

Oxfordshire County Council
Schools Forum – 3 October 2018
Schools Forum Draft Budget for 2019-20

For Decision

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To propose the budget for 2019-20.

2. Recommendations/Actions/Decisions for Schools Forum

Schools Forum is asked to:

2.1 Agree the draft budget for 2019-20 and funding proposals (section 4).

2.2 Agree that the projected balance on the 2018-19 budget be carried forward to 2019-20 (paragraph 4.5).

3. Background

3.1 Under funding arrangements put in place from 1 April 2013 the Schools Forum budget was funded primarily from the Dedicated Schools Grant's (DSG) Schools block. The majority of funding within the Schools Block was delegated to schools. The local authority could identify specific amounts that could be retained centrally from the Schools block. These amounts fell into three categories of exception and were "(1) Where schools agree to pool funding for a service to be provided centrally (de-delegation); (2) Historic commitments and (3) Statutory functions commitments". Schools Forum budget met from the Schools block and fell under the last category. Increases to the budget provision was not permitted and limited to 2012-13 levels.

3.2 Under the arrangements outlined in paragraph 3.1 above Schools Forum budget of £30,730, was specifically funded by £25,730 from DSG Schools block, £4,000 from the Early Years block and £1,000 from High Needs block.

3.3 From April 2018 changes to the DSG allocation methodology came into effect and created a new fourth DSG block – Central Schools Services block (CSSB). Into this new block were moved all previously identified funding relating to "(1) Where schools agree to pool funding for a service to be provided centrally (de-delegation); (2) Historic commitments and (3) Statutory functions commitments". Schools Forum funding was therefore moved to the CSSB and the other three blocks allocations reduced accordingly. The CSSB, Schools Forum budget is now identified by the single amount of £30,730 and is the responsibility of and is administered directly by the local authority.

3.4 However, the formal decisions required by Schools Forum, introduced in 2013 in respect of the DSG Schools block - delegations, de-delegation, historic and statutory functions commitments are still required annually. This budget will also be included in the general paper at an aggregate level. Should the decision relating to this budget be counter to the proposals given below, the recommendations will, where necessary, be reworked on the day of Schools Forum.

4. Budget 2019-20

4.1 Given the constraints outlined in section 3 above, in respect of the level of spending, the potential need for resources to contribute to national funding issues and debates, it is proposed that the budget plan for 2019-20 be maintained at the current level of allocation for 2018-19, £30,730.

4.2 No inflationary increases have been assumed at the aggregate level. The budget includes anticipated costs for the Schools Forum and its two regular Sub-Committees (Schools and High Needs and Services and Contracts. Anticipated pay and price increases have been met by reducing the Contingency provision. No allowance has been included for the effect of the teachers' pay grant.

4.3 The table below sets out the Schools Forum budget for 2019-20.

	Budget £	Notes
Supply Cover	13,000	Supply cover for Local Authority headteacher attendance [based on up to 6 Forum and 8 Working Group and 2 training meetings, assumes 1 day attendance for main Forum meetings and ½ day attendance for subcommittee meetings, plus contingency days. Daily rate £285].
Members expenses	4,500	Travel, child minding and incidental expenses for Forum members.
Supporting the Schools Forum	4,000	Includes clerking costs [basis 2 days per month].
Meeting expenses	3,000	Venue and catering costs [based on number of meetings and two ½ day training sessions].
Conferences	2,000	Attendance fees [assumed up to 8 conference days].
Training provision	2,000	Expenses relating to the training need of Forum members.
Consultancy	500	Specific project work undertaken by outside agency.
Contingency	2,230	Includes provision to meet inflation increases
TOTAL	30,730	

- 4.4 This budget is to be reviewed annually.
- 4.5 It is also proposed that as for previous years any underspend from the Schools Forum Budget for 2018-19 be retained by this specific budget rather than returned to the collective DSG underspend. This along with the small Contingency identified in the proposed budget plan above will provide resource for Schools Forum to effectively contribute to continuing national funding reform debate and any other schools related financial initiatives proposed by central government. The continued applicability of this carry forward proposal will be reviewed at the end of the 2019-20 financial year.

5. Contact Details of Lead Officers/Authors

If you have any queries or comments in advance of the Schools Forum meeting about this report, please contact:

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