

Blackpool Council

2 March 2020

SCHOOLS FORUM

Tuesday, 10 March 2020 at 9.15 am
in Room A, @the grange, Bathurst Avenue, Blackpool, FY3 7RW

A G E N D A

1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests in the items under consideration and in doing so state:

(1) the type of interest concerned either a

- (a) personal interest
- (b) prejudicial interest
- (c) disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI)

and

(2) the nature of the interest concerned

If any member requires advice on declarations of interests, they are advised to contact the Head of Democratic Governance in advance of the meeting.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 1 - 8)

To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2020 as an accurate record.

To discuss any matters arising, not discussed elsewhere on the Agenda.

4 PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE (Pages 9 - 12)

Judith Mills, Consultant in Public Health, to provide an update to the Forum on recent Public Health items.

5 LOCAL AUTHORITY AND INCLUSION UPDATE (Pages 13 - 14)

Paul Turner, Head of Service for School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion, to provide an update to the Forum on relevant Local Authority and Inclusion developments.

6 CONTINUUM OF PROVISION

Liz Franey from the Department for Education, to provide a verbal update on the Continuum of Provision.

7 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT BUDGET MONITORING 2019/20 (Pages 15 - 18)

Mark Golden, Finance Manager, to provide an update to the Forum.

8 HIGH NEEDS UPDATE (Pages 19 - 24)

Hilary Wood, Head of Business Support and Resources, to provide an update.

9 EARLY YEARS FUNDING FORMULA 2020/21 (Pages 25 - 28)

Paul Sharples, School Funding and Private Finance Initiative Manager, to provide an update on the Early Years Funding Formula for 2020/21.

10 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT BUDGET PROPOSAL 2020/21 (Pages 29 - 32)

Hilary Wood, Head of Business Support and Resources, to provide an update to the Forum outlining the 2020/21 Budget Proposals.

11 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Forum to note the date of the next meeting as Tuesday 16 June 2020 at 9.15am @thegrange, Bathurst Avenue, Blackpool, FY3 7RW.

Venue information:

Ground floor meeting room, accessible toilets, no-smoking building.

Other information:

For queries regarding this agenda please contact Danielle Bowater, Democratic Governance Adviser, Tel: 01253 477202, e-mail danielle.bowater@blackpool.gov.uk

Copies of the agendas and minutes of the Schools Forum are available on the Council's website at www.blackpool.gov.uk

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 3

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING - TUESDAY, 14 JANUARY 2020

Present:

Primary School Head Teachers/Representative

Ms J Hirst, Bispham Endowed

Ms E Allen, St John Vianney

Primary School Governor Representative

Ms M Lonican, School Governor, Our Lady of the Assumption

Special School Maintained Representative

Ms K Haworth, Woodlands

Special School Academy Representative

Ms S Fielder, Chair of Governors, Park Community Academy

Academy School Representatives

Mr S Brennand, Unity

Mr R Farley, Westminster

Mr A Hussain for Ms A Bailey, Highfield (Star Academies)

Ms T Harrison, Thames

Ms J Heywood, Revoe

Mr D Logan, Roseacre (Achievement Through Collaboration)

Mr D Metcalf, St Georges

Mr E Vitalis, Marton / South Shore (Bright Futures)

Pupil Referral Unit

Ms W Casson, Educational Diversity

Non-Schools Members

Mr N Adams, Staff / Teacher Associations

Ms A Baines, Staff/Teacher Associations

Mr S Hughes, Blackpool and the Fylde College

Mr R Rendell, Early Years Strategic Group

In Attendance:

Ms N Dennison, Public Health Specialist

Mr M Golden, Finance Manager

Mr P Sharples, School Funding and Private Finance Initiative Manager

Mr P Thompson, Head of SEND

Mr P Turner, Head of Service for School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion

Mrs H Wood, Head of Business Support and Resources

Mrs D Bowater, Democratic Governance Adviser (minutes)

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING - TUESDAY, 14 JANUARY 2020

1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Hilary Wood, Head of Business Support, opened the meeting where introductions were made and apologies for absence were received from Councillor Kath Benson, Cabinet Member for Schools, Education and Aspiration and Amanda Bailey, Highfield (Star Academies).

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were noted.

3 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The Forum considered the election of a Chairman of the Schools Forum until January 2021.

Resolved:

- **The Forum elected Jo Hirst as Chairman of the Schools Forum until January 2021.**

4 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Having been elected, Jo Hirst took the role of Chair from this point of the meeting. The Forum considered the election of a Vice Chairman of the Schools Forum until January 2021.

Resolved:

- **The Forum elected Roger Farley as Vice Chairman of the Schools Forum until January 2021.**

5 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

(Janice Heywood and Dean Logan arrived at the meeting)

The minutes of the Schools Forum held on 9 October 2019 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting pending the correction of the spelling of Susan Fielder in the attendance list.

Matters arising from the minutes were noted:

Item 3: Children's Centre update - Jo Hirst attended the meeting relating to Children's Centre staff. It was noted that an update on finances would be available at the March 2020 Schools Forum meeting.

Item 7: High Needs update –information relating to deficit recovery plans from other authorities was presented in the update at item 8.

Item 8: Illuminate Funding – an updated Protocol would be reissued on the Illuminate Funding and finances distributed to schools following this.

Item 9: To provide an update on the proposal for special educational needs provision to be available on mainstream sites – the process had been on hold but would be progressed prior

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING - TUESDAY, 14 JANUARY 2020

to the March 2020 Schools Forum meeting.

Item 11: Extending the Academies risk protection arrangements to local authority maintained schools – no further updates had been received following the consultation, Paul Sharples would refer to the Department for Education website for any updates.

6 PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

Nicky Dennison, Public Health Specialist provided an update including the Holiday Activity Programme and a Personal, Social and Health Education update.

It was noted that the holiday provision had been successful and the Holiday Activity Partnership was looking at how the scheme could be sustainable for all school holidays. A bid to fund a similar scheme across ten areas of the town for the Summer 2020 period had been submitted with the outcome expected in February 2020.

It was reported that all schools had been offered a package of free support in preparation for Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education becoming statutory from September 2020 and 41 out of 44 schools had engaged with some or all of the offer. In response to a question, it was noted that the remaining three schools had made their own arrangements to prepare for the statutory requirements.

In addition to the report, Nicky Dennison indicated that there would be free training from Public Health for professionals to address tobacco use by young people and the details would be circulated to Headteachers for information.

Nicky Dennison further reported that Trading Standards were undertaking some work in relation to e-cigarettes and vaping and were looking for information from teachers to assist with this project.

Finally, it was noted that the school nurse provision would be reviewed and questionnaires would be circulated in order to gain views and opinions to inform the review process.

Resolved:

- **To circulate the Public Health report and the additional information on tobacco, trading standards and the school nurse review to headteachers for information.**

7 LOCAL AUTHORITY AND INCLUSION UPDATE

Paul Turner, Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion provided an update and it was agreed that the report would be shared with Headteachers for information. It was recognised that there had been a number of inspections conducted by Ofsted across schools in the town. Of those receiving a 'good and declining' outcome, it was noted that although they were observed as 'good', an additional inspection visit would be made to monitor the progress.

It was also reported that a number of moderators had been trained to allow them to

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moderate assessments at key stage one and two.

With regards to inclusion, it was noted that more data would be available at the March 2020 meeting. A revised Attendance Strategy was in development and some recommendations would be presented to the Schools Forum in March 2020.

An update was provided on the Inclusion Project within secondary schools. Funding of £120,000 per setting would be provided to establish a continuum of provision to support high needs pupils, improve inclusion and reduce permanent exclusions. The project would be funded by the Opportunity Area fund, a contribution from the Local Authority budget and also devolution of funds from the High Needs block. Further clarification and assurances had been sought by Schools Forum at the previous meeting on the scope and plans attached to the project prior to the Schools Forum proportion of funds being released. Paul Turner advised that the contracts for the project had been issued and signed and schools had agreed to a framework. To gain both assurances and accountability in relation to the project, it would be monitored by the Department for Education with further monitoring of the process by Blackpool Council School Standards Team through BERA and the associated Steering Group.

As outlined at the Schools Forum meeting in October 2019, Members supported the implementation of the project but highlighted some areas that had not been undertaken well in the consultation process. It was acknowledged that there was a drive for sustainable change in relation to inclusion and for schools to retain responsibility for pupils. It was recognised that this was the first time that schools had agreed to collaborate on inclusion and lead a new system. It was anticipated that as a result of a successful project, a reduction on the High Needs budget spend would be seen. Due to the timeline of receipt of the Project proposal (July 2019) and the Schools Forum meeting (October 2019), Schools Forum were consulted on the Project at the earliest opportunity following the initial proposal.

Schools Forum sought some further information on the Project and it was agreed that the Chair would invite Stephen Tierney to the next Schools Forum meeting as he was overseeing the project for the Department for Education. It was agreed that some questions would be prepared and sent to Stephen Tierney prior to the meeting to enable him to provide responses.

It was also acknowledged that there should be lessons learned from this process in relation to both consulting Schools Forum members and information sharing in a more timely way for future projects.

It was suggested that the next report on the Inclusion Project could include the two options: an outline of the anticipated outcomes to proceed with the project; the anticipated outcome to cease the project, and the resulting impact on Inclusion in Blackpool schools with both options.

Resolved:

- **That Schools Forum support the process of the Inclusion Project.**
- **To ask Stephen Tierney as Project Lead to present an overview of the Inclusion**

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Project to the next Schools Forum meeting in March 2020.

- **To develop a list of questions on the Inclusion Project beforehand to be emailed to Stephen Tierney prior to the meeting.**
- **Timeliness of the consultation and information sharing be considered for any future projects where Schools Forum are required to support use of funding.**
- **To share the Local Authority and Inclusion update report with Headteachers for information.**

8 HIGH NEEDS UPDATE

Hilary Wood, Head of Business Support and Resources provided an overview of the latest developments relevant to the High Needs Budget. It was reported that the funding for High Needs had increase by 13% on the 2019-20 allocation amounting to £2.78million.

The medium term plan had been revised and also extended to cover a five year period given that the deficit recovery plan would be likely to extend beyond three years. It was reported that the in-year overspend on the High Needs Block for 2019-20 had worsened from £2million to £2.3million. Due to the increasing upward trend in pupil numbers in special schools and Out of Borough placements costs, using these assumptions the cumulative deficit against the Dedicated Schools Grant would reach £3.8million by the end of 2024-25. New and alternative ways to reduce spending in certain areas were sought.

The High Needs Action Plan would be presented to the Schools Forum in March 2020 with updates on progress.

It was reported that due to the size of the forecast deficit at 31 March 2020, should the rules remain unchanged, Blackpool would be required to submit a deficit recovery plan to the Department for Education. It was noted that last year 32 local authorities submitted deficit recovery plans as their deficit exceeded 1% of their total Dedicated Schools Grant allocation. The Department for Education had provided guidance of a 'good plan'.

It was reported that the Lotus Special School was due to open in September 2020 and would provide 48 places for 10 to 16 year olds with social, emotional and mental health needs. The provision would provide cost effective local provision and avoid the more expensive out of borough placements.

Phil Thompson reported that a consultation would be issued on how schools could support placements of children with education, health and care plans within Blackpool mainstream schools.

In response to a question it was noted that a rise in special school top-up funding was due to a review of banding payments and backdated payment of these.

The report was noted.

Resolved:

- **High Needs Action Plan would be presented to the Schools Forum in March 2020**

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with updates on progress.

9 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT BUDGET MONITORING 2019/20

Mark Golden, Finance Manager, provided a report on the budget position of the 2019-20 Dedicated Schools Grant and reserves as at 30 November 2019.

Since the budget was set, the mainstream top-up funding had increased and there was a larger than expected increase in the number of Out of Borough placements and Special School numbers. The forecast gap on the Dedicated Schools Grant in 2019-20 had increased from £1.207million to £2.144million. The forecast Dedicated Schools Grant deficit stood at £2.561million by 31 March 2020. It was noted that a line of alternative provision had been included of £157,000 relating to the continuum of provision.

In response to a query, it was anticipated that the debt recovery plan would be required by June 2020.

The report was noted.

10 SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA 2020/21 PROPOSALS

Paul Sharples, School Funding and Private Finance Initiative Manager, presented the local authority's proposal for the allocation of the schools funding formula for 2020-21.

Following discussion regarding a possible transfer of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, it was suggested that there should be a robust debt recovery plan and there should be more communication with schools on this. It was recognised that the school budget was still on a soft formula and the circumstances would change should a hard formula be introduced.

It was suggested that consultation on a radical course of action on the budget be viewed in March 2020 including a plan on how to train staff to support high needs. Further information would also be presented to the headteachers meeting.

Following discussion, Schools Forum members agreed to the recommendations to continue to apply the National Funding Formula unit values; to set a minimum funding guarantee of 1.84% compared to 2019-20 per pupil funding; to set no cap on gains in line with local formula consultation responses; to set aside surplus growth funding allocation of £180,000 in a growth fund contingency and to transfer the £101,000 headroom from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.

Resolved:

- **To continue to apply the National Funding Formula unit values.**
- **To set a minimum funding guarantee of 1.84% compared to 2019-20 per pupil funding.**
- **To set no cap on gains in line with local formula consultation responses.**
- **To set aside surplus growth funding allocation of £180,000 in a growth fund**

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contingency.

- To transfer the £101,000 headroom from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.

11 DRAFT 2020/21 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT BUDGET PROPOSAL

Hilary Wood, Head of Business Support and Resources, provided a report to share the provisional estimates for the use of Dedicated School Grant in 2020-21.

It was noted that the Schools Block funding had increased by £5.7million (almost 7%) and Central Schools Services block had decreased by £183,000. The High Needs budget forecast had increased by almost £2million and work would be undertaken to identify options for additional savings to consider at the next meeting. It was proposed that the Early Years Block funding was fully allocated to Early Years provision and services. The reduction in the block was a result of reduced participation levels although an increase of 1.84% in the hourly funding rate had been given (8 pence per child per hour). A small amount of savings in the Early Years central budget had been identified and a consultation with early years providers was underway to determine how the funds should be re-allocated.

It was estimated that the in-year deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant would be £680,000 with a cumulative deficit at 31 March 2020 of £2,615,000.

It was noted that the budget proposal would be further discussed at the March 2020 Schools Forum meeting.

Resolved:

- The budget proposal would be further discussed at the March 2020 Schools Forum meeting.

(Simon Brennand and Edward Vitalis left the meeting)

12 DE-DELEGATION OF SERVICES AND RETENTION OF FUNDING FOR EDUCATION FUNCTIONS 2020/21

Paul Sharples, School Funding and Private Finance Initiative Manager, provided a report to seek approval for the continued de-delegation of services and the retention of funding for Education Functions.

In relation to Union duties, the Unison representative sought clarification on previous funding consultation between Unison and Schools Forum and it was agreed that Paul Sharples would share the information. It was also requested that the balance relating to the fund for union duties be presented at the next meeting for information.

Following a vote, the mainstream primary members agreed to the continued de-delegation of funding for free school meal eligibility checks.

Following a vote, the mainstream primary members agreed to the continued de-delegation of funding for Professional Teaching Association (PTA) union duties at £4.00 per pupil.

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Following a vote, the mainstream school members, including primary, special and pupil referral unit members, agreed to the amount of £35.33 per pupil being retained from school budgets for the purpose of funding education functions.

Resolved:

- **The mainstream primary members agreed to the continued de-delegation of funding for free school meal eligibility checks.**
- **The mainstream primary members agreed to the continued de-delegation of funding for Professional Teaching Association (PTA) union duties at £4.00 per pupil.**
- **The mainstream school members including primary, special and pupil referral unit members agreed to the amount of £35.33 per pupil being retained from school budgets for the purpose of funding education functions.**
- **That the balance relating to the fund for union duties be presented at the next meeting for information.**

13 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Forum noted the date of the next meeting as Tuesday 10 March 2020 at 9.15am, @thegrange, Bathurst Avenue, Blackpool, FY3 7RW.

Chairman

(The meeting ended 12.15pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:

Danielle Bowater Democratic Governance Adviser

Tel: 01253 477202

E-mail: danielle.bowater@blackpool.gov.uk

Report to: **SCHOOLS FORUM**
Relevant Officer: Judith Mills, Consultant in Public Health
Date of Meeting: 10 March 2020

PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the following:

- Make your Mark
- Provision of free period products
- Free School Breakfast
- Bystander programme
- Very Brief Advice for Tobacco Dependence

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 The forum to receive the updates.

3.0 Background Information

3.1 Make your Mark

Blackpool Youth Council runs the annual 'Make Your Mark' Campaign. For the last 3 years Mental Health has come top in terms of concerns for young people in the town. Blackpool Fairness Commission wanted to support the Youth Council and it was agreed that a youth mental health campaign, led by young people would be the best way.

The objective of the campaign is to raise awareness of Youth mental health as a subject and support young people by providing a range of free events to 'have a go' and build confidence. To provide evidence of youth engagement and feedback on a specific mental health campaign to support a wider town approach to supportive/preventative activity with possibility of a combined town wide bid.

Activity:

- A week of free events run by various partners throughout the town over children's mental health week
- 10 bus/tram stop posters with messages covering the 5ways to well-being/resilience moves designed by young people

- A social media campaign with supporting toolkit for partners
- An in school competition
- Chatty Bus take over
- Park run takeover

For further details contact Chloe Shore on chloe.shore@blackpool.gov.uk

3.2 **Provision of free period products**

To raise awareness that the Department for Education has launched a new scheme to provide free period products for all schools and colleges. We would encourage all schools and colleges to get involved in the scheme and detailed below is the link to the guidance which explains how the products can be ordered and how to access and implement the scheme effectively.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/period-products-in-schools-and-colleges/period-product-scheme-for-schools-and-colleges-in-england>

There are a wide range of products available for schools and colleges to select from, including sustainable and eco-friendly products. Once products are delivered, it will be up to school and college leaders to decide how they make products available to learners, in such a way that maximises support and minimises stigma.

More information about the scheme can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/free-period-products-for-all-schools-and-colleges>

3.3 **Free School Breakfast**

Blackpool Council has been providing a free school breakfast to all primary school children since 2015. As the scheme has been in place for 5 years, it is the right time to review the breakfast offer to ensure it is benefitting the children. Public Health is currently in the process of reviewing the Free School Breakfast Scheme due to the range of delivery models that are in place across all the Schools and due to the concerns raised about the content of the breakfast offer. Additionally, Public Health wants to ensure that the scheme is providing a healthy breakfast that meets the requirements of the School Food Plan and ensuring that the most vulnerable children are benefitting from the scheme, as well as being delivered in the most cost effective way.

As part of the review work it is important that we seek the views of the primary schools about the scheme. In the next few weeks, a member of the Public Health team will be circulating a survey to all schools in order to gather these views. All the data/information gathered will be anonymised and will be used to help the Public Health and Catering Team

consider future service delivery models. It would be appreciated if schools took the time to complete the survey so that all views can be considered.

3.4 **Bystander Programme**

On the 19 March 2020 there will be an interactive stakeholder event about a recent pilot in Blackpool of the Bystander programme in both of our local colleges.

The Bystander programme is an evidence based primary prevention initiative to develop skills in young people to recognise and respond to partner violence, sexual coercion and stalking. Following the success of this in colleges, we are keen to explore how bystander may be further embedded in education settings, including primary and secondary schools.

This event provides an opportunity to share the evaluation of the pilot, explore other bystander model opportunities, and consider where bystander approaches might meet wider strategic priorities and statutory PSHE requirements.

The event will be held @theGrange, Blackpool from 9.30 – 12.30 (lunch provided). Please RSVP to Nicole.peters@blackpool.gov.uk

3.5 **Very Brief Advice Training for Tobacco Dependence**

Public Health is currently offering Very Brief Advice (VBA) training for tobacco dependence for the workforce across Blackpool including schools and colleges. We are trying to encourage as many people as possible to undertake the training including pastoral support, catering staff, and anyone who comes into contact with young people.

VBA is an effective, evidence based very quick intervention which can ultimately save lives.

Smoking is still the biggest cause of preventable death and disease in our community – few people ‘choose’ to smoke, it’s an addiction that usually starts in childhood.

Delivering VBA only takes 30 seconds, it is an evidence based intervention which moves away from the traditional method of telling someone to stop smoking to offering the individual information on where to get support.

Evidence shows with VBA individuals are twice as likely to make an attempt to quit smoking compared to if they were just told to stop smoking.

If you would like to receive this training, please contact Lisa Mills, Public Health Trainer by email lisa.mills@blackpool.gov.uk

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Report to: **SCHOOLS FORUM**

Relevant Officer: Paul Turner, Head of Service for School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion

Date of Meeting: 10 March 2020

LOCAL AUTHORITY AND INCLUSION REPORT

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To provide a high level overview of recent developments within the Local Authority to the forum.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To note the report for information.

2.2 To approve the proposal outlined in 3.1 to advertise to fill the School Safeguarding Adviser role on a fixed term contract.

3.0 Background Information

3.1 Local Authority update

Jeremy Mannino is now acting as Virtual School Headteacher alongside his role as School Safeguarding Advisor. The Council is advertising to fill the School Safeguarding Advisor role on a fixed-term contract, subject to approval from Forum, to focus more upon early help and supporting schools in this area of safeguarding, as well as providing ongoing school-focused training. Jeremy will still be responsible for responding to concerns from schools and investigating complaints. The ability to audit provision will be slightly reduced. This position will be at a reduced salary rate and the difference between this salary and the salary of the School Safeguarding Advisor will be returned to the DSG. The intention is to continue with this arrangement for two years.

At the time of writing there has been 1 Ofsted inspection since the last Forum meeting, with St Nicholas School receiving a Section 8, 1 day Modern Foreign Languages subject visit on the 27 March. No grading is given at this type of inspection.

3.2 Academies

Since the last meeting there has been 1 inspection of an Academy at Highfield Leadership Academy. At the time of writing this has not yet been published.

3.3 Statutory Assessment and Moderation

Blackpool Local Authority has again been selected for a visit from the Standards and Testing Agency to look at the effectiveness of moderation arrangements.

3.4 Inclusion update

Data correct as of 28/02/2020.

EHE	267 (226 at this time in 2019)
Educational Diversity	249 (261 at this time in 2019)
PEX (Secondary)	13 pupils (17 at this time in 2019)
FTE (Secondary)	385 pupils
Overall Absence	4.53% / 8.16%
Persistent Absence	11.73% / 24.57%

The current data shows that the 2019-20 picture is largely similar to the 2018-19 academic year. A significant number of pupils being absent from school due to Norovirus and winter vomiting has affected attendance. This has also been evident in staff absence.

Concerns raised by Forum members about accountability and scrutiny in relation to the Opportunity Area Continuum of Provision project have been raised with Secondary Academy CEOs again and the Department for Education will be attending the Forum meeting to discuss.

List of Acronyms:

DSG – Dedicated Schools Grant

EHE – Elective Home Educated

PEX – Permanent Exclusions

FTE – Fixed Term Exclusions

CEO – Chief Executive Officer

Report to: **SCHOOLS FORUM**
Relevant Officer: Mark Golden, Finance Manager
Date of Meeting: 10 March 2020

DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT BUDGET MONITORING 2019-2020

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To report the budget position of the 2019-20 Dedicated Schools Grant as at 31 January 2020 - Appendix 7(a).
- 1.2 To report the amount of Dedicated Schools Grant reserves as at 31 January 2020 – Appendix 7(b).

2.0 Recommendation:

- 2.1 To note contents of the report.

3.0 Background:

- 3.1 The monitoring report at appendix 7(a) reflects the budgets as approved at the March 2019 Schools Forum.
- 3.2 Since budgets were set Mainstream Top-Up Funding has increased and there has been a larger than expected increase in the number of Out of Borough placements and Special School numbers. The forecast gap on the DSG in 2020-21 has increased from £1.206m to £2.501m.
- 3.3 The forecast DSG deficit now stands at £2.918m by 31 March 2020.

4.0 List of Appendices:

- 4.1 Appendix 7(a) - Dedicated Schools Grant 2019-2020 Budget Monitoring Report to 31 January 2020.
Appendix 7(b) - Dedicated Schools Grant Reserves as at 31 January 2020.

List of Acronyms:

DSG	-	Dedicated Schools Grant
LA	-	Local Authority
HNB	-	High Needs Block
SSA	-	Special Support Assistant
ESFA	-	Education and Skills Funding Agency
SERF	-	Special Education Referral Unit
PRU	-	Pupil Referral Unit

Appendix 7(a) - Dedicated Schools Grant 2019-2020 Budget Monitoring Report to 31 January 2020

Service	2019/20						Comments
	Budget	In Year Adj.	Recoupment	Adjusted Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance	
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	
Schools Block							
Local School Budget							
- Delegated	82,313	0	(64,123)	18,190	18,190	0	
- Third Party & Public Liability Insurance (de-delegated)	0	0	0	0	0	0	
- Union Duties (de-delegated)	18	0	0	18	18	0	
- Free School Meals Eligibility Checks (de-delegated)	12	0	0	12	12	0	
- Education Functions (retained)	158	0	0	158	158	0	
Pupil Growth Contingency	77	0	590	667	667	0	
	82,578	0	(63,533)	19,045	19,045	0	
Central School Services Block							
Servicing of Schools Forum	15	0	0	15	15	0	
Licences & Subscriptions	85	0	0	85	85	0	
School Admissions	153	0	0	153	156	3	
Contribution to Combined Budgets - Children's Centres	1,000	0	0	1,000	1,000	0	
Former ESG Retained Duties							
- Education Welfare	204	0	0	204	204	0	
- Asset Management	57	0	0	57	57	0	
- Statutory / Regulatory Duties	77	0	0	77	77	0	
	1,591	0	0	1,591	1,594	3	
Total Schools Block	84,169	0	(63,533)	20,636	20,639	3	
High Needs Block							
Special Schools							
Place Funding	4,677	0	(2,565)	2,112	2,170	58	Increase in numbers
Top-up Funding	2,470	0	0	2,470	2,644	174	Increase in numbers
SERFs							
Place Funding	320	0	(80)	240	240	0	
Top-up Funding	105	0	0	105	105	0	
Transport	77	0	0	77	53	(24)	Transport SLA
Pupil Referral Units							
Place Funding	2,533	0	0	2,533	2,533	0	
Top-up Funding	1,303	0	0	1,303	1,285	(18)	Based on Summer Term Numbers
Other AP	0	0	0	0	20	20	
Mainstream Schools							
Top-up Funding	833	0	0	833	1,175	342	Increased demand based on Autumn Data
Exceptional Circumstances Funding	163	0	0	163	96	(67)	Forecast Lower than Predicted
Post-16 Education	2,023	0	(696)	1,327	1,332	5	
Out of Borough	4,440	0	0	4,440	5,113	673	£571k Placements, £102k Transport SLA
Specialist Advisory and Referral Service (SARS)	1,082	0	0	1,082	1,027	(55)	Non Staffing Savings
Access and Inclusion	335	0	0	335	524	189	Continuum of Provision
Other High Needs Central Services (Management, Central Support Costs, Admin Support, Pension Top-slice)	772	0	0	772	767	(5)	
Total High Needs Block	21,133	0	(3,341)	17,792	19,084	1,292	
Early Years Block							
2 Year Old Grants	1,750	(131)	0	1,619	1,619	0	
Early Years Pupil Premium	111	(11)	0	100	100	0	
3 & 4 Year Old Grants	6,659	(274)	0	6,385	6,385	0	
Early Years Inclusion Fund	10	0	0	10	10	0	
Disability Access Fund	47	0	0	47	47	0	
Early Years Central Services	421	0	0	421	421	0	
Total Early Years Block	8,998	(416)	0	8,582	8,582	0	
Total Expenditure	114,300	(416)	(66,874)	47,010	48,305	1,295	
Dedicated Schools Grant Income	(113,093)	416	66,977	(45,701)	(45,701)	0	
Post-16 funding from the EFA	0	0	(103)	(103)	(103)	0	
Total Income	(113,093)	416	66,874	(45,804)	(45,804)	0	
In year (under)/over spend	1,207	0	0	1,206	2,501	1,295	

Appendix 7(b) - Dedicated Schools Grant Reserves

Description	Brought Forward 1st April 2019	Total Forecast Expenditure FY 2019-20	Forecast Surplus / (Deficit) at 31st March 2020	Comments
DSG Reserve	(417,323)	2,501,000	(2,918,323)	

Report to: **SCHOOLS FORUM**
Relevant Officer: Hilary Wood, Head of Business Support and Resources
Date of Meeting: 10 March 2020

HIGH NEEDS UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To update Schools Forum members on latest developments relevant to the High Needs budget.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To note and discuss the contents of this report.

3.0 Background Information

3.1 As reported in previous meetings, Blackpool, along with many other areas around the country, is experiencing financial pressures on its High Needs Budget. In order to better understand Blackpool's financial position, a medium-term financial plan has been developed to monitor forecast expenditure against the High Needs Budget, and factor in predictions of where savings may be achievable.

3.2 The medium-term plan has been revised to take account of updated forecasts (see Appendix 8a). Since it was last reported at Schools Forum, the forecast in-year overspend on the High Needs Block for 2019/20 has worsened from £2.3 million to a predicted £2.5 million. This is over and above the £431k funding transferred from the Schools Block and the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit of £417k brought forward from last year.

3.3 The plan includes the agreed transfer of £101k headroom from the Schools Block in 2020/21, plus an additional transfer of £8k from the Central Schools Services Block, but makes no assumptions about transfers from other blocks of the DSG beyond next year.

3.4 Despite the additional government funding, pupil numbers in special schools and Out of Borough placements are continuing their upward trend, leading to a position where costs exceed funding allocations by more than £1 million per annum. Using this set of assumptions, the cumulative deficit against DSG would reach over £4 million by the end of 2020/21, rising to almost £9 million by the end of 2024/25.

3.5 It is therefore clear that, despite the additional funding from central government, radical action is still required in order to reverse the continuing upward trend in costs. Action is underway to tackle those budget lines which are continuing to grow at a faster pace than the funding or where efficiencies can be identified. These actions include the following:

- Special schools – given the growing number of pupils in all three schools, the local authority is working in collaboration with special head teachers to identify opportunities to manage numbers at more affordable levels, as well as considering options for the most effective use of available building capacity.
- SERFs – consideration is being given to ways in which support for behaviour needs in the primary phase can be most effectively managed.
- Out of Borough – this line of the budget is placing ever-increasing pressure on available resources, with costs now exceeding £5 million a year. While there will always be a need for specialist provision for a number of pupils with the most complex needs, the local authority is proactively seeking opportunities for new local provision where this could provide better outcomes at a lower cost. Since the last Schools Forum meeting, mainstream schools have been invited to indicate their willingness to explore options for the creation of resource provision for pupils with special education needs and disabilities. This would result in a reduced requirement for more expensive Out of Borough placements. A verbal update on the exercise will be provided at the meeting.

DSG deficits

3.6 The forecast deficit at 31 March 2020 is more than 2% of the DSG allocation. Under previous rules, this would mean that Blackpool would be required to submit a deficit recovery plan to the Department for Education (DfE). Following the publication of the DSG conditions of grant for 2020/21, the DfE has revised its processes around deficit recovery.

3.7 The conditions of grant now state that:

“Any local authority that has an overall deficit on its DSG account at the end of the 2019 to 2020 financial year, or whose DSG surplus has substantially reduced during the year, must co-operate with the DfE in handling that situation. In particular, the local authority must:

1. Provide information as and when requested by the department about its plans for managing its DSG account in the 2020 to 2021 financial year and subsequently.
2. Provide information as and when requested by the department about pressures and potential savings on its high needs budget.
3. Meet with officials of the department as and when they request to discuss the local authority's plans and financial situation.
4. Keep the schools forum regularly updated about the local authority's DSG account and plans for handling it, including high needs pressures and potential savings.

The Secretary of State reserves the right to impose more specific conditions of grant on individual local authorities that have an overall deficit on their DSG account, where he believes that they are not taking sufficient action to address the situation."

- 3.8 It is unclear, therefore, whether Blackpool will be invited to provide the DfE with a deficit recovery plan based on the deficit predicted for this year-end. However, it is likely that those local authorities that are required to produce recovery plans will be subjected to increased levels of scrutiny from the DfE.
- 3.9 The Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations have also been amended to create a new statutory provision whereby DSG deficits must be carried forward to be dealt with from future DSG income, unless the Secretary of State authorises the local authority not to do this.

Lotus School update

- 3.10 As previously reported, Lotus Special School is due to open on Langdale Road in September 2020, and will provide 48 places for 10 to 16 year olds with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. This is a vital part of the High Needs medium-term financial plan, as it will provide cost effective local provision, and avoid the need to place pupils in more expensive out of borough independent settings.
- 3.11 The construction of the building is well underway, and is on track to be completed for the planned opening in September 2020. The local authority continues to liaise closely with Champion Education Trust regarding the identification of pupils who could take up places in the new school. Once this work has progressed further, the broad assumptions currently made within the medium-term plan will be replaced with more accurate forecasts of costs, as well as savings elsewhere in the High Needs budget.

List of acronyms:

DSG – Dedicated Schools Grant

DfE – Department for Education

List of Appendices:

Appendix 8a – High Needs Medium-Term Financial Plan

High Needs Block Medium-Term Financial Plan

Service	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Notes Current Version
	Actual	Forecast	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	
High Needs Block								
New Free School (opening September 2020 - c£1m pa when full)	-	-	350	863	1,000	1,000	1,000	Assumes 24 places from September 2020, increasing to 48 from September 2021
Special Schools								
Place Funding	4,093	4,735	4,860	4,883	4,900	4,900	4,900	April 2019 270 (P), 76 (HF) and 110 (W); from September 2019 290 (P), 76 (HF) and 120 (W); from September 2020 290 (P), 80 (HF) and 120 (W); from September 2021 290 (P), 80 (HF) and 120 (W)
Top-up Funding	2,548	2,644	2,837	3,206	3,447	3,451	3,515	Updated based on Dec 19 Figures
SERFs								
Place Funding	395	320	320	320	320	320	320	Highfield and Marton SERFs decommissioned from September 2018
Top-up Funding	153	105	111	111	111	111	111	Highfield and Marton SERFs decommissioned from September 2018
Transport	64	53	48	49	50	51	52	
AP Provision								
PRU - Place Funding	2,580	2,533	2,208	1,913	1,850	1,850	1,850	Reduced from 250 places to 200 from September 2020, 185 from September 2021
PRU - Top-up Funding	1,260	1,285	1,112	881	908	908	908	Forecast numbers:- September 2019 to March 2020 240, April to August 2020 272, September 2020 to March 2021 182, April to August 2021 215, September 2021 to March 2022 147, April to August 2022 178, September 2022 to March 2023 152
Other AP		20	165	165	165	165	165	
Mainstream Schools								
Top-up Funding	984	1,175	1,550	1,579	1,609	1,640	1,671	
Exceptional Circumstances Funding	64	96	96	96	96	96	96	
Post-16 Education	2,031	2,028	2,082	2,137	2,194	2,252	2,312	Increase in placement costs including inflationary increase @ 3%
Out of Borough	4,187	5,113	5,345	4,919	4,803	4,814	4,827	Based on 16 year-olds leaving, 40 new placements each year @£35k per place and inflationary increase @3%, offset by transfers into new Free School starting in September 2020
Specialist Advisory and Referral Service (SARS)	1,044	1,027	1,064	1,081	1,099	1,117	1,136	
Access and Inclusion	232	524	698	585	589	594	598	
Other High Needs Central Services	767	767	772	772	772	772	772	
(Management, Central Support Costs, Admin Support, Pension Top-slice)								
Total High Needs Block Expenditure	20,402	22,424	23,617	23,560	23,913	24,040	24,233	
Available High Needs Block funding	18,957	19,496	22,276	22,656	22,756	22,756	22,756	Includes additional funding for new Special Free School
Additional High Needs Block allocation in-year	296	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Transfers from other funding blocks	400	431	109	-	-	-	-	
Council Funding	400	-	-	-	-	-	-	
HNB (Surplus) / Deficit	349	2,497	1,232	904	1,157	1,284	1,477	
Cumulative HNB (Surplus) / Deficit	349	2,846	4,078	4,983	6,140	7,424	8,901	
Movement		2,148	(1,265)	(328)	253	127	193	

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Report to: **SCHOOLS FORUM**

Relevant Officer: Paul Sharples, School Funding and Private Finance Initiative Manager

Date of Meeting: 10 March 2020

EARLY YEARS FUNDING FORMULA 2020/21

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 Schools Forum is asked to agree the local authority's proposed formula for Early Years funding for three- and four-year old early education, as well as the value of the Inclusion Fund for 2020/21, and to note the funding rate for two-year olds.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 It is recommended that Schools Forum agrees to the local authority's proposed formula for three- and four-year old early education for 2020/21, as outlined below. Voting is restricted to school and PVI members.

2.2 It is recommended that the Early Years Inclusion fund for three- and four-year olds is increased to £30,000 for 2020/21, from £10,000 in 2019/20.

2.3 Schools Forum is asked to note the local authority's funding rate for two-year olds at £5.09 per hour.

3.0 Background Information

Three- and four-year old funding rates

3.1 The Department for Education has announced an increase in the Early Years funding rates for Blackpool of 8p per child per hour for 2020/21. The rate has risen to £4.44 from £4.36 in 2019/20.

3.2 The local authority has carried out a review of the Blackpool funding formula for early years education in collaboration with the Early Years Provider Strategic Group and has undertaken consultation with Early Years providers. A summary of these findings can be found at paragraph 3.8 of this report.

3.3 The local authority is permitted to retain up to 5% of early years funding towards the cost of central expenses for administration of the grant. As a result of savings

identified, the local authority can release a further £44,000 from central expenditure thereby reducing its current 5% retention.

3.4 The local authority proposes to pass through the full amount of the government increase to Early Years providers. It is therefore proposed that the overall hourly Base Rate is increased by a total of 9p per child per hour to include the 8p additional funding, together with 1p from savings. This will bring the Base Rate up to £4.12 per hour, compared to £4.03 in 2019/20.

3.5 The 2020/21 funding proposals can be summarised as follows:

	£ per child per hour
Base rate	£4.12
Deprivation:	
Top 0-10% of deprived postcodes	16p
Top 11-20% of deprived postcodes	8p
Top 21-30% of deprived postcodes	4p
Quality supplement:	
Education led by staff with Early Years Teacher Status (or EY Professional), or other suitably qualified teacher (i.e. QTS foundation stage/primary)	8p

Early Years Inclusion Fund

3.6 The Early Years Inclusion Fund is set aside from the three- and four-year old grant in order to support settings to improve early learning and development outcomes for children with additional needs. It is proposed for 2020/21 that the value of the fund is increased from £10,000 to £30,000. This will be funded from the savings identified in central expenditure.

Two-year old funding rates

3.7 Government funding for eligible two-year olds has also increased by 8p from £5.20 per child per hour for 2019/20, to £5.28 for 2020/21. The local authority proposes to pass through the full amount of the government increase, together with 1p from savings, to Early Years providers and increase the rate to £5.09, from £5.00 in 2019/20.

Consultation with Early Years Providers

3.8 Consultation has taken place with Early Years Providers between 20 December 2019 and 31 January 2020. Please see below a summary of the finding:

- 13 responses were received regarding the proposals;
- The majority of respondents agreed with the proposals;
- Some providers expressed concerns that the increase did not take account of

increases in the living wage. (The overall increase is decided by the Department for Education and beyond the control of the local authority);

- One provider felt that the current deprivation supplements should be reviewed.

3.9 The responses were considered by Early Years Provider Strategic Group who felt that there was sufficient support to implement the proposals. The group considered that the current arrangements for distribution of deprivation supplements was satisfactory.

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Report to: **SCHOOLS FORUM**
Relevant Officer: Hilary Wood, Head of Business Support and Resources
Date of Meeting: 10 March 2020

DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT BUDGET PROPOSAL 2020/21

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To share with Schools Forum the proposals for the use of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in 2020/21.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To agree the proposal for future use of DSG.

3.0 Background Information

3.1 At its meeting in January 2020, Schools Forum was presented with the provisional estimates for expenditure against Dedicated Schools Grant in 2020/21. The forecasts for 2020/21 have been updated, and are presented at the appendix to this report.

Schools Block

3.2 Blackpool's allocation for the Schools Block is £88.665m. After the National Funding Formula is applied in full for all schools and academies, and a growth contingency is set aside as agreed at the January meeting, there is surplus funding of £101k on this block. As agreed by Schools Forum in January, it is proposed that this headroom is transferred to the High Needs Block to help offset ongoing pressures.

Central Schools Block

3.3 The allocation in 2020/21 for this block stands at £1.423m, which is made up of £623k of ongoing funding, plus a reduced amount of £800k in respect of the historic contribution to combined budgets. The proposed allocation of the £623k can be seen in the appendix to this report, while the ongoing review of Children's Centres will mean that costs in 2020/21 can be met within the reduced allocation. It is proposed that the surplus of £8k on this block is transferred to the High Needs Block to help offset ongoing pressures.

High Needs Block

3.4 Estimates of expenditure against the High Needs Block have been updated since the

January meeting. Forecast spend now amounts to £23.617m against an allocation of £22.276m. The pressure of £1.341m is being partially offset by the transfers of funding from other blocks, resulting in a net overspend of £1.232m.

- 3.5 The previous report gave further information about the longer-term forecasts for the High Needs Block, together with some proposed actions to seek to reduce expenditure in future years. It is hoped that some of these actions will be implemented in time to have a positive effect on the predicted overspend.

Early Years Block

- 3.6 Expenditure against the Early Years Block allocation of £8.733m is shown as a breakeven position. The increase of 1.84% in the funding rate from central government equates to an increase of 8p per child per hour in the provider rate. A review of local authority expenditure in respect of early years has resulted in savings of £44k being identified. As outlined in agenda item 9, it is proposed that this helps to increase the provider rate by a further 1p per child per hour, as well as increasing the Early Years Inclusion Fund from £10k per annum to £30k per annum.

List of acronyms:

DSG – Dedicated Schools Grant

List of Appendices:

Appendix 10a – Draft DSG Budget 2020/21

	2020/21	2019/20	Movement	% Change	Notes
	Total	Total			
Schools Block					
Local Schools Budget	88,190,540	82,313,699	5,876,841	7%	
- Union Duties (de-delegated)	18,192	18,216	(24)	0%	
- Free School Meals Eligibility Checks (de-delegated)	14,383	11,710	2,673	23%	
- Education Functions (retained)	160,681	157,705	2,976	2%	
Pupil Growth Contingency	180,490	76,705	103,785	135%	As agreed by Forum Jan 2020
	88,564,286	82,578,035	5,986,251	7%	
Central Schools Services Block					
Servicing of Schools Forum	15,600	15,000	600	4%	
Licences & Subscriptions	88,261	84,967	3,294	4%	
School Admissions	159,710	152,712	6,998	5%	
Contribution to Combined Budgets	800,000	1,000,000	(200,000)	-20%	
Former ESG retained duties					
- Education Welfare	212,160	204,000	8,160	4%	
- Asset Management	58,864	56,600	2,264	4%	
- Statutory / Regulatory duties	80,080	77,000	3,080	4%	
	1,414,675	1,590,279	(175,604)	-11%	
High Needs Block					
Special Schools					
Place Funding	5,000,000	4,676,667	323,333	7%	
Top-up Funding	3,047,413	2,469,897	577,516	23%	
Total Special Schools	8,047,413	7,146,564	900,849	13%	
SERFs					
Place Funding	320,000	320,000	-	0%	
Top-up Funding	111,108	105,260	5,848	6%	
Transport	47,676	77,442	(29,766)	-38%	
Total SERFs	478,784	502,702	(23,918)	-5%	
Alternative Provision					
Place Funding	2,208,333	2,533,333	(325,000)	-13%	
Top-up Funding	1,112,164	1,303,410	(191,246)	-15%	
Other AP Provision	165,000	-	165,000	-	
Total Alternative Provision	3,485,497	3,836,743	(351,246)	-9%	
Mainstream Schools					
Top-up Funding	1,549,853	832,813	717,040	86%	
Exceptional Circumstances Funding	96,000	162,984	(66,984)	-41%	
Total top-up for Mainstream Schools	1,645,853	995,797	650,056	65%	
Post-16 Education	2,081,769	2,022,759	59,010	3%	
Out of Borough	5,344,554	4,440,300	904,254	20%	
Specialist Advisory and Referral Service (SARS)	1,064,006	1,081,517	(17,511)	-2%	
Access and Inclusion	697,550	335,151	362,399	108%	Continuum of Provision
Other High Needs Central Services (Management, Central Support Costs, Admin Support, Pension Top-slice)	771,865	771,865	-	0%	
	23,617,291	21,133,398	2,483,893	12%	
Early Years Block					
2 Year Old Grants	1,650,492	1,749,615	(99,123)	-6%	
3 & 4 Year Old Grants	6,527,552	6,659,184	(131,632)	-2%	
Early Years Pupil Premium	100,373	110,617	(10,244)	-9%	
Disability Access Fund	47,355	47,355	-	0%	
Early Years Inclusion Fund	30,000	10,000	20,000	200%	
Other Early Years Central Services (Management, Central Support Costs, Training, Admin Support, Pension Top-slice)	377,324	421,229	(43,905)	-10%	
	8,733,096	8,998,000	(264,904)	-3%	
Total	122,329,348	114,299,712	8,029,636	7%	
Dedicated Schools Grant Allocations	(121,097,541)	(113,093,000)	(8,004,541)	7%	
Deficit / (Surplus)	1,231,807	1,206,712	25,095		

	Schools Block	Central Schools Services Block	High Needs Block	Early Years Block	Total
Original DSG Allocations 2020/21	88,665,404	1,422,653	22,276,388	8,733,096	121,097,541
Proposed transfers between blocks	(101,118)	(7,978)	109,096	-	-
Allocations above	88,564,286	1,414,675	22,385,484	8,733,096	121,097,541

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