

# **Report of the Director of Children's Services to the meeting of the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee to be held on 12 January 2016.**

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**Subject:**

**Schools Forum Update**

**Summary statement:**

**Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee has asked for a regular update on the work of the Schools Forum.**

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Michael Jameson  
Strategic Director, Children's Services

**Portfolio:**

**Children's Services**

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**Overview & Scrutiny Area:**

**Children's' Services**



## **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The Committee has asked for regular updates to be provided on the work of the Schools Forum.
- 1.2 The Schools Forum has met twice since the last report, on 9 December 2015 and again on the 6 January 2016.
- 1.3 The decisions list from the 9 December Schools Forum meeting is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.4 At the 6 January meeting, the Forum was asked to make its final recommendations on the allocation of the 2016/17 financial year Schools Budget. The decisions list from this meeting is not available for attachment at the time this report is published. This decisions list will be provided as a late report for the Committee (by email) and a presentation will be given verbally to the Committee on the key recommendations the Schools Forum has made.
- 1.5 A paper outlining the Schools Forum's recommendations will be presented to the Executive on 23 February 2016 as part of the Authority's budget setting process.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Under national Regulations, every local authority is required to operate a Schools Forum. The primary function of a Schools Forum is to recommend to the Council's Executive Committee how the funding, which the Government provides for schools and individual pupils (known as the Dedicated Schools Grant), is managed. The Forum also has some specific technical decision making powers.
- 2.2 The Schools Forum meets every half term. The next meeting is to be held on Wednesday 16 March 2016.
- 2.3 In the 25 November 2015 Autumn Statement, the Chancellor announced the Government's intention to consult on the implementation of a national funding formula for schools and academies from April 2017. We expect a consultation document to be published shortly and we anticipate that this will initiate a significant amount of work and discussion on the implications for the Bradford District.
- 2.4 Other key points from the Chancellor' Autumn Statement, as these affect school and academies budgets, and the Local Authority, are:
  - Funding for the universal infant FSM is to be "maintained".
  - The Pupil Premium is to be "protected at current rates" for the rest of the Parliament.



- Average childcare funding rates are to be increased from 2017/18 alongside the extension to 30 hours for working parents and the introduction of an Early Years National Funding Formula. It is currently unclear how the change in national rates will affect Bradford.
- The 16-19 base funding rate is protected “in cash terms”, but other non-base rate funding is expected to be reduced e.g. bursary funding; deprivation funding Post 16 funding formula.
- There is to be a significant focus on greater efficiency, with the DfE to provide detailed “actions and guidance” in 2016 to support schools and academies to make savings, including better use of economies of scale.
- There is to be a review of statutory duties alongside a £600m reduction (3/4 reduction) in Education Services Grant. This reduction will affect both academy and local authority budgets. A very clear statement in the Chancellor’s report about furthering the Government’s goal of “ending local authority running of schools”.
- There is to be an Apprenticeship Levy at 0.5% of the annual pay bill. It is not clear at this stage whether local government will be subject to payment of the levy (including schools where the Council is the employer and schools and academies that are their own employers with a payroll cost exceeding £3m). This levy may have implications for pay costs for school budgets.

### **3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

None

### **4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

Not applicable – this is an update for information.

### **5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

Not applicable – this is an update for information.

### **6. LEGAL APPRAISAL**

Not applicable – this is an update for information.

### **7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable – this is an update for information.

#### **7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

Not applicable – this is an update for information.



## **7.2 TRADE UNION**

Not applicable – this is an update for information.

## **8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

Not applicable – this is an update for information.

## **9. OPTIONS**

Not applicable – this is an update for information.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**10.1 Committee Members are asked to consider and to note the information provided in this update.**

## **11. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Schools Forum Decisions List 9 December 2015

## **12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None



## **DECISIONS OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9 DECEMBER 2015**

### **DECISIONS:**

#### **1. MATTERS RAISED BY SCHOOLS**

No resolution was passed on this item.

#### **2. STANDING ITEM – DSG GROWTH FUND ALLOCATIONS**

No resolution was passed on this item.

#### **3. STANDING ITEM – BRADFORD EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT COMMISSIONING BOARD (BEICB)**

No resolution was passed on this item.

#### **4. THE AUTUMN SPENDING REVIEW**

Resolved – That the information provided on Autumn Spending Review be noted.

#### **5. THE LOCAL AUTHORITY'S BUDGET CONSULTATION**

Resolved –

(1) That the feedback of Forum Members (recorded in the minutes of this meeting) on the budget proposals be considered by the Council.

(2) That further specific detail is provided to the Schools Forum on the proposal to re-commission SEND specialist teaching support services; to include further impact assessment, the important milestones for the transfer of responsibility for services to schools and what liabilities, including for Council infrastructure (re-charge) costs, may also transfer.

***LEADS: Strategic Director, Children's Services  
Interim Assistant Director, Access and Inclusion***



## **6. 2015/16 SPENDING POSITION AND ONE OFF MONIES**

**Resolved –**

- (1) That the information provided in Document FM be noted at this stage.**
- (2) That further information is provided to the next meeting on who is providing oversight (and how this is provided) to ensure that the raising of standards at Beckfoot Upper Heaton Academy is not impeded by the financial imperative to increase pupil numbers as quickly as possible.**

***LEAD: Business Advisor, Schools***

## **7. 2016/17 DSG UPDATE**

**Resolved – That the contents of Document FN be noted.**

## **8. FUNDING HIGH NEEDS 2016/17**

**Resolved –**

- (1) That the Forum is presented with further details on the review (and implications) of the SEND and Behaviour Strategies, as a priority as soon as possible, so that the Forum can consider and assess how these reviews should influence DSG spending decisions.**
- (2) That further information is provided to the next meeting on how the Authority is investigating the free school option to increase the number of available specialist places in the District.**

***LEAD: Interim Assistant Director, Access and Inclusion***

## **9. CENTRAL AND DE-DELEGATED EARLY YEARS & SCHOOLS BLOCK FUNDS 2016/17**

**Resolved –**

- (1) That the information provided on the current position of the review of the centrally managed and de-delegated funds be noted at this stage.**
- (2) That, in making final recommendations on the 2016/17 DSG on 6 January, Forum Members remain aware that financial pressures on schools and academies are “becoming acute”.**

## **10. REPORT FROM THE FORMULA FUNDING WORKING GROUP**

**Resolved –**

- (1) That the information provided on the Primary and Secondary formulae modelling be noted at this stage.**

**(3) That the final modelling for the 6 January meeting is presented incorporating the FFWG's steer on how a contribution from delegated budgets to the DSG affordability gap in 2016/17 should be taken (flat contribution from all factors). That the modelling shows clearly the contributions taken from each setting so that Members can assess impact.**

***LEAD: Principal Finance Officer (Schools)***

**11. OTHER SCHOOLS FORUM STANDING ITEMS**

**No resolution was passed on this item.**

**12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB) / FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

**No resolution was passed on this item.**

**13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**The next meeting of the Schools Forum is Wednesday 6 January 2015.**

*FROM: Dermot Person (Interim City Solicitor)  
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