

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON WEDNESDAY 21 OCTOBER 2015 AT CITY HALL, BRADFORD

Commenced 0803
Adjourned 0955
Reconvened 1010
Concluded 1128

PRESENT

School Members

Bev George, Brent Fitzpatrick, Chris Quinn, Dianne Rowbotham, Dominic Wall, Emma Ockerby, Kevin Holland, Michele Robinson, Nicky Kilvington, Maureen Cairns, Ray Tate, Sami Harzallah, Sue Haithwaite and Trevor Loft

Nominated Sub School Members

Ian Morrel and Irene Docherty

Non School Members

Ian Murch and Donna Willoughby

Local Authority Officers

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| Andrew Redding | Business Advisor (Schools) |
| Dawn Haigh | Principal Finance Officer (Schools) |
| Judith Kirk | Interim Assistant Director, Education and School Improvement |
| Michael Jameson | Strategic Director, Children's Services |
| Raj Singh | Business Advisor |
| Sarah North | Principal Finance Officer (Schools) |
| Stuart McKinnon-Evans | Director of Finance |

Observers

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|------------------------|---|
| Councillor Hinchcliffe | Portfolio Holder, Education, Skills and Culture |
| Councillor Sykes | Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Chair |
| Lynn Murphy | Business Manager, Feversham College |
| Nav Chohan | Shipley College (<i>Observer for David Harwood</i>) |
| Sarah Murray | Bradford College Education Trust (<i>Observe for Dwayne Saxton</i>) |
| Tom Bright | The Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) representative |

Apologies

David Harwood, Dwayne Saxton, Gareth Dawkins, Nigel Cooper, Phil Travis and Vivienne Robinson

DOMINIC WALL IN THE CHAIR

97. NEW CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

Dominic Wall introduced himself as the newly elected Chair of the Schools Forum. With Paul Burluraux, the previous Chair, attending the Forum for the final time, Dominic thanked Paul, on behalf of all Members and officers, for his outstanding contribution to the work of the Schools



Forum as a long standing member and as Chair and also for his commitment to Bradford since 1983. Paul thanked Dominic and members for their appreciation and kind words, in return thanking all current and former Forum members, and officers, for their dedication and hard work in putting the interests of the children of Bradford first and in seeking to drive forward change and improvements. Following a round of applause, Paul left the meeting.

The Chair continued by reporting membership changes since the last meeting. It was reported that:

- Shanaz Anwar-Bleem (academy representative) has resigned and a replacement will be sought via the academies convener.
- Michael Walsh (the representative of Post 16 High Needs Providers) has also resigned and has been replaced, following election, by David Harwood, the Principal of Bradford College. As David is not able to attend this meeting, the Principal of Shipley College is in attendance as a substitute.

98. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

A declaration was received from the Chair for agenda item 9 “New to English Support Strategy (Additional Information)”, minute 103.

ACTION: *City Solicitor*

99. MINUTES OF 23 SEPTEMBER 2015 AND MATTERS ARISING

The Business Advisor (Schools) reported the progress made on “Action” items:

- **Schools Forum Members – Election of a Chair (item 87. Page 60):** This has been actioned as agreed. Dominic Wall is elected Chair.
- **Update on 2015/16 DSG Funding Matters (item 88. Page 62):** It was reported that an update, responding to the Forum’s requests for further information on the establishment of the hubs and the Council’s strategic approach, is provided under agenda item 7 and that the minutes of the BEICB meeting are provided under agenda item 6
- **Early Projection of the 2016/17 DSG Position and Cost Pressures (item 89. Page 64):** It was reported that the risk analysis and information on funding multiple needs, requested at the last meeting, is provided in the FFWG report under agenda item 14.
- **Consultation on the Early Years Single Funding Formula (item 90. Page 64):** It was reported that the consultation document was published and outcomes are being reported to this meeting under agenda item 11. In terms of the request for further information on the vetting processes for take up of the 2 year old offer, it was reported that:
 - The responsibility for checking eligibility for the 2 year old offer rests with settings. Guidance and support is provided by Sufficiency Officers.
 - Some authorities carry out their own checking (rather than asking settings to do this). We believe that these authorities have comparably much lower numbers than us. A consideration is the time (as well as the capacity) that would be needed for the Authority to vet all children and the delays this may cause to confirming funding allocations. This being said, our Early Years team undertook audits in summer



2014, from which 3 children in total were identified to have been funded when not eligible.

- Concerns raised by Sufficiency Officer are referred to Internal Audit and, in some case, the Council's Fraud Investigation Unit.
- The Authority agrees that some form of vetting does need to continue, alongside guidance and pro-active support. We do not expect this to mean that the Council will check the eligibility of all 2 year olds. It is anticipated that the quite significant streamlining of finance processes relating to the 2 and 3 / 4 year old offers, which is currently taking place, will free up capacity to enable the Council to continue to carry out audits
- In wider context, the robustness of data is an issue that we also face with Census information for primary and secondary schools. Simply put, the Council never has had the capacity to audit all the data that comes from schools. However, we do carry out spot checks and sampling, in particular, where anomalies are identified.
- This is an issue that we will come across with the extension of the entitlement to 30 hours (where some vetting of the work status of the parents will need to take place). Clearly then, the Authority will need to think about further.

- **Consultation on the primary and secondary school formulae 2016/17 (item 91. Page 65):** It was reported that the consultation document, amended as agreed, was published and outcomes are being reported to this meeting under agenda item 10.
- **Pupil Premium Spending Analysis (item 92. Page 66):** the action points from this agenda item will be taken forward. The Pupil Premium survey has been presented to the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee and this Committee has asked that the Schools Forum draws to the attention of headteachers and governors the low number of schools (9% of statements) that make reference in their Pupil Premium Statements to the use of Pupil Premium to raise the achievement of looked after children. We ask Members to consider this and to take this back to colleagues.
- **Work Programme (item 93. Page 66):** the work programme has been amended and published as agreed. As indicated at the last meeting, the DfE's Area Reviews are now beginning and the District is also beginning to review our Post 16 provisions. We still await announcements about Post 16 funding levels for 2016/17. From a financial perspective however, a number of secondary schools have seen reductions in their Post 16 numbers this September, which has consequences for their overall budget pressures.

The Business Advisor (Schools) reported on other Matters Arising:

- **Update on the Bradford Learning Network:** regular updates have been provided previously to the Forum on the number of schools and academies buying into the BLN. A matters arising document provides details of the buy in for the BLN 3 contract. As the statement shows, the vast majority of schools and academies (and therefore, pupils) access the BLN3 services. This is tabled for information.
- **Implementation of a Living Wage:** as discussed previously (latest in July), and as referred to at the September Forum meeting, the Council is about to write out to schools about the implementation of a living wage. Included in the meeting papers is the draft of the letter, and supporting guidance, to be sent to maintained community and voluntary controlled schools. Letters to other types of setting will be sent out based on this. This is tabled for information.
- **Report to the Scrutiny Committee:** a report is being presented to the Scrutiny Committee tomorrow evening, providing an updated view on the relationships between funding and attainment. This has been provided for the Forum's awareness. Members, in particular, should consider the key messages from the outline conclusions presented in paragraph 1.3



of the report. Members will also be interested in the appendix to the report, which shows the value for money framework used by the DfE to assess the value for money of the academies / free school programme, There are a number of things we can learn from this framework in the development of our framework for evaluating the impact and success of funding strategies.

- **Unplaced children at the October Census:** In previous years we have reported to the Forum the number of children that were ‘in the system’ but had not been allocated a place in a primary or secondary school before the October Census was taken. We do not receive DSG funding for the children that are not placed by this time. This has been presented for the Forum’s information, but also as Members have expressed a desire to improve this position and to consider ‘spend to save’ strategies that could be employed. Members are reminded that, to this end, there is a sum of £151,000 available within the DSG admissions budget that is still available to use. The figures unplaced, in the context of the total number of applications, this year and in the last few years are:
 - October 2012: 169 out of 1,278 (13%)
 - October 2013 277 out of 1,500 (18%)
 - October 2014 90 out of 1,370 (7%)
 - October 2015 143 out of 1,499 (10%)

Of the 143 not allocated a place by October 2015, 45 were primary-aged and 98 were secondary-aged.

Resolved –

- (1) **That progress made on “Action” items and Matters Arising be noted.**
- (2) **That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2015 be signed as a correct record subject to Trevor Loft (School Member) and Michael Jameson (Strategic Director, Children’s Services) be recorded as attended.**

ACTION: *Assistant City Solicitor*

100. MATTERS RAISED BY SCHOOLS

There were no matters raised by schools to report.

No resolution was passed on this item.

101. STANDING ITEM – DSG GROWTH FUND ALLOCATIONS

No new allocations were presented.

No resolution was passed on this item.

102. STANDING ITEM – BRADFORD EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT COMMISSIONING BOARD (BEICB)

In introducing this item, the Chair reminded Members that a report, which includes the minutes of BEICB meetings, is now a standing agenda item. The Business Advisor (Schools) then presented the minutes of BEICB, focusing on section 7 (action items).



Forum members asked the following questions and made the following comments:

- What opportunity do Forum members have to ask specific questions, and receive responses, about the work / decisions of the BEICB? The Business Advisor (Schools) responded with the suggestion that, similar to Council questions submitted by Elected Members, Forum members could submit written questions by email to him for written responses to be provided within the next standing report to the Forum. Members agreed this approach.
- Is the BEICB's allocation for the NQTs funding new activity? Have we seen a significant increase in the number of NQTs in the District this year, and is the NQT programme in reaction to this? It was agreed that a response to these questions would be provided in the next BEICB report.
- A member of the Schools Forum and previously of the Education Improvement Strategic Board (EISB) asked for clarification on the status of this Board, and expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of clear communication from the Council on this. The Strategic Director, Children's Services, clarified that the EISB is still in place and that he would talk to the Member outside this meeting.
- Who would be the School Forum's representative on the BEICB following the retirement of the previous Chair? The Vice Chair put herself forward to represent the Forum, but it was agreed that an email asking for nominations would be sent out to give all Members the opportunity to put themselves forward.

Resolved –

- (1) **That where Forum members have specific questions about the work of the BEICB, that these questions be submitted by email to andrew.redding@bradford.gov.uk. Written responses will be presented back to the Forum within the BEICB standing agenda item at the next available meeting. The next opportunity to report back will be on the 9 December 2015.**
- (2) **That further information be provided on the New Qualified Teachers strategy as recorded in the minutes of the BEICB's 14 September 2015 meeting.**
- (3) **That an email be sent to all members to inform them that Dianne Rowbotham (Vice Chair) had put herself forward to be the School Forum's representative on the BEICB (following the retirement of the Forum's previous Chair) and to ask for any further nominations. If no further nominations are received, Dianne is to be the Forum's representative. If further nominations are received, the representative will be decided by election (by email).**

Action: *Business Advisor (Schools)*

103. NEW TO ENGLISH SUPPORT STRATEGY (ADDITIONAL INFORMATION)

The Lead Area Achievement Officer and the Co-ordinator New Communities/Travellers presented verbally an update on the development of new to English centres of excellence (hubs) and also responding to the questions that Forum members asked at the last meeting (recorded in the minutes).

Regarding the development of the hubs, it was reported that:

- 9 schools so far have expressed an interest in developing hubs (the Authority is initially seeking to establish 6).
- The Authority's on-going role will be to monitor the progress and performance of the hubs.



It is anticipated that performance reports would be provided on a regular basis to the BEICB, with the first report at the end of the 2015/16 academic year.

- The host schools will be required to 'put in' their infrastructures, systems and specialist support services, including the provision of advice to other schools (attendance improvement and monitoring, data management and pupil performance tracking, parental involvement, support for teaching and learning, behavioural and cultural advice, preparation for Ofsted).
- The £20,000 initial allocation is for pump-priming purposes only and any future finance would need to be considered by the BEICB. It is expected that the hubs will become self-sustaining.
- The Authority is exploring a further application for funding to the Education Endowment Fund.
- Bradford College has been contacted (as agreed at the last meeting).

Forum members asked the following questions and made the following comments:

- Children attending the hubs will progress at different rates and have different needs, which will make performance evaluation difficult. The Lead Achievement Officer responded that the Authority is aware of this and is currently talking with the data analysis team.
- A member expressed the view that the redirection of support services for new to English to schools from the Authority is a bold step (more than half of local authorities continue to provide centrally managed support). Critical then is the evaluation of impact and success and these needs to take a form more significant than an annual report to the BEICB. Of concern is whether a school-led system will be able to deal with the complexity of need.
- A member expressed a concern about the assumption that the hubs will be self-sustaining and asked that this aspect is specifically considered further; previous models that have relied on the trading of services between schools have not been successful because they have not become self-sustaining.
- A member emphasised that education support services need to be better joined with social care and health and the Authority needs to progress discussions further with agencies about how health and social care can be better engaged in provision for children in Bradford schools.

The Co-ordinator New Communities/Travellers spoke to the Forum in response to the questions asked at the last meeting regarding processes for managing the arrival of refugees in Bradford. He reported that:

- 28 refugees from Syria were placed in Bradford schools and colleges in the 2014/15 academic year. To date 12 have been placed during this academic year, with an estimated further 18. Given these low numbers, it is not expected that these will have any significant impact on standards in schools. The Co-ordinator added that, having spoken to the schools that have admitted children from refugee children, these schools speak very positively about these children. Many of these children are making very good progress.
- There is a Home Office sponsored housing provider in Bradford, who liaises with the Authority's admissions team to ensure that refugee families are not placed in areas of the District where there are not available school places. Parents do have the right to express a preference, and some do where families have links with relatives or families already living in Bradford.
- The placement of children from refugee families is discussed with individual schools within the admissions and Fair Access meetings.

In summing up this item, the Chair thanked the Lead Area Achievement Officer and the Co-ordinator New Communities/Travellers for their comprehensive response to the questions and concerns raised by the Forum at the last meeting. The Authority must continue to ensure that communication with schools around admissions and planning takes place as early as possible.



Resolved –

- (1) That the information provided be noted and that a further update be received on 9 December 2015.**
- (2) That further consideration be given to how the new to English hubs will be self-sustaining and how education, health and social care services can be joined.**

104. EDUCATION PERFORMANCE 2015

A report was presented, **Document FF**, which outlined the key education attainment results from summer 2015. It was explained that this information is presented to support Members' view of key funding priorities.

The Interim Assistant Director - Education and School Improvement and Head of Service for School Improvement were both present and gave a joint synopsis of the report. It was explained that there have been some further statistical releases since the paper was written; we now have full results for the EYFSP, year 1 phonics and key stage 1 results. The remaining results are still to be validated and it was explained that we would expect some small changes in the final results.

Forum Members asked the following questions and made the following comments:

- Do we understand the reasons behind the apparent divergence in performance between secondary schools at Key Stage 4? It was explained that the type of courses being delivered was one reason alongside other individual-school level factors.
- That we need to be better at celebrating success.
- Are we holding schools to account in their use of resources?

The Chair observed that the results in Early Years would seem to evidence some impact of our investment of DSG formula funding in this phase. However, it is difficult to be clear on cause and effect here. How do we know what part funding has played in the improvement on GLD scores, as opposed to other factors? Referring to Ofsted's letter to the Authority following the inspection of Bradford Council's school improvement function early this year, the Chair asked that officer work quickly to develop a framework through which the specific impact of funding can be evaluated. It will be important to have this framework in place especially as we consider how to reduce spending or redistribute funding in the future.

Resolved –

- (1) That the information provided be noted.**
- (2) That the Authority develops a framework for the evaluation of the impact of financial decision making (as referred to in Ofsted's inspection report on the Council's school improvement function) and presents this for the School Forum's consideration at the earliest opportunity.**

Action: *Business Advisor (Schools)*

105. THE LOCAL AUTHORITY'S FINANCIAL POSITION AND BUDGET PROPOSALS

The Director of Finance and the Strategic Director, Children's Services presented verbally an outline of the key aspects of the Local Authority's financial position for 2016/17, explaining that this



information is given in advance of fuller discussion on the Council's budget proposals for 2016/17, which is planned for the next Forum meeting.

The Director of Finance began by explaining that the assessment of the Council's funding gap, based on current estimates (with a number of uncertainties, including the impact of the introduction of the national living wage on the Council's supply chain, regional devolution and the Chancellor's Spending Review on 25 November), is £60m over 2016-18 (£20m in 2016/17 and £40m in 2017/18). The Council is therefore, by necessity, continuing to reduce its expenditure. Members will be aware of the 'New Deal' conversations that have taken place across the District. The budget proposals for 2016/17, which will be published on 23 November for consultation, will be wide ranging. The Director explained that there are a number of tensions and balances to consider in developing proposals, especially in reducing the financing of preventative services (for example, in social care, which constitutes approximately 50% of the Council's spending excluding schools), the continued requirement to meet statutory responsibilities and continuing to deliver on (or manage) people's expectations of what the Council will deliver. The Director explained that there is also a tension between the time pressure on the achievement of savings and the difficult and complex nature of savings projects, such as the review of Children's Centres and changes to the school transport policy. It is useful for the Schools Forum to be aware that more of these types of projects will be necessary to achieve sufficient savings, but that these projects will be complex to administer and difficult to implement.

The Strategic Director, Children's Services, presented verbally the financial pressures, and themes and priorities, in Children's Services. He explained that Children's Services is the 2nd largest Council budget, at £72m, with this budget having been reduced by £14m this financial year. A notional 'salami slice' approach to savings would mean a further reduction of £12m in 2016/17. This salami slicing approach is not being proposed, but the £12m does illustrate the extent of the financial challenge facing the Council and Children's Services. There will need to be whole-system change, based on an absolute clarity on outcomes. The Director further outlined his thoughts on the key building blocks / themes behind the reviews of services; social care and safeguarding, including a whole system review of pro-active early help, disability services and transitions; opportunities in social care and health around regional devolution; children in care, including children's homes and foster carers; post 16 provision, responding to the significant reductions in funding in this area; education outcomes, including the progression of the sector-led improvement system; employment and skills. The Director explained that he would bring further proposals to the Schools Forum in these areas to the December meeting. He also added that the DSG allocation to the Bradford Education Commissioning Board (the co-commissioning fund) is vitally important in facilitating successful system change.

Following these presentations, Forum Members asked the following questions and made the following comments:

- The Chair stated that safeguards will need to be built into change processes. Such a degree of structural change will require a significant behavioural shift. The Council must engage as early as possible with schools and other stakeholders, so that change is developed and managed in partnership with a clarity of understanding of the direction of travel and impact.
- Is 2016/17 the final year of austerity reductions? The Director of Finance responded that 2016/17 is not the final year; reductions do not finish until 2020, with further reductions in the region of £20-30m in each of 2018/19 and 2019/20.
- Will the devolution of business rates income negatively affect Bradford? The Director of Finance explained that we do not yet know enough about what is being proposed by Government to assess the impact. The impact (in 2020) will depend, in particular, on the distribution mechanism, what new responsibilities local authorities will take on and the regional devolution agreement. There are a range of different positions across metropolitan districts.
- The Vice Chair stated that a real issue facing schools is the quality of parental support of children, especially aged 0-3. How services for family / parental support develop (or are



affected by reductions) will be critical in raising educational outcomes, with some concern that funding reductions will reduce activity in this area. This is perhaps an issue for the Commissioning Board to consider. The representative of Nursery schools explained that Children's Centres are continuing to work hard to deliver support for parents and families but that funding cuts are biting hard.

Resolved –

- (1) That the information provided be noted.**
- (2) That further detailed information be provided to the 9 December 2015 meeting on the Council's budget proposals for Children's Services for 2016/17.**

Action: *Director of Finance
Strategic Director, Children's Services
Business Advisor (Schools)*

106. CONSULTATION OUTCOMES – PRIMARY AND SECONDARY FORMULAE

The Principal Finance Officer (Schools) presented a report, **Document FG**, which asked Members to consider the outcomes of the consultation on the 2016/17 Primary & Secondary funding formulae and to make final recommendations on the structure of these formulae (the "pro-forma"), which is to be submitted to the Education Funding Agency. The responses received to the consultation were reported verbally.

Concerns were raised regarding the low response rate and Members questioned how the two-way communication between schools / academies and the Schools Forum could be improved. Members agreed that effective communication is especially important as budgets become tighter and as significant changes in the funding system are expected to be introduced. The Business Advisor (Schools) explained the main ways the Local Authority communicates with schools, academies and other providers, and also explained that a termly Schools Forum newsletter is being planned. In getting key messages to schools and collecting feedback however, he stated the Local Authority needs the help of Forum Members and of other stakeholders in the system, including the partnerships. The Vice Chair suggested that Schools Forum business could be a regular agenda item at BPIP Board meetings. It was also suggested that the Primary Area Leads could be used to disseminate messages and collect feedback. Communication is also something that the new Commissioning Board could consider. In summarising the Forum's discussion, the Chair stated that he would consider how he as Chair can improve communication and that the Forum must discuss this matter further. He asked that a paper be provided to the next meeting to aid this.

Resolved –

- (1) That the Primary and Secondary Pro-forma (shown in Appendix 1) for the 2016/17 financial year be submitted to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) by 30 October 2015. Agreed by vote on a phase-specific basis.**
- (2) That the continuation in the 2016/17 financial year of the criteria for the allocation of the DSG's Schools Block Primary and Secondary Growth and other contingency funds Primary, as proposed in the consultation document, be agreed. Agreed by vote on a phase-specific basis.**
- (3) That the negative consultation feedback received from one school on the values of funding of additional educational needs in Bradford's formulae be considered by the Formula Funding Working Group at its next meeting.**



- (4) That in the absence of a specific provision for this with the Finance Regulations, that a solution be developed to manage how the votes of academy members can be treated where voting must take place on a phase-specific basis.
- (5) That where the level of response in future consultation exercises is low, that an email reminder be sent to the Chairs of the Partnerships informing them of this and confirming the proposed action to be taken.
- (6) That, referring also to other matters discussed during the meeting, that a paper be provided for the 9 December 2015 meeting, which outlines the measures by which communication and feedback between the Schools Forum and the partnerships and schools can be improved.

Action: *School Formula Funding Officer*

107. CONSULTATION OUTCOMES – EARLY YEARS SINGLE FUNDING FORMULA

The Principal Finance Officer (Schools) presented a report, **Document FH**, which asked Members to consider the outcomes of the consultation on the Early Years Single Funding Formula and to make final recommendations on the structure of this Formula for 2016/17. It was confirmed verbally that no formal written responses have been received to the consultation.

The report also provided further information on places planning and on the development of flexibility in the maintained sector, responding to the previous request of Members for further information. The signposting of sources of support and guidance was welcomed by Members. A Member asked for clarification on how maintained providers delivering the 2 year old offer can access DSG resources for 2 year old children with SEND.

Resolved –

- (1) That the structure of the Early Years Single Funding Formula for the 2016/17 financial year, as proposed in the consultation document, be agreed. Agreed unanimously by vote by Primary and Early Years members.
- (2) That clarification be provided on the ability of maintained schools to access the DSG's SEND budgets for children in their 2 year old provisions.

Action: *Principal Finance Officer (Schools)*

108. CONSULTATION – HIGH NEEDS BLOCK 2016/17

The Business Advisor (Schools) presented a report, **Document FI**, which asked Members to agree the publication of the proposed consultation document on the High Needs Block funding model for 2016/17. It was explained that this document includes the number of places the Authority plans to commission and the arrangements for paying top up (Plus) funding. Members were also asked to begin to consider the issues the report raises regarding on-going affordability pressures within the High Needs Block.

Members asked the following questions and made the following comments:

- Whether the £3m-£3.5m indicative affordability gap in 2016/17 takes account of current spending positions (and whether this gap is reduced when current spending patterns are factored in). It was explained that the High Needs Block is currently forecasted to be fully



spent in this financial year and therefore, there is no expectation that either on-going or one off savings will be available to reduce the affordability gap next year. The Business Advisor stated that a detailed breakdown of the 2015/16 DSG spending forecast will be presented to the Forum at the next meeting.

- That it would be useful for the Forum to be provided with data, which shows the extent to which children move up the ranges funding model as they progress through primary to secondary provision, including those that may progress to be funded through an independent or out of authority provision.
- That the SEN Reference Group has identified, and is beginning to consider further, what benchmarking data highlights about how the number of specialist places provided in the Bradford District differs from the numbers in other authorities. This data will be presented in summary to the Schools Forum and the next meeting and that this will likely provide context to considerations around the 2016/17 DSG allocation and affordability pressures. The Vice Chair welcomed discussion on this data taking place in the full Schools Forum. Following the Chair's suggestion, the Business Advisor explained that it may be useful for a single item agenda / education select committee style Forum meeting to be arranged in the new year, specifically to consider evidence and comparative data concerning the District's SEND places provision, how the District's places sufficiency strategy could develop and how this may be affected by developments nationally e.g. a national funding formula.
- That there are a number of issues previously raised with the Forum that are outstanding to be concluded or resolved, including the development of the District's strategy and provision for behaviour support and for ASD need. The Vice Chair specifically made a plea for the review on primary aged behaviour support to now be quickly progressed.
- The Principal of Shipley College (attending as a substitute representative of Post 16 high needs providers) specifically requested that the current issue regarding the sufficiency of places funding for Further Education settings be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Resolved –

- (1) That the publication of the proposed consultation on the High Needs Block funding model for the 2016/17 financial year be agreed.**
- (2) That a more detailed report be presented to the Schools Forum on 9 December 2015 on the high needs funding matters highlighted at this meeting.**
- (3) That information be provided, which shows the extent to which children move up the ranges funding model as they progress through primary to secondary provision, including those that may progress to be funded through an independent or out of authority provision.**
- (4) That the Authority resolves the issue of the gap between places funding and actual occupancy in Further Education settings as a priority, with a recommendation to be considered by the Schools Forum on 9 December 2015.**

Action: *Business Advisor (Schools)*

109. DSG SCHOOLS AND EARLY YEARS CENTRAL ITEMS AND DE-DELEGATED FUNDS 2016/17

The Business Advisor (Schools) presented a report, **Document FJ**, which asked the Forum to consider the position of Schools and Early Years Block central and de-delegated items to be funded from the DSG in 2016/17. It was explained that the information in this report, especially Appendix 1, is presented to continue the discussion on the future direction of these funds and it is



anticipated that Members will wish to further consider this across the December and January meetings. In particular then, Forum Members are asked to consider what further information is needed / review work should take place in order for final recommendations for 2016/17 to be made.

The Business Advisor suggested that the 4 funds that will be of most interest to Forum Members will be Admissions, the DSG's Matched Contribution to School Improvement, ESBD Support Team and the Ethnic Minority Support Team. It was reported that updated benchmarking (Appendix 2) indicates that, following the changes made this year, our spending on trade union facilities time has come more in line with other authorities.

The Business Advisor explained that the Local Authority recommends that a detailed discussion on the direction of travel of these funds, in particular, of the DSG's contribution to schools improvement, takes place at the next BEICB meeting to be held on the 12 November, with the members of the Forum's De-Delegated and Centrally Managed Services Working Group involved in this discussion. This feels to be a good way of joining together the scrutiny and views of both the Schools Forum and the BEICB. On this basis, recommendations from this meeting can be presented back to the Schools Forum in December for consideration. It is the Schools Forum that will make final recommendations to the Council's Executive.

Members asked the following questions and made the following comments:

- Who are the Members on the Forum's De-Delegated Funds Working Group? The current membership was given (Dianne Rowbotham, Chris Quinn, Dwayne Saxton, Ian Morrell and Bev George).
- What response has been received to the consultation on de-delegated items? As reported in item 106, it was explained that very little feedback of the view of maintained schools on de-delegation has come from the consultation exercise.

In summing up this item, the Chair emphasised the importance of effective collaboration and recognition of collective responsibility between schools and the Local Authority, especially in sustaining specialist services and expertise (staff).

Resolved –

- (1) **That the contents of Document FJ be noted.**
- (2) **That the members of the Forum's Working Group meet with the Bradford Education Improvement Commissioning Board (on 12 November 2015) to consider the position and the future direction of the DSG's centrally managed funds, for recommendations to be presented to the Schools Forum on 9 December 2015.**

Action: *Business Advisor (Schools)*

110. **FORMULA FUNDING WORKING GROUP REPORT**

The Principal Finance Officer (Schools) presented a report, **Document FK**, which provided initial feedback on the discussions within the Formula Funding Working Group (FFWG) on matters relating to the values of factors within the primary and secondary funding formulae and on the matters raised in the September Forum meeting, which were recorded in the minutes of that meeting.

Following a summary of the report, the Business Advisor (Schools) asked Members to focus on the final column in Appendix 1, which shows the higher level of funding we currently allocate to primary and secondary schools for children with multiple needs. It was explained that this higher rate of funding follows the nature of our provision, but is clearly an area of risk as a national funding



formula may not replicate this. Another area of risk is the funding of smaller schools, as the national average lump sum value is much lower than our current £175,000 and we are aware that ministers have previously expressed a desire to move away from lump sum funding (except in supporting sparsity). The Director of Finance reminded Members that significant changes are likely to be implemented under transitional protection, so there is no need to panic at this stage. However, the Authority will need the help of Forum Members in communicating key messages about the national funding formula when more is announced by the DfE.

A member representing primary maintained school headteachers reminded the Forum that the funding difference between primary and secondary is still considerable. Concern was also expressed around the implications of future funding reductions for the capacity of outstanding schools (including outstanding smaller schools) to support others.

The Forum noted that a further meeting of the FFWG is planned to take place this term in order to inform the Forum further before recommendations on the 2016/17 DSG allocation are made.

Resolved –

That the contents of Document FK be noted.

111. SCHOOLS FORUM ADMINISTRATION 2015/16 ACADEMIC YEAR

The Business Advisor (Schools) presented a report, **Document FL**, which asked Members to review the Forum's administrative and membership arrangements for 2015/16. It was also confirmed that the current academy membership convener will be contacted to replace the membership now vacant from the resignation of Shanaz Anwar-Bleem.

Resolved –

- (1) That the Schools Forum's Conduct of Meetings & Procedural Matters document be agreed.**
- (2) That the proposal to transfer one secondary maintained Headteacher membership to an academy membership be agreed.**

Action: *Business Advisor (Schools)*

112. OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRES

The consideration of this item was deferred to the Schools Forum of 9 December 2015.

113. SCHOOLS FORUM STANDING ITEMS

There were no further updates presented on the Forum's standing items:

No resolution was passed on this item.

114. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB) / FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

No resolution was passed on this item.



115. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Schools Forum is Wednesday 9 December 2015.

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Forum.

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THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER

