



Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council People Directorate

Minutes

BARNSLEY SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FORUM, HELD ON THURSDAY, 8th OCTOBER 2015, AT HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC AND CHURCH OF ENGLAND 3-16 SCHOOL

PRESENT

Headteachers:	Nick Bowen	Headteacher Representative and Chair of the Schools Forum
	Jo Nolan	Headteacher Representative
	Dave Whittaker	Headteacher Representative
	Alison Wilks	Headteacher Representative
Governors:	Adrian England	School Governor Representative
	John Gostelow	School Governor Representative
	Bob Krause	School Governor Representative
	Mark Pawson	School Governor Representative
	Michael Sanderson	School Governor Representative
Special Schools	Molly Beever	Special Schools Representative
Early Years Service:	Claire Gilmour	Early Years Service Representative
Officers:	Margaret Libreri	Service Director (Education, Early Start and Prevention) People Directorate, Barnsley MBC
	Josh Amahwe	Strategic Finance Manager (People Directorate) Barnsley MBC
	Anna Turner	People Directorate, Barnsley MBC
	Shafeek Khan	People Directorate, Barnsley MBC

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were noted from Councillor Millner, Councillor Mitchell, Mr Bowser, Ms Gilmour and Mrs Milliner.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTEREST

All Headteacher and Governor representatives present at today's meeting, declared an interest in Agenda Items 7 (a-c) and 11.

3. REVIEW OF MEMBERSHIP OF THE BARNSELY SCHOOLS FORUM

Ms Libreri presented an initial report on the impact upon school rolls of the growth in the number of academies in the Borough. She invited Members of the Forum to advise on whether or not this should lead to an immediate change in the proportionality of representation from within the Schools Group.

Comments arose on whether the Forum should better reflect representation from the following elements:

- Special schools
- Alternative provision, including Pupil Referral Units
- Free schools
- Full Diocesan representation from within the Sub Region

RESOLVED

- 1 (a) That the Service Director (Education, Early Start and Prevention) check the DfE's current guidance and regulations on the membership of Schools Forums with a view to submitting a follow up report to the next meeting.**
- 1 (b) Following the next meeting of the Forum, Barnsley MBC will formally seek nominations from schools and academies with a view to announcing nominees appointed to serve on the Forum, during 2016/17.**

4. AMENDED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM, HELD ON 3rd MARCH 2015

The Forum considered an amendment to the minutes of its meeting, held on 3rd March 2015, concerning 3rd satellite provision and specialist placement provision.

RESOLVED

- 2 That the amended minutes of the meeting of the Schools Forum, held on 3rd March 2015 now be approved as a correct record.**

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM, HELD ON 11th JUNE 2015

The Forum considered the minutes of its meeting, held on 11th June 2015.

RESOLVED

- 3 That the minutes of the meeting of the Schools Forum, held on 11th June 2015 be approved as a correct record.**

6. MATTERS ARISING

Meeting of the Schools Forum, held on 11th June 2015

Mr Amahwe advised the Forum that the reports concerning (a) use of carry forward DSG balances and (b) options for meeting increased demand for provision at Springwell PRU and alternative provision, through High Needs Block Funding, would be submitted to the next meeting of the Forum.

Mr Gostelow referred to the constraints facing members in printing the papers for meetings of the Forum

RESOLVED

4. That the local authority distributes hard copies of the agenda and accompanying papers for future meetings of the Forum, upon request.

7. REVIEW OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHOOLS BLOCK FUNDING FORMULA

At the Chair's request, the Schools Forum agreed to prioritise for consideration Agenda Item 11, concerning the outcomes of a review of the Barnsley Schools Block Funding Formula.

Mr Amahwe outlined the purpose of the recent consultation which had taken place with schools in the Borough on the Funding Formula. He referred to the consultation document which set out a limited range of options for changing factors within the Formula, together with the responses made by schools to the questions presented in the consultation paper. These factors included Age Weighted Pupil Units (AWPU), Basic Entitlement, Prior Attainment and English as an Additional Language.

Among the schools which had responded to the consultation, were (a) The Dearne ALC and (b) Penistone Grammar School. Both had provided detailed responses to the changes to Funding Factors proposed in the consultation and, in particular, the impact which any potential changes could have on provision. These were considered by the Forum.

The impact of any potential changes in the Funding Formula upon all individual schools who had responded to the consultation was detailed in Mr Amahwe's report to the Forum which set out the recommendations of the Local Authority's Funding Formula Review Group (FFRG) following the consultation.

The Forum agreed that the diverse range of responses made to the consultation, including from The Dearne ALC and Penistone Grammar School, meant that no overriding or sustainable support could be given to any one of the Options for change, indicated in the consultation paper. Mr Whitaker argued that this was, also, attributable, in part, to the design and formulation of the consultation.

Of greater significance was the view expressed by members of the Forum that, aside from the impact of any potential changes to funding factors in the Formula and the perceived problems associated with the consultation document, the most significant financial challenge facing schools in the Borough were the BSF/PFI contracts. The local authority was urged by members of the Forum to review the contracts with a view to developing a strategy on how this matter could be addressed moving forward.

In considering the comments made by Forum members, together with the challenges facing the Borough and other, notable issues, including evolving school inspection frameworks, Ms Libreri advised that moving funding from the 'Deprivation' and 'Prior Attainment' factors in the Formula into AWPU funding, during 2016/17 would negatively impact upon disadvantaged pupils and schools at a time when attendance and outcomes for such pupils were poor in comparison to both peers and disadvantaged pupils, at national level.

Therefore, the consensus which emerged on the Review was that the Schools Forum could not identify a preferred option for Cabinet recommendation, due to the balance of arguments for and against moving resources from the 'Prior

Attainment' and 'Deprivation' factors into the AWPU funding factor. In particular, the Forum recognised that the proposed changes to the Funding Formula, outlined in the recent consultation, would not address or alleviate the wider financial challenges facing schools in Barnsley, notably BSF/PFI funding commitments.

RESOLVED

- 5 (a) **That Cabinet be advised of the Barnsley Schools Forum's view that due to the balance of arguments for and against the transfer of resources between funding factors in the Formula, the Forum cannot recommend any of the options for change, outlined in the consultation, to the Cabinet.**
- 5 (b) **The Schools Forum agrees, in principle, to establishing 'English as an Additional Language' as an additional funding factor within the Formula, from 2016/17.**
- 5 (c) **That Barnsley MBC be encouraged to review schools BSF/PFI funding commitments with a view to developing a strategy on how the challenges faced can be addressed.**

8. SCHOOLS BUDGETS

(a) Schools Budget (2015/16): Latest Outturn Position

Mr Amahwe informed the Forum of the latest projected outturn position concerning the delegated budgets for maintained schools and the measures being taken alongside individual schools to address any year end deficit balances.

RESOLVED

- 6. **That the latest projected outturn position be noted.**

(b) Outcomes of the Review of Significant Surpluses

Mr Amahwe reported on the findings of this Review, including reference to the factors considered and measures taken to 'claw back' excessive surpluses at specific schools.

RESOLVED

- 7. **That the Forum notes the outcomes of the Review.**

(c) Statement on Support Provided to Schools In Meeting Redundancy Costs (2013/14 – 2015/16)

Mr Amahwe presented a data report, concerning funding afforded to schools to help in meeting the costs of redundancy.

RESOLVED

- 8. **That the report be noted by the Forum.**

9. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

No matters were raised by Members of the Forum.

10. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Mr Bowen stated that Members of the Forum would be advised of the date of the next meeting as soon as possible. He thanked Members for their attendance and, also, thanked the staff at Holy Trinity Catholic and Church of England 3-16 School for their hospitality in hosting the meeting.