

**Membership**

Membership with differentiated voting rights ~ Total Membership of 27, of whom 23 are entitled to vote on funding formula issues								
Tenure ends 31 August 2020								
Sector Representation (23)	Appointed by the Council following election by:	Member	Dates and Attendance					
			14 January 2020	24 March 2020	23 June 2020	13 October 2020		
Maintained Nursery School Senior Staff (1)	Primary Headteachers Group	Jane Wilkie (JaneW)	P					
Special School Staff (1)	Special School Headteachers Group	Maureen Brettell (MBr)	A					
Special School Governor (1)	Governors Forum	Mike Frost (MF)	P					
PRU (1)	PRU Management Board	Sam Rigby-White (SRW)	P					
UTC (1)	UTC	Lee Barber (LB)	X					
Academy Secondary (6)	Academy Schools	Gwyn Williams (GW)	P					
		Tim Long (TL)	P					
		John Carlin (JC)	P					
		Bev Scott-Herron (BSH)	P					
		Jon Wright (JonW)	A					
	Governors Forum	Vacant	-					
Academy Primary (3)	Academy Schools	Craig Burgess (CB)	P					
		Cath Cooke (CC)	P					
		Gary Cunningham (GC)	P					
Maintained Primary School Sector (6)	WAPH (3)	Jacqui Wightman (JacquiW)	P					
		Lesley McGann (LM)	P					
		Lyndsey Glass (LG)	P					
	Governors Forum (3)	David Hart (DH)	A					
		Janet Lazarus (JL)	P					
		Hazel Coen (HC)	A					
Maintained Secondary School Sector (2)	WASCL (2)	Chris Hunt (CH)	P					
		Ed McGlinchey (EM)	P					
Private Voluntary and Independent Providers (1)	PVI Providers Forum	Vacant	-					

Representing	Member	Dates and Attendance						
		14 January 2020	24 March 2020	23 June 2020	13 October 2020			
<b><u>Non-Schools Members (4)</u></b>								
Anglican Diocese (1)	Jane Griffiths	A						
Roman Catholic Diocese (1)	Tim Warren (TW)	P						
16-19 Institutions (1)	Vacant	-						
Parent Governor (1)	Vacant	-						

<b>Independent Chair</b>	Maureen Banner (MBa)	P						
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Representing		14 January 2020	24 March 2020	23 June 2020	13 October 2020			
<b><u>Warrington Borough Council</u></b>								
Head of Service Education and SEND	Melissa Young (MY)	P						
Finance Manager	James Campbell (JC)	P						
Senior Accountant (Schools)	Garry Bradbury (GB)	A						
Executive Member for Children and Young People's Services	Cllr Matt Smith (CllrMS)	P						

**Key**

P ~ Present

S ~ Substitute

A ~ Apologies

- ~ Vacancy

X ~ Absent with no apologies

O ~ Observer

**Trades Union**

Laura Watson

(NASUWT)

**Presenting Item:**

Paula Worthington

Director, Early Help, Education and SEND, WBC (Item 10)

Shelley Gerrard

WBC (Item 2)

Helen Fleming

WBC (Item 3)

**Apologies**

Shaun Everett

(NEU)

**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. Cllr Matt Smith (portfolio holder for Children’s Services) was welcomed to Schools Forum.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Revised Early Years Report</b></p> <p>Shelley Gerrard (SG) presented the report to the forum on behalf of Andrea Riley, and key points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to the Inclusion Panel – being held monthly for children identified as requiring additional support. It is the route for health and the LA to fulfil their respective responsibilities and identify children at the earliest opportunity, making sure children are school ready.</li> <li>• Settings can refer into the panel, and support packages can be identified to meet the needs of the child, and these will be reviewed and monitored.</li> </ul> <p>Questions/comments were invited from the chair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LG asked how this panel is different from before, is it the provision map? SG noted that the CDC had previously been directing some of the work, but this is now being addressed through the panel. Although the panel has not significantly changed, work has been done to align it with the EHCP Panel so there is a seamless flow. Some of the EHCP team will sit on the Inclusion Panel.</li> <li>• Noted that there used to be referrals for outreach at Sandy Lane, but now referrals go directly to the Panel and they decide if it is appropriate for outreach at Sandy Lane, an Educational Psychologist or for the two new SEND workers to pick up.</li> <li>• The Inclusion Panel is more of a triage approach, and referral is via the MARS form.</li> <li>• LG queried (2.3 of report) how it has been evidenced that as a result of Portage parents understand how to communicate with their child better. SG noted that this is received on the Portage feedback sheets.</li> <li>• JaneW referred to Table 1, and noted that it would be useful to have the Summer 2019 spend.</li> <li>• JaneW asked for a forecast of 1 year olds going to be turning 2 years in order to look at budgets.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action: Shelley Gerrard to provide a forecast of how many 2 year olds may be eligible for funding next year.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LG asked if some of the contingency money could be set aside for (a) a person to check free school meal eligibility, and (b) if any free school meals need to be paid for.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action: JC will take this request back to Garry Bradbury for discussion at the EY Funding Formula Group meeting.</b></p> <p>Schools Forum is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Note the report. <b>NOTED</b></li> <li>(ii) Note that funding for 2021 will be discussed at single funding formula meeting and reported back to schools forum in March. <b>NOTED</b></li> </ul>	<p>SG</p> <p>JC/GB</p>

	<i>Item</i>	Action
3.	<p><b>Facilities Time Agreement</b></p> <p>Helen Fleming presented her report to the forum, and noted that at the last Schools Forum it was agreed for the underspend to be carried forward into 2020/21. This updated report is now provided to propose the recalculated per pupil contribution rate for trades union facilities time in 2020/21.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Taking into account the carry forward, it is therefore proposed that Schools Forum agree, on behalf of the maintained school sector to de-delegate £1.62 per pupil for the purposes of teacher trade union facility time in 2020/21. Participating academies will be asked to contribute at the same rate. <b>AGREED</b></li> <li>(ii) This reduced rate will apply only to those schools that have supported and contributed to the shared facilities time arrangements historically. Any new schools wishing to participate in the scheme moving forward will be invited to join at the historical rate of £3.67 per pupil. <b>AGREED</b></li> </ul> <p>Over the next 12 months the £3.67 per pupil rate will be reviewed. Other local authorities will be contacted to compare the figures they use, and a report will come back to Schools Forum (possibly October 2020) to consider whether this is the right figure or if it needs to change.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Free School Meals</b></p> <p>Melissa Young presented the report on behalf of Ellen Parry, and noted that the service is facing financial challenge. We need to cover the cost of free school meals, and a decision has been made to increase the cost to offset the increases in staffing and food costs. This will mean a change in the amount of funding the LA needs to take from maintained schools' budget allocations with effect from 1 April 2020.</p> <p>CC noted that there are implications for different schools, which might mean significant costs to some schools. MY informed that Ellen Parry will meet with Garry Bradbury to map out the costs, and if untenable for some schools due to their demographic, we may have to consider a cap. CC asked if schools are aware of this change, and informed that she will mention it at the full WAPH meeting on Thursday.</p> <p><b>Action: MY to ask Ellen Parry to email all schools (primaries and secondaries) to inform of the funding change for free school meals.</b></p> <p>Concern was raised that the amount per meal was kept at the old rate of £1.86 instead of £2.30, and maintained schools will have retained funding that should have been used to feed children. Noted that academy schools are already paying the full amount of £2.30 per meal. More investigation is needed about why the old rate of £1.86 was used, and a request was made for an update at the next Schools Forum for an understanding of discrepancies in the budget.</p> <p><b>Action: MY to follow up with Garry Bradbury for an update at the next Schools Forum.</b></p>	<p>MY</p> <p>MY</p>

	<i>Item</i>	<b>Action</b>
	<p>Recommendation from the report:</p> <p>(i) Schools Forum is asked to note the change to funding being given to the School Meals Service to fund free school meals for eligible children in mainstream schools. <b>NOTED</b></p>	
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Minutes from the previous meeting and matters arising</b></p> <p>The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting and noted that matters arising had been addressed.</p>	
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>Schools Forum Membership</b></p> <p>Discussion took place about the changes to membership. A number of people have stepped down, and there have been changes to allocation within maintained and academy schools. Andrea Riley will be requesting a volunteer from the PVI sector. MY asked Gwyn Williams to request that a Post 16 rep is nominated at the next WASCL. There is also a long term Parent Governor vacancy that can be from either the primary or secondary sector. MY noted that changes will be made to membership before she leaves.</p>	
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>Consultation outcome and implications for school budgets</b></p> <p>James Campbell presented the report on behalf of Garry Bradbury. The last Schools Forum discussed recent developments for NFF for 2020/21, and asked the Formula Working Group to meet and explore options to be considered in a consultation to schools. Three questions were identified for consultation, (i) Should we have a mobility factor in the formula for 2020/21? (agreed), (ii) if we don't receive enough funding what should be scaled back? (a decision on this was subsequently not required), and (iii) if the settlement is a greater level of funding what are the priorities for distribution? This third question was discussed further in relation to the £934K additional money, and noted the consultation favoured AWPU with lump sum a close second. More schools would benefit from the lump sum but by a smaller amount. A hybrid option was presented with 2/3<sup>rd</sup> through AWPU and the remainder through lump sum.</p> <p>Questions/comments were invited from the chair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The additional funding is headroom which has arisen largely because of the transitional effect of finally moving fully to the new EYFS scoring framework (low prior attainment). Depending on how it is applied, it could inform the minimum funding guarantee in future years – hence we have to be careful not to risk a potential affordability issue.</li> <li>• LG noted that primaries are still working towards the sector minimum MPPFL, whereas secondaries are already receiving MPPFL.</li> <li>• GW noted that Schools Forum had already agreed to stick as close as possible to NFF, and the discussion favouring lump sum was not following the principle of the argument as discussed at the Formula Working Group. We should not just be looking at how many schools benefit.</li> <li>• GW queried what was the point of having a consultation if it was going to be ignored. JC informed that at the time of the consultation we were still waiting for the</li> </ul>	

	<i>Item</i>	<b>Action</b>
	<p>allocations from the government. GC noted that if the consultation could have given the amount of the additional funding, he is confident that the recommendation would have been for lump sum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion took place around a hybrid option.</li> </ul> <p>The forum meeting was adjourned for 5 minutes to allow sector representatives to confer. The meeting reconvened, and proposals were made and seconded for AWPU and lump sum. The votes were counted as 8 for lump sum, and 6 for AWPU, therefore the recommendation for lump sum would be made to the local authority.</p> <p>The secondary sector asked for the minutes to reflect that this decision had gone against the consultation, and they felt the methodology used was hugely weighted towards the primary sector. JC informed that the weighting was school by school.</p> <p>It was noted that this is a recommendation from Schools Forum to the local authority, and ultimately the final decision rests with the local authority.</p> <p>It is recommended that Schools Forum members representing mainstream schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Note the contents of the report; <b>NOTED</b></li> <li>(ii) Agree how the Consultation findings should affect the modification to NFF as it is applied to mainstream school budgeting, and hence individual school allocations, for 2020/21. <b>AGREED FOR LUMP SUM BY 8 VOTES TO 6</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Update to minutes following the meeting:</b></p> <p>The local authority has accepted the recommendation of Schools Forum and the uncommitted funding will be applied as a lump sum increase. In doing so, we recognise that this doesn't just reflect the preference scoring from the Consultation, but it is the option which benefits the greatest number of Warrington schools and, importantly, has least impact on future years' funding decisions because it sits outside the MFG. Many of the comments of those schools citing AWPU as their preferred option regarded it as the fairest option, and this is probably correct were it not for the distorting effect of MFG. If lump sum had been clearly and obviously disregarded by most respondents to the Consultation, the decision may have been taken differently.</p>	
8.	<p><b>DSG funding settlement 2020/21</b></p> <p>James Campbell presented the report on behalf of Garry Bradbury, and noted this report is a follow up with more information. Interesting to note that the overall DSG is £10.7m more than the year before. The EY Block is the only allocation subject to change, everything else stays the same. GB will provide a mid-year report on the EY Block. The High Needs Block has an extra £2.6m, but this will not solve the challenges with high needs.</p> <p>Questions/comments were invited from the chair, but none were forthcoming.</p> <p>It is recommended that Schools Forum members representing mainstream schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Note the contents of the report; <b>NOTED</b></li> </ul>	

	<i>Item</i>	<b>Action</b>
	(ii) Consider the NFF budget figures in the light of this evening's discussion of the autumn funding consultation, and the decision regarding allocation of headroom. <b>NOTED</b>	
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>De-delegation agreements</b></p> <p>James Campbell presented the report on behalf of Garry Bradbury and noted that the de-delegation process remains in place for 2020/21. It is important to note that when we transition to a hard formula de-delegations will not be allowed and we will move to individual trading arrangements with schools.</p> <p>The individual de-delegated items are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Miscellaneous Licences</li> <li>• CLEAPSS</li> <li>• Free School Meals Assessment</li> <li>• Teachers' Panel and Union Duties</li> <li>• Maternity/Paternity/Adoption Costs</li> </ul> <p>The secondary and primary sectors all agreed to the above de-delegated items. Noted that the trades union facilities time de-delegation was agreed as noted in Item 3.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>(i) It is recommended that representatives from the maintained sectors are asked, for each phase, to decide which funding streams are to be de-delegated for 2020/21. <b>AGREED ALL ITEMS</b></p> <p>(ii) For services not agreed for de-delegation, but for which it is recognised that a demand still exists (either collectively or individually), that Schools Forum suggests an alternative model of remuneration, service delivery, or both. <b>N/A</b></p>	
<b>10.</b>	<p><b>Update on High Needs (<i>standing item</i>)</b></p> <p>Paula Worthington informed that the HN budget continues to be challenging. A meeting took place with Ofsted as part of their research on the impact of funding challenges on LAs and schools to deliver an inclusive offer to our pupils. This information will feed into their survey. Noted that some representation has been made into the f40 group around the challenges with funding. Some people may see the additional funding for HN to be a panacea to all our challenges, but it won't.</p> <p>There are some difficult decisions ahead with some of the key services to young people, for example, we have had to make sure the transport policy is fully implemented. There has been some resistance to that due to financial implications and we have made some individualised arrangements (as a one-off) in order to get some young people to school.</p> <p>There is challenge around Post 16 and a report is going to the CEO regarding the transition team and work around creating a clear pipeline so we don't get a bulge Post 16. Noted that some external providers have failed to meet the needs of the children and this has increased the cost by changing provision.</p>	

	<i>Item</i>	<b>Action</b>
	<p>PW offered to provide some of the detail on current practice around key priorities for high needs, and would be guided by the forum about what they wanted to see. Noted that part of the work being done around high needs would be presented at Director’s Briefing. The LA does not want to be the arbiter of budgets at the expense of children’s needs. There are still areas of challenge e.g. health and high needs medical funding. PW noted it might be useful to share the numbers about to be submitted on the SEN2 return to the government. As other LA numbers have creased dramatically, we have remained more or less static.</p> <p>Questions/comments were invited from the chair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JacquiW noted that we have better confidence than before that things have been and are being addressed, and we need to know the amounts and the headlines. MY informed that Panel decisions are being scrutinised to see how much we have spent by each sector, and that support is being provided to the right children. We can pass on the reassurance that we are seeing a difference and better outcomes for children and better support. JacquiW noted that it is reassuring that it isn’t just managing demand, it is meeting children’s needs.</li> </ul>	
<b>11.</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advance notice was given that the Leader of the Council, Cllr Russ Bowden, Steven Broomhead (CEO) and Cllr Matt Smith are hosting an evening for school leaders/governors to meet with the leaders of the council for dinner and for an opportunity for conversations. It is taking place on 3 February 2020 at 7.00 pm at Halliwell Jones, and there are places for 15-16 people. Anyone who would like to attend should let Paula Worthington know.</li> <li>Maureen Banner (Chair) thanked Melissa Young for her support and interest and commitment as she moves on at the end of the month.</li> </ul>	
<b>12.</b>	<p><b>Meeting schedule for 2020:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>24 March 2020</li> <li>23 June 2020</li> <li>13 October 2020</li> </ul> <p>All Tuesdays at 5.15 – 7.00 pm.  <i>(Venue for all meetings – Sir Thomas Boteler CE High School)</i></p>	

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