

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON WEDNESDAY 15 MARCH 2017 AT CITY HALL, BRADFORD

Commenced 0805

Concluded 0935

PRESENT

SCHOOL MEMBERS

Bev George, Brent Fitzpatrick, Chris Quinn, Dianne Richardson, Dominic Wall, Emma Hamer, Ian Morrel, Kevin Holland, Lesley Heathcote, Michele Robinson, Nicky Kilvington, Nigel Cooper, Ray Tate, Sue Haithwaite, Tehmina Hashmi, Trevor Loft, Wahid Zaman

NON SCHOOLS MEMBERS & NOMINATED SUB SCHOOL MEMBERS

Alison Kaye, Donna Willoughby, Ian Murch and Irene Docherty

LOCAL AUTHORITY (LA) OFFICERS

Andrew Redding	- Business Advisor (Schools)
Asad Shah	- Committee Services Officer
Dawn Haigh	- Principal Finance Officer (Schools)
Jenny Cryer	- Assistant Director, Performance, Commissioning and Partnerships
Sarah North	- Principal Finance Officer Schools
Stuart McKinnon-Evans	- Strategic Director, Corporate Services

APOLOGIES

Members – Brent Fitzpatrick, Helen Williams, Lesley Heathcote, Maureen Cairns, Sir Nick Weller, Sami Harzallah and Tahir Jamil; Executive Portfolio Holder – Education, Employment And Skills – Councillor Imran Khan; Regular Observer - Lynn Murphy (Business Manager, Feversham College)

DOMINIC WALL IN THE CHAIR

CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed Tehmina Hashmi (Principal – Bradford Academy) for her first attendance as a full Member of the Schools Forum.



241. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

The Chair disclosed that he has had a conversation with the Chair of Governors of Oastler School in relation to the school's letter, which is currently under consideration by the Forum's Panel.

No other declarations of interest were received.

242. MINUTES OF 7 DECEMBER 2016, 11 & 18 JANUARY 2017 & MATTERS ARISING

The Business Advisor (Schools) reported on progress made on "Action" items as follows:

- An update on the action items recorded in the minutes of the 11 and 18 January would be reported back within reports to this meeting (especially Document HG), rather than separately.
- The Chair reported that the Forum's recommendations on the 2017/18 DSG allocation have been agreed by Council without amendment.
- An updated version of the individual school national formula funding modelling, based on the final option 4 agreed by the Schools Forum, is included within the meeting's document for Members' reference.
- The majority of action items recorded in the 7 December minutes related to information that was requested and presented back to the Forum on 11 January.
- Picking up 2 specific matters recorded in the 7 December minutes:
 - The request for a report on what guiding strategies the Council is employing to deliver its budget savings (strategies such as focusing on early help, delivering further efficiencies, multi agency budget collaboration and transfer of responsibilities) will be provided to a future Forum meeting.
 - Oastler letter and Panel recommendation – The 2nd meeting of the Panel has been arranged for 27 April. It is expected that the Panel's recommendation will be presented to the next Forum meeting.

Resolved –

- (1) That progress made on "Action" items be noted.**
- (2) That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2016, 11 & 18 January 2017 be signed as correct records.**

ACTION: City Solicitor



243. MATTERS RAISED BY SCHOOLS

No resolution was passed on this item.

244. STANDING ITEM – DSG GROWTH FUND ALLOCATIONS

No resolution was passed on this item.

245. NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA – CONSULTATION RESPONSE

The Business Advisor (Schools) presented **Document HF**, which provided an update on National Funding Formula news and which asked the Schools Forum to consider its response to the DfE's 2nd stage of consultation, the closing date being 22 March 2017.

A response drafted by the Business Advisor (Schools) was presented with this report. It was explained that the response has been written in particular to highlight our concerns on:

- The reduction in the spending power of school budgets that comes from the lack of response to the growth in costs in schools, especially in staffing costs.
- The impact on smaller schools with the proposal for a low value of lump sum.
- The excessive damping of the High Needs Block national formula result when this is viewed over a medium term period.

Members were asked for their views on this drafted response. Members asked the following questions and made the following comments:

- Whether the response has been submitted already? It was clarified that the response has not yet been submitted, but needed to be submitted by the closing date of 22 March. It was agreed that the drafted response be sent to Members electronically so that Members could share with colleagues. Any additional feedback is to be sent directly to the Business Advisor (Schools).
- The response should be strengthened to emphasise the financial pressure being faced by the primary and the lack of solution to this within the national funding formula as currently proposed. The response should also include reference to the pressure in schools brought about by the continued low level of capital funding.
- How will the BSF affordability gap element be funded under NFF? It was confirmed that a longer term formula solution is still to be proposed and this this was an area of 'risk' going forward. For an interim period, this would be funded based on the previous year's cost plus inflation.

Resolved –

- (1) That the drafted response to the DfE's 2nd stage of consultation on National Funding Formula be supported.**
- (2) Members should return any additional comments on the proposed response**



directly to the Business Advisor (Schools) before the 22 March deadline.

ACTION: Business Advisor (schools)

246. UPDATE ON MATTERS CONCERNING THE 2017/18 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT

The Business Advisor (Schools) presented **Document HG**, which provides an update on a number of matters related to the 2017/18 Dedicated Schools Grant. It was explained that this is a 'catch up' document, which provides a quick summary of some key aspects of the DSG position following the January meetings. It also then provides a more detailed update on 3 matters in particular:

- The Social Impact Bond.
- Fischer Family Trust (reporting the final details of the agreed contract with FFT).
- Primary FSM% additional data.

The Business Advisor also explained that the local authorities are currently waiting for some key pieces of information from the DfE, especially:

- The Nursery School Supplement validation exercise. It was reported to the meeting verbally that this exercise has now been completed.
- The operational guidance for the administrative management of the extended 30 hours early years free entitlement. The Early Years Working Group is likely to need to review our Early Years Single Funding Formula arrangements from autumn 2017 in response.
- The DSG Blocks re-baselining exercise

Resolved –

- (1) That Document HG be noted.**
- (2) That a detailed update on the Authority's SEND Review be presented to the next Schools Forum meeting.**

LEAD: Business Advisor (Schools)

247. MATTERS CONCERNING SCHOOL AND ACADEMY BUDGETS

The Business Advisor (Schools) presented **Document HH**, which provided an update on matters related to school and academy budgets. It was explained that this is an interim update on the position of the conversion of maintained schools to academy status and the financial impact so far and what financial impact (in terms of risk of deficit) is immediately forecasted, following the request made by the Forum at the last meeting. A more detailed update will be provided to the next meeting (as we usually do within the Forum's standard timetable). The report highlighted two key new pressures – the Apprenticeship Levy and the increase in the employer's contribution for employees enrolled in the West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF).



Given the fluidity of the position of school budgets and academy conversions, the Business Advisor asked Members whether a position statement should become a standing agenda item.

Members asked the following questions and made the following comments:

- It would be helpful for further details of the lump sum element of the WYPS 2017/18 to be provided, especially for high needs providers who have a larger proportion of non-teaching staffing.
- An academy member expressed his surprise at the cost of assessment by the WYPS upon conversion to academy. The Director of Finance explained that, as academies become separate employers, the volume of assets becomes more divided and this creates more work for the WYPF.
- A member representing the Trades Unions stated that every defined benefit pension scheme went further into deficit during 2016 and so there is an inherent cost 'risk' within the WYPF in terms of the cost of employer's contributions. Has an assessment of the position of the WYPF for 2016 (the basis of the next tri-annual value assessment) has been made? The Director of Finance responded to explain that the Local Authority is discussing this with the actuaries and that the actuaries have undertaken to refresh their value assessment more regularly.
- That school and academy budgets are facing enormous financial pressure and the Schools Forum should receive regular updates as this position develops further.
- Does the Authority's Intended Use of Balances control allow schools to hold monies in support of future costs and budget protection? The Business Advisor (Schools) explained that it does, but that the key requirement is that schools are clear about how and why they are holding money in reserve for spending on these purposes.
- That it would be helpful for an analysis to be presented on the funding streams that make up the Government's "£40bn" of spending on schools; how this is distributed between grants and how much of this is allocated into Bradford, to inform further discussion on the position of school and academy budgets and opportunities for access to these funding streams.

Resolved –

- (1) That Document HH be noted.**
- (2) That an update on the position of school and academy delegated budgets be made a standing agenda item in School Forum meetings.**
- (3) That the values of the lump sum payments to be made by individual schools to the West Yorkshire Pension Fund be provided.**
- (4) That analysis be presented on the funding streams that make up the Government's "£40bn" of spending on schools; how this is distributed between grants and how much of this is allocated into Bradford, to inform further discussion on the position of school and academy budgets and opportunities for access to these funding streams.**



LEAD: Business Advisor (Schools)

248. OTHER SCHOOLS FORUM STANDING ITEMS

No resolution was passed on this item.

249. AOB

The Executive Member for Education, Employment and Skills invited Schools Forum members to attend the launch event of 'One Britain, One Nation' on 24 March at City Hall.

Resolved – That an update be provided to the next meeting on the Schools Forum's membership arrangements.

LEAD: Business Advisor (Schools)

250. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Schools Forum is Wednesday 17 May 2017.

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

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

