



Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

People Directorate

A

Minutes

BARNSLEY SCHOOLS FORUM

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FORUM, HELD ON THURSDAY, 12th JANUARY
2017, AT KIRK BALK ACADEMY**

PRESENT

Headteacher Representatives

Nick Bowen (Chair of the Forum) Jane Gilmour, Josh Greaves (substitute for Dave Whitaker) and Alison Wilks

Governor Representatives

Adrian England and Mark Pawson

Special Schools Representative

Molly Beever

14-19 Years Service Representative

Dave Benbow

Local Authority Elected Member Representative

Councillor Andrew Millner

Trade Union Representative

Nic Fitzpatrick

Observer

Emma Hardy (National Union of Teachers)

Officers

Margaret Libreri

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

Josh Amahwe

Strategic Finance Manager (People Directorate)
Barnsley MBC

Helen Perrin

Finance, Assets and Information Services, Barnsley
MBC

Shafeek Khan

People Directorate, Barnsley MBC

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Goddard, Mr Krause, Mr Micklethwaite Mrs Milliner, Ms Nolan, Mr Sanderson and Mr Whitaker.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTEREST

Mr Bowen declared an interest in Agenda Item 5 (d), 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 the set of items under Agenda Item 5, concerning school budget provision.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM

The Forum considered the minutes of its meeting, held on 20th October 2016.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the minutes of the meeting of the Barnsley Schools Forum, held on 20th October 2016, be approved as a correct record.**

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

No issues were raised through consideration of the minutes.

5. SCHOOL BUDGETS

5(a) Proposed Schools National Funding Formula

Mr Amahwe presented a report on the proposed National Funding Formula for the Schools Block which was announced as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement, last month. In particular, Mr Amahwe briefed the Schools Forum on the impact of the new Formula upon schools in Barnsley. Should the new Formula be implemented fully, it would result in an increase amounting to £11.9 million or 7.7% for the Borough and this would place it within the top quartile of 'gainers' who would benefit from the proposals. No individual school in the Borough would suffer a reduction in funding as a result of the new Formula.

However, Mr Amahwe advised that the increase would be mitigated through a process of transitional protection, aimed at reducing the impact of the proposals upon authorities that would be adversely affected. Therefore, any increase would be limited to 2.4% or £3.7 million during the first year of the new Formula (2018/19). Mr Amahwe added that any gains achieved by authorities, such as Barnsley, would only be guaranteed until the end of the current Parliament (2019/20).

Responding to Mr Pawson's question over weightings ascribed to schools under the new Formula, Mr Amahwe advised the Forum on the range of funding factors which the new Formula would take into account.

RESOLVED

- 2 (a) That the Schools Forum notes the proposed National Funding Formula for the schools block and the impact upon schools in Barnsley.**
- 2 (b) The Forum be invited to comment on the proposals, concerning the introduction of the new Formula as part of the local authority's response to the Stage 2 consultation.**

5(b) Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Funding Settlement (2017/18)

Mr Amahwe informed the Forum of details concerning Barnsley's DSG allocation for the following:

- Schools Block Funding
- Early Years Block Funding
- High Needs Block Funding
- Pupil Premium Grant
- Other Schools Related Grant Funding

Discussion arose over the allocation for the Early Years Funding Block, including the £1.6 million ascribed to meet the extended entitlement to 30 hours of free child care for eligible parents and whether the allocation would ensure a sustainable model of early years provision in the Borough. Ms Libreri commented that this would need to be considered as part of the development of the Borough Sufficiency Strategy for Child Care provision and would take this up with the Early Years Team.

Referring to Councillor Millner's query over the impact of housing growth upon pupil numbers in the medium term, Ms Libreri advised that one of the objectives of the Pupil Growth Fund was to help local authorities meet additional or unanticipated demand for school places.

Also noted, during discussion, were, firstly, the funding adjustments concerning the Higher Needs Block, including those relating to the funding of post 16 placements and, secondly, funding provision for learning music via Music Education Hubs.

RESOLVED

2 (c) That the Forum notes the details of the DSG Schools Funding Settlement for 2017/18, including the proposed allocations for the (a) Schools Block (b) Early Years Block (c) High Needs Block and (d) Pupil Premium Grant.

2 (d) Members of the Forum be invited to comment on proposals concerning both Early Years and Higher Needs Block Funding as part of ongoing consultations by the DfE.

5 (c) Schools Block Funding Arrangements (2017/18)

Mr Amahwe outlined the local authority's proposals on funding allocations on centrally retained budgets, including the following:

- School Admissions
- Education Support For Looked After Children
- 14-19 Years Project Team
- School Improvement
- Pupil Growth Fund
- Use of Education Services Grant (ESG) retained duties (including asset management, education welfare, together with other statutory and regulatory duties)
- Indicative level of school block resources to be delegated to schools through the current funding formula, including funding factors and data sets used for this purpose.

14-19 Project Team

In considering the proposed funding allocation for the 14-19 Project Team, Ms Gilmour enquired if it remained sustainable for the positive engagement of young people with employment, skills and further education opportunities, to be funded through DSG

funding when this could be better utilised in supporting other school related activity. Ms Gilmour argued whether there should, now, be a case for alternative sources of funding to be bid for.

Mr Benbow responded by highlighting the beneficial impact which DSG funding had made in ensuring Barnsley maintained one of the lowest number of young people not in education, employment or training. Among those pupils who had achieved a positive destination into education, employment or training after leaving school, were those in alternative provision as well as those being educated at home. Mr Benbow added that whilst the objective of this service was to move to a self sustaining financial position, there existed a number of current risks, not least of which was the current uncertainty over the fruition of the Sheffield City Region Devolution Deal; the nature of the City Region's delivery model for improving the skills and life chances of young people together with the amount of any eventual funding which the Borough could draw in. A further risk was the potential lack of success in a bidding process.

In addition, Ms Libreri warned that any withdrawal of funding for this purpose could risk impacting on work targeted at improving outcomes for specific cohorts of young people, particularly those with special educational needs and their transition to adulthood.

In deciding whether to continue to support employment and skills support for 14-19 year old pupils through DSG, a balance needed to be determined on the one hand, between the issue of sustainability and on the second, the risks inherent in withdrawing funding at this time.

EAL Provision

Ms Libreri contended that the £45,000 attributed to the Barnsley Alliance for improving the educational outcomes of pupils for whom English was not the primary language, should continue during 2017/18, as a result of the recent improvements made in attainment through the 'Champion Schools' initiative. Currently, this peer led support was only available without charge to maintained schools with academies being charged for accessing the resources available.

RESOLVED

- 2 (e) The Forum agrees that the proposed DSG 2017/18 funding allocations for the following services remain at the same levels as for 2016/17:**
- **Admissions = £275,000**
 - **Schools Forum administration costs = £7,000**
 - **Employee termination and pension costs = £75,000**
- 2 (f) Following consideration of the reports within Agenda Item 5 (d) of today's meeting, the Forum agrees the 2017/18 DSG budget allocation for the following services:**
- **Education support for looked after children = £200,000**
 - **School Intervention Fund and school improvement = £400,000**
- 2 (g) Following the outcome of a vote restricted to members of the Schools Group, the Forum agrees that funding for the 14-19 Years Project Team be reduced by £50,000 to £150,000 during 2017/18 and that funding provision for this activity be subject to regular review as part of a tapering and managed reduction of DSG funding.**
- 2 (h) That the Authority considers how best to re-allocate the £50,000**

saving resulting from the above reduction and to report on options to a future meeting of the Forum.

- 2 (i) The Forum agrees a proposed increase amounting to £100,000 to the Pupil Growth Fund, resulting in a total allocation of £400,000 during 2017/18 in reflection of changes to the growth criteria.
- 2 (j) The Forum agrees for £500,000 of funding concerning duties under the ESG, to be held centrally and to be allocated to the following local authority services, during 2017/18:
- Asset management (£251,000)
 - Education welfare (£208,000)
 - Statutory and regulatory duties (£41,000)
- 2 (k) The Forum notes the indicative level of Schools Block resources, identified in Mr Amahwe's report, that will be delegated to schools through the funding formula (Please see Minute Refs. 2 (e) – 2 (j))
- 2 (l) The Forum notes the funding factors and data set contained and used within the funding formula, as identified in Mr Amahwe's report and that this information and data forms the basis of the submission of the Authority's Pro Forma Tool to the DfE .
- 2 (m) After giving consideration to the effectiveness of this approach, the Forum agrees for the following budgets to be de-delegated and retained centrally by the local authority, during 2017/18:
- School contingency = £447,000
 - Supporting under performance among EAL pupils = £45,000
 - Eligibility for free school meals = £15,000
 - Staff cover costs = £261,000.

5 (e) Early Years Block Funding Arrangements

The Forum considered proposals on the funding arrangements for the Early Years Block, following the recent announcement on the new national funding formula and the arrangements for extending free child care entitlement for eligible parents up to 30 hours per week.

RESOLVED

- 2 (n) The Forum notes the provisional DSG funding settlement for the Early Years Block during 2017/18 and the impact of the new Early Years National Funding Formula for children aged 3 and 4 year olds in the Borough.
- 2 (o) The Forum, also, notes the outcome of the consultation undertaken by the Authority on changes to the funding arrangements.
- 2 (p) The Forum supports the proposals in Mr Amahwe's report concerning the allocation of funding, through the Early Years Single Funding Formula, to providers and settings in respect of children aged 3 and 4 years, during 2017/18.

5(f) Removal Of Education Services Grant Funding: Impact Upon Barnsley MBC

This report was withdrawn from consideration.

RESOLVED

- 2 (q) That a report on the removal of education services grant funding upon the Authority, be submitted to the next meeting of the Forum.**

5(g) Latest Schools Budget Outturn (Quarter 3: 2016/17)

Mr Amahwe informed the Forum of the latest outturn data on the delegated budget for maintained schools and centrally retained budgets. Commenting on individual schools balances, Mr Bowen referred to the ongoing financial plight of Penistone Grammar School and how the transitional protection arrangements forming part of the implementation of the new National Funding Formula for Schools would not offer any respite.

RESOLVED

- 2 (r) The Forum notes the latest projected outturn position for both the Schools Delegated Budget and Centrally Retained DSG Budgets, including the identified financial risks.**
- 2 (s) That, in terms of these risks, a briefing paper on the financial challenges facing Penistone Grammar School be considered at a future meeting of the Forum.**

6. PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE BARNSELY DRAFT SCHOOL TRAVEL ASSISTANCE POLICY (2017-20)

Ms Libreri alerted Members of the Forum to a public consultation on the proposals within the draft Borough School Travel Assistance Policy which was being managed by the Council's Planning and Transportation Service. The Forum was invited to respond to the consultation by the deadline date. The outcomes of the consultation would inform the Cabinet's final recommendation on the proposals which would be made in March, this year.

RESOLVED

- 3 The Forum notes the draft Policy and the invitation to respond to the proposals in the consultation.**

7. 'SCHOOLS THAT WORK FOR EVERYONE': EDUCATION GREEN PAPER (2016)

Ms Libreri referred to the recent consultation on the proposals made in the DfE's Education Green Paper and of the local response. Ms Libreri commented that the overriding message within the local response was that Barnsley did not support selective education as it would increase inequality in the system.

RESOLVED

- 4 The Forum notes Barnsley's response to the proposals in the Education Green Paper.**

8. APPRENTICESHIP LEVY: IMPACT UPON SCHOOLS

Mr Benbow presented his report on the Apprenticeship Levy and the impact upon schools, academies and multi academy trusts. This included reference to the Digital Apprentice Service and Digital Accounts, together with the Public Sector Apprenticeship Target to which schools would be subject.

Whilst schools in Barnsley had been alerted to the Levy prior to today's meeting of the Forum, there remained significant concern over its impact upon budgets as well as the impact of the Public Sector Apprenticeship Target upon job security elsewhere in the schools workforce.

RESOLVED

- 5 The Forum notes Mr Benbow's report and that the Authority consider the creation of a small Barnsley schools 'Task and Finish' Group to meet and consider the implications of the Levy in greater detail and how schools can be supported in this duty.**

8. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Next Meeting Of The Schools Forum

Mr Bowen suggested that in view of a clash with a meeting of the Schools Fair Access Panel, the date of the next meeting of the Forum be re-scheduled.

RESOLVED

- 6 That Members of the Forum be notified of a revised date for the next meeting as soon as possible.**

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

.....

Signed by the Chair of the Barnsley Schools Forum