

SOLIHULL SCHOOLS FORUM WORK GROUPS

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE FINANCE WORK GROUP

1. Role

To advise Forum on matters where the LA must seek Forum's advice concerning:

- Changes to the local funding formula
- Proposed changes to the operation of the minimum funding guarantee
- Changes to or new contracts affecting schools
- Arrangements for pupils with special educational needs, in pupil referral units and in early years provision

To advise Forum on matters where Forum has decision making powers:

- How much funding may be centrally retained within the Dedicated Schools Grant (e.g. for the Admissions Service, prudential borrowing costs, additional funding available for growing schools), including evaluation of the efficiency, effectiveness and value for money of centrally funded services
- Any proposed carry forward of deficits on central spend from one year to the next
- Proposals to de-delegate funding from maintained primary and secondary schools (e.g. for staff supply cover, insurance, behaviour support)
- Changes to the scheme of financial management

2. Tasks

The Work Group's main tasks are:

- 2.1 To discuss relevant financial issues and make recommendations to Solihull Schools Forum.
- 2.2 To maintain an overview of all funding streams and their relationship with the Core Funding Formula.
- 2.3 To make recommendations to Forum regarding changes to the Solihull Scheme for the Financing of Schools
- 2.4 To advise Forum on the implications of changes to the National Funding Framework
- 2.5 To discuss and advise Forum concerning the terms of any proposed Local Authority contract for supplies or services relevant to schools, in particular those contracts that fall within EU procurement rules.
- 2.6 To discuss and advise Forum concerning the relevant aspects of strategic partnerships and similar undertakings.
- 2.7 To discuss and advise Forum concerning the terms for the provision of support services managed by the Authority and purchased by schools.
- 2.8 To receive a regular report on the Forecast Out-turn Statement and the final Out-turn Statement of the Non-delegated DSG budget; to determine the reason for any variation from the budget and ascertain any potential effect on school budgets. Note: detailed financial matters relating to the High Needs Block will normally be dealt with by the Finance Work Group and Education SEND Group.
- 2.9 To discuss financial issues relating to arrangements for pupils with special educational needs, in particular the places to be commissioned by the LA and schools and the arrangements for paying top-up funding and making recommendations to Solihull Schools Forum.
- 2.10 To discuss financial issues relating to arrangements for use of Pupil Referral Units and the education of children otherwise than at school, in particular the places to be commissioned by the LA and schools and the arrangements for paying top-up funding.
- 2.11 To discuss financial issues relating to arrangements for Early Years Provision.
- 2.12 To discuss financial issues relating to the administration arrangements for the allocation of central Government grants.
- 2.13 To discuss proposals for any transfer of funds up to a maximum of 0.5% between the Schools Block and High Needs.
- 2.14 To discuss proposals to delegate or de-delegate funding from maintained primary and secondary schools (eg. for behaviour support) where there is a direct impact on High Needs.
- 2.15 To maintain an overview of the value for money and effectiveness of discretionary centrally retained services within the Schools Block, e.g. the Combined Services budget.
- 2.16 To discuss and advise Forum concerning other matters as may be determined by Schools Forum.
- 2.17 Recommendations by the Group to Forum must be made by permanent members of the Group.

3. **Membership**

- 3.1 Primary sector representatives – minimum 8, (max 10)
- 3.2 Secondary sector representatives – minimum 4, (max 5)
- 3.3 Special School Representatives – minimum 1, (max 2)

The above categories to include an appropriate mix of maintained, academy, head teacher, governor and bursar representatives from across the 5 Collaboratives

- 3.4 Trades Union Representatives – minimum 1
- 3.5 Forum members – minimum 4
- 3.6 Other members may be invited to serve on the Work Group on a permanent or ad hoc basis
- 3.7 Substitute members may be allowed, but only in consultation with the Chair
- 3.8 The Forum Administrators will contact the appropriate constituent bodies on behalf of the Chair to confirm membership of the Work Group for the next academic year

In Attendance – Officers of Education Finance section to be in attendance, with other SMBC officers as required and with support from Forum Administration.

Headteachers and Principals can nominate a member of their leadership teams (including Bursars where the Bursar is a member of the Leadership Group) to be their permanent representative at Work Group meetings. The representatives are to be fully prepared for the role by the Headteacher/Principal and fully empowered to act on their behalf at the meetings without further reference.

4. **Chair**

The Group will appoint one of its Forum members to act as Chair, the appointment to be reviewed annually. The Chair or nominated representative shall also attend meetings of the Forum Executive. The appointment of Chair will be made in the Summer Term to be ratified by members at the first meeting in the Autumn Term.

5. **Vice Chair**

The Group will appoint one of its number to act as Vice Chair, the appointment to be reviewed annually. The appointment of Vice Chair will be made at the first meeting of the Autumn Term, following ratification of the appointment of Work Group Chair.

6. **Frequency of Meetings**

The Work Group shall normally meet 5 times per year, but may meet more or less frequently, as agreed by its members, depending on the needs of the financial planning cycle, e.g. may need additional meetings during the crucial budget-planning period (September – January).

7. **Reporting Arrangements**

After approval by the Chair, formal minutes will be circulated to members. The Work Group shall provide post-meeting reports on its activities to Forum, these will be published on the Solihull Schools Forum website as part of Forum meeting packs.

Agreed by Finance WG on 10 September 2020

Approved by Forum on 7 October 2020

Checked and agreed by SF and DL that Terms do not require amendment 6 September 2021

6.9.21