

PRESENT (continued)

Officers (cont'd)

Tracy Bell	Head of Recruitment and HR Traded Services, Barnsley MBC
Amber Burton	Service and Strategy Manager (Children and Young People with SEND) Barnsley MBC
Darren Dickinson	Interim Head of the Barnsley Alliance for Schools
Peter Mirfin	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
William Ward	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Shafeek Khan	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Formal apologies were submitted by Mr Greaves, Ms Hammerton and Mr Potter

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 4 of today's meeting.

3. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE REPORT (QUARTER 3: 2020/21)

Through the provisions of Part 1, Section 12 (A) of the Local Government Act (1972) this document was considered without any members of the public or media being present. Mr Sanderson welcomed Amber Burton to the meeting who, together with Ms Sleight, presented the latest quarterly SEND Performance and Finance report to the Schools Forum.

Ms Sleight and Ms Burton particularly referred to the following:

- The number and profile of children and young people with special educational needs in the Borough, together with those with an Education and Health Care Plan.
- The high level of compliance with statutory responsibilities and timescales under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act (2014) and SEND Code of Practice.
- Progress and developments made against the strategic objectives of the Borough's School Placement Strategy for Children and Young People with SEND, together with those made to the quality of practice and provision in relation to the broader Local SEND 'Offer' during Quarter 3. This included, firstly, widespread engagement of children and young people so that their experiences significantly contributed to evidence-based decision-making and secondly, a forthcoming Peer Challenge of local area services for children and young people with SEND, to be conducted by the Association of Directors of Children's Services.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE REPORT **(QUARTER 3: 2020/21) (cont'd)**

- The latest position concerning the Schools (High Needs) Budget and associated budgets, together with proposed management action

Members of the Forum endorsed the work of the Local Authority and other statutory partners in developing a system which was making significant progress in meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND in the Borough despite the prevailing financial challenges.

Mr Sanderson thanked both Ms Sleight and Ms Burton for presenting their report

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the Schools Forum notes the progress made towards achieving the strategic objectives of the Borough School Placement and Sufficiency Strategy for Children and Young People with SEND, together with the broader local SEND 'Offer' during this period.**

4. TRADE UNION FACILITIES TIME AGREEMENT AND ACADEMIES FACILITY TIME POOLED ARRANGEMENTS

Mr Sanderson welcomed Mrs Bell to the meeting who presented the latest annual report on this matter. Mrs Bell particularly referred to the following issues:

- The current position relating to the number of trade union convenors and trade union facilities time within the Local Authority's maintained schools
- The impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic in delaying the formulation of the latest Trade Union Facilities Time Agreement with the likely start date now being 1st April 2021
- A summary of ongoing discussions between the Service Director (Human Resources, Business Improvement and Communications) and the St Mary's Multi-Academy Trust on brokering pooled employee representation arrangements in academies.
- The potential financial risks to the Local Authority and maintained schools, resulting from the gap between what the Local Authority can afford to fund and the cost of the Trade Union Facilities Agreement.
- The potential financial risks to the pooled arrangements for employee representation in the academies sector, should not enough academies subscribe to funding the arrangement.

In the brief discussion which followed, members of the Forum, including Councillor Cave, underlined the importance of ensuring employee representation across all schools in the Borough, particularly in promoting their wellbeing.

Mr Sanderson thanked Mrs Bell for presenting this report.

RESOLVED

- 2. That the Schools Forum notes the current position relating to the Trade Union Facilities Time Agreement with Local Authority Maintained**

Schools, together with the proposed pooling arrangements for employee representation within academies in the Borough.

- 3. That following the proposed review at the end of this school year, a further progress report on this matter be submitted for the Forum's consideration at a future meeting.**

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE FORUM

RESOLVED

- 4. The minutes of the meeting of the Forum, held on 20th January 2021 were agreed as a correct record.**

6. MATTERS ARISING THROUGH CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

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

7. SCHOOLS BUDGETS

High Needs Budget (2021/22)

Ms Sleight and Mr Amahwe presented their report on confirmation of the High Needs Funding Settlement for the Borough and proposed allocations. Mr Amahwe commented on the following issues:

- A funding settlement of £31.168 million which amounted to an increase of £3.985 million compared to the previous year.
- Confirmation that the Secretary of State had approved the Local Authority's and Schools Forum's request to transfer 1% of funding (or £1.662 million) from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block during 2021/22.
- The provisional adjustment for high needs placements funded directly by the Education and Skills Funding Agency within academies, amounting to £7.828 million (*to be confirmed this Summer*)
- Details outlined in Operational Guidance on the funding per pupil and the application of teachers' pay and pension costs.
- The local context dictating the allocation of funding, particularly increasing demand for SEND school places, together with both funding and cost pressures.
- The cumulative DSG budget deficit in the High Needs Block which was forecasted to be £12.5 million during 2021/22
- Details of high-needs top-up funding to Pre-16 years mainstream schools, special schools/academies, specialist resource provision, alternative provision and direct entry to Barnsley College at age 14-16.
- Proposals for the commissioning of additional locally based SEND school placements
- Funding to meet the needs of children and young people with complex needs, particularly through independent, out of authority provision, together with SEND provision for young people aged over 16..

- Details of remedial action to be taken to manage and mitigate the deficit in the High Needs Block and wider SEND system in the Borough, pending the outcomes of the national Review of SEN.

Ms Drinkhill regretted the financial outlook particularly for schools and enquired to what extent the deficit could be reduced in the medium term. Mr Wood referred to the DfE's current consultation on proposed changes to the funding formula and allocations which hoped to take account of actual expenditure in a local area, during a specific period (2017/18) instead of historical expenditure. Mr Amahwe commented that the Authority would be responding to the proposals and that any such change would be welcomed as it would benefit Barnsley.

RESOLVED

- 5. That the Schools Forum notes the high needs funding settlement for the Barnsley, including the outcome of the disapplication request, for 2021/22**
- 6. That the proposed funding requirements for 2021/22, particularly in relation to the number of commissioned specialist places and the payment of top ups to mainstream and special schools /academies, alternative provision, post 16 providers and independent and non-maintained special schools, also be noted by the Forum.**

Young People's Skills And Enterprise: Commissioning Of High Needs Education Placements For Young People Aged 16 And Over

Mr Smith presented his report on how the allocation of Central Schools Services Block Funding had been used to commission high needs education places for this group of young people in previous years and how the proposed allocation for 2021/22 as agreed by the Forum at its previous meeting would be utilised in order to continue improvements in outcomes. Mr Sanderson thanked Mr Smith for the details set out in his report.

RESOLVED:

- 7. The Schools Forum notes the report.**

Education Of Looked After Children And Young People

The Forum was aware that at its previous meeting it also approved an allocation of £200,000 from Central Schools Services Block Funding to support the education of looked after children and young people in the Borough. Mr Banwell was welcomed to the meeting and outlined how the previous year's allocation had been used to improve outcomes for this disadvantaged cohort and how the latest allocation would be used to add value in continuing to improve outcomes, as part of the Council's *Pledge* to children and young people in care and the Care Leavers Covenant. Mr Sanderson thanked Mr Banwell for presenting this report.

RESOLVED

8. The Schools Forum notes the report.

Funding For School Improvement In The Borough

Similarly, the Forum agreed to allocate £400,000 at its previous meeting to support school improvement in the Borough. Mr Sanderson welcomed Mr Dickinson who presented his report. Whilst school improvement currently remained a statutory responsibility for local authorities, the Barnsley Alliance for Schools was the strategic partnership with overall responsibility for this matter under the oversight of the Children and Young People’s Trust Executive Group.

The Barnsley Alliance was responsible for ensuring the strategic objectives of the Borough’s Education Improvement and Inclusion Strategy were achieved via a sector-led, peer-based approach. Mr Dickinson went onto highlight the achievements made by the Barnsley Alliance using the funding allocated during 2020/21. This included the role of the Barnsley Alliance in supporting schools to meet the challenge of the Covid-19 Pandemic, including procuring devices to enable vulnerable and disadvantaged children to continue their education, together with solutions that would enable pupils to learn remotely and online. Also noted was the progress made in supporting schools improve the quality of teaching and learning standards, together with the provisional education outcomes for the Borough in each Key Stage of the National Curriculum. Mr Sanderson thanked Mr Dickinson for his report.

RESOLVED

9: That the report be noted.

8. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Mr Khan advised that this was the final meeting of the Forum during the current school year. Dates for the meetings of the Forum in 2021/22 would be circulated in due course. No further matters were raised and so Mr Sanderson thanked members of the Forum for their attendance and contribution during this meeting.

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Signed by the Chair of the Barnsley Schools Forum