

Nottingham City Council

Schools Forum

Minutes of the meeting held at remotely via Zoom on 13 October 2020 from 1.47 pm - 2.47 pm

Membership

Present

Judith Kemplay (Chair)	Maintained Primaries
Derek Hobbs (Vice Chair)	Secondary Academies
Paul Burke	Secondary Academies
Meeta Dave	Primary Academies
Kerrie Fox	Pupil Referral Units
Kerrie Henton	AP Academies & Free Schools
Tim Jeffs	Primary Academies
Patricia Lewis	Maintained Special Schools
Stephen McLaren	The Nottingham Nursery School
Janet Molyneux	Maintained Primaries
Lee Morgan	Special Academies
Cath Rowell	Secondary Academies
Debbie Simon	Early Years PVI
Terry Smith	Maintained Primaries
Sheena Wheatley	Trade Unions

Absent

Phil Briscoe	14-19 Education
James Strawbridge	Primary Academies
David Tungate	Secondary Academies
Bob White	Secondary Academies

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Jackie Handley	- Insurance & Risk Manager
Elaine Harrison	- HR Consultant, Employee Relations
Julia Holmes	- Senior Commercial Business Partner
Nick Lee	- Director of Education Services
Patricia Lockhart	- Commercial Analyst
Kathryn Stevenson	- Senior Commercial Business Partner
Ceri Walters	- Head of Commercial Finance
Phil Wye	- Governance Officer

1 Election of Chair

Resolved to appoint Judith Kemplay as Chair of this Forum for the 2020-21 academic year

2 Election of Vice-Chair

Resolved to appoint Derek Hobbs as Vice-Chair of this Forum for the 2020-21 academic year

3 Membership

Resolved to note

- (1) the current membership of the Forum;**
- (2) the appointment of Kerrie Fox as a new member representing PRUs;**
- (3) the vacancy for a Primary Academy member.**

4 Apologies for Absence

David Tungate (Secondary Academies)
Bob White (Secondary Academies)

5 Declarations of Interest

None.

6 Minutes

The Forum confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2020 as a correct record.

7 2019/20 Dedicated Schools Grant - Outturn Report

Ceri Walters, Head of Commercial Finance, presented the report setting out the 2019/20 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) outturn position and the updated reserve balance, highlighting the following:

- (a) the 2019/20 outturn was an underspend of £1.264m compared to the budget set in January 2019. Underspends were in the Schools and Early Years blocks, with an overspend in the High Needs block;
- (b) underspend in the Schools Block was mostly from the Pupil Growth Contingency Fund, which will remain in the Statutory Schools Reserve (SSR). There has been a continuing underspend in the Early Years block for 3 years and consideration is now being given to the extent and timing of a potential further base rate increase;
- (c) the SSR balance as at 1 April 2019 was £6.469m, and after in year movements during 2019/20 the balance is £6.999m. Removing the commitments and ring fenced funding from this results in an un-earmarked balance of £2.224m. There is no statutory requirement for the levels of this reserve however its adequacy should align to any in year risks, which in Nottingham City would likely be High Needs and exclusions.

Resolved to

- (1) note that the 2019/20 financial outturn position of the DSG was an under spend of £1.264m (0.46% of the overall budget) against a final budget of £275.629m;**
- (2) note that this under spend has been allocated back to the Statutory Schools Reserve (SSR) resulting in a closing balance of £6.999m for 2019/20;**
- (3) note that the uncommitted balance on the SSR balance is £2.224m.**

8 De-delegation of funding for Trade Union time off for Senior Representatives for 2021/2022

Sheena Wheatley, National Education Union, presented the report outlining the proposed funding arrangements for trade union facility time for senior trade union representatives from schools to attend negotiation and consultation meetings and to represent their members in schools from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

Resolved for

- (1) maintained schools to note the revised methodology for calculating the funding available for trade union facility time from the financial year 2021/22. Whereby, the per pupil rate and lump sum amount have been increased by 1.5% each financial year since 2016/17 to generate a revised rate per pupil and lump sum for 2021/22. This will ensure there is sufficient funding to cover the salaries of the trade union representatives in both maintained schools and academies and achieve a breakeven position in the financial year 2021/22. This will also enable the total time allocated to trade union representatives to be increased back to the level they were in the financial year 2016/17;**
- (2) maintained mainstream primary schools to approve the de-delegation of funding for senior trade union representatives at a rate of £1.49 per pupil and a lump sum of £1537.44 per school. These charges will generate a £0.145m projected income and is based upon the current 66 maintained schools and academies buying into the scheme;**
- (3) maintained mainstream primary schools to note that the total funding requested to be de-delegated by maintained mainstream primary schools is £0.061m. This is made up of £0.016m generated by pupil's numbers and £0.045m lump sum funding.**

9 Update on the consultation with maintained schools on the revised Scheme for financing schools (Fair Funding Scheme) and the proposed changes

Ceri Walters, Head of Commercial Finance, presented the report updating the Forum on the findings of the consultation on the revised scheme for financing schools (Fair Funding Scheme) and seeking approval for the recommended changes to the scheme as required, highlighting the following:

- (a) the consultation document was circulated to all head teachers and chairs of governors of maintained schools on 18 September 2020, with a response period of 13 days;
- (b) two changes were proposed:
 - i. from 2021 to 2022 funding year each school must submit a 3-year budget forecast each year by 15 June each year;
 - ii. from 1 April 2020 Local Authority Maintained Schools (LAMS) are able to join the Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA).

Resolved for maintained schools to approve the changes made to the Scheme for financing schools.

10 Funding Update 2021/22

Ceri Walters, Head of Commercial Finance, gave a presentation and provided the following information:

- (a) on the 20 July 2020 the Minister of State for School Standards announced the provisional funding allocations for the financial year 2021/22, as well as additional funding schemes that are available to schools to recover costs associated with Covid-19 in the financial year 2020/21;
- (b) in 2021/22 the national increase in high needs funding will be £730m or 10% compared to 2020/21;
- (c) the funding factors used in the schools and high needs National Funding Formulae (NFF) in 2021/22 remain the same but there are some technical changes including the addition of funding from the teachers' pay grant and the teachers' pension employer contribution grant, and an update to the Income Deprivation Affection Children Index;
- (d) schools funding through the Schools NFF is increasing by 4% overall in 2021-22, excluding growth. Estimates for the schools block in 2021/22 are £222.406m, which is an increase of 1.97%. This will be distributed to schools via the NFF based on schools' and pupils' needs and characteristics. The funding floor will ensure that every school is allocated at least 2% more pupil led funding per pupil compared to 2020/21;
- (e) in the illustrative funding allocation for 2021/22 the Central Expenditure has been reduced by a further 20%, meaning that there is a funding gap of -£1.968m. Use of this for Local Authority services will therefore be more restricted;
- (f) for high needs funding, Nottingham City is receiving the maximum increase of 12% which equates to £5.377m, which should enable it to meet existing high needs pressures and significantly help address the strategic priorities outlined in the 2018/23 SEND strategy.

11 Consultation on High Needs Places

Kathryn Stevenson, Senior Commercial Business Partner, delivered a presentation to share with the Forum draft proposals for planned high needs places for the 2021/22 academic year, and highlighted the following:

- (a) the local authority identifies where a place number change may be required by taking into account current numbers, known leavers at the end of 2021, anticipated new admissions and limits to physical capacity;
- (b) planned place changes for September 2021 are an 8 place increase at Woodlands, an 8 place increase at Nethergate. No further increase is planned at Woodlands or Westbury and Rosehill and Oakfield's planned places already reflect physical capacity;
- (c) a total of £0.451m additional funding will be required for special schools for next financial year arising from place number changes.

12 High Level Needs Funding Review Update

Kathryn Stevenson, Senior Commercial Business Partner, delivered a presentation and highlighted the following:

- (a) The local authority is rolling out a new High Level Needs (HLN) application & allocation process to underpin HLN funding for the primary phase from April 2021. This is currently undergoing testing with a sample of schools, and then will be launched to all schools ready for use straight after half term. SENCO training and support will be provided;
- (b) HLN application grids for all pupils will be required from schools by the end of November. The full dataset of applications will then be analysed to ensure that the allocation model is generating robust outcomes;
- (c) schools can submit an application for any pupil whose additional support needs exceed £6,000. There will be more bands and access to higher levels of funding than previously for pupils with the most complex needs;
- (d) a presentation on the new HLN model outcomes and financial implications will be presented at the January meeting. The next stage will be to conduct an HLN review for secondary and early years phases for implementation the following April.

13 Update on Inclusion Projects

Nick Lee, Director of Education Services, presented the report updating the Forum on the decision to put in place a Routes to Inclusion (R2i) delivery team and an expanded Intensive Support Team (IST) for September 2020, highlighting the following:

- (a) the anticipated impact on young people's mental health and behaviour has been well documented throughout the Covid pandemic. The Council needs a fully staffed and operational response to support schools with young people and their

needs for the start of the new academic year;

- (b) in the context of the pandemic, the proposal is more critical than ever. With an expanded Intensive Support team (IST), more children can be supported when their school place is in crisis. The IST work with school staff, the child and the family plus external agencies and departments to prevent exclusion and allow the child to remain in mainstream school. The model was trialled in 2019/20 and was very successful;
- (c) delaying a decision pending further consultation with the Schools Forum Sub-Group was not feasible due to the expiry of temporary staff contracts in July 2020 and the need to secure the experienced staff;
- (d) it is anticipated that in the future these teams will become self-funded and will not required to be funded from the DSG reserve.

Resolved to

- (1) note the use of £0.472m from the DSG reserve to fund a R2i delivery team for two academic years from September 2020;**
- (2) note the use of £0.090m from the DSG reserve to fund the expansion of the Intensive Support Team (IST) for the period September 2020 to March 2021.**

14 Future meeting dates

Resolved to note that the Forum is scheduled meet at 1.45pm on the following Tuesdays, either remotely or at Loxley House:

- **1st December 2020**
- **19th January 2021**
- **23rd February 2021**
- **27th April 2021**
- **22nd June 2021**