



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
WORCESTERSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM (WSF)**

**Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020  
Worcester Room, County Hall, Worcester**

**The meeting started at 2.00 pm**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

WSF Members

Malcolm Richards (Chair)	-	Governor, Bromsgrove
Paul Essenhigh	-	Executive HT Catshill Middle, Catshill First and Nursery Schools
Vivienne Cranton	-	Principal The Black Pear Trust
Adrian Ward	-	HT Trinity High School
Deb Rattley	-	HT Chadsgrove Special School
Bec Garratt	-	HT Wyre Forest School
Lorraine Petersen	-	Governor, Bromsgrove
Jeff Robinson	-	Governor, Malvern Hills
David McIntosh	-	Governor, Wyre Forest
John Bateman	-	Governor, Aspire Alternative Provision (AP) Free School
Tim Reid	-	Church of England Board of Education
Stephen Baker	-	Union Representative
Tricia Wellings	-	PVI Sector

Local Authority (LA)

Sarah Wilkins	-	Director of Education and Early Help Worcestershire Children First
Phil Rook	-	Director of Resources Worcestershire Children First
Andy McHale	-	Service Manager Funding and Policy Worcestershire Children First
Caroline Brand	-	Schools Finance Manager Worcestershire County Council
Rob Phillips	-	Schools Finance Team Worcestershire County Council
Councillor Marcus Hart	-	Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills Worcestershire County Council

**1. APOLOGIES**

Marie Pearse	-	HT Evesham Nursery School (Absent)
Nathan Jones	-	HT Meadow Green Primary
Bryn Thomas	-	HT Wolverley CE Secondary School
Chris King	-	CEO Severn Academies Educational Trust
Greg McClarey	-	Archdiocese of Birmingham

**2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None.

**3. DECLARATION OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTERESTS WITH ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

None.

**4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (28<sup>th</sup> November 2019)**

Agreed.

**5. MATTERS ARISING**

5.1 Under 6.2, Phil confirmed a meeting had taken place with the Head of HR WCC to discuss the issues on the Liberata HR service. The WSF were requested to let Phil know of some detailed concerns that could be forwarded. In response to a query from a member of the WSF Phil confirmed both he and Caroline could be contacted regarding issues. Members of the WSF reported there were specific issues on the support in making appointments, issuing contracts and the requirements of teaching schools.

5.2 Under 9.2, Andy confirmed a meeting had taken place regarding the Early Years consultation and a draft document was close to being issued to the sector. The PVI representative reported on the usefulness of the engagement prior to the formal consultation. The document would be issued shortly with a return date of just after half term. This would allow a report to be prepared for CMR sign off prior to the changes coming into force from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 as required.

**6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**7. CABINET DECISIONS 20<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2019****7.1 Agenda Item 4 – 2020-21 Draft Budget**

(a) Phil reported the draft budget for 2020-21 for WCC had been considered and was now out for formal consultation. It included proposals for growth in both Adult and Children's Social Care and the recommended Council Tax rise. It also included references to the provisional DSG settlement 2020-21 received in October 2019.

(b) Phil advised the Cabinet Budget Report for 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020 would include information on the School Funding Settlement 2020-21 received in December 2019 and the WSF deliberations on the Local Schools Funding Formula (LSFF) submission due to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) by 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020.

## 7.2 Agenda Item 6 – Fair Funding Consultation Outcomes 2020-21

(a) Andy reported the full outcomes of the local funding consultation in the Autumn Term 2019 were received by and considered by Cabinet.

(b) The WSF noted the Cabinet decisions made for the LSFF to continue as far as is practicable and affordable on the DfE NFF parameters, no transfer of funding from the Schools Block to support High Needs, de-delegations for maintained schools and centrally retained items for all schools.

## **8. PROVISIONAL SCHOOL FUNDING SETTLEMENT 2020-21**

### **8.1 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)**

(a) Andy advised on the DSG settlement as follows: -

- The DSG schools block is allocated based on the new National Funding Formula (NFF) schools block primary and secondary units of funding 2020-21 announced in October 2019.
- The Central Services Schools (CSS) Block is allocated on the DfE national model.
- The High Needs (HN) Block is allocated based on the new National Funding Formula (NFF) announced in September 2017. In addition, the HN DSG has been increased by an additional £780m of funding in 2020-21 announced in October 2019.
- Continuation of the new national Early Years (EY) DSG arrangements introduced in 2017-18.
- The allocations are prior to the recoupment deduction for Academies and non-LA maintained specialist providers.

<b>DSG Allocations</b>	<b>2019-20 Latest November 2019 £'m</b>	<b>2020-21 Provisional December 2019 £'m</b>	<b>Variance £'m</b>
Schools Block	321.578	339.667	+18.089
Pupil Growth Fund	<u>1.736</u>	<u>2.319</u>	<u>+0.583</u>
S-T School Block	323.314	341.986	+18.672
Central School Services Block	3.793	3.515	-0.278
High Needs Block	51.667	60.403	+8.736
Early Years Block	35.239	35.887	+0.648
<b>Total DSG Gross</b>	<b>414.013</b>	<b>441.791</b>	<b>+27.778</b>

(b) For the **Schools Block**: -

- There is an overall increase in pupil numbers of +776 between October 2018 and October 2019, which shows an increase in both the primary (+237.5) and secondary (+538.5).

<b>Phase</b>	<b>2019-20 October 2018 Census</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2020-21 October 2019 Census</b>	<b>%</b>
Primary	44012.5	60.4	44250	60.1
Secondary	28873	39.6	29411.5	39.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>72885.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>73661.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(c) For the **Central School Services Block (CSSB)** the NFF formulaic allocation for centrally retained statutory services is £2.315m plus historic commitments £1.200m (**reduced by 20% by the DfE from 2019-20 allocation £1.500m as part of their national policy**).

(d) For the **High Needs Block**: -

- The allocation of £60.403m reflects the share of the additional £780m HN DSG allocated in 2020-21 of £8.736m gross.
- The estimated net HN DSG in 2020-21 is £52.491m which is an increase of £8.955m on 2019-20 of £43.536m. This reflects the proposed place deductions from the HN block for SEN units in academies, maintained post 16 and NMSS providers.

<b>DETAIL</b>	<b>2019-20 Current November 2019 £'m</b>	<b>2020-21 Provisional December 2019 £'m</b>	<b>Variance  £'m</b>
<b>HN DSG Gross</b>	<b>51.667</b>	<b>60.403</b>	<b>+8.736</b>
Place Deductions			
SEN Units Academies	(0.807)	(0.808)	<b>-0.001</b>
Special Academies Pre and Post 16	(4.940)	(4.940)	<b>0.000</b>
Alternative Provision	(0.860)	(0.910)	<b>-0.050</b>
Special Maintained Post 16	(0.270)	(0.000)	<b>+0.270</b>
Academies Post 16	(0.060)	(0.060)	<b>0.000</b>
FE Providers	(1.194)	(1.194)	<b>0.000</b>
<b>S-T Deductions</b>	<b>(8.131)</b>	<b>(7.912)</b>	<b>+0.219</b>
<b>= HN DSG Net</b>	<b>43.536</b>	<b>52.491</b>	<b>+8.955</b>

(e) For the **Early Years Block** the provisional is based upon Schools, Early Years and Alternative Provision census data for 2, 3 & 4-year olds from January 2019. This reflects the additional £0.08p, announced in November 2019, on the 2,3 and 4-year old hourly rates. The final allocations will be updated based on January 2019 and January 2020 census data.

(f) The WSF noted the details comparing 2019-20 and 2020-21 in **Appendices A and B** to the report. This showed for the Schools Block the effect of the increase in the PUF and SUF for the Year 3 NFF and the increased numbers in the October 2019 pupil census.

(g) Andy advised the Schools Block and the CSSB were fixed and the increase in the former was expected due to the NFF.

(h) Andy further advised the High Needs Block might change because of any further academy conversions. The WSF welcomed the increase but contended it will not cover the significant existing cost pressures. They concluded what is required is further lobbying through the f40 Group and politically on ensuring the provisional settlement announced for 2021-22 and 2022-23 in October 2019 includes similar allocations to High Needs as in 2020-21. In response to a question from a member of the WSF Andy advised the national place funding rate of £10,000 has not been changed. The Cabinet Member commented that there is a misunderstanding by some in that the HN NFF only applies to the total quantum and that there is no national system for a local formula for HN providers.

(i) The WSF noted the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) and other grants were still to be announced.

8.2 Some members of the WSF raised concerns on the ESFA requirements for 5-year financial forecasts when there was only a one-year detailed settlement.

8.3 The WSF noted the provisional school funding settlement for 2020-21.

## **9. SCHOOL BLOCK ALLOCATIONS 2020-21 AUTHORITY PROFORMA TOOL (APT)**

### **9.1 Initial APT Issues**

(a) Andy introduced the report which detailed the early January 2020 position on the APT.

(b) Andy provided an analysis of the Schools Block funding, prior to de-delegation for mainstream schools and after adjusting for centrally retained services detailing the estimated amount to be included in the Local Schools Funding Formula (LSFF) as follows: -

<b>DETAIL</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Schools Block Allocation</b>		
Primary Unit of Resource £4,065.10 x Pupil Numbers 44250	179,881	
Secondary Unit of Resource £5,179.87 x Pupil Numbers 29411.50	152,348	
	7,438	
+ Premises Costs Historic Costs Allocation		<b>339,667</b>
<b>= Total LSFF Quantum 2020-21</b>		
+ Pupil Growth Fund DfE Formula Allocation		2,319
<b>= Total Schools Block DSG</b>		<b>341,986</b>

(c) Andy advised the LSFF net amount allocated in 2019-20 was £322.039m and a comparison of the position compared to 2020-21 as follows: -

<b>DETAIL</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>LSFF 2019-20</b>	<b>322,039</b>
<b>Adjustments</b>	
Overallocation 2019-20 funded from the Pupil Growth Fund	(461)
Additional DSG for NFF Year 3 for Schools Block October 2019	14,383
Additional DSG for Increase in Pupil Numbers October 2019	3,755
Change in Historic Premises – rates and PFI	(49)
<b>= Estimated Amount for LSFF 2019-20</b>	<b>339,667</b>

(d) Andy further advised although this seems a significant increase, the additional NFF DSG allocation notified in October 2019 was expected. Also, the increase in pupil numbers of 776 (Primary 237.5; Secondary 538.5) will require funding in the LSFF 2020-

21 together with the requirements of LSFF to be based as far as is practicable and affordable upon the National Funding Formula (NFF) parameters for Year 3.

(e) The WSF were reminded that the budgetary impact for each individual school will depend upon: -

- How their individual pupil numbers and all other data varies between October 2018 and October 2019.
- The Schools Block DSG increase between 2019-20 and 2020-21.
- The impact across all schools.
- The impact of the LSFF for the NFF parameters i.e. the MFG requirement and any associated capping level for affordability, together with the mandatory sector Minimum Funding Levels (MFLs).
- The impact and affordability of the Minimum Funding Levels (MFL) per pupil for the total budget: –
  - Primary increasing from £3,500 2019-20 to £3,750 in 2020-21.
  - Secondary increasing from £4,800 2019-20 to £5,000 in 2020-21.
  - Hybrid MFL rates for schools with 'non-uniform' year groups.
- The MFG of between +0.5% and +1.84% per pupil in 2020-21 and as any associated affordability cap.

(f) Andy advised at its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2019, the Worcestershire County Council Cabinet: -

- *Approved for 2020-21 the LSFF as supported by the WSF and the consultation responses to continue to be based as far as is practicable and affordable on the DfE NFF parameters.*
- *Authorised the Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Cabinet Members with Responsibility for Children and Families and with Responsibility for Education and Skills to make the required submission to the national executive body, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) by 21 January 2020 for the approved Local Schools Funding Formula for 2020-21 taking account of any impact and change on the approved units of resource, Minimum Funding Guarantee and capping arrangements as a consequence of the October 2019 census and other 2019 data changes and the final 2020-21 Dedicated School Grant (DSG).*

## 9.2 Current APT Position

(a) The WSF were provided with further information in **Appendix A** together with **Annexes A and B** to the agenda item which summarised the current position and a comparison of the APT formula factors between 2019-20 and 2020-21.

(b) Andy advised the LA has been working on the APT for final submission to the ESFA by 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020.

(c) Andy confirmed: -

- The estimated quantum for the LSFF in 2018-19 is £339.667m plus a further sum of £2.319m from the national Pupil Growth Fund.
- The current APT position using the approved units of resource, other data and the Year 3 NFF parameters for the MFG, Capping and the sector Minimum Funding Levels is £338.818m – an under **allocation of £0.849m** against the £339.667m excluding the Pupil Growth Fund.
- However, this does not yet include: -

- The effect of Year 2 for the new North Worcester Primary Free School. This is a call on the DSG and must be funded on estimated numbers not included in the October 2019 census.
- Local data sets still to be received and finalised e.g. rates – impact unknown.
- The ‘payback’ required for the Pupil Growth Fund used in 2019-20 to fund the NFF Year 2 – actual £0.461m.
- The WSF are reminded as in 2019-20 in 2020-21 the parameters based on the NFF cannot be fully replicated through the APT due to some of the starting baselines used by the ESFA. Consequently, the draft APT uses the DfE quoted NFF rates, applied MFG at +1.84% per pupil, no capping level and the mandatory sector MFLs.
- The new DfE data will have to drive the allocations and so cannot be amended along with the units of resource as approved unless there is a Schools Block DSG quantum issue. Varying from this approach is not appropriate – as in previous years the data and local formula parameters run.

(d) The WSF were reminded: -

- The MFG is a per pupil not a cash protection, so the LSFF even when based on the NFF parameters, cannot protect schools from the effect of significant data changes between 2018 and 2019 e.g. reductions in pupil numbers and other data sets such as FSM, low prior attainment, etc. This data is controlled and supplied by the DfE in the APT and cannot be changed.
- Consequently, some schools will see reductions in funding due to these data changes. Nevertheless, all schools could be subject to at least a +1.84% per pupil increase because of the MFG in the LSFF being based upon the NFF parameters.
- The APT is draft only and it is not final until the ESFA have approved the APT following their detailed compliance checks – this will take some time following submission.
- School by school data is never shared at this time as is not available until all maintained schools and academies have had their allocations.

(e) The WSF were advised All the above issues are all a call on the currently unallocated funding of £0.849m. This means the Year 3 NFF on current estimate is just about affordable from the Schools Block quantum.

(f) In response to a question from a member of the WSF Rob confirmed that rates are included at the appropriate level including any relief in the APT and any subsequent ESFA recoupment.

(g) The WSF commented as follows: -

- Given the consultation and LSFF approvals, it was felt that there is a need to endeavour to replicate the Year 3 NFF parameters in 2020-21 as approved by Cabinet.
- There is a need to ‘repay’ the PGF used to set the LSFF in 2019-20.
- Given the additional PGF in 2020-21 from the DfE national formula, the WSF supported its use in the LSFF generally if required.
- There was unanimous support to submitting the APT for 2020-21 using the Year 3 NFF parameters and viewing the Schools Block as a whole including the PGF.

## RESOLVED –

The WSF unanimously endorsed (For 13 votes; Against 0 votes; Abstention 0 votes) the submission of the LSFF APT final Schools Block funding for 2020-21, using the Year 3 NFF parameters as approved by Cabinet in December 2019, taking account of the above issues, to the ESFA by 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020 as required.

### 10. CENTRAL SCHOOL SERVICES BLOCK (CSSB) ANALYSIS

10.1 Phil introduced the report which detailed a full analysis of the services supported from the CSSB as follows: -

<b>Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) Allocation</b>		
<u>Centrally Retained Budgets (Previously Approved by WSF and WCC Cabinet)</u>		
Contributions to Combined Services – Early Intervention Family Support	1,200	
Co-ordinated School Admissions	582	
Servicing of the Schools Forum	55	
Former ESG Retained Duties for All Schools	1,262	
<u>DfE Designated Centrally Retained Budgets</u>		
Licenses and Subscriptions – DfE Actual	420	
= Total Centrally Retained		3,519
- Central Services Schools Block (CSSB) Allocated (See <b>Agenda Item 10</b> for CSSB Analysis)		3,515
<b>= Projected Surplus/(Deficit) on CSSB</b>		<b>(4)</b>

10.2 The WSF noted the issues on the proposals for the shortfall in DSG allocated for the EIFS and the servicing of the Schools Forum.

### 11. ACADEMIES UPDATE

11.1 The WSF noted the current academies position as at 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 and conversion approvals had been affected by the general election purdah.

**The meeting closed at 2.45pm**

The date of the next WSF meeting is: -

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 2pm  
Worcester Room  
County Hall  
Worcester