

## Schools Forum Schools Funding Working Group

### Minutes – 7<sup>th</sup> January 2011

**Present:** Liz Williams, Colin Kay, Martin Watson, Phil Cooch, John Hawkins, Neil Baker, Catriona Williamson, Ingrid Lancaster-Gaye, Julia Cramp, Carol Grant, John Kimberley

In Attendance: Paul Collyer (for item 1)

		Action												
1	<p><b>Apologies</b> Judith Finney</p>													
2	<p><b>Minutes from Previous Meeting</b> The minutes from the meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> November 2010 were agreed</p> <p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p><b>H&amp;S Maintenance Contracts</b> – Paul Collyer updated the group on discussions with the Property Services Team regarding the possibility of central contracts for these issues. He reported that the Property Team would not have the capacity to manage a tendering process for schools contracts. There is, however, a Wiltshire Council contract for the maintenance of fire equipment that schools will be invited to join. The suppliers for Gym equipment and Kilns had also indicated that they are keen to progress arrangements with individual schools.</p> <p>It was agreed that the budget should be delegated and that Paul Collyer would provide guidance to schools on existing contracts and the transition to new arrangements.</p> <p>It was agreed that funds should be delegated on the basis of a flat rate and per pupil amount as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Primary</th> <th>Secondary</th> <th>Special</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Flat Rate</td> <td>£50</td> <td>£500</td> <td>£250</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Per Pupil</td> <td>£0.65</td> <td>£0.81</td> <td>£0.70</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>SIMS Licence</b> – P Cooch (PC) informed the group that he had received confirmation that a 3 year agreement is allowable under procurement rules however was still awaiting advice as to whether we would be required to go out to tender.</p>		Primary	Secondary	Special	Flat Rate	£50	£500	£250	Per Pupil	£0.65	£0.81	£0.70	<p>PCollyer</p> <p>PC</p>
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3	<p><b>Section 251 Benchmarking</b> This item had been referred to the group from the last Schools Forum meeting.</p> <p>The group reviewed the report and the benchmarking graphs and requested clarification on the following:</p> <p><b>Speech &amp; Language Therapy</b> – Wiltshire benchmarks as the highest spender on speech &amp; language. In order to understand</p>													

	<p>more about different costs and practice in other authorities it was requested that we seek the following information from our statistical neighbours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount funded by the Local Authority</li> <li>• The amount delegated to schools for speech &amp; language</li> <li>• The amount funded by Health</li> </ul> <p>School Improvement – details of what other authorities include in the School Improvement line on the Section 251 return as Wiltshire continues to benchmark high.</p>	<p>EW/JCramp</p> <p>EW</p>
4	<p><b>Mainstream SEN Recoupment</b></p> <p>EW tabled a brief update report on issues relating to mainstream SEN recoupment. This issue had been raised by PHF during the discussions on SEN delegation. The paper confirmed that current recoupment arrangements do not impact on the increased delegation for SEN in primary schools and that recoupment funded pupils had been removed from all of the modelling work on the impact of delegation.</p> <p>The paper also highlighted that pupils with statements from other LAs are differentially funded in Wiltshire schools. This anomaly has now been recognised but EW reported that there are no proposals to change the current system at this time. Wiltshire will be engaging with work being carried out regionally on an agreed methodology for mainstream SEN recoupment and it was felt that the system should not be changed until that point – likely to be 2012-13 at the earliest.</p>	
5	<p><b>Updated Schools Funding Scheme Guidance 2011</b></p> <p>PC presented a paper outlining the main changes to DfE guidance on local authority Funding Schemes and the potential changes that would be required to the Wiltshire Scheme. Most of the issues are already covered in the Wiltshire scheme and a number of amendments will be made to the scheme which will be re-issued to schools in March 2011.</p> <p>The DfE guidance states that LAs may continue their existing controls on surplus balances scheme if Schools Forum is in agreement. The group discussed this and agreed that the controls on surplus balances scheme had been helpful in giving more detailed information to Schools Forum and in driving the principle that funding should be spent on the pupils in the school in the year in which it is allocated. Before recommending that Wiltshire should continue with its scheme, however, members of the group felt that more detail is needed on the national context and the view of the current government on surplus balances</p>	
6	<p><b>Schools Funding Settlement 2011/12</b></p> <p>EW presented a paper outlining the headlines from the schools funding settlement issued by the government on 13<sup>th</sup> December, and the main issues to be considered by Schools forum.</p>	

	<p><b>Pupil Premium</b> – the pupil premium will be paid at £430 per pupil eligible for free schools meals, and £200 per child from a service family. Looked after children will also attract the premium at £430 per child looked after for more than 6 months. PC had carried out some modelling based on eligibility for free school meals at Autumn 2010, and numbers of service children in January 2010. the modelling indicated that Wiltshire could attract a pupil premium of £1.9 million and a service child premium of £840,000.</p> <p>The group agreed to recommend to Schools Forum that the pupil premium attracted by pupils in Special Schools and the YPSS should be paid directly to the schools rather than held back by the local authority.</p> <p><b>DSG Estimate</b> – based on the October pupil counts DSG is estimated at £273,117 million for 2011/12 after Academy recoupment has been taken in to account. The standstill DSG requirement is estimated at £273.708 million, a shortfall of £0.590 million. However other cost pressures of up to £1.4 million have also been identified. It was agreed that further work was required on the cost pressures prior to Schools Forum and that savings would be required in order to meet any investment priorities.</p> <p><b>Allocation of Former Standards Funds</b> – the group considered potential models for the allocations of former standards funds which have been rolled in to DSG. The first model looked at the allocation per pupil in 2010/11 in each school and used this as a multiplier for the 2011/12 budget. Whilst it was accepted that this is a simple model there was some concern about the potential for the current funding to be cast in stone – particularly for those grants where there is variation in the allocation between schools. Models which allocate grants on a per pupil basis caused more turbulence in the system however it is difficult to identify the impact on grants previously paid on a cluster basis. It was agreed that a further meeting should be held on 14<sup>th</sup> January to consider models in more detail – this meeting to involve officers currently responsible for allocating the grants.</p> <p>The group recommended that the former Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant should continue to be retained centrally to fund the EMAS team.</p>	
11	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>ILG raised an issue from Tristan Williams regarding the use of DSG to support social care spend. EW responded that funding decisions in respect of placements are made by the Joint Complex Needs Panel and undertook to raise the concerns with Julia Cramp. A number of placements are jointly funded between DSG and social care however the funding conditions for DSG need to be taken in to account.</p>	EW
9	<p><b>Date &amp; Time of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>Date of Next Meeting Monday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2011, 12.30pm at County Hall</p>	