



Minutes

BARNSLEY SCHOOLS FORUM

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FORUM HELD ON THURSDAY, 18th
OCTOBER 2018, AT KIRK BALK ACADEMY**

PRESENT

Headteacher Representatives

Dean Buckley, Antoinette Drinkhill and Alison Wilks

Governor Representative(s)

Adrian England, Mark Pawson and Michael Sanderson

Special Schools Representative(s)

Molly Beever

Early Years Provision Representative(s)

Claire Gilmore

Local Authority Elected Member Representative(s)

Councillor Andrew Millner

14-19 Years Representative

Dave Benbow

Officers

Margaret Libreri	Service Director (Education, Early Start and Prevention) Barnsley MBC
Josh Amahwe	Strategic Finance Manager (Core Services Directorate) Barnsley MBC
Shafeek Khan	People Directorate

1. ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE DEPUTY CHAIR OF THE FORUM

Mr Sanderson advised that Mr Bowen had submitted his apologies and as Vice-Chair, he had been invited to chair today's meeting of the Forum.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Formal apologies had been received from Mr Bowen, Councillor Tattersall and Mr Whittaker.

3. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTEREST

Representatives of the Forum declared their interest concerning Agenda Items 5 (a-c) concerning Schools Budgets.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE FORUM

The Forum considered the minutes of its meeting held on 8th March 2018.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the minutes of the meeting of the Barnsley Schools Forum, held on 21st June 2018, be approved as a correct record.**

5. MATTERS ARISING THROUGH CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

No matters arose through consideration of the minutes.

6. REVIEW OF THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE BARNSELEY SCHOOLS FORUM

Ms Libreri presented a report which outlined the outcomes of a recent review of the membership of the Forum. The review took into account a number of issues, particularly in relation to the Schools Group. These included the number of academy conversions which had recently taken place, together with their impact upon pupil rolls within maintained schools. Also considered were the number of current vacancies in the Forum and the persistent absence of other members.

As a result, Ms Libreri proposed the following changes to the membership of the Forum, based on the current position concerning the number of academies in the Borough:

Local Authority maintained primary schools:	5 members (<i>no change</i>)
Primary academies:	5 members (<i>increase by 1 member</i>)
Local Authority maintained secondary schools:	3 members (<i>no change</i>)
Secondary academies:	4 members (<i>increase by 2 members</i>)
Alternative and special provision:	2 members (<i>no change</i>)
Other schools (for example, free school; faith school; studio school or university technical college)	1 member (<i>no change</i>)

In order to preserve the current level of experience, Ms Libreri proposed that no further changes should be made to the membership of the Forum, unless a resignation is tendered. Responding to Mrs Beever's query concerning the office of Chair to the Forum and the formalisation of appointments concerning other existing members, Ms Libreri advised that, in the event of the Chair of the Forum

resigning this position, an election, involving all Members of the Forum casting a vote, would be held at the beginning of the following meeting, after which a newly elected Chair would take up this office for a period of two years. Ms Libreri concluded that the proposed changes would ensure the Barnsley Schools Forum becomes compliant with the membership provisions of the Regulations and updated operational and good practice guidance.

RESOLVED

2.1 The Schools Forum agrees to the proposed changes in its membership as outlined in Paragraphs 5.3 and 5.4 of Ms Libreri's report.

2.2 That the Clerk to the Forum writes to (a) Chairs of governing bodies of maintained schools, together with academy trust or multi academy trust proprietors and (b) the Dioceses of Leeds and Sheffield, seeking head teacher, governor and Diocesan nominations to serve on the Forum, during the remainder of 2018/19 and a fixed period thereafter.

2.3 That letters of appointment be sent to all current members of the Forum, formalising their membership for the remainder of 2018/19 and a fixed period thereafter.

2.4 A follow-up report on the proposed changes to the membership of the Forum, be submitted for consideration at the next meeting.

7. SCHOOLS BUDGETS

(a) National Funding Formula: Indicative Allocations (2019/20)

Mr Amahwe referred to the publication, in July this year, of the Borough's illustrative National Funding Formula (NFF) allocations for schools, high needs and central services, during 2019/20. Mr Amahwe commented upon the following:

- The percentage per pupil increase for each school.
- The minimum level of per pupil funding and basic per pupil funding rate.
- The setting of the minimum funding guarantee
- The percentage cash uplift in relation to the funding floor of the High Needs Block.

Mr Amahwe stated that the provisional DSG allocation for Barnsley, should the NFF be implemented fully, would be £175.4 million. This would represent an increase of £16.5 million (or 10.4%) against the adjusted baseline position. However, transitional arrangements would mean that the annual increase in funding would be capped and phased over a period of years. Therefore, the provisional increase in funding through the NFF will be £3.6 million during 2019/20 and would be in addition to the £7.6 million increase in 2018/19.

RESOLVED

3.1 The Forum notes the provisional funding allocations for the Schools and High Needs Blocks, during 2019/20.

3.2 The Forum also notes the impending consultation on changes to further align the local Funding Formula with the NFF.

(b) Consultation On Changes To The Schools Funding Formula (2019/20)

Mr Amahwe presented his report on the outcomes of the recent consultation with schools on proposed changes to the local Schools Funding Formula. The objective was to develop a fair, transparent and consistent funding system which closely aligned with the NFF.

Out of 87 schools consulted, 20 (or 23%) responded to the questions in the consultation. These questions, together with a summary of responses are set out, below:

Question 1: Are there any other funding factors that should be considered for inclusion in the Formula and can you provide any justifiable reason for inclusion?

A majority of 75% of schools said no other funding factors should be included. Of the remainder, some schools favoured SEN(D) being a funding factor whilst others expressed concern over the percentage of SEN(D) pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage, without Education and Health Care Plans or Statements of SEN, whose needs are met via the school's budget.

Responding to Mr Pawson's query, Mr Amahwe confirmed that 'Prior Attainment' was already a funding factor in the Formula.

Question 2: Do you support the increase in the secondary funding ratio to 1.33, higher than the NFF ratio of 1.29?

The majority of respondents (65%) were supportive of a higher ratio. There was an even split among primary school respondents who were either in favour of or against the increase.

Question 3: Do you support our proposal to increase the KS3 and KS4 AWPU rates for secondary schools to the NFF level for 2019/20, whilst slightly increasing the primary AWPU rate?

A significant majority of respondents to this question (80%) were in favour of this proposal. Of the 4 schools which were not supportive, no sustainable reason was indicated.

Question 4: Do you support our proposal to increase the minimum per pupil funding factor to the NFF levels of £4,800 for secondary schools and £3,500 for primary schools, respectively for 2019/20?

Similarly, an overriding majority of respondents to this question (95%) were supportive of the proposal. The objection of one secondary school respondent, together with the reasons provided were noted by the Forum.

Question 5: Do you support the proposal to maintain the funding proportions for additional needs factors (i.e deprivation, low prior attainment and English as an additional language) for 2019/20 at the same level as in the current year (which is below the NFF level)?

There was an even split between schools who were either in favour or against this proposal (40% and 35% respectively) with a further 25% of respondents not sure. Comments made in favour and against the proposal in Question 5, were noted by the Forum.

Question 6: Do you support the proposal to maintain the lump sum factor at the current level i.e £100,000 per school (irrespective of school phase) recognising that any increase would entail a reduction in the level of funding allocated through pupil led factors?

An overriding majority of respondents (95%) indicated support for this proposal. Mr Pawson commented that the urgency in tackling inflationary pressures may also have been a factor in the response of schools to this question.

Question 7: Do you support the proposal to set the Minimum Funding Guarantee at 0.5% which, together with the funding floor factor, would ensure all schools see an increase in their funding compared to 2018/19?

A considerable majority (90%) of schools supported this proposal. The comments of the two schools (10%) who did not, were also noted by the Forum.

Responding to Mr Pawson's comments on whether or not the NFF; its funding factors and targeted funding, could provide a panacea to the ongoing financial challenges facing many schools, Mr Amahwe felt that the funding factors were heavily prescribed and that individual decisions and choices could often contribute to a school's financial position.

Question 8: Do you support the continued contribution from the schools block to the high needs block and for this to be maintained at the same level as in 2018/19 i.e 1% or £1.4 million?

A significant majority of schools (75%) who responded to this question supported this proposal. This compared to only 16% of schools who expressed support during the previous consultation on this matter, at the end of 2017. The comments of schools who did not support the proposal were noted by the Forum.

The Forum's View Of The Consultation

Mr England expressed concern over the conduct of the consultation in that, firstly, he had not personally been made aware of it by anyone and, secondly, according to the Schools Forum (England) Regulations, the Forum, itself should have co-ordinated the consultation. Mr England, also, believed that the consultation period, of two weeks, would not have provided many schools, who ultimately did not respond, with an opportunity to satisfactorily consider the proposals and these comments were reinforced by Mrs Wilks.

Ms Drinkhill enquired over the extent to which the Local Authority would ascribe importance to any dissenting comments made to questions in the consultation when approving the proposed changes. Mr Amahwe felt that these should be noted in any Cabinet report. Councillor Millner enquired whether the comments of the cluster of schools in the Penistone Wards to the consultation could form part of the Forum's response. Whilst other members of the Forum did not confirm this should be the case, any such comments could be sent to Mr Amahwe for consideration.

RESOLVED

4.1 That the views expressed by Members of the Forum on the conduct of the consultation on proposed changes to the Schools Funding Formula

(2019/20) be considered as part of preparations and planning for similar consultations in the future.

4.2 The Forum approves the transfer of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block amounting to 1% or £1.4 million to address recurring financial pressures in the High Needs Block, during 2019/20.

(c.) Schools Budget: Latest Outturn Position (2018/19)

Mr Amahwe presented details of the latest outturn position on the following:

- Overall DSG Budgets
- Schools Delegated DSG Budget
- Centrally Retained Schools Budgets

RESOLVED

5. The Forum notes the latest outturn position, together with the action considered to manage and mitigate the identified financial risks.

8. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Mrs Gilmore advised the Forum of a recent DfE Circular which invited bids for funding to develop extensions to current nursery provision in schools. Following an internal assessment, all local schools which met the eligibility criteria had been contacted over the proposal last Friday. An information session for eligible schools was being arranged and any resulting Borough-wide bid would need to be submitted to the DfE by 22nd November.

RESOLVED

6. The Forum notes the current position with a view to receiving a verbal update on progress at its next meeting.

9. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS (2018/19)

The dates for future meetings of the Forum were noted. Mr Sanderson then 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.

Mr Sanderson also noted that this could be the final meeting of the Forum prior to the potential intake of additional members, for 2018/19.

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Signed by the Vice-Chair of the Barnsley Schools Forum