



Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

People Directorate

A

Minutes

BARNSLEY SCHOOLS FORUM

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FORUM, HELD ON THURSDAY, 22nd JUNE 2017,
AT KIRK BALK ACADEMY**

PRESENT

Headteacher Representatives

Nick Bowen (Chair of the Forum) Dean Buckley (*substitute for Jo Nolan*) Jane Gilmour
Josh Greaves (*substitute for Dave Whitaker*)

Governor Representatives

Mark Pawson and Michael Sanderson

Special Schools Representative

Molly Beever

Early Years Provision

Linda Mathison

14-19 Years Provision

Dave Benbow

Other Representatives

Nicola Fitzpatrick

Officers

Margaret Libreri	Service Director (Education, Early Start and Prevention) People Directorate, Barnsley MBC
Josh Amahwe	Strategic Finance Manager (People Directorate) Barnsley MBC
Sue Day	Service and Strategy Manager (Assessment and Review) Barnsley MBC
Richard Lynch	Head of Commissioning, Governance and Partnerships (Barnsley MBC)
Shafeek Khan	People Directorate, Barnsley MBC

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr England, Mr Goddard, Councillor Millner Councillor Mitchell and Ms Wilks.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTEREST

Representatives of the Forum, declared an interest in the set of items under Agenda Item 5, concerning school budget provision. Mr Greaves interest in Agenda Item 6 (b) was also noted.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM

The Forum considered the minutes of its previous meeting:

RESOLVED

- 1. That the minutes of the meeting of the Barnsley Schools Forum, held on 6th March 2017, be approved as a correct record.**

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Page 3, Minute 2(b): Impact Upon Barnsley MBC Of The Removal Of The Education Services Grant (ESG) (2017-19)

Mr Amahwe clarified that the detailed consultation with schools and academies, over the implications for budgets and funding emerging through the withdrawal of ESG would begin later this Summer (*Please also see Pages 3-4, Resolution 5*)

5. SCHOOL BUDGETS

5 (a): Schools Budget Outturn And Carry Forward Of Balances (2016/17)

Mr Amahwe presented his latest report to the Forum on the outturn position for the Schools Budget and Centrally Retained Budget, together with other specific grant funding for schools. He responded to queries raised by Mr Pawson and Mr Greaves concerning the carry forward of overspends and whether they were one-off or recurrent in nature and the benchmarking of expenditure on out of authority placements, respectively.

RESOLVED

- 2. That the Forum notes the final outturn position, particularly the carry forward balances for maintained schools and centrally retained Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budgets, including the carry forward of overspends into 2017/18.**

5 (b): Schools Budgets (2017/18) – Latest Position

Mr Amahwe outlined the Authority's confirmed DSG funding allocation for 2017/18, including a quantification of variations in funding within the Schools Block, High Needs Block and Early Years Block.

Mr Amahwe proceeded to identify the nature of the financial risks to the schools' budget arising through the final DSG allocation to the Borough, particularly those with low balances and/or reserves. These included increased remuneration costs and the Apprenticeship Levy. Also noted, was the significance of cost pressures arising through the statutory duty to meet the specific needs of SEN pupils. This matter would be considered in more detail by the Forum during Agenda Item 6 of today's meeting.

RESOLVED

- 3. That the Forum notes Barnsley's DSG allocation, for 2017/18, as confirmed by the Education Funding Agency and, at the same time, the financial positions of maintained schools in the Borough, including perceived financial risks against schools budgets.**

5 (c) (i): Schools Block Funding Formula - Comparison To Benchmark Data

On the matter of the proposed National Formula for Schools Block Funding, Mr Amahwe submitted an information report on the Borough's anticipated outcome in relation to each of the following funding factors in the formula, together with a comparison to similar areas, elsewhere in the country:

- Age weighted pupil unit (for primary stage; Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4)
- Prior attainment – Low Cost High Incidence factor
- Pupil deprivation
- Looked after children
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language
- Geographic mobility of pupils
- Sparsity
- Lump sums to schools
- Private Finance Initiative (PFI) factor
- Notional SEN budget
- Pupil Growth Fund and Falling Rolls Fund

Mr Amahwe advised the Forum that, overall, the proposed formula would result in a good outcome for the Borough and that, in terms of performance against each funding factor, Barnsley compared favourably with other areas. As a result, no change in the allocation to local funding factors was envisaged.

RESOLVED

- 4. That the Forum notes the anticipated outcomes for the Borough likely to arise through the proposed National Formula, together with local performance against each funding factor as compared to statistically comparable areas.**

5 (c) (ii): Schools Block Funding Formula – Proposed Changes To Baseline Funding

At its last meeting, the Forum considered a report on the impact upon the local authority of the removal of the Education Services Grant (ESG) leading to a reduction in the financial contribution made by the Authority to the Schools Budget, amounting to nearly £1.5 million. Today's report referred to the outcomes of an initial financial assessment of the withdrawal in funding and how, as a result, of the implementation of the new National Funding Formula, the effect of these changes could be mitigated and mitigated by schools.

The report, also, confirmed previously agreed arrangements for carrying forward the prevailing deficit in the High Needs Block Budget, currently amounting to £1.6 million and, in addition, the transfer of £0.5 million, in funding, from the Schools Block to the Higher Needs Block to help tackle cost pressures arising from the statutory duty to best meet the educational needs of SEN pupils, thereby enabling the Borough to take similar action to other local authorities within these circumstances.

RESOLVED

- 5. That today's report heralding proposed changes to the schools' funding baseline, during 2018/19 be considered at the next meetings of Barnsley**

Primary and Secondary School head teachers as part of a sustained conversation with schools, prior to the Summer break, on modelling and developing fair and equitable changes in funding.

6. HIGHER NEEDS FUNDING

6 (a): Borough Special Educational Needs And Disabilities Position Statement And High Needs Funding (2017/18)

In order to begin a series of discussions on the cost pressures facing the Higher Needs Funding Block, Ms Day presented a wide ranging report on education provision for meeting the needs of pupils with SEN, including disabilities. In particular, Ms Day referred to the following matters:

- Nature of funding arrangements.
- The basis through which needs were identified and met.
- The number of pupils, in Barnsley, who were entitled to support as a result of a Statement of SEN or Education and Health Care Plan, compared to statistical comparator areas.
- Number of high needs places commissioned for 2017/18.
- Pressures impinging on future sufficiency of provision.
- Rationale and quantity of places commissioned outside of the Borough.
- A fundamental review of resourcing future SEN education provision.

Ms Gilmour welcomed this report as the foundation for the Forum's continued consideration of this major issue.

RESOLVED

- 6. That Ms Day be thanked for providing this position statement on the issues accounting for current levels of expenditure on SEN(D) provision and that a further position statement be provided for the Forum's consideration at its next meeting.**

6 (b): Springwell Academy: Alternative Provision

Mr Lynch presented a report, seeking the Forum's agreement for additional, one-off funding, amounting to £120,000, to be given in order to help the Springwell Alternative Academy in managing and mitigating risks arising through the demand for Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) provision, during 2017/18. The Forum heard that the Springwell Academy had requested more than the amount proposed, however, Mr Lynch considered that the above amount would be sufficient to enable the Academy to tackle the challenges, currently faced, concerning the increasing complexity of need among children being presented for referral and the escalating risk of violent behaviour exhibited by such pupils against each other as well as against staff.

At the same time, this would enable a fundamental review of the current model of PRU delivery to take place with a view to developing and implementing a reconfigured model for the 2018/19 academic year.

Ms Gilmour expressed the Forum's concern over the current lack of transparency around the evidence basis for this proposal. Whilst acknowledging this concern, Ms Libreri assured the Forum that in considering all alternatives, this proposal had been evaluated as the most appropriate and effective means through which a sustainable interim position could be secured, pending the outcome of the review.

RESOLVED

7. That, in recognition of the risks outlined in today’s report, the Forum agrees to provide the Springwell Alternative Academy with an additional £120,000 of funding to secure PRU provision during the current school year, subject to the outcomes of a review of the current delivery model being reported to the meeting of the Forum, scheduled for 18th January 2018.

7. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Early Years Education: Changes To The Funding Agreement With Academies

Mrs Mathison reported on a key change to the Statutory Guidance on Early Education and Child Care, made in March 2017 which stated that from this September onwards, the local authority should “*Secure alternative provision and withdraw funding from a provider (excluding a local authority maintained school) as soon as is practicable, whenever Ofsted publishes an ‘Inadequate’ inspection judgement for that provider.*”

Mrs Mathison added that the change would require an amendment to the current early education funding agreement for academies.

RESOLVED

8. The Forum notes the change in statutory guidance and agrees to the recommendation within this report to inform academies of the subsequent change in the local funding agreement, concerning the impact of an ‘Inadequate’ judgement.

Jane Gilmour

Members of the Forum paid tribute to Ms Gilmour who was attending her final meeting as a Primary School Headteacher representative. Ms Gilmour thanked the Forum and added that she would inform the Clerk of her successor, following the next meeting of Primary School Headteachers.

8. SCHEDULE OF FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE FORUM

The Forum noted that its next meeting would take place on Thursday, 19th October 2017.

Mr Bowen, 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.

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Signed by the Chair of the Barnsley Schools Forum