

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES of the meeting held at Loxley House on 23 April 2015 from 1.48pm - 3.27pm

Membership

Present

Susi Artis
Mark Precious (Chair)
Caroline Caille
Sally Coulton
Carole Fearria
Terry Smith
Paul Halcro
Andy Jenkins
Chris Manze
Judith Kemplay
Janet Molyneux
James Strawbridge
Tracey Ydlibi

Absent

Bev Angell
Carol Barker
Sian Hampton
Gary Holmes
Richard Matthews
Wendy Vincent

Substitutes

Andy Seymour (for Sian Hampton)
Charlotte Malik (for Carol Barker)

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Alistair Conquer	- Head of Education Partnerships
Pat Fielding	- Director of Education
Julia Holmes	- Finance Analyst, Children and Adults
Lucy Juby	- Project Manager, School Organisation
Ceri Walters	- Finance Business Partner, Children and Adults
Councillor Sam Webster	- Executive Assistant
Laura Wilson	- Governance Officer
Phil Wye	- Governance Officer

39 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Bev Angell (The Nottingham Nursery)
Carol Barker (Special Schools)
Sian Hampton (Secondary Academies)
Gary Holmes (Early Years PVI)
Richard Matthews (Maintained Primary Schools)

40 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

41 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Forum confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2015 as a correct record and they were signed by the chair. The following items were discussed:

- (a) in relation to minute 36 (2), Alistair Conquer, Head of Education Partnerships, explained that the report has been written but needs further advice from finance before being presented to the Forum;
- (b) in relation to minute 37 (2), it has been confirmed that the Trade Union representative will be able to attend meetings of the Schools Forum Sub-Group;
- (c) in relation to minute 38 (d), the Finance Business Partner, Children and Adults will give an update at the next meeting on work to reduce the impact of eligibility of free school meals on the Pupil Premium.

42 WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme for the June meeting of the Forum was noted. During the course of the Forum the following additional items were proposed and accepted:

- (a) update from the Finance Business Partner, Children and Adults, on work being done to reduce the impact of Free School Meals on the Pupil Premium;
- (b) presentation from the City School Catering Service.

43 REVISED MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUTION FOR NOTTINGHAM CITY SCHOOLS' FORUM

Alistair Conquer, Head of Education Partnerships, welcomed Chris Manze and Tracey Ydlibi as new members of the Schools' Forum following new guidance from the Education Funding Agency.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) note the appointment of Chris Manze from Stone Soup Academy as the AP Academy representative;**
- (2) note the appointment of Tracey Ydlibi from Nethergate School as the Apecial Academy representative;**
- (3) note the new consultation roles of the Schools' Forum as detailed in paragraph 1.3 of the report.**

44 UPDATE ON THE PUPIL GROWTH CONTINGENCY FUND

Lucy Juby, Project Manager, School Organisation, gave a verbal update on the Pupil Growth Contingency Fund, highlighting the following points:

- (a) the total remaining balance for 2014/15 is £98,933. The only changes since the last forum are for Glenbrook Primary and Nottingham Academy;
- (b) the total remaining balance for 2015/16 is £91,358. A number of schools have been added since the last report in December 2014 as they will be taking additional pupils;
- (c) 100% of parents who applied on-time for a reception place for 2015/16 have been offered a school. High demand and pressure still exists in some areas but the overall picture has improved on previous years;
- (d) possible expansion of Fernwood Primary is being investigated, though this needs to be consulted on.

Forum members felt that the information was helpful, however more information could be provided on the possible impact of rising pupil numbers on secondary provision.

RESOLVED for Lucy Juby to return to the next forum with a more extensive report including an update on work being done across the city to address the likely impact of rising pupil numbers on secondary schools.

45 STATUTORY SCHOOL RESERVE UPDATE

Ceri Walters, Finance Business Partner, Children and Adults, presented her report on the Statutory Schools Reserve (SSR), highlighting the following points:

- (a) the report includes all commitments approved by the Schools' Forum to date;
- (b) the uncommitted balance of the SSR is £5.747m. This figure may still change before the outturn report at the next forum in June;
- (c) the balance represents 2.47% of the 2015/16 Dedicated Schools' Grant (DSG) allocation, which is in line with the Local Authority's recommendations;
- (d) the total potential risk to the reserve is identified as £0.818m, which is made up from the following:
 - academy DSG recoupment;
 - deficit balances for sponsored academy conversions;
- (e) the figure for the risk is much lower than the previous figure of £3.916m. This reduction is due to the removal of the following from the risk register:
 - academy DSG recoupment;
 - Children & Families bill;
 - higher needs inter authority recoupment;
 - extension of Free School Meals (FSM).

The following comments were made during the discussion:

- (f) some schools that use the City School Catering Service have not been receiving the additional funds that they understood they would receive with the extension of FSM. A presentation from the City School Catering Service would be helpful to update the Forum on this.
- (g) if any further risks are identified during the year, a new risk assessment will be made;

RESOLVED to

- (1) note the total value of the SSR as at 1 April 2014 was £12.781m;**
- (2) note the latest commitments against this balance are £7.034m;**
- (3) note the latest uncommitted balance of the SSR is £5.747m;**
- (4) note the values identified in the risk register are £0.818m;**
- (5) agree for the City School Catering Service to give a presentation at the next forum in June regarding their service.**

46 ENHANCING CAPACITY

Pat Fielding, Director of Education, presented his report requesting £0.061m from the SSR to fund 200 days of activity from the Consultant Support Team. He highlighted the following points:

- (a) the Consultant Support Team is now a traded service, and their time must be bought back. Their time is increasingly used up by neighbouring authorities. This is regrettable as the team is a high quality resource which has developed expertise over time within the city;
- (b) the team's service will be offered to all schools, including academies, high performing schools and special schools.

The following comments were made in the discussion following the presentation:

- (c) the consultants do fantastic work and they have a local context which adds value to their advice;
- (d) buying back the consultants' hours is a good short term solution to raise standards, but may not provide value for money in the longer term.

RESOLVED to

- (1) assign £0.061m from the SSR in 2015/16 to support specific work required to enhance and deepen the support and challenge provided in relation to securing improvements in the effectiveness of city schools and academies;**
- (2) request an end-of-year update to monitor the effectiveness of this work.**

47 STRATEGIC ALLIANCE - ACTIVITY FUNDING

Pat Fielding, Director of Education, presented his report requesting £0.600m from the SSR to develop a citywide strategic alliance and fund focussed improvement activities, highlighting the following:

- (a) the City Council has already agreed to match fund £0.600 to this project;
- (b) the project is influenced by the London Challenge which has been hugely successful in improving outcomes for children in inner London by encouraging collaboration of a wide range of practitioners and schools;
- (c) the Nottingham project will be appropriate to local circumstances and will be led by a strategic alliance of local practitioners and not by the local authority;
- (d) consultation has already been taken out with various schools and organisations and there has been lots of interest in participation;
- (e) in the first instance the key focus of the alliance will be upon developing world class and cutting edge teaching and learning in mathematics, and will focus on all ages of children from early years foundation stage to key stage 4;

The following comments were made in the discussion which followed:

- (f) the project could help to spread specialist provision and knowledge more evenly around the city so that it is available in all areas;
- (g) the money should be used to identify more streamlined, efficient ways of working as the extra capacity does not currently exist within schools;
- (h) it will be positive to re-establish an educational community in Nottingham, and this project should provide an opportunity to show that Nottingham takes education seriously.

RESOLVED to

- (1) approve the allocation of £0.600 from the SSR in 2015/16 to develop a citywide strategic alliance and fund focussed improvement activities;**
- (2) agree to receive a further update report identifying spending streams and their impacts.**