



**Warrington Schools Forum**

**Membership**

Membership with differentiated voting rights ~ Total Membership of 26, of whom 22 are entitled to vote on funding formula issues										
Tenure ends 31 August 2020										
Sector Representation (22)	Appointed by the Council following election by:	Member	Dates and Attendance							
			26 June 2018	2 October 2018	4 December 2018	15 January 2019	5 March 2019	23 April 2019	25 June 2019	8 October 2019
Maintained Nursery School Senior Staff (1)	Primary Headteachers Group	Jane Wilkie (JaneW)	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	
Special School Staff (1)	Special School Headteachers Group	Maureen Brettell (MBr) <i>from 2 Oct</i>	P	P	A	X	P	S	A	
Special School Governor (1)	Governors Forum	Mike Frost (MF) <i>(from 04/12/18)</i>	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	
PRU (1)	PRU Management Board	Sam Rigby-White (SRW)	A	A	P	A	S	P	A	
UTC (1)	UTC	Lee Barber (LB)	P	A	A	S	A	A	A	
Academy Secondary (5)	Academy Schools	Gwyn Williams (GW)	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	
		Tim Long (TL)	P	P	A	A	P	P	S	
		John Carlin (JC)	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	
		Bev Scott-Herron (BSH)	P	P	S	P	P	P	P	
	Governors Forum	Kieran Walshe (KW)	A	A	P	A	P	A	P	
Academy Primary (1)	Academy Schools	Andrew Redman (AR)	A	P	S	A	A	P	A	
Maintained Primary School Sector (8)	WAPH (4)	Cath Cooke <i>(from 15/01/19)</i>	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	
		Gary Cunningham (GC)	S	P	P	P	A	P	P	
		Lesley McGann (LM)	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	
		Lyndsey Glass (LG)	S	P	P	P	P	P	P	
	Governors Forum (4)	Stuart Munslow (SM)	P	A	P	P	S	P	A	
		David Hart (DH)	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	
		Janet Lazarus (JL)	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	
		Hazel Coen (HC)	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	
Maintained Secondary School Sector (2)	WASCL (2)	Chris Hunt (CH)	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	
		Ed McGlinchey (EM)	A	P	P	A	P	A	P	
Private Voluntary and Independent Providers (1)	PVI Providers Forum	Ginny Taylor (GT)	P	P	A	A	P	A	A	

Representing	Member	Dates and Attendance								
		26 June 2018	2 October 2018	4 December 2018	15 January 2019	5 March 2019	23 April 2019	25 June 2019	8 October 2019	3 December 2019
<b><u>Non-Schools Members (4)</u></b>										
Anglican Diocese (1)	Jacqui Wightman (JacquiW)	P	P	S	P	P	P	P		
Roman Catholic Diocese (1)	Tim Warren (TW)	P	A	A	P	A	A	A		
16-19 Institutions (1)	Julie McCann (JM)	P	P	P	P	P	P	S		
Parent Governor (1)	Vacant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		

<b>Independent Chair</b>	Maureen Banner (MBa)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		
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Representing		26 June 2018	2 October 2018	4 December 2018	15 January 2019	5 March 2019	23 April 2019	25 June 2019	8 October 2019	3 December 2019
<b><u>Warrington Borough Council</u></b>										
Head of Service Education and SEND	Melissa Young (MY) <i>(from 2 Oct)</i>	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Finance Manager	James Campbell (JC)	P	P	P	P	P	A	P		
Senior Accountant (Schools)	Garry Bradbury (GB)	P	P	P	P	P	A	P		
Executive Member for Children and Young People's Services	CIlr Jean Carter (CIlrJC)	P	A	A	A	P	A	A		

**Key**

P ~ Present

S ~ Substitute

A ~ Apologies

- ~ Vacancy

X ~ Absent with no apologies

O ~ Observer

**Trades Union**

Laura Watson

(NASUWT)

**Apologies:**

Paula Worthington

Assistant Director, Early Help, Education and SEND, WBC

**Substitutes:**

Damian McGuire

substitute for Tim Long and Julie McCann

**Observer:**

Adrienne Laing

Director of Operations - TCAT

**Minutes:**

Gill Sykes

	<i>Item</i>	<b>Action</b>
1.	<p><b>Apologies and Welcome</b></p> <p>The chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Minutes from the previous meeting and matters arising:</b></p> <p><b>(a) 5 March 2019</b>  <b>Page 4</b> – JC agreed to follow up the action for Simon Bleckly to provide examples of fines re: GDPR and put on My School Services.  The minutes were accepted.</p> <p><b>(b) 23 April 2019 (extraordinary meeting)</b>  <b>Page 3 – Funding Bands:</b> The banding wording was challenged, and MY clarified that all bands (A-G) would be replaced by bespoke amounts that schools will apply for.  <b>Page 4 – High Needs Medical Funding:</b> MY confirmed that we have not removed this funding and schools can still apply for it. We would like to remove it going forward, but until we get commitment from Health we don't want to leave children vulnerable. The proposal to remove the funding has been put on hold until we have agreement from Health and they make alternative arrangements.  <b>Page 5 – New Horizons Primary Provision:</b> MY confirmed that the primary provision would close from September 2019 and schools will be informed of the alternative arrangements for primary children. It will give a more appropriate offer to schools to support children. Noted that we cannot get the money back for the next financial year, the funding agreement is until 2020 and we have to give notice in November for the following academic year. Jacqui Wightman asked if we are going to request an update to Schools Forum from New Horizons about how they are spending the money. MB noted that this could be a continuing agenda item at Schools Forum.  The minutes were accepted.</p>	JC
3.	<p><b>Update on High Needs (<i>standing item</i>)</b></p> <p>Work is ongoing for long term sustainable savings to the High Needs budget going forward. Significant work is being undertaken around out of area placements and some significant savings are being made. We are continuing to look at ways of getting money from New Horizons. Work will continue with initiatives to reduce spend.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Pathway following decisions at the Extraordinary (SEND) Forum meeting</b></p> <p>This was discussed as part of the minutes above – 2(b).</p>	
5.	<p><b>School Balances</b></p> <p>Garry Bradbury (GB) presented his report to the forum, and noted that there is no longer a mandatory requirement for maintained school sector balance challenges. The closing balances for maintained schools in 2019 shows that every sector has a level of</p>	

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	<p>balance that is increased compared to the previous year. There are plenty of schools where balances are declining, but are outweighed by schools where balances have increased.</p> <p>If the clawback process was still being undertaken, there would be challenges made to 21 schools who would need to justify their position on balances. Although we are not taking this approach, it was suggested that these schools should have a discussion with their senior leadership team and governors to investigate how these balances have been arrived at. It is good practice to be challenging of one's circumstances and while we continue to press government for additional funding we need to be prepared if asked questions about balances. It was suggested that a briefing note to all governors could be prepared listing their responsibilities, and areas they should be aware of and challenging. Challenges made at governing body meetings would be minuted and provide a formal record if schools were questioned on balances by Ofsted.</p> <p>It was noted that the report on school balances may be sending the wrong message about schools being "awash" with money, and some additional notes explaining why funding is retained would be helpful. It was suggested that it is good practice for schools to have 3 year plans with information around why schools retain some funding for future spends.</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Schools Forum is asked to note the level of maintained school balances recorded at the end of 2018/19. <b>NOTED</b></li> <li>(ii) Schools Forum members representing WAPH and WASCL are asked to consider whether to recommend that schools evaluate internally their closing 2018/19 balances. <b>NOTED</b></li> </ul>	
6.	<p><b>DSG Outturn</b></p> <p>GB presented his report to the forum and confirmed the outturn position for the retained Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budgets for 2018/19. The accounts closed on a deficit of under £200k which is a significant reduction from £1.2m projected. This has been due to a number of factors, such as the new procedures, savings, additional funding from outside the council, a redirection of underspend from elsewhere in the council, some unrepeatable interventions. There are still considerable pressures and the £200k deficit will be carried forward into next year, where the projected deficit may be £1.3m to £1.4m.</p> <p>Questions/comments were invited from the chair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lyndsey Glass (LG) queried if there was a statement on the current position, with an indication of overspend for this year (2019/20). GB noted that this is corporately monitored, and the next monitoring is at Quarter 1 (end of June beginning of July). A projected £1.16m was discussed at the last meeting.</li> </ul>	

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	<p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <p>(i) Schools Forum is asked to note the 2018/19 outturn position for DSG, and that this overspend will be aggregated with the 2019/20 projected deficit of £1,160,046. <b>NOTED</b></p> <p>(ii) Maintained school representatives are asked to note that no additional balances are due to be returned in respect of de-delegated services. <b>NOTED</b></p>	
7.	<p><b>Departmental Outturn</b></p> <p>James Campbell (JC) gave a verbal update of the overall council financial outturn position for the last financial year (2018/19). It was noted that the figures given are draft as the accounts have not been accepted yet (external auditors currently reviewing them).</p> <p>The headlines as per the draft management accounts published on the WBC website are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council's net core revenue budget for 2018/19 was £133.4m (of which the Families and Wellbeing budget was £105.6m some 79%)</li> <li>• The draft outturn net actuals for 2018/19 was £133.7m (an overall small overspend of £0.3m to be met from resources)</li> </ul> <p>Within these figures there are two large variances: FWB Directorate with a £5.3m overspend and Corporate Services with a £5.0m underspend.</p> <p>FWB Directorate overspend: Executive, Adults Social Care (ASC), Better Care Fund, Children's Social Care (CSC), Education and Early Help (ED/EH) and the Director of Public Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASC - £2.8m overspend (residential and home care packages for adults and older people)</li> <li>• CSC - £2.4m overspend (children in care, external agency placements, social work teams and children's homes)</li> <li>• ED/EH - £0.6m overspend (home to school/SEN transport)</li> </ul> <p>Corporate Services underspend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over-achievement of income targets (additional income over and above income targets) - £5m (Treasury management, loans and investments, property acquisitions – some of the items Cllr Bowden discussed when he attended Schools Forum in March)</li> </ul>	
8.	<p><b>F40 revised budget proposals</b></p> <p>GB presented his report to the forum to give an update regarding the current status of the f40 group. There is a guarded welcome to the fair funding initiative so far and there is still work to be done for fairness and equity. The current revised model shows the Warrington figures if the f40 proposals were implemented. The model proposed varies from the current NFF putting more into basic entitlement and less into</p>	

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	<p>deprivation element. The f40 proposals encapsulates a large degree of discretion and this would be welcomed. It is being considered for rates to come out of the formula and be paid centrally.</p> <p>The proposal at it stands, if applied for 2019/20 would increase Warrington budgets by 11%. There is no promise that this is likely to happen, but f40 will continue with their campaign.</p> <p>Questions/comments were invited from the chair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gwyn Williams (GW) noted concerns that the government may choose parts of the suggestions from f40, and there are huge concerns about removal of the minimum funding guarantee. Regardless of the funding there is a minimum required to run any school.</li> <li>• It was noted that it is really important that f40 does not give up as funding is still unfair.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <p>(i) Schools Forum is asked to note the theoretical basis of the f40 proposal, and the potential impact on Warrington schools. <b>NOTED</b></p> <p>(ii) Schools Forum members are asked to consider whether the proposals are consistent with funding principles previously discussed in Forum and in the formula working groups, and what, if any, steps can or should be taken to express support for implementation. <b>NOTED</b></p>	
9.	<p><b>Progress on school electronic payments</b></p> <p>GB gave a verbal update and informed that we are on track for rolling out the electronic payments across schools. It is equivalent to BACS and is a partial or whole replacement for cheque books. This should save on administration time and on postage. There were six schools taking part in the pilot (five primary and one secondary). The system should be ready to go live in September 2019, and procedure notes are currently being written.</p> <p>Questions/comments were invited from the chair – none were forthcoming.</p>	
10.	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>MY informed that concern had been raised by a school about the way the NFF had been applied and to address this matter we would like to reconvene the Formula Funding Working Group. As this is a small group we would like to open the meeting up to all Schools Forum members and it was noted that this must be a balanced representation of sectors. The focus of the meeting will be to discuss the fairness of the application of the formula and how it has affected some of the protections.</p>	

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	A paper will be prepared and the meeting will take place before the end of the academic year. Recommendations from this meeting will be brought back to Schools Forum.	
<b>11.</b>	<p><b>Meeting schedule:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuesday 8 October 2019 at 5.15 pm (<i>Venue – Sir Thomas Boteler CE High School</i>)</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that the meeting planned for Tuesday 3 December 2019 would be rearranged to January 2020 (date to be confirmed).</p>	

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and the meeting was closed.