

# Schools Forum – 4 October 2016

## Facilities time funding 2017-18

### Recommendations

That the Schools Forum considers this report and maintained schools members vote on

- 1 The amount of funding they wish to allocate to the recognised trades unions for facilities they provide for their members who work in schools in 2017/18. This is either option 1 £202,320 or option 2 £234,320

### Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities:

#### PART A

#### Why is it coming here – what decision is required?

Maintained schools members of forum vote annually on whether to de-delegate a number of budget lines of which facilities time for recognised trades union representatives to carry out their duties is one. Academies are not part of these arrangements since these responsibilities and the funding for them are automatically delegated to academies through the EFA use of the local funding formula.

Under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act, 1992, schools must arrange facility time for trades unions they recognise. Schools forum can take the decision for maintained schools in its area to de-delegate funding for recognised unions to provide facilities to their members, and forum has agreed every year, including the current year, to do this.

Members of forum were advised, at the meeting in July 2016, of the issue relating to the quantum of funding for the current year. This arose because Staffordshire county council removed funding for school support staff unions (specifically Unison) from the central county council budget. This was because the funding of school-based staff should be a matter for maintained schools (through schools forum de-delegation) and academy schools (through the purchase of services from the unions on an individual basis).

The effect of this decision is that the schools facilities time budget is now (with effect from 1 April 2016) required to fund Unison and therefore to cover the costs associated with six unions, rather than just the five teaching unions (as had been the case previously).

In July 2016, forum members agreed to allocate, on a one-off basis, £32,039 to maintain the level of facilities time for trades union representation in maintained schools provided the central underspend is more than this amount in the 2015/2016 financial year. This sum matches that taken out of the allocation for Unison following the LA's decision not to fund union activities undertaken on behalf of schools.

The outturn for facilities time funding in 2014/2015 was £190,703 and in 2015/2016 was £192,603.

It is for maintained schools members of the forum to determine the total allocation for facilities time. The options below indicate the effect of agreeing to maintain the level of funding based on the previous forum allocation only or increasing the allocation (as in 2016/17) to include that previously funded by the county council.

Options	
Option 1 - existing	£202,320
Option 2	£234,320

Variance between options	
Primary (210 place)	£63.80
Secondary (900 place)	£259.20

If option 2 is approved, this will increase the budget for Union Duties and reduce the School Specific Contingency by the amount requested. This will be divided proportionately between the Primary and Secondary sector.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

The level of funding schools determine to fund recognised unions for facilities provided to their members who work in their schools is a matter for the relevant members of forum.

## **PART B**

### **Background**

The background is set out in the main body of the report.

### **Report author**

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