

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES of the meeting held at Loxley House, Nottingham on 23 February 2017 from 13.46 - 14.40

Membership

Present

Sian Hampton (Chair)
Judith Kemplay (Vice Chair)
Bev Angell
Caroline Caille
Sally Coulton
David Holdsworth
David Hooker
Andy Jenkins
Tracy Rees
James Strawbridge
Sheena Wheatley

Absent

Maria Artingstoll
David Blackley
Gary Holmes
Chris Manze
Janet Molyneux
Terry Smith
Marcus Wells
Tracey Ydlibi

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Alistair Conquer	- Head of Educational Curriculum and Enrichment
Julie Corner	- Strategic Finance Business Partner
Pat Fielding	- Director of Education
Julia Holmes	- Senior Commercial Business Partner
Kathryn Stevenson	- Senior Commercial Business Partner
Ceri Walters	- Head of Commercial Finance
Alison Weaver	- Service Manager, Inclusive Education Service
Anna White	- Nottingham City Secondary Education Partnership
Michael Wilsher	- Inclusion Officer
Phil Wye	- Governance Officer

40 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Maria Artingstoll
Gary Holmes
Janet Molyneux
Marcus Wells

41 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

42 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2017 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

43 WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme was noted.

44 PROPOSED NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA UPDATE

Ceri Walters delivered a presentation on the proposed National Funding Formula, highlighting the following:

- (a) the Education Funding Agency (EFA) have confirmed that there will be a new Central School Services Block in 2018-19, meaning that the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) will now be split into four blocks: Schools, Early Years, High Needs and the new block;
- (b) all schools will move to a hard funding formula in 2019-20. Prior to this there will be transitional funding available. The Schools Block will be ring-fenced in 2018-19 but there will be some limited flexibility to this;
- (c) the schools formula will comprise the 12 proposed factors, with an additional factor for mobility. In 2018-19 they will fund growth on the basis of historic spend;
- (d) funding for Looked After Children will no longer be allocated through the DSG anymore but will be transferred to Pupil Premium Plus. The Central School Services Block will have a per-pupil formula with an additional factor for deprivation;
- (e) the EFA are proposing to include a funding floor to limit overall reductions as a result of the formula, and a minimum funding guarantee as part of the transition towards the formula's implementation;
- (f) the Department for Education (DfE) have published each school's baseline funding for 2016/17 and illustrative funding if the formula was implemented in full without any transitional protections. The impact for Nottingham schools shows a total reduction of 2.6%, or an average reduction per pupil of £133.33. In real terms, bearing inflation in mind, this equates to an actual cut of 11.3%, or an average of £578.34 per pupil. 98% of Nottingham schools will see a reduction in funding;
- (g) the deadline for the consultation is 22 March 2017. The Local Authority is in consultation with parents and schools are encouraged to reply to the consultation independently;
- (h) as a part of the proposed school formula, there will continue to be a substantial deprivation factor to reach a broad group of disadvantaged children. The weighting of the low prior attainment factor will increase, as well as the total spend

on English as an Additional Language (EAL);

- (i) the stage 2 consultation on the High Needs funding formula is also taking place. When fully implemented, Nottingham City would see a £5.9m (20.5%) increase in high needs funding, which is the highest percentage increase nationally.

The Chair commended the LA for its distribution of letters to inform parents of the proposed formula changes and to encourage them to respond to the consultation.

The Vice-Chair proposed that the Forum write a collective response to the consultation, expressing dissatisfaction that every school in Nottingham City will be losing funding through the new Formula.

The Trade Unions representative confirmed that the school-based unions have collated data, and written to all ward councillors about how their schools will be affected. They have also written to local MPs, including Lillian Greenwood who is on the Select Committee for Education.

RESOLVED to

- (1) note the information and thank Ceri for the presentation;**
- (2) request a timeline for funding approvals at the next meeting, and confirm timely establishment of the finance sub-group;**
- (3) write a letter the EFA in response to their consultation on behalf of the Forum by the Chair, to be shared with members before sending.**

45 SECONDARY HIGH NEEDS DEVOLVED FUNDING PILOT

Anna White, Strategic Director, Nottingham City Secondary Education Partnership (NCSEP), introduced the report providing the Forum with the outcome on the consultation with secondary schools on the future use of High Needs funding ring fenced for pupils who are at risk of or already permanently excluded from mainstream education. Anna highlighted the following:

- (a) the original proposal was to devolve funding to all secondary schools to give them a greater role in commissioning alternative provision and services, to ensure quality and improve outcomes;
- (b) unfortunately not all schools have agreed to opt into the pilot, as they are subject to a clawback clause for exclusions post April 2016 and would receive no funds or have to pay funds back to the Local Authority. This is because these schools have already permanently excluded pupils during the current financial year, the costs of which go beyond the agreed available funding;
- (c) the level of permanent exclusion in Nottingham has been high for a number of years, peaking in 2014/15. There are currently 105 pupils on roll at Denewood Learning Centre and 143 on roll at Unity Learning Centre which is unsustainable;

The following points were raised by members of the Forum during the discussion which followed:

- (d) there was originally a proposal for a primary pilot in Clifton as well, but this never happened as the secondary school didn't want to be involved which was frustrating for the primary heads;
- (e) the secondary heads that have not opted into the pilot are not against its principles and do recognise that the number of permanent exclusions needs to reduce;
- (f) quality assurance of the pilot will be scrutinised in a termly report to the Finance Sub-Group of the Schools Forum;
- (g) the pilot appears to benefit the schools that exclude the least rather than those that exclude a lot, however it should be seen as something that will eventually benefit the entire city school population, rather than individual schools. This will be easier to realise if or when all schools are on board.

RESOLVED to

- (1) note that three trusts comprising of six secondary schools have accepted the Local Authority's offer of their share of High Needs funding based on the July 2016 Finance Model and SLA presented by the LA. This group will form the High Needs Exclusions Pilot and is made up of the Greenwood Dale Academies Trust, Bluecoat Academies Trust and the Trinity Catholic School. Funding will be released for this current financial year (2016/17) prior to the end of the financial year and for financial year 2017/18;**
- (2) note that at present not all schools could agree to the pilot, due to high exclusion rates and an exclusion cost recovery clawback clause, and some schools in the city are not incentivised to join under the current finance model;**
- (3) note that NCSEP and the LA will continue to work together to find a position where all secondary schools in the city will participate in these arrangements;**
- (4) note the reinstatement of the Finance Sub-Group of the Schools Forum and that NCSEP will be expected to provide a termly update on progress in relation to the pilot proposal.**

46 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY FAIR ACCESS FUNDING

Michael Wilsher, Inclusion Officer, introduced the report notifying the Forum of additional funding for secondary Fair Access and an increase in funding from the 2017/18 financial year for primary and secondary Fair Access processes. Michael highlighted the following:

- (a) over the last 3 academic years there has been a significant increase in the number of cases considered through primary and secondary Fair Access

protocols. The complexity of support required for pupils has also increased;

- (b) primary Fair Access is managed by the Local Authority. There is a need to increase capacity to create a sufficient service and develop primary Fair Access processes in line with that available for secondary schools;
- (c) an analysis of Fair Access processes will take place by the end of this academic year, including a review of service delivery and costs to ensure value for money and quality of the service;

The following points were raised during the discussion which followed:

- (d) the amount of support required for primary schools is decided in discussion between the school and the Local Authority. This is for immediate support to ensure quick admission to the school;
- (e) from September 2017 there should be a long-term plan in place with a service commissioned with a contract awarded for at least 3 years;
- (f) most Fair Access cases at secondary level are out of education or at risk of permanent exclusion. At primary level most cases are for families fleeing domestic violence or children out of education. It is complex to unpick the reasons for the increase in cases, as there are many factors.

RESOLVED to

- (1) note additional funding for secondary Fair Access for the 2016/17 financial year of £100k;**
- (2) note the proposal to increase the annual primary Fair Access funding to £100k from the 2017/18 financial year and to carry over any remaining funding to support these processes up to a maximum of £40k;**
- (3) note the proposal to increase the annual secondary Fair Access funding to £300k from the 2017/18 financial year and to carry over any remaining funding to support these processes up to a maximum of £70k;**
- (4) note the proposal to continue to fund £57k each financial year from 2017/18 to support managed moves as part of the broader Fair Access process and as a strategy to reduce permanent exclusions. Funding will be based on actual expenditure, with any underspend being unearmarked and will not carry over;**
- (5) note the proposal that each financial year £25,000 from within the Statutory School Reserve (SSR) will be allocated for emergency expenditure incurred by primary and secondary Fair Access by the end of the academic year. Any underspend will be unearmarked within the SSR;**
- (6) note that the local authority will take a strategic decision on the long term support and structure of the primary and secondary Fair Access processes and support from September 2017 onwards. This will be subject to internal**

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decision making processes, procurement regulations and approval as required.