



Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

People Directorate

A

Minutes

BARNSLEY SCHOOLS FORUM

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FORUM, HELD ON THURSDAY, 20th OCTOBER
2016, AT KIRK BALK ACADEMY**

PRESENT

Headteacher Representatives

Nick Bowen (Chair of the Forum) Ian Goddard, Jo Nolan, Alison Wilks

Governor Representatives

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

Special Schools Representative

Molly Beaver

Early Years Service Representative

Claire Gilmore

14-19 Years Service Representative

Dave Benbow

Local Authority Elected Member Representative

Councillor Kath Mitchell

Officers

Margaret Libreri

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

Josh Amahwe

Strategic Finance Manager (People Directorate)
Barnsley MBC

Shafeek Khan

People Directorate, Barnsley MBC

Anna Turner

People Directorate, Barnsley MBC

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Ms Fitzpatrick, Ms Gilmour, Councillor Millner and Mr Whitaker.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTEREST

Mr Bowen declared an interest in Agenda Item 5, concerning the use of top slice DSG grant in improving the attainment of EAL pupils. School governor representatives of the Forum, declared an interest in Agenda Item 6, concerning school budget provision.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM

The Forum considered the minutes of its meeting, held on 11th July 2016.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the minutes of the meeting of the Barnsley Schools Forum, held on 11th July 2016, be approved as a correct record.**

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

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Referring to Ms Nolan's request for clarification concerning the local authority's support to schools and academies for covering redundancy related costs, Mr Amahwe stated that in instances where an individual school's financial position had improved during a year, the Authority reserved the right to retrieve such financial support although this applied to maintained schools.

5. USE OF TOP SLICE DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (DSG) FUNDING

Ms Libreri referred to the meeting of the Schools Forum, held on 22nd February this year at which the Forum considered and approved the proposed budget allocations concerning the use of top slice DSG. As part of this, the Forum recommended that a report on the impact made by the allocations and the outcomes achieved be considered at a future meeting. At today's meeting, Forum members noted the impact of such funding in relation to the following provision:

Young People's Skills And Enterprise

Mr Benbow advised that the £200,000 which had been allocated to the Young People's Skills and Enterprise Service was used to support the following three priorities:

- Priority 1: Ensuring vulnerable young people are fully able to make a positive contribution after reaching the age of 16.
- Priority 2: Effective use of tools to directly support the provision of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance, in schools and providers.
- Priority 3: A cohesive portfolio of activities to help schools meet the requirements of the Gatsby Report.

Mr Benbow went on to describe the interventions which had been made in each of the above named priorities and their impact. In noting the report, Mr Pawson enquired over what measures were being used to review progress in employer engagement and the raising of young people's aspirations. Mr Benbow confirmed that the benchmarks recommended as part of the Gatsby Report had been adopted.

Ms Nolan asked whether the indicators within Priority 1 had indirectly impacted on A' Level attainment. Mr Benbow commented that whilst there had been a slight rise in attainment, Barnsley's performance remained below the Regional Average. A key objective would be to improve performance in this realm.

USE OF TOP SLICE DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (DSG) FUNDING (cont'd)

School Admissions And Appeals

Ms Libreri advised the Forum of the local authority's statutory responsibilities concerning school admissions activity and of how the allocation, approved by the Forum, had ensured compliance, particularly in meeting the demand for school places and fair access.

Support For Children In Care Placements

Ms Libreri indicated how the £200,000 allocation was used to help provide educational support to a specific cohort of vulnerable children, including the following:

- Young people in secure welfare placements, that include education provision.
- Young people in secure remand placements, which include education provision.
- Meeting the cost of additional staffing support and home to school transport for children and young people with complex care needs.

Ms Libreri also highlighted the role of the local authority's Children's Resources Allocation Group and the Placement Sufficiency, Oversight and Resource Panel in maintaining scrutiny of the quality of individual placements via the regular review of individual education and health care plans.

Ms Libreri offered to submit further reports on the impact of top slice DSG allocation for this provision, on a half yearly basis.

Support For EAL Pupils

Ms Libreri described the work of (a) Queen's Road Primary Academy and (b) Horizon Community College, in acting as lead schools for the Barnsley 'Champion Schools' Programme.

The resources and materials on offer as part of this peer led programme were noted by the Forum. Also noted, were the outcomes of Ofsted's review of provision for EAL pupils, conducted in June 2015, which commented favourably on the developments taking place through the Barnsley Alliance Board's 'Closing The Gap' Group in narrowing the gaps in attainment between EAL pupils and peers, at all stages of the Curriculum.

Support For School Improvement

Mr England commented that the Forum had, also, agreed for £400,000 to be allocated towards school improvement, during 2016/17 and he requested that the Forum be afforded an opportunity to review the impact made by this allocation.

RESOLVED

- 2 (a) The Schools Forum notes the impact made by the funding allocations it has agreed for each type of provision, so far, during 2016/17.**
- 2 (b) That further reports on the impact of the funding allocation in support of education provision for children in care placements, be submitted for the Forum's consideration on a half yearly basis.**
- 2 (c) That a report on the impact made by the allocation to fund school improvement be submitted to the next meeting of the Forum.**

6. SCHOOLS BUDGETS

Proposed Revision Of The Local Scheme For Financing Schools

Mr Amahwe informed the Forum of changes to the local Scheme which were the result of a combination of changes required by the DfE as well as those proposed by Barnsley MBC. The proposed changes were summarised in Mr Amahwe's report and would become effective, from January 2017.

RESOLVED

3 The Schools Forum notes the recommendations in this report.

Pupil Growth Fund: Proposed Amendment To Criteria

In response to the significant challenge faced by local authorities through the growth in pupil numbers, Mr Amahwe presented a report and detailed annex, seeking the Forum's agreement to an amendment in the criteria for the allocation of funding. The proposals were as follows:

- The Pupil Growth Fund will apply to secondary as well as primary school phases.
- For permanent increases in admissions or continuing bulge classes throughout the year groups, pro rata AWPU funding will be provided each year for 7 years, effective from the date of the increase in capacity.
- Where a new school or academy is established in response to the basic need for pupil places, one-off funding will be made available in recognition of costs incurred, prior to the school's opening.
- Consideration to be given to tackling diseconomies of scale whenever a new school or academy opens without a full complement of year groups. The support arrangements will be negotiated and agreed by the local authority and the new school.

Responding to Ms Wilks query on whether the proposed, amended criteria could be applied to support individual schools, on a retrospective basis, Mr Amahwe commented that the criteria would commence from the beginning of the 2017/18 academic year and apply to schools where there was a year on year expansion in the number of pupils but not for a bulge class. In response to Ms Nolan's query on the reasons for the amendments to the criteria, Mr Amahwe advised that it was based on data concerning school place shortages on an electoral Ward basis.

RESOLVED

4 The Schools Forum approves the proposed changes to the Pupil Growth Fund Criteria, with effect from April 2017.

Schools Budget (2016/17): Latest Outturn Position

Mr Amahwe reported on the latest outturn position concerning overall DSG; schools delegated DSG and centrally retained schools budgets. In particular, he commented on the variations in school balances; increased costs through staff cover for maternity leave; a forecasted cost pressure of £1.7 million emerging through meeting the complex needs of an increasing number of children and young people in both FE Colleges and through out of authority placements, together with meeting demand from eligible families, with children, in respect of extended child care entitlement.

SCHOOLS BUDGETS (cont'd)

RESOLVED

- 5 The Schools Forum notes the latest outturn position concerning the 2016/17 Schools Budget, together with the planned action to be taken in order to manage the emerging financial pressures.**

Schools Budget Planning (2017/18)

Mr Amahwe presented a report which invited the Forum's comments on the factors upon which the planning and setting of school budgets would take place for the 2017/18 year. Mr Amahwe commented on the following:

- Latest position concerning the timetable for introducing the National Funding Formula for the Schools Block.
- Nature of EFA Guidance on schools funding arrangements, during 2017/18.
- Proposed funding baselines for (a) the Schools Block (b) Higher Needs Block and (c) Early Years Block.

RESOLVED

- 6 (a) The Schools Forum notes the recommendations in Mr Amahwe's report**

- 6 (b) A further report on specific schools budget approvals, be submitted for the consideration of the Forum at its next meeting.**

7. EARLY YEARS PROVISION AND EARLY YEARS LEARNING

Mrs Gilmore outlined the nature of the response made by Barnsley MBC to a recent consultation on the proposed Early Years National Funding Formula. Mr Amahwe added that to compound the current challenges faced in meeting commitments in the Early Years Block, one of the proposals in the consultation concerned a requirement upon local authorities to establish an inclusion fund, to be potentially resourced via the Higher Needs Block. On this, Ms Libreri commented on her concern that the proposals in the consultation would, in fact, not do much to close the gap in outcomes between children from disadvantaged families in comparison to other peers.

Responding to Mr Krause's query on when the Government's response to the proposals would be published, Mr Amahwe said that this was due by the end of 2016.

RESOLVED

- 7 The Schools Forum notes the local authority's response to the consultation.**

8. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Next Meeting Of The Schools Forum

At this point, Mr Bowen left to attend a meeting of the Fair Access Panel and Mr Sanderson took over as Chair for the remainder of today's meeting. In Mr Bowen's absence Ms Libreri stated that, owing to a school peer review in which Mr Bowen would be involved, it had become necessary to re-schedule the next meeting of the Forum.

ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS (cont'd)

RESOLVED

- 8 That Members of the Forum be notified of the new date for the next meeting as soon as possible.**

Mr Sanderson thanked members of the Forum for their attendance and contribution and expressed his appreciation and gratitude to Ms Nolan and the staff at Kirk Balk Academy for their hospitality in hosting this meeting.

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Signed by the Chair of the Barnsley Schools Forum