

Minutes of a meeting of the Schools Forum held on Wednesday, 18 September 2019 in Committee Room 1 - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 0805, Adjourned 0940
Reconvened 0955, Concluded 1050

PRESENT

School Members

Ashley Reed, Bryan Harrison, Carol Dewhurst, Deborah Howarth, Dianne Richardson, Dominic Wall, Gill Holland, Helen Williams, Ian Morrel, Kevin Holland, Sir Nick Weller, Sian Hudson, Sue Haithwaite, Tehmina Hashmi and Trevor Loft.

DIANNE RICHARDSON IN THE CHAIR

Local Authority Officers

Andrew Redding	Business Advisor (Schools)
Asad Shah	Committee Services Officer
Dawn Haigh	Principal Finance Officer – Schools
Marium Haque	Deputy Director,
Rachel Phillips	Strategic Manager, Admissions & Exclusions
Raj Singh	Business Advisor (Financial)

Observer

Councillor Pollard

423. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

- Dominic Wall, Ian Morrel, Sue Haithwaite and Trevor Loft for agenda item 6 “Send and Alternative Provision Reviews – Progress Update” (minute 427).
- Sir Nick Weller for agenda item 5 “DSG Growth Fund Allocations” (minute 426).

ACTION: *City Solicitor*

426. MINUTES OF 10 JULY 2019 & MATTERS ARISING

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

- **Item 410 page 3 (Matters Raised by Schools)** – This item returns to this meeting as a substantive item (agenda item 14).
- **Item 412 page 4 (Chair and Vice Chair Election)** – The agreed process

for the collection of nominations was completed. The nominations put forward were for Dianne Richardson as Chair and Ian Morrel as Vice Chair, so an election was not required. Diane and Ian continue in their positions for the 2019/20 academic year.

- **Item 413 page 4 (Schools Forum Membership)** – For the Forum’s awareness, the DfE has not yet announced any changes to the composition or regulations governing School Forums for next year.
- **Item 414 page 6 (SEND & SEMH Reviews Update)** – An update is provided at agenda item 6. This includes the establishment of the requested cross-phase working group. The briefing note on the development of the Behaviour Centres and District PRU will be published on BSO this week.
- **Item 415 page 7 (SEND Call for Evidence)** – The final submission on this is presented for Members within the reports pack. No further comments were submitted after the meeting and prior to the submission of the Forum’s agreed response.
- **Item 416 page 8 (Report on PFI Costs)** – The Forum has agreed to take a ‘watching brief’ on this matter. The National Funding Formula (NFF) announcements made so far indicate a continuation of the current DSG arrangements in 2020/21. These announcements do not give any indication of possible changes in the NFF approach in future years.
- **Item 417 page 9 (NFF and DSG)** – This is covered under agenda item 7. Members are asked to book themselves onto one of the scheduled FFWG sessions.

c) Other Matters Arising, reported by the Business Advisor as follows:

- We would like to warn primary-phase maintained school representatives that, as last year, because of the timescales needed to confirm subscription, these Members will be asked at the next meeting on 16 October whether they wish to de-delegate for the purposes of subscribing to **Fischer Family Trust**. As such, it will be helpful for them to have collected feedback from colleagues in advance of this. We will send an email to Members following this meeting to help with this.
- The response received from Lord Agnew on the Chair letter regarding the insufficiency of **high needs capital** is copied in the agenda pack (orange page 11). The announcements on 2020/21 arrangements made so far do not cover high needs capital funds.
- The final position of **brought forward balances within the DSG by block at 31 March 2019** is presented on page 13 (pink) for Members’ reference. The only change from the position presented in May is the confirmation of our Early Years Block Funding for 2018/19, which has adjusted the EYB BFB by £78k. The forecast of balances remaining at the end of this current financial year will be presented, as usual, in December.

- For the Forum's awareness - the DfE's has launched a consultation on measures proposed to "**improve transparency of the financial health of maintained schools**". This consultation closes on 30 September and final measures are expected to be introduced for 2020/21. A copy of the document is included in the agenda pack (purple page 15).
- For the Forum's awareness – the DfE has launched a consultation on permitting maintained schools to access the academy sector's **Risk Protection Arrangement**. A copy of the document is included in the agenda pack (orange page 57).

Resolved –

- (1) That progress made on "Action" items and Matters Arising be noted.
- (2) That subject to the attendance of Alison Kaye being amended from attendance to non attendance with apologies, the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2019 be signed as a correct record.

ACTION: *City Solicitor*

427. MATTERS RAISED BY SCHOOLS

No resolutions were passed on this item.

428. STANDING ITEM - DSG GROWTH FUND ALLOCATIONS

The Business Advisor (Schools) presented **Document KT**, which asked Members to agree two allocations to the primary-phase from the Growth Fund. These allocations total £104,087.

Resolved –

That the proposed primary-phase Growth Fund allocations, set out in Document KT, be agreed.

ACTION: *Business Advisor, Schools*

429. SEND & ALTERNATIVE PROVISION REVIEWS - PROGRESS UPDATE

The Deputy Director, Education and Learning, provided an update verbally on the development of the new 354 specialist places.

- 200 additional places are live from September, with further places coming in from October half term and from January, with the remaining places delivered by April.
- The Authority's discussions with schools on the further creation of new places (in addition to the initial 354) continue with the expectation that

more places will be created for the 2020/21 academic year and on an on-going basis thereafter. The Deputy Director again expressed her thanks to schools for their interest and support in this work.

- These places will be created through the expansion of Local Authority-led resourced provisions and existing school-led resourced provisions as well as the expansion of special school capacity, including the adoption of split site arrangements. The Authority does not intend to create new school-led resourced provisions. The Primary Behaviour Centres are being given the option to convert to resourced provisions at September 2020.
- The working group, requested by the Schools Forum at the last meeting, to further consider options for the development of alternative provision (in relation to the Primary Behaviour Centres and District PRU) has been convened for 1 October.

In the discussion that followed this update, Members asked the following questions and made the following comments:

- An Academies Member highlighted for the Forum the issues for PFI schools that are expanding capacity and require capital / buildings adjustments, where these adjustments are triggering change notices and lifecycle cost increases. So, although the initial cost of capital works is being met through the Authority's capital funds, the on-going adjustment to PFI contract costs will fall on schools. The Member expressed the view that the Authority should take a lead in negotiating a position on this with the LEP. The Deputy Director responded that the Authority is aware of this issue and is seeking to work this through with the PFI Operational Board. The Forum will be kept updated on progress.
- The Academies Members representing Alternative Provisions, understanding that progress is being made, expressed concern that there is still a 'system blockage' and lag in the movement of students. He referred to his own provision, which is already full at the beginning of the academic year. He asked for an update on the position of the creation of the 40 SEMH places at Oastler School. The Deputy Director confirmed that these places are created, but that, recognising the vulnerability of these students, they will be occupied on a phased basis and that the Authority is working with Oastler School on this. The Authority is also engaged in discussions with secondary schools on the development of new SEMH resourced provision, which is anticipated will be live from January.

The Chair asked for a confirmation of staffing changes within SEND and Children's Services School Improvement and the Deputy Director provided this and stated that an SEND team plan will be made available.

The Chair asked what the Authority's position is in relation to the new wave 14 Free School programme that has recently been announced by the DfE. The Deputy Director responded that the Authority is currently working through the paperwork from this announcement and would be forming a view about whether an application for a new special school free school would be submitted. She stated that the Authority needs to be very clear about what we would want from a

new free school, both in terms of our provision mapping as well as to increase the clarity and strength of any application we would submit. Both the Chair and Vice Chair expressed concern that the Authority's assessment on this is made quickly and thoroughly so that we do not miss the tight deadlines and so that we get any application 'right' to improve its chances of success. The Chair asked for an update on this to be provided to the next meeting.

Resolved –

That the information provided by the Deputy Director, Education and Learning be noted.

430. NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA - UPDATE

The Business Advisor (Schools) presented a report, **Document KV**, which provided an update on the development and implementation of National Funding Formula and the announcements that have been made so far on 2020/21 DSG arrangements. He summarised the key matters that have still to be announced and emphasised that there is still a large degree of uncertainty about the impact on Bradford of the DfE's proposals for DSG funding. In particular, no announcements have yet been made about the position of the funding of maintained nursery schools after August 2020 nor how much of the additional £700m in high needs funding Bradford will receive.

An Academies Member expressed concern that the DfE's inflation assumption for 2020/21 at 1.84% will significantly understate the likely true increase in cost, especially salaries costs, that schools will have to absorb in 2020/21. A settlement of 1.84% will feel like a continued cut in funding in this context.

Resolved –

That the information presented in Document KV be noted.

431. OUTLINE - FORMULA FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS & CONSULTATIONS 2020/21

The Business Advisor (Schools) presented a report, **Document KW**, which outlined the working principles that are being considered in the development of Bradford's formula funding arrangements for 2020/21. He reminded Members that they are invited to attend a 'Formula Funding Working Group' session, on Tuesday 1 October (8am) or Wednesday 2 October (8am) or Tuesday 8 October (8am).

Members did not ask any questions and did not have any comments at this stage.

Resolved –

(1) That the information presented in Document KW be noted.

(2) That Members are invited to attend a 'Formula Funding Working

Group' session in advance of the October meeting.

432. WORK PROGRAMME AND SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2019/20 ACADEMIC YEAR

The Business Advisor (Schools) presented a report, **Document KX**, which outlined the School Forum's 2019/20 Academic Year work programme.

Within the discussion on this programme:

- The Vice Chair asked for this to include a report from the Virtual School Headteacher.
- Members discussed receiving an update at the next meeting on the success of the placement of new admission applications prior to the October census. A Member also asked about the timescale for the review of the Fair Access Policy. The Strategic Manager, Admissions and Exclusions, advised that a review of this was begun last year and will continue, and will be consulted on, this year.

Resolved –

That the work programme for 2019/20, amended to include a report from the Virtual School Headteacher, be agreed and published.

ACTION: Business Advisor, Schools

433. SCHOOLS FORUM STANDING ITEMS

434. AOB / FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

435. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Please see the published schedule of meetings – the next meeting of the Schools Forum is scheduled for Wednesday 16 October 2019.

436. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

The Schools Forum was asked to consider if the agenda item relating to the funding of health services in schools should be considered in the absence of the public and, if so, to approve the following recommendation:

Resolved –

That the public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the item “Funding Health Services In Schools” on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if they were present exempt information within Paragraph 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) would

be disclosed and it is considered that, in all the circumstances, the public interest in allowing the public to remain is outweighed by the public interest in excluding public access to the relevant part of the proceedings for the following reason: “legal privilege”.

LEAD/CONTACT OFFICER: Business Advisor, Schools

437. *FUNDING HEALTH SERVICES IN SCHOOLS

The Schools Forum was asked to consider further matters raised by a school at the Forum’s meeting on 10 July 2019 relating to the funding of health services in schools. In response, a **Not For Publication (NFP)** document was circulated during the outset for discussion on this item.

Resolved –

A confidential resolution was agreed at the meeting.

Note: This resolution is exempt information under Paragraph 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

LEAD/CONTACT OFFICER: Business Advisor, Schools

Chair

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

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