



Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Children's Services Directorate

A

Minutes

BARNSLEY SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE FORUM HELD ON THURSDAY, 17th DECEMBER 2020

PRESENT

Headteacher Representatives

Nick Bowen, Paul Crook, Nichola Smith, Alison Wilks and Kirsty Wordsworth

Governor Representative(s)

Molly Beever, Margaret Gostelow, Sandra James, Jackie Milliner and Michael Sanderson (Chair of the Schools Forum)

Early Years Provision Representative

Laura Hammerton

Barnsley MBC Elected Representative

Councillor Trevor Cave

Officers

Mel John-Ross

Executive Director (Children's Services)
Barnsley MBC

Nina Sleight

Service Director (Education, Early Start and
Prevention) Barnsley MBC

Josh Amahwe

Strategic Finance Manager (Core Services
Directorate) Barnsley MBC

Anna Turner

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Formal apologies were submitted by Ms Baggley, Mr Buckley, Ms Drinkhill
Mr England and Mr Greaves

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTEREST

Representatives from the Forum declared their interest in relation to matters being considered as part of Agenda Item 5 of today's meeting.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE FORUM

RESOLVED

(1) The minutes of the meeting of the Forum, held on 20th October 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING THROUGH CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

No matters arose during consideration of the minutes of the previous meeting.

5. SCHOOLS BUDGETS

Outcome of the Consultation with Schools on Proposed Changes to the Local Schools Funding Formula (2021/22)

Mr Amahwe presented his report on the outcomes of the recent consultation and detailed the responses which were submitted to the following questions concerning proposed changes to the local schools funding formula:

Q1: Are there any excluded funding factors that should be considered for inclusion in the formula and can provide any justifiable reason for inclusion?

	Primary	Secondary	Total	Percentage
Yes	0	0	0	0%
No	34	6	40	100%
Not answered	0	0	0	0%
	34	6	40	100%

Q2: Do you support the primary / secondary funding ratio of 1:1.33, and its alignment to the national Funding Formula?

	Primary	Secondary	Total	Percentage
Agree	28	6	34	85%
Disagree	6	0	6	15%
Not sure	0	0	0	0%
Not answered	0	0	0	0%
	34	6	40	100%

Q3: Do you support the proposal to increase AWPU values for primary, KS3 and KS4 above the NFF level for 2021/22?

	Primary	Secondary	Total	Percentage
Agree	31	6	37	93%
Disagree	3	0	3	8%
Not sure	0	0	0	0%
Not answered	0	0	0	0%
	34	6	40	100%

Q4: Do you support the following proposals:

- a) Uplift the unit values for the FSM and IDACI deprivation measures whilst maintaining the proportion of funding at 9% in line with NFF?

	Primary	Secondary	Total	Percentage
Agree	32	6	38	95%
Disagree	0	0	0	0%
Not sure	2	0	2	5%
Not answered	0	0	0	0%
	34	6	40	100%

- b) Increase the unit values and maintain the proportion of funding allocated through the mobility factor (0.1%) in line with NFF?

	Primary	Secondary	Total	Percentage
Agree	33	6	39	98%
Disagree	0	0	0	0%
Not sure	1	0	1	3%
Not answered	0	0	0	0%
	34	6	40	100%

- c) Maintain the proportion of funding allocated through the prior attainment factor (6.9%) and increase the unit values for both the primary/secondary school phases to NFF levels?

	Primary	Secondary	Total	Percentage
Agree	33	6	39	98%
Disagree	0	0	0	0%
Not sure	1	0	1	3%
Not answered	0	0	0	0%
	34	6	40	100%

- d) Increase the EAL unit values for both the primary / secondary school phases to NFF level, whilst recognising that the proportion of funding allocated (0.3%) is below the NFF level of 1.1%

	Primary	Secondary	Total	Percentage
Agree	33	6	39	98%
Disagree	0	0	0	0%
Not sure	1	0	1	3%
Not answered	0	0	0	0%
	34	6	40	100%

Q5: Do you support the proposal to increase the lump sum factor to £117,000 (compared to the NFF £117,800) and the for the same amount to be applied to both school phases?

	Primary	Secondary	Total	Percentage
Agree	27	5	32	80%
Disagree	7	0	7	18%
Not sure	0	1	1	3%
Not answered	0	0	0	0%
	34	6	40	100%

Q6: Do you support the proposal to set the MFG at 2%, which mirrors the NFF funding floor and would ensure all schools see an increase in their pupil led unit funding compared to 2020/21?

	Primary	Secondary	Total	Percentage
Agree	31	4	35	88%
Disagree	1	0	1	3%
Not sure	2	2	4	10%
Not answered	0	0	0	0%
	34	6	40	100%

Q7: Do you support the principle of capping and scaling funding gains to achieve a more equitable distribution of gains across all schools?

	Primary	Secondary	Total	Percentage
Agree	26	0	26	65%
Disagree	4	4	8	20%
Not sure	3	2	5	13%
Not answered	0	0	1	3%
	34	6	40	100%

Among the issues discussed at today's meeting were the following:

- Mr Bowen and Mr Crook illustrated their vehement concern over the capping of any funding gains' and this was duly noted.
- Clarification was provided on the relationship between the Deprivation and IDACI funding factors, together with the actual financial position of secondary schools within Annex 2 of the report.

In considering the responses made to this year's consultation, together with the comments made during today's discussion, Mr Amahwe confirmed the nature of the proposed changes which the Local Authority would be instigating to the local schools funding formula in order to align it more closely to the National Funding Formula during 2021/22. These changes would relate to the following:

- A primary/secondary phase funding ratio of 1:1:33
- Two per cent increases to both primary and secondary phase AWPU funding values
- To uplift the values for both the *Free School Meals* and *IDACI* measures within the *Deprivation* factor
- To uplift the unit values for the *Low Prior Attainment* factor to the same unit values for the National Funding Formula (NFF)
- To uplift the unit values for *Education as an Additional Language* at both primary and secondary phases to match the unit values for the NFF
- To set the *Lump Sum* factor at £117,000 (£800 below the NFF amount) as part of minimising the impact of the proposed percentage transfer of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block/
- To set the *Minimum Funding Guarantee* (MFG) level in the Borough at 2% which is the maximum permitted by the DfE.
- No capping of funding gains should be applied but the scaling of gains across the board be required to implement the 2% MFG

RESOLVED

(2) The Forum notes the outcomes of the consultation on proposed changes to the local schools funding formula, together with the Local Authority's response and next steps.

Proposed Percentage Transfer of Funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block

Mr Amahwe then presented his second report, detailing the challenges which continued to be faced in the High Needs Block. These included the factors which had contributed to ongoing budget and cost pressures, together with the factors which were causing the growing demand in the High Needs Block and examples of good practice elsewhere in the Region.

Mr Amahwe went on to describe the responses which had been made to the relevant question in the consultation. These are summarised below:

Q8: In light of the recurring financial pressures in the high needs block and taking into account the system improvements do you support the proposal to transfer 1% from the schools' block to the high needs block for 2021/22.

	Primary	Secondary	Total	Percentage
Agree	13	3	16	40%
Disagree	21	3	24	60%
Not sure	0	0	0	0%
Not answered	0	0	0	0%
	34	6	40	100%

Over half of the responses from schools (60%) were not supportive of the proposal to increase the funding transfer to the High Needs Block to 1% whilst 40% of schools did support the proposal but would expect the Council to continue to lobby the DfE for further increases in High Needs funding. In summary, there was a 50/50 split in the support for the funding transfer proposal by secondary schools.

Among the matters considered during today's meeting were the continuing lobbying of central government to provide sustainable funding and to publish the outcomes of the SEND Review, together with the progress which the Local Authority and statutory partners were making in relation to achieving the objectives of the Borough's SEND School Placement and Sufficiency Strategy. Quarterly reports on this matter would continue to be presented to the Schools Forum. Ms Sleight added that the Local Authority had no other option under Local Government Financial Regulations to help mitigate the cost pressures in the High Needs Block.

The proposed percentage transfer amounting to 1% was put to a vote of Forum Members with 9 members voting for the proposal and 1 member of the Forum voting against. Ms Sleight thanked the Forum for its continuing support in helping vulnerable children achieve their potential through this means.

RESOLVED

- (3) **The Forum notes the response made by schools to the proposed percentage transfer of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block and approves a 1% transfer.**

6. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Earlier, Mrs Smith had raised a query over the Local Authority's intention to claw back funding from schools relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage. Ms Sleight suggested that a discussion take place on this matter outside of this meeting.

In concluding the Forum's deliberations, Mr Sanderson thanked members for their attendance and contribution as well as wishing them a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

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Signed by the Chair of the Barnsley Schools Forum