

MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Held on Wednesday 18 January 2017 at Chace Community School

Schools Members:

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

Headteachers: Ms H Ballantine (Primary), Mr D Bruton (Secondary), Mr P De Rosa (Special), Ms M
Hurst (Pupil Referral Unit), Mr B Goddard (Secondary), Ms H Knightley (Primary),
Ms H Thomas (Primary), Ms L Whitaker (Primary), Ms S Quartson (Primary)

Academies: Ms L Dawes (Secondary), Ms A Nicou, Vacancy

Non-Schools Members:

Early Years Provider Ms C Gopoulos

16 - 19 Partnership *Mr K Hintz*

Teachers' Committee Mr T Cuffaro

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee Vacancy

Head of Behaviour Support Mr J Carrick

Education Professional Vacancy

Observers:

Cabinet Member *Cllr A Orhan*

School Business Manager Ms A Homer

Education Funding Agency *Mr O Jenkins*

Also attending:

Chief Education Officer Ms J Tosh

Assistant Finance Business Partner Mrs L McNamara

Head of Budget Challenge Mr N Goddard

Resources Development Manager Mrs S Brown

Resources Development Officer Ms J Bedford

* Italics denote absence

1. MEMBERSHIP AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

a) Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Orhan and Mr Hintz.

Noted Mr Clark's absence from the meeting.

b) Membership

Reported:

- Ms Quartson was attending this meeting to cover the primary vacancy.
- Nomination for the vacant positions would be pursued after the pupil numbers from the January Census had been assessed for pupil number changes across the different types of schools.

Noted nominations for any vacant positions would be sought, as appropriate, from the Headteacher Conferences, Member Governor Forum, academies and free schools. Each academy and free school would be advised of the vacancy and asked to forward a nomination for any academy or free school vacancy.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

- a) **Received** and agreed the minutes of the meeting of the Schools Forum held on 8 December 2016, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book.
- b) Matters arising from these minutes
Item 3(b) Outturn report 2015/16 & Budget Monitoring 2016/17 - Update
Noted the process for reporting deficit budgets would be reviewed in the new financial year.

4. ITEM FOR DISCUSSION & INFORMATION

a) Funding arrangements for the education of 3-16 year olds (2017-18): results of consultation & proposed changes

Received a report summarising the responses received to the proposed changes to the local funding arrangements for 3-16 year olds (2017-18), a copy of which is included in the Minute Book.

Reported the report included the final proposals for the local arrangements in line with national requirements. These included:

- Ceasing to fund the first £6k for all pupils with EHCPs in mainstream schools and introducing a threshold for triggering funding;
- Redistributing the funding released from the removal of the Sixth Form factor based on Key Stage 4 pupils;
- Implementing a new formula for allocating the funding for three and four year olds accessing the free nursery entitlement;
- Removing the facility of the annual advance, unless agreed as part of a separate funding agreement with individual schools;
- Amending and including in the Scheme for Financing a clause for supporting schools with a planned deficit.

The Schools Forum and sector representatives respectively were being asked to note and agree the recommendations as contained in the report.

Clerks Note: Ms Quartson & Mr Goddard arrived at this point.

Noted

- i) The Secondary Headteachers felt that the level of funding provided to schools should not be cut because of the proposal not to fund the first £6k for all pupils with EHCPs in mainstream schools. It was felt the change would create more challenges and the Behaviour Support Service should be retained and funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).
- ii) There was a concern the change would mean a loss of funding for those schools with high numbers of pupils with EHCPs.
- iii) The changes in how this funding was allocated were in line with DfE guidance and requirements. It was unclear what other alternatives there were to support the budget if the changes were not pursued.
- iv) It was suggested that the Council set a deficit DSG budget. It was stated that the Administration and Council would not support setting a deficit budget. The Forum was advised that the Council had been given a grant to review provision for pupils with SEND. Cllr Orhan was aware of the effect of the proposals for individual schools and was keen that part of the funding from the grant be used to review provision for pupils with EHCPs in mainstream schools.
- v) If the full funding including the first £6k was not provided, then some schools may need to consider budget reductions and these could lead to redundancies. The impact and consequences of this change could lead to an increase in exclusions.

- vi) To support schools with high number of pupils with EHCPs, it was suggested a compromise could be to carry out a review of the arrangements so these schools received more funding. It was stated that the arrangements did recognise schools that were inclusive. To carry out a review may be difficult because of the need to submit the returns to the DfE, set budgets and inform schools before the start of the year. It would be possible to review the arrangements and look to make any changes during the year.
- vii) At a previous meeting, the view was to protect individual school's budgets and therefore the current review of funding the first £6k for all pupils with EHCPs in mainstream schools was illogical. Members were advised that this proposal had been considered and withdrawn twice before and now there was a need to implement the present proposal to address the ongoing pressure on the DSG and to meet DfE requirements.
- viii) The draft budget showed a £1m saving from this proposal and not £1.8m, because, as previously reported, the balance of the funding had been identified to meet the future pressure of continuing with the policy of funding the first £6k.
- ix) A member observed that a deficit be set for the coming year and schools continue to be supported. The Forum was reminded that the Council could not and would not set a deficit budget. It was then suggested that individual schools could consider setting a deficit budget. The response from officers was that schools were required to set a balanced budget and if this was not possible, then they needed to agree the setting of a deficit budget with the Authority.

An academy member informed the Forum that academies were not allowed to set a deficit budget.

To highlight their disagreement with this proposal, the Forum members sought a vote on the proposal to change the local arrangements and not fund the first £6k for all pupils with EHCPs in mainstream schools.

Sixteen members of the Forum disagreed with the proposal not to fund the first £6k for all pupils with EHCPs in mainstream schools.

Resolved:

- (i) To agree:
 - The redistribution of the funding released from the removal of the Sixth Form factor based on Key Stage 4 pupils;
 - The proposed local formula for allocating the funding for three and four year olds accessing the free nursery entitlement;
 - The removal of the facility of the annual advance, unless agreed as part of a separate funding agreement with individual schools;
 - To amend and include in the Scheme for Financing a clause for supporting schools with a planned deficit.
- (ii) Not to support the proposal to amend the funding arrangements for pupils with EHCPs in mainstream schools.

b) Schools Budget – monitoring position 2016-17 and Budget update 2017-18

Received a report providing information on the Schools Budget: Monitoring Position for 2016-17 and a budget update for 2017-18, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book.

Reported, following the update provided at the December meeting, the Authority had received from the DfE the budget settlement and dataset to use for the formula allocation to individual schools for 2017–18. The report sought the Forum's approval for the unit rates to be used for the funding formula and confirmation of the continuation of the de-delegated services.

Noted:

- i) The initial DSG settlement for 2017-18 was set at £319.1m, which included the Early Years Pupil Premium. An additional £1.56m had been received from the Education Funding Agency to fund Post-16 places in special schools. Therefore, the resources available for 2017-18 totalled £320.6m.
- ii) The DSG had increased by £8.08m on the forecast previously reported because of an increase in the number of pupils recorded on the October Census, additional funding of £1.19m for the High Needs Block and for the Early Years Block of £6.57m to support the implementation of the National Funding Formula and extend the provision to 30 hours for working parents. The majority of the funding for the Early Years Block would be delegated to providers; the Authority was allowed to retain 7% in 2017–18 and 5% in subsequent years to fund central services.
- iii) The unit value used for the KS4 AWPU included the adjustment for the proposal to incorporate the funding from the Sixth Form factor. Members were reminded that the KS4 AWPU would not be protected when the National Funding Formula was introduced in 2018-19.
- iv) The budget included an estimate to cover any increases following the revaluation of the rateable values. A member asked whether, if the rateable values were increased, the funding generated could be earmarked for use for educational purposes. It was stated that it was uncertain if this was possible, but it would be raised.
- v) The changes to the de-delegated items included:
 - maternity scheme was not going to be offered as a de-delegated service for 2017–18 because the Authority did not charge the administration costs to the scheme and now it was not possible to absorb these costs;
 - as agreed by the primary sector, for 2017–18, the money used to fund the central School Improvement Service would be provided as a de-delegated service.
- vi) The budget pressures included the Home and Hospital Service, but it was hoped following the review of processes the pressure could be managed in 2017–18.
- vii) There were no changes proposed for funding special schools and ARPs, but the review of the High Needs Block would include the top-up rates used to fund special schools and ARPs.
- viii) Information on Sixth Form funding would be provided directly by the EFA at the end of January 2017.

Resolved:

- (i) The Forum agreed to:
 - the unit rates detailed in the report for the formula used to fund mainstream schools;
 - the recommendations made for central services at the December meeting;
- (ii) School representatives agreed to the de-delegated services as outlined in the report;
- (iii) The Forum noted:
 - The DSG monitoring position for 2016-17;
 - The draft DSG budget position for 2017-18.

c) Central Services Funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant

Received a paper providing an update on Central Services funded from the DSG, a copy of which is in the Minute Book.

The Forum noted this information.

d) Education Support Grant (ESG)

Received a report providing an update on the ESG, a copy of which is in the Minute Book.

The report provided information on the services that were notionally funded from the ESG. The Council had continued to provide these services on an historical basis and not changed these to match the funding provided through the ESG. Also attached to the paper was a list of Education Teams and Services currently under the responsibility of the Chief Education Officer for the delivery of the Council's statutory duties.

The DfE had confirmed that the funding from the ESG to cover general statutory duties provided by local authorities to maintain schools would cease from September 2017. The issue with this cut was that the Government had not withdrawn the associated statutory duties. The cessation of this funding was a loss of £3m to the Council. The Council was currently considering how the cut would be managed and how maintained schools would continue to be supported.

Noted:

- (i) The funding for the retained duties provided to all schools, academies and free schools would continue to be provided. For 2017–18, the amount had been set at £15 per pupil and not £77 as stated in the report. The DfE had added this amount to the DSG and confirmed that this funding and any more needed to deliver the statutory duties to all schools could be top sliced with the Forum's agreement.
- (ii) The list of Education Teams and Services was included to advise the Forum of all the services provided to schools and those for which funding will not be provided.
- (iii) A number of other local authorities were working with their Schools Forum to seek funding to retain the general duties by agreeing to fund a per pupil rate of between £10 and £40.
- (iv) The Authority will provide information on the use of the funding for the centrally retained duties and proposals for the continuation of the general duties.
- (v) A member observed that the calculation could only be based on the work that had been done and not on need. It was stated that this may be the case, but Enfield had 97% of schools judged good or outstanding and this had been achieved with the support of some of the services.
- (vi) Similar to the exercise carried out on the DSG, the Council was reviewing all services to ensure that only statutory services continued to be provided. This included reviewing the historical funding provided for the CAMHS service.
- (vii) Separately the Council had received £155k for the School Improvement Service to provide a monitoring and brokerage role. This was only a proportion of the amount required to continue to provide the current level of service.
- (viii) The early years providers used to receive free training and checks for the Disclosure and Barring Service and now providers were charged for these because these services were not statutory.

Resolved further information in the arrangements for 2017–18 would be provided on the services currently funded from the ESG.

Action: Ms Tosh

5. ITEM FOR INFORMATION

a) DfE Consultation documents: schools and High Needs National Funding Formula – summary of proposals

Received a report providing DfE Consultation Documents: Schools and High Needs National Funding Formula – Summary of Proposals, a copy of which is in the Minute Book.

The report provided a brief summary of the DfE proposals for the introduction of a National Funding Formula for the Schools and High Needs Block. The deadline for responses was

22 March 2017. The Forum was asked to comment and provide their views on the proposals to inform Enfield's response

Noted

- i) For the Schools Block, it was proposed the ratio in funding between primary and secondary phases be set at the current national average of 1:1:29. There appeared to be no rationale for this other than that it was the national average. This was slightly lower than the ratio for Enfield, which was 1:1:3.
- ii) The proposals included allocating a greater amount of funding through the additional educational needs factor, whereas Enfield had allocated a greater amount through the per pupil amount.
- iii) A national rate of £110k was proposed for the lump sum. This was considerably lower than the rate of £162k used in Enfield. This may be an issue for smaller schools.
- iv) The other school-led factors it was proposed would be funded on historical basis. It was unclear how this would address future pressures in these areas, e.g. rate revaluations.
- v) The transitional arrangements included capping any gains or losses at 3% in 2018–19 and 2.5% 2019–20.
- vi) The proposals did not include any funding to support Looked after Children.
- vii) For the first time since the School Funding Reforms were introduced, it was proposed to have a National Funding Formula for the High Needs Block. An immediate concern with the formula was the provision that 50% of the funding would be allocated according to historical spend. It was unclear if the historical spend would be based on 2017–18 to inform 2018–19. If not, then it may create a pressure on resources available to support pupils with SEND.
- viii) Proposals also include for all pupils on roll at special schools, independent or post-16 institutions to be included on the Pupil Census to inform per pupil funding.
- ix) A new Central Schools Services Block would be created. This block will include funding for the retained duties previously funded from the ESG and the central services currently funded from the Schools Block.

Resolved a further update on the proposals and a draft response would be provided to the next meeting.

ACTION: Mrs Brown

6. WORKPLAN

Any additional items arising from the meeting would be added to the workplan.

ACTION: Mrs Brown

7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8 FUTURE MEETINGS

- a) The date of the next meeting has been changed to **Wednesday 8 March** at 5.30pm at Chace Community School.
- b) Proposed dates for future meetings
 - 19 April 2017 to be changed to May
 - 05 July 2017

9 CONFIDENTIALITY

No items were considered confidential. The meeting closed at 8.00pm.