



# Minutes

# BARNSLEY SCHOOLS FORUM

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FORUM HELD ON THURSDAY, 18<sup>th</sup>  
JANUARY 2018, AT KIRK BALK ACADEMY**

**PRESENT**

**Headteacher Representatives**

Dean Buckley and Antoinette Drinkhill

**Governor Representatives**

Mark Pawson and Michael Sanderson

**Special Schools Representative(s)**

Dave Whitaker

**Early Years Provision Representative**

Claire Gilmour

**Local Authority Elected Member Representative**

Councillor Andrew Millner

**Other Representative(s)**

Nicola Fitzpatrick

**Also Attending**

Alison Brown

**Officers**

Josh Amahwe

Strategic Finance Manager (Core Services  
Directorate) Barnsley MBC

Richard Lynch

Head of Children's Services Commissioning,  
Governance and Partnerships, People  
Directorate, Barnsley MBC

Shafeek Khan

People Directorate

### **1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON FOR THIS MEETING**

In Mr Bowen's absence, Mr Sanderson agreed to chair today's meeting, in his capacity as Deputy Chair of the Barnsley Schools Forum.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTEREST**

Representatives of the Forum declared their interest concerning Agenda Item 1 (Schools Budgets: Trade Union Time Facility Agreement) Agenda Items 5 (a –c) (Schools Funding Settlement; Proposed Schools Block and Early Years Block Budget 2018/19) and Agenda Item 6 (a) Review Of Funding For Alternative Provision.

### **3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Formal apologies for absence had been received from Mrs Beever, Mr Bowen, Mr Benbow and Mr England.

### **4. SCHOOLS BUDGET: TRADE UNION TIME FACILITY AGREEMENT**

At Mr Sanderson's request, the Forum agreed to begin today's meeting by considering Mrs Brown's report on the Council's funding proposal to support employee representation activity by trade unions in local authority maintained schools during 2018/19. Mrs Brown advised the Forum that de-delegated funding for this facilitation would reduce to £58,000 in the next school year and this would result in a funding gap of £48,000 in comparison to 2017/18. Mrs Brown added that the Council could no longer afford to manage the previous level of funding and was, therefore, seeking the support of maintained schools to contribute towards bridging this gap. This would be in the context of the continuing conversion of schools in Barnsley into academies.

Three options were set out for the Forum's consideration as follows:

Option 1: Schools to reconsider the DSG de-delegated budget centrally funded amount which is retained by the Council.

Option 2: To meet the £48,000 funding gap during 2018/19 through making additional contributions from schools' budgets.

Option 3: To return to the previous model of only funding the agreed facility time per union via DSG contributions rather than funding 2 full time convenors (during term time)

On these, Mr Amahwe asked the Forum to note that the DfE was unlikely to support Option 1 and that Option 3 was no longer affordable. Therefore, Option 2 was considered to be the only sustainable option.

Discussion emerged over the limit of responsibilities between the trade unions and Barnsley MBC in supporting trade union facilitation upon which Mrs Brown provided clarification. Whilst understanding the purpose of Mrs Brown's report, Ms Fitzpatrick, firstly, regretted the timing of the distribution of this report to the

Forum which had left her with little opportunity to consult with other trade union convenors and members and, secondly, that the report, in its current form, did not address the broader issue of employee representation across the local schools landscape and the benefits which this provided to a larger membership. In response, Mrs Brown re-iterated the Council's policy on this matter, namely that it was the responsibility of the Trust of an individual academy or multi-academy trust board to make its own arrangements.

Nonetheless, some members of the Forum were sympathetic towards considering a broader perspective concerning trade union facilitation across schools and academies in the Borough, without committing the local authority and maintained schools to any support beyond its current responsibilities.

## **RESOLVED**

- 1 (a) **The Forum agrees that Option 2 in Mrs Brown's report, namely for additional contributions to be made by schools to close the funding gap of £48,000 in supporting the Trade Union Facilities Agreement between Barnsley MBC and maintained schools, be implemented.**
- 1 (b) **That a discussion, concerning trade union facilitation across the local schools system, take place at a future meeting of the Forum.**

## **5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM**

The Forum considered the minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2017 together with the minutes of the special meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2017.

## **RESOLVED**

2. **That the minutes of the meeting of the Barnsley Schools Forum, held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2017, together with the special meeting of the Forum, held on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2017, be approved as a correct record.**

## **6. MATTERS ARISING THROUGH CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES**

No matters arose through consideration of the minutes

## **7. SCHOOLS BUDGETS**

### **(a) Schools Funding Settlement (2018/19)**

Mr Amahwe presented a report concerning the DfE's funding settlement for schools during 2018/19 together with Barnsley's allocation in terms of the following:

- Total DSG Allocation
- Schools Block Funding
- Early Years Block Funding (including Early Years Pupil Premium)
- High Needs Block Funding
- Pupil Premium Grant
- Other Schools Related Funding (including for Universal Infant Free School Meals; Year 7 Catch Up Premium and PE and Sport Premium)

## RESOLVED

- 3. The Forum notes the DSG Settlement for 2018/19 together with the allocation for each funding block, as the basis for determining the budgets for schools and settings.**

**(b) Proposed Schools Block Budget (2018/19)**

Further to the previous report, Mr Amahwe proceeded to set out the Schools Block Funding Budget in which the Forum noted the following:

- Schools Block Funding Envelope, including reference to the proposed units of funding for primary and secondary schools, with comparisons to the National Average.
- Proposed changes to the Schools Funding Formula arising through the recent local consultation between Barnsley MBC and schools.
- Proposed transfer of resources from the Schools Block to the Higher Needs Block, based upon, firstly a 1.5% transfer (*as proposed by the Local Authority*) or secondly, a 1.0% transfer (*as recommended by the Forum*) and upon which the DfE's decision was awaited.

The Forum also considered the amounts which it was proposed would be de-delegated to be retained centrally and managed by the Local Authority. This funding would cover Contingency, Eligibility for Free School Meals and Teaching Staff Cover.

## RESOLVED

- 4 (a) That the arrangements for Schools Block Funding, during 2018/19, as outlined in Mr Amahwe's report, be noted by the Forum.**
- 4 (b) The Forum agrees the nature and level of de-delegated funding to be retained centrally and managed by the Local Authority, as detailed in Paragraphs 25 and 26 of Mr Amahwe's report.**

**(c) Proposed Early Years Block Budget (2018/19)**

Similarly, Mr Amahwe set out the proposed funding arrangements for the Early Years Block. This included reference to funding allocations for 3-4 year old children, notably the £2.8 million of funding for the extension of free child care entitlement up to 30 hours per week, together with the level of funding to be passed onto providers. Also noted were the Funding Supplements to meet, in particular, the needs of children with disabilities and special educational needs.

Mr Amahwe also commented on the next steps which would be taken to determine budget allocations for schools and settings.

## RESOLVED

- 5. The Forum notes the provisional DSG funding arrangements for the Early Years Block, during 2018/19, including the next steps in determining budget allocations for schools and settings.**

## **8. REVIEW OF THE FUNDING OF ALTERNATIVE PROVISION**

The Forum recalled that at its meeting, held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2017, it gave approval for £120,000 of one-off funding to be allocated to the Wellspring Academy Trust in order to sustain the equitable delivery of Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) places during the 2017/18 school year. One of the conditions of granting approval was that a review would be undertaken of Fair Access processes and PRU provision.

Mr Lynch advised the Forum that this review had since concluded and resulted in improvements to Fair Access Processes and systems which should reduce the need for PRU placements in future. Related improvement activity in secondary schools would enable more settings to develop their own offer of alternative provision and further prevent the need for exclusion, particularly through enabling better access to early help and the nurturing of specialist, bespoke behaviour support. Mr Lynch added that it was in this context, together with the considerations outlined in Section 3 of his report, through which the following options had been highlighted for the Forum's consideration:

Option 1: To maintain current arrangements.

Option 2: To introduce a charge for permanently excluded pupils and to require schools to purchase PRU places directly from the provider for any non-permanently excluded pupil.

Option 3: To introduce a charge for permanently excluded pupils and recharge placing schools a fee for any non-permanently excluded pupil.

Option 4: To diversify the delivery of PRU provision to allow schools or academies judged to be 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted to provide PRU provision.

Mr Lynch outlined the opportunities and risks within each of the four options and advised that the most effective and sustainable option for shaping future PRU provision, would be Option 3. Here, the Local Authority would continue to fund the agreed number of PRU places (currently 120 places) and reserve access to the appropriate number of places, based on projected need for permanently excluded pupils in order to comply with statutory duties.

Through Option 3, schools would be re-charged a fee payable to the Local Authority following placement in order to offset some of the costs in providing PRU placements to non-permanently excluded pupils. The level of fees would be subject to consultation and negotiation with the Schools Forum but would not exceed the cost of a permanent exclusion. The advantage of this approach would be to maintain stability for both placing schools and the PRU provider as well as maintain access to PRU places. However, schools should consider that under Option 3 they would be required to re-imburse the Local Authority at an agreed rate for the duration of the placement. In the main, pupils would remain on the roll of the placing school in line with current practice.

Members of the Forum commented on the report and Mr Buckley advised that, at a recent meeting of secondary school headteachers, there had been widespread support for the recommended option in Mr Lynch's report.

### **RESOLVED**

- 6 (a) The Forum agrees to the development of Option 3 in Mr Lynch's report as the preferred future model for the funding of PRU provision**

**6 (b) A further report, outlining the details of the proposed operational model concerning future PRU provision be submitted for the Forum's consideration and approval at a future meeting.**

**9. Any Other Urgent Business**

No issues were raised.

**10. Date Of The Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Forum would be held on Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2018. Mr Sanderson thanked members of the Forum for their attendance and contribution and expressed his appreciation and gratitude to the staff at Kirk Balk Academy for their hospitality in hosting today's meeting.

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Signed by the Deputy Chair of the Barnsley Schools Forum