



Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

People Directorate

A

Minutes

BARNSLEY SCHOOLS FORUM

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FORUM, HELD ON MONDAY, 11th JULY 2016, AT
KIRK BALK COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

PRESENT

Headteacher Representatives

Ian Goddard, Jo Nolan, Alison Wilks

Governor Representatives

Adrian England, Bob Krause, Paul Micklethwaite, Mark Pawson and Michael Sanderson

Special Schools Representative

Bill Denton

Early Years Service Representative

Linda Mathison

14-19 Years Service Representative

Dave Benbow

Local Authority Elected Member Representative

Councillor Andrew Millner

Officers

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

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted from Mrs Beever, Mr Bowser, Mrs C. Gilmore, Ms J. Gilmour, Mrs Milliner, Councillor Mitchell and Mr Whitaker.

Mr Bowen advised that, subject to the conclusion of an alternative appointment, he would be arriving later. Mr Sanderson agreed to chair today's meeting of the Forum.

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Further to the recent review of Schools Group representation and the request for new nominees to serve on the Forum, Mr Sanderson welcomed Mr Goddard and Mr Micklethwaite to their first meeting, as representatives from the Primary Academy sector.

3. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTEREST

All Headteacher and Governor representatives who were present at today's meeting, declared an interest in Agenda Item 6, concerning school budgets.

4. PRIORITISATION OF AGENDA ITEMS

With the Forum's agreement, Mr Sanderson proposed that an issue relating to Agenda Item 8, be prioritised for immediate consideration.

RESOLVED

1 The Schools Forum agrees to prioritise consideration of the Sufficiency Statement for Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

Sufficiency Statement For Children With SEN

Mr Lynch was welcomed to the meeting to present a report on how Barnsley MBC was fulfilling its statutory duty to meet the education, health and social care needs of children with SEN, including those with statements.

Ms Nolan referred to the percentage of children in schools who were subject to a statement of SEN and/or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHP) in Barnsley compared to the Regional and National Average and whether any steps were being considered to close the gap (3.8% (*including children in care, placed outside the local authority area*) compared to 2.8% (National Average) and 2.4% (Regional Average)).

Ms Libreri advised that, in hindsight, there would be children within the 3.8% cohort who may not have been given a statement in other local authorities. Mr Pawson and Councillor Millner enquired how far the needs of children, who were identified with SEN, were being met within mainstream school provision.

Ms Libreri replied that, dependent on the nature and complexity of each individual's needs, these were being met through a combination of mainstream and specialist provision. Ms Libreri added that a review of expenditure and whether specific needs could be more efficiently met, would form part of the development of the Council's new SEN Strategy, to be published later this year.

RESOLVED

2 (a) That the Sufficiency Statement for Children with SEN be noted and that an update on measures being taken to close the gap between the percentage of SEN children in schools with an SEN and/or EHP compared

to the Regional and National Average be considered at a future meeting of the Forum.

- 2 (b) The requested report on the impact of the use of DSG funding on improving outcomes within school admissions; attainment of ethnic minority pupils and children in care, together with improving the skills and employability of 14-19 year olds, be submitted to the next meeting of the Forum.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM

The Forum considered the minutes of its meeting, held on 22nd February 2016.

RESOLVED

3. That the minutes of the meeting of the Barnsley Schools Forum, held on 22nd February 2016, be approved as a correct record.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

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

7. SCHOOLS BUDGETS

The Forum considered the following reports concerning schools budgets and the use of DSG:

Schools Budget Outturn Position And Use Of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Underspending (2015/16)

Mr Amahwe presented details concerning the outturn position on the following:

- Schools' surplus and deficit balances (by school and sector)
- Allocation of Pupil Premium Grant
- Allocation of other, specific grant funding
- Centrally retained schools budgets (including for staff cover, school improvement, redundancy and other financial assistance and Pupil Growth Fund)
- Pressures affecting the Higher Needs Funding Block
- Use of carry forward of DSG resources to ease pressure or bolster provision

Ms Nolan requested urgent clarification on whether or not redundancy related support funding should continue to be ringfenced and if it remained sustainable for it to be centrally retained. Mr Amahwe suggested that it should not be and would confirm the answer at the next meeting of the Forum. In any event, Mr Amahwe felt that the funding to be allocated to meet such costs, during 2016/17 would be sufficient.

Councillor Millner commented on the prevailing deficit balance at Penistone Grammar School and the potential for acquiring additional assistance from the local authority. Mr Amahwe commented that he would monitor the situation on a year by year basis and that the eventual introduction of the proposed National School Funding Formula would help in addressing the recurring deficit at the School (*Please see Page 5*).

Mr Denton referred to the costs of providing out of local authority area placements for children in need of care and asked if steps were to be taken to reduce expenditure, whilst still meeting the needs of this vulnerable group. Ms Libreri replied that the recent development of the Borough Placement and Sufficiency Strategy for Children in Care, placed emphasis on improving provision within the Borough, including through additional

adoptive and fostering placements which could better meet complex needs or those of harder to place children.

RESOLVED

- 4 (a) That the final outturn position for the Schools Delegated Budget (2015/16) be noted.**
- 4 (b) That all proposals concerning the use of carry forward DSG balances as indicated in Paragraphs 18.1 – 18.5 of Mr Amahwe’s report be approved by the Schools Forum**

Approved School Budgets (2016/17)

Mr Amahwe gave an update on the Barnsley Schools Budget and allocations to schools for 2016/17, following approval by the Schools Forum, at its meeting held on 15th January this year and confirmation by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) in March.

RESOLVED

- 5 (a) The Schools Forum notes the overall latest funding position for schools, during 2016/17, as confirmed by the EFA.**
- 5 (b) The Forum, also, notes the financial positions of the Borough’s maintained schools, as indicated within individual budget positions**

Early Years Two Year Old Entitlement Trajectory Funding

Mrs Mathison set out the local authority’s proposal for earmarking the carry forward of DSG funding aimed at enhancing early years provision for children aged 2 and above, during 2016/17. The total value of the funding amounted to £62,000 and her report made the following recommendations:

- Interim Inclusion Grant, amounting to £40,000 as part of improving access to childcare and early education for children with additional needs by supporting settings with the costs of additional specialist resources, including staffing.
- Online Applications and Associated Marketing - £12,000 to enable Barnsley to set up an online application system.
- Additional funding, amounting to £10,000 to provide practitioners with ‘Passport to Inclusion’ training as part of improving outcomes for children with disabilities or other, complex needs.

Mrs Mathison believed that use of DSG carry forward funding, in this way, would further enhance early years provision for 2-4 year olds, in Barnsley. This had been cited by the (former) Child Care Minister as being among the top quartile of local authorities in the country. However, additional demand had been identified, particularly in both Dearne Wards and North East Ward and the proposals would help in tackling any shortfall.

RESOLVED

- 6 That the recommendations, outlined in this report, be approved by the Schools Forum.**

Acquisition Of SEN Equipment

The Forum also considered a report, recommending the use of savings accrued within SEN support service budgets, during 2015/16, to fund the acquisition of the following equipment, as part of further improving outcomes for children and young people, with SEN (including a disability or other complex need(s)):

- Fit for purpose mobile, IT equipment for practitioners.
- Radio aids for children who have been identified as possessing a hearing impairment.

RESOLVED

7 That approval be given to the acquisition of this equipment.

Department For Education Consultation On A National Schools Block Funding Formula And Reform Of Higher Needs Block Funding

Mr Amahwe advised the Forum of a consultation paper, emerging through the Education White Paper (2016) on proposals for a National Schools Block Funding Formula and reform of the Higher Needs Funding Block, to be introduced at the beginning of the 2017/18 school year.

A copy of the consultation paper, together with Barnsley MBC's response to the proposals, upon which the Forum had previously been consulted, was circulated for the Forum's information. Mr Amahwe commented that the proposals would benefit areas such as Barnsley and that a second consultation would take place later this year. This would provide clarification on the details of the proposals, together with the extent of the impact upon schools in the Borough.

Ms Libreri added that a recent letter from the DfE to local authorities stated that the above proposals would be progressed but it remained unclear if they would be implemented by the start of the 2017/18 school year or subject to a delay.

RESOLVED

- 8 (a) That the proposals in the DfE's consultation paper, together with the local authority's response, be noted by the Forum.**
- 8 (b) The Forum be kept informed of any developments, concerning the proposed introduction of the National Schools Block Funding Formula and reform of Higher Needs Block Funding, at future meetings.**

8. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

RESOLVED

9 The Forum agrees to consider an additional report at today's meeting.

Department For Education Consultation On Extending Free Child Care Entitlement To Eligible Families

Mrs Mathison reported on the formulation of an Expression of Interest (EoI) by the local authority in bidding for capital funding to pilot the extension of free child care entitlement to eligible families to 30 hours per week. Details concerning the EoI had been circulated for the attention of schools.

She added that proposals were being developed, based upon four local projects upon which co-operation was being sought from eligible bodies. Mrs Mathison invited any

schools who would be interested in becoming involved in the EoI to contact her by the deadline date. In noting the EoI, Ms Wilks enquired over its purpose, particularly if sufficient provision already existed as indicated in proposals leading to the re-organisation of early years and early education provision, earlier this year. .

RESOLVED

- 10 That any schools interested in becoming involved in the EoI contact Mrs Mathison by the deadline.**

9. SCHEDULE OF FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM (2016/17)

RESOLVED

- 11 That the schedule of remaining meetings of the Forum, during 2016/17 be noted by Members.**

In concluding today's meeting, Mr Sanderson thanked members of the Forum for their attendance and contribution and expressed his appreciation and gratitude to Ms Nolan and the staff of Kirk Balk Community College for their hospitality in hosting this meeting.

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Signed by the Chair of the Barnsley Schools Forum