

MINUTES OF JOINT MEETING OF EDUCATION RESOURCES GROUP AND SCHOOLS FORUM 12 January 2016

Attendance:

Education Resources Group: Eve Stickler (Chair), Ms L Dawes, Peter De Rosa, *Annie Gaudencio*, Bruce Goddard, Julie Messer, Sally Quartson, Jenny Tosh, Jayne Fitzgerald, Louise McNamara, Sangeeta Brown

Schools Forum:

Governors: Ms I Cranfield (Primary): Chair, Mr Clark (Primary), Ms J Ellerby (Primary), Mrs J Leach (Special), *Mrs L Sless* (Primary), *Mr T McGee* (Secondary), Mr G Stubberfield (Secondary)

Headteachers: Ms H Ballantine (Primary), Mr P De Rosa (Special), Mr B Goddard (Secondary), Ms M Hurst (Pupil Referral Unit), *Ms H Knightley* (Primary), Mr M Lavelle (Secondary), Ms A Nicou (Primary), Ms H Thomas (Primary), *Ms A Gaudencio* (Primary) substituted by Ms L Whitaker

Academies: *Ms R Stanley-McKenzie*, Ms L Dawes

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee
16 - 19 Partnership
Teachers' Committee
Education Professional
Head of Behaviour Support
Early Years Provider

Cllr D Levy
Mr K Hintz
Mr S McNamara, substitute Mr T Cuffaro.
Ms Stickler
Mr J Carrick
Vacancy

- *Italics denote absence*

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D Levy, Mrs Sless, Ms Knightley and Mr Hintz.

The Group congratulated and extended their best wishes to Janet Leach and Gordon Stubberfield on receiving MBEs.

2. Minutes from the Last meeting held on 1 December 2015

(a) Meeting with MPs

Reported a follow up letter to ask on progress, since the meeting, would be sent to the MPs.

(b) Schools Budget – 2016/17 - Update

Reported the settlement was received just before Christmas. The settlement was based on flat cash for the Schools (SB) and Early Years (EYB) Blocks, that is no change to the per pupil amount provided for these blocks. The final amount for the SB was slightly higher than projected due to pupil numbers and the confirmation that the Carbon Reduction Credit was already accounted for elsewhere. The EYB information was based on January 2015 figures and not January 2016, so there may be some changes after the January 2016 Pupil Census.

There was an increase in the High Needs Block of just over £660k.

The extra funding meant an additional £900k in resources than previously projected. The pupil data had also been received just before Christmas. The data showed a significant variation to the local projections. This variation was due to:

- a change in how the IDACI scores and then aligned to bands to indicate deprivation. The 2015 updates from 2010 showed more pupils were now identified to be living areas in Bands 1-3 (the more affluent areas);
- free school meal data had been received for all academies and the data showed a reduction in numbers than previously calculated.

The changes meant a reduction in the funding required for the funding formula.

The current position was that the budget gap had reduced from approximately £5m down to £3m. Work on formulating the draft budget was continuing and the draft would be presented to the Schools Forum next week.

The Group were advised that it was a difficult time of transformation and resource reduction within the LA and that this was the context within which Louise had been working to develop the draft budget. The Group thanked Louise for the work she was doing.

3. Central Services Funded from the DSG: Update

Reported, as agreed at the last Schools Forum meeting, this meeting had been set up to enable the Schools Forum members to be part of the in depth discussions held with the Education Resources Group. The Group was advised that some services had added updates, appendices and revisions to their pro-formas and these had been circulated with the agenda. Attendees were provided with a paper which had assessed and used the feedback from the Headteachers' Conferences, the Education Resources Group, the Departmental Management Team and Service Managers to compile information into a table which included possible options for achieving some savings through reductions of budgets.

The Group were advised that the savings were a suggestion and if these were accepted then further work with Service Managers will be required on how they would manage the resultant cut in their budgets and the viability of their services moving to a Service Level Agreement and if so when it would be feasible.

The first section of the table outlined those areas where a Schools Forum decision was required and the second section was where the school representatives on the Schools Forum were required to make a decision. The remainder were areas for the Local Authority to consider the feedback from the Schools Forum and formulate a decision based on the impact to children and young people.

Noted:

- (a) It was questioned how the proposed 7% reduction had been arrived at? It was stated that this was based on the figure being used by the Council in it's recent calculations and therefore applying the same principle.
- (b) 40 SEN School Res Independent and 42 SEN Special Day Independent: It was questioned whether these services and also the transport costs for these services were being reviewed. It was stated that the transport for both these areas were part of a separate review.

The Group were advised that there need to be further considered discussion on how children with high and complex needs were met. The position for the borough was that there were finite number of places in Enfield's special schools and when these places were filled and mainstream schools were not able to meet the needs of such children with extremely complex needs the alternative was to consider independent provision. Therefore, there was a need for a discussion on how the needs of these children could be managed and met in less costly in-borough provision. It was reported that Rob Leak was keen that this work to be prioritised and carried out by the SEN Strategy Group.

It was commented that the Schools Forum had in the past supported and funded a programme to expand provision in-borough to bring pupils back. The expansion included more places in special schools and development of out of school activities to provide wraparound provision which enable families to cope and manage the needs of their children. This strategy had been and continued to be successful and further consideration needed to be given as to how the current increase being experienced could be used to replicate this strategy.

The Group was advised that the immediate need was for in-borough provision for pupils with autism and the current projections indicated that an extra 100 places were required.

It was reported that special school Headteachers were also discussing this issue and the options available and what best mix of provision was: expansion, additional places in mainstream provision either managed by the host school or by arrangement and in partnership with a special school. With the number of pupils and the level of numbers of complexity in need, it was felt there was a need to look at something different whether this is expansion or a new academy.

It was stated that the LA was also working with external organisations such as National Autistic Society to develop a strategy.

- (c) It was remarked that Secondary Headteachers had been forced to consider cuts to their budgets and wanted to consider how the reductions in central services would support them. It was

confirmed that the representatives were sharing the views of secondary Headteachers' Conference. The information circulated provided a basis for a discussion.

- (d) 5 Capital – it was confirmed that this was historic funding which now supported the Primary and School Expansion Programme. The impact of withdrawing this funding may mean that there will not be any funding for some of additional items requested by schools and the LA would need to borrow more for additional capital funding.

The Group were advised the LA had been allocated a higher amount of capital funding. It was questioned how much was allocated and whether this could be used to fund the repairs and maintenance. It was stated this funding was for larger projects and any spend had to follow the Council's approval process.

Suggested funding was withdrawn.

Agreed to confirm the level of capital funding that had been allocated.

Action: Jenny

- (e) 9 Skills for Work – It was confirmed that this funding supported the development of links with employers to deliver work experience and also support pupils with a particular needs which could not be addressed by schools and support the junior citizenship programme. The service was now part of the Environment department.

Suggested should be offered as SLA.

- (f) 14 Hire of external premises – it was reported that the Asset Management combined the three budgets to support schools. This budget funded historical items to help schools with costs of playing fields and where schools needed additional provision through a mobile class.

Suggested funding was withdrawn.

- (g) 16 HR TDA – it was confirmed that this was the continuation of a historical grant.

Suggested funding be withdrawn.

- (h) 23 Physical Education – It was reported that the Service Manager had requested that the service could manage with half the funding being raised through an SLA. It was commented that the Headteachers had considered this should be an SLA

Agreed to review further.

- (i) 20 Libraries – recommended all the funding should be met through an SLA.

- (j) 15 HR – recommended that these services should continue to be considered as part of the de-delegation process.

- (k) 19 SIS Intervention: it was stated that there had been an error in the information sent out and that there were two elements to the service:

- 19a – Data and MI Support: it was confirmed that this was a historic grant and when funding arrangements changed was included within the DSG. It funded a member of staff and central subscription. It was requested that funding of £110k be maintained for this service.

It was commented that support provided was really useful and helpful to both existing and new Headteachers had found it helpful to have a central resource.

- 19b – the remaining funding was originally for the Reading Recovery programme and now funded a range of literacy interventions.

It was commented that this service could be provided in an alternative way.

Recommended to retain £110k for Data and MI Support and remove the balance.

- (l) 24 Place to Be: – It was commented that LA was in the process of finding and confirming the lead contact at this organisation.

It was commented that Headteachers felt it was unfair for some schools to be supported / subsidised and other having to pay. There needed to be transparency. It was stated that the process for reviewing commissioned services had begun and arrangements would be formalised.

Suggested funding was withdrawn.

- (m) 25 Play Development – it was suggested that this service be offered as an SLA. The Group were advised that this was a sensitive area and the whole team were under threat due to the changes required to Council services. SLA

Suggested funding was withdrawn.

- (n) 7 Early Years Social Inclusion – it was reported that this service supported two areas: Nurture Groups and intervention. The service could begin to consider an SLA but it would be difficult to manage an SLA for the total cost of the service from April 2016. There needed to be some central funding to support the co-ordination and management of the development of an SLA.

It was suggested that there needed to be some consistency in the decision making and the reasons for retaining some funding centrally. It was stated that it was difficult for some services to move to a buyback as the DSG was the only source of funding for the service.

It was noted that some of these services were comprised only of staffing and this would lead to a redundancy situation.

It was questioned if the removal of this funding would not affect the money (£60k) provided for running a Nurture group. It was stated that there were clear guidelines on the running of Nurture Groups and the funding provided for the Nurture Group was not part of this discussion.

It was commented that information needed to be provided on all aspects of the budget.

It was queried how quality of the Nurture group was monitored. It was stated that this was managed by the service and might have to be part of the SLA.

Suggested £100k be retained and the balance offered as an SLA.

- (o) It was queried could any service afford more than 7% reduction. It was stated that 7% was a starting point and would need to be considered as part of the discussion whether services had access to any other funding to cover the activities carried out by the DSG funding.

- (p) 13 and 47 HEART – it was reported that this funding supported the team for LAC.

It was observed that schools were unclear as to the benefit received from this service. It was stated that extra information and case studies had been included in the pack on the work of the service. The way the service was formed and operated could be considered part of a review.

It was suggested that the funding be reduced.

- (q) 18 SIS – it was reported that the service worked with all irrespective of size. The service received funding from the ESG to support schools causing concern and this would be reduced due to Government reductions to this grant. The service provided an SLA for training. A reduction of 7% would mean a reallocation of how work was managed and delivered.

It was commented that some secondary schools used another external company to deliver on some of the areas provided by the service and whether there was an issue of double funding. It was stated that all secondary schools were also supported by the service and received visits.

It was observed that there was a mixed economy of provision in Enfield if you included teaching schools and there was a collective responsibility to support those schools that could not buy the level of support they required and whether the group was in a position to make a decision which would jeopardise the support available to these schools.

It was noted that buying from external provision was not always the best solution with experience showing some of the external providers determining the service provided against the amount of money they received and thereby waste of resources. Members concurred that aspects of the external service was always good, but the LA were also now using consultants.

It was remarked that schools in some instances needed to go out to address a specific need.

With all schools having access and being supported by the service, there was a concern where a school had chosen not to buyback there would be no opportunity to provide early intervention.

Suggested that the percentage for reduction be reviewed and also information provided on the level of support received by each school.

- (r) 4, 12, 21 & 46 Joint Service for Disabled Children, Out of School Activities, Foundation Stage Support and Pre School Support (EISS): – As stated above, these services were developed to support the pupils brought back in borough from out of borough provision. The support required by these pupils was a statutory requirement and if the current provision was withdrawn then the pupils would need to be placed in out borough provision. At the moment, the funding for (r) Joint Service for Disabled Children and Out of School Activities was used to support between 8-900 pupils to receive up to £500 per year for a comprehensive wraparound service.

The Foundation Stage Support and Pre School Support were two services providing early intervention. The activities carried out by the Pre School Support service included home visiting, portage and working with the PVI providers to prepare children to cope in an education setting.

Teaching Assistants were deployed by the service to support Foundation Stage and Pre School pupils in either schools or PVI settings.

It was proposed for the service to be reviewed to ensure equity in terms of delivery.

It was commented that the concern with the service was that the Teaching Assistants provided were not aware of how the school operated and as part of the review consideration needed to be given as to how the money could be used in a different way including providing individual schools with the funding to engage Teaching Assistants.

It was questioned whether academies accessed these services. It was confirmed that this was not the case and this was the reason to review the service and ensure there was equality in access and delivery.

Agreed that the percentage reduction could be managed over the four service areas.

- (s) 22 Parenting Support Unit – it was confirmed that this service received no other funding from any other funding streams. The service worked closely with BSS and also provided clinical supervision to Parent Support staff within a number of schools, offered access to a duty team, offered parenting programmes for vulnerable families and worked closely with families throughout the year, not confined to the academic term. The service was used by both primary and secondary schools. Additional material had been offered in advance of the meeting giving information on the early help service offered to those in need and those schools where the service had worked with the children and families.

It was commented that many schools employed their own PSA and it not be delivered through an SLA. It was stated that the service would be reviewed to consider alternative delivery options.

It was observed that the service, similar to the Joint Service for Disabled Children, aimed to provide a wraparound service for those children below the threshold for social care intervention but clearly in need of support and in danger of being excluded.

It was commented that one of the issues with service was the perceived variability in quality. It was stated that this issue would be considered as part of the review.

Agreed to consider an increase in the percentage and also review the service.

- (t) 29 SIS Professional & Development – Agreed to retain the service at the current level.
- (u) 31 Admission – it was observed that the service provided good quality support, advice and guidance. Agreed that the service be reviewed to consider if any savings could be achieved.
- (v) 8 Early Years Team – it was reported that the service had had the brokerage and commissioning element of the service already reduced and a reduction in this budget would mean cutting teachers posts and the remaining staff would be limited to managing the statutory work around monitoring.

It was observed that the continued reduction in funding would impact on the provision available to support and improve quality in PVI settings. It was noted support to Children's centres may also be affected by the reduction in funding. It was suggested that consideration may need to be given as to how schools could support PVIs in their local area.

It was stated that the data and information required for children's centre was provided by another service.

- (w) 10 EPS – it was reported that this funding was specifically for out borough settings. The Group were advised that the funding for this service was being cut by 50% due to the reduction in ESG and loss of CAMHS grant.
- (x) It was questioned why Enfield was paying for this when other Local Authorities did not pay for children in schools. It was suggested the arrangements be reviewed to ensure that where other local authorities needed to be charged that they were charged.

Agreed to review the service.

- (y) 11 EWS – the funding was used to support pupils with high needs in out borough provision and those supported by the LAC and Youth Offending service. Agreed to maintain the percentage reduction.
- (z) 17 Learning Consultant – There were two members of staff who supported and worked with schools.

It was commented that some secondary schools didn't use the service and wanted to move to an SLA. It was stated that the Learning Consultants worked with both primary and secondary schools closely.

- (aa) 28 Speech therapy – it was reported that this was a contractual arranged with the CCG being the major funder of the contract. There had been issues of quality and level of provision. A group was meeting to look at these issues.

It was commented that there was real concern amongst Headteachers in considering reductions as there was an increase in demand for this service.

- (bb) 37 SEN Equipment – it was confirmed that this budget supported any school that required specific specialist equipment to support pupil with SEN equipment and aids.

It was commented that schools were not aware of this budget and purchased their own equipment. There was a real concern around storage and removing equipment when the pupil had out grown the equipment. It was stated some equipment was made for a particular pupil and so could not be reused.

Agreed budget and storage facility for reusable equipment would be reviewed.

- (cc) 30 Youth – it was reported that this service was experiencing significant cuts in other areas.
- (dd) 44 Appeals – it was reported that there had been recent changes in the regulations concerning appeals and these were being reviewed and further information would be brought back to the next meeting of the Schools Forum.

4. Dates of meetings for the Education Resources Group

Dates of future meeting confirmed as:

Group	Date	Time	Venue	Comment
Education Resources Group	12 January 15	8.15 - 10.15am	Highlands	
Schools Forum	14 October 15	5.30 - 7.30pm	Chace Community	
Schools Forum	9 December 15	5.30 - 7.30pm	Chace Community	
Schools Forum	20 January 16	5.30 - 7.30pm	Chace Community	