters carried from the Forum's spring term meetings.
- Further consideration of Forum membership for September 2024 & election of the Chair & Vice Chair of the Schools Forum. Annual review of the Forum's conduct of meetings and procedural matters document.
- Anticipated significant volume of review work and discussion required for our 2025/26 DSG funding arrangements (begin these earlier than usual).

- Continued consideration of the implications of the 'hard' National Funding Formula reforms. Work-streams from consultations / announcements for 2025/26 arrangements.
- Continued consideration of the implications of the national SEND and Alternative Provision system and funding reviews. Work-streams from consultations / announcements for 2025/26 arrangements e.g. our high needs delegated funding model.
- Continued consideration of our early years entitlement funding arrangements and the financial position of the Early Years Block, including / especially in the context of the extension of the entitlements beginning April 2024.
- Continued detailed work on the High Needs Block funding, deficit projection and provision matters (strategic multi-year financial planning & forecasted deficit mitigation and management).
- Review of school balances held at 31 March 2024 (maintained schools).
- Initial confirmation of DSG balances held at the end of 2023/24.
- Update on pupil planning and the impact of Academies & Free Schools. Continued discussion on issues related to falling rolls and under subscription (in particular across early years and primary phases).