

Nottingham City Council

Schools Forum

Minutes of the meeting livestreamed at <https://www.youtube.com/user/NottCityCouncil> on 7 December 2021 from 1.45 pm - 2.51 pm

Membership

Present

Kerrie Fox (PRUs)
Andy Smith (Secondary Academies)
Paul Burke (Secondary Academies) (Vice Chair)
Meeta Dave (Primary Academies)
Terry Smith (Maintained Primary Head Teachers)
Tim Jeffs (Primary Academies)
Judith Kemplay (Maintained Primary Head Teachers) (Chair)
Sheena Wheatley (Trade Unions)

Absent

Patricia Lewis (Maintained Special Schools)
Christine Green (Strategic Finance Business Partner)
Janet Molyneux (Maintained Primary Governors)
Mohammed Ramzan (Nottingham College)
Lisa Wilson (14-19 Education)
Patricia Lewis (Maintained Special Schools)
James Strawbridge (Primary Academies)

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

John Dexter - Director of Education
Julia Holmes - Senior Commercial Business Partner
Nick Lee - Director of Education Services
Mark Leavesley - Governance Officer
Kathryn Stevenson - Senior Commercial Business Partner
Kathryn Bouchlaghem - Early Years Manager
Lucy Juby - Project Manager- Education Services

10 Apologies for Absence

Patricia Lewis (Maintained Special Schools)
Christine Green (Strategic Finance Business Partner)
Janet Molyneux (Maintained Primary Governors)
Mohammed Ramzan (Nottingham College)
Lisa Wilson (14-19 Education)
Patricia Lewis (Maintained Special Schools)
James Strawbridge (Primary Academies)

11 Declarations of Interest

None.

12 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 12 October 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

13 Central expenditure budget 2022/23: on-going commitments

Nick Lee (Director of Education Services) elaborated on his report which was seeking approval of the Central Expenditure Budget 2022/23 – On Going Commitments. The following information was highlighted:

- a) The Forum members were being asked to approve the ongoing commitments budgets set out in Table 3 of the report totalling £1.643m, noting the additional historical detail set out in Appendix A of the report.
- b) It was noted that the estimated cost of Copyright Licences totalling £0.223m does not require approval as the licences are managed and procured by central government.
- c) Should the 2022/23 settlement for ongoing commitments be less than anticipated the Local Authority, in the Schools Budget report 2022/23, will present revised funding allocations to the Schools Forum on 18 January 2022.

Resolved to

- (1) approve the ongoing commitments budgets set out in Table 3 totalling £1.643m, noting the additional historical detail set out in Appendix A of the report;**
- (2) note that the estimated cost of Copyright Licences totalling £0.223m does not require approval as the licences are managed and procured by central government;**
- (3) note that where values are based on estimated pupil numbers, this report has used the latest October 2020 census, however, once the October 2021 census and final allocations are issued from the DfE these figures will be updated and represented in the final budget report;**
- (4) approve that should any additional funding be received above the £1.643m, that will be allocated to the LA to cover the cost of retained duties.**

14 Central expenditure budget 2022/23: historic commitments

Nick Lee (Director of Education Services) elaborated on his report which was seeking approval of historic commitments set out in the report totalling £3.905m for the financial year 2022/23. The following points were highlighted:

- a) The Sub Group have looked at this in detail over the year and noted that the Government is cutting budgets year on year.
- b) In keeping with the Department of Education's (DfE) commitment to reduce historic commitment funding, Nottingham City's historic commitments funding have

been cut by a further 20% in 2022/23 which also happened in the financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22.

- c) As a Local Authority, one of the main issues faced with regards to costs is the significant reduction in the placement budget, the shortfall of which has to be managed through the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- d) In response to a question raised by the Chair, the Director of Education Services gave assurance that despite the Safeguarding training budget being removed in 2022/23 the loss of income is forecast to be met by income generated by the service and any significant changes to this will be reported back to the Schools Forum and the earliest possible date.

Resolved to approve the historic commitments set out in Table 3 of the report totalling £3.905m for the financial year 2022/23, noting the additional historical detail set out in the appendices to the report.

15 Early Years Central Expenditure 2022/23

Kathryn Stevenson (Senior Commercial Business Partner) and Kathryn Bouchlaghem (Early Years Manager) elaborated on the report seeking approval of the Early Years Central Expenditure Budget for 2022/23. The following information has highlighted:

- a) The report was brought before the Forum annually as part of the budgeting process which was seeking approval in principle the Early Years Central Expenditure of £1.025m for 2022/23. This represents an increase of 1.69% compared to 2021/22 and allows for an uplift on pay costs of 2% (in line with the assumption in the Council's wider budget setting process), with other elements of the central expenditure budget remaining the same as 2021/22.
- b) An update will need to be provided as part of the 2022/23 Schools Budget Report as the 2022/23 Dedicated School Grant (DGS) early years funding settlement has yet to be announced.
- c) There is uncertainty over what pupil data the ESFA will use in calculating indicative allocations for 2022/23. In normal circumstances, it would be based on January 2021 data. However, this date corresponded with a national lockdown and interim funding protection arrangements are currently in place for early years DSG funding.
- d) Since publication of the report it was explained that the Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) rates for funding coming into the Local Authority in 2022/23 for 2 year olds and 3 & 4 year olds had been announced and these had both been significantly increased, from 8 pence to 21pence and from 6pence to 17 pence (an hour) respectively.
- e) The Continued Professional Development (CPD) offer has being modified and there has been a shift in how the training is delivered to meet the emerging needs of the workforce and national policy. Initially uptake was low but this has since doubled and the demand for the CPD offer is high requiring additional resource.

The Chair thanked officers for the report and noted that it was the youngest people who had been most severely impacted by Covid due to the disruption in their education.

Resolved

- (1) to approve Early Years Central Expenditure of £1.025m for 2022/23;**
- (2) to note that following the announcement of the DSG settlement for 2022/23, an update will be provided in the January 2022 Schools Budget Report in relation to compliance with the regulations;**
- (3) to note the LA's intention to pass the LA's full 3 & 4-year-old funding rate increase in the 2022/23 DSG settlement to schools/providers via the hourly base rate.**

16 Proposed pupil growth allocation for 2022/23

Lucy Juby (Project Manager - Education Services) elaborated on the report which was seeking approval of the allocation of £1.116m to support pupil growth in 2022/23. The following points were highlighted:

- a) The Pupil Growth funds are a mechanism nationally to support expanding schools; ensuring sufficiency of school places being a statutory duty of the Local Authority (LA).
- b) The LA holds a central fund which enables them to support schools that are providing significant additional capacity to meet the basic need school places and avoids schools being at a disadvantage with a further £0.247m has been set aside to allow for contingency, to support any other schools accommodating additional pupils.
- c) For maintained schools, there is usually a funding lag period of 7 months, between September and March, if schools have to provide additional staff for an extra class of pupils, but the increased number on roll are not reflected in their budget until the following April. The PGCF is used to support schools to address this funding lag.
- d) Despite ongoing expansions, demand for school places continued to rise with the overall capacity level being squeezed.

Resolved

- (1) to approve the allocation of £1.116m to support pupil growth in 2022/23 (noting that appendix 1 outlines the current commitments and projected requirements for pupil growth in 2022/23 based on the current PGCF criteria for primary and secondary growth);**
- (2) to note:**
 - a) the requirement to allocate funding to academies for the period April to August 2022 as guided by the ESFA (but which will be reimbursed to the LA's Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG));**

- b) that the amount to be allocated (and reimbursed) is £0.445m;**
 - c) that the total amount of academies individual school budget shares will be netted off against the pupil growth given out for this period, and the Authority's Dedicated Schools Grant for 2022/23 will be adjusted accordingly;**
- (3) to approve the allocation of any unallocated DSG funding in the Schools Block, which cannot be passed onto schools due the national funding formula guidelines in 2022/23, to the pupil growth contingency fund should there be a surplus balance.**

17 De-delegation of funding for Trade Union time off for Senior Representatives for 2022/2023

Elaine Harrison, Employee Relations Consultant, Human Resources, elaborated on her report and which outlined 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 2022 to 31 March 2023.

The following points were highlighted:

- a) The decision made by primary maintained schools at Schools Forum on 13 October 2020 to de-delegate from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 related to that year only, so a new approval is required for de-delegation to continue from 1 April 2022 to March 2023.
- b) Schools Forum members of maintained mainstream primary schools must decide whether this service should be provided for centrally and the decision will apply to all maintained mainstream primary schools in that phase.
- c) There are 7 recognised Trade Unions, with reps getting access to facility time. The time allocated is based on member numbers which is submitted annually. The facilities time is divided between the reps which are paid for by facilities time through a pooled arrangement.
- d) Regarding value for money, Union reps spend time negotiating on all major policies affecting Education; annually reps are required to examine Pay Policy prior for it going out to consultation and once agreed, passed to all schools that have bought into the HR services. This prevents the number of disputes as a consultation has already been undertaken and an outcome reached.
- e) Without trade union facility time, individual schools would have to devise their own Pay Policy and without the pooled arrangements schools would be required to negotiate contractual policies including the most complex policies such as Pay and Disciplinary.
- f) The Key role of the Trade Unions is to discuss, consult and negotiate; they meet regularly with Local Authorities to discuss emerging issues in a non- adversarial manner assisting and supporting schools where there are complex re-organisations and re-structures.

In response to questions asked, the following information was highlighted:

- g) The current funding method means that academies will be reimbursed for time spent away from school on TU duties.
- h) Maintained schools and academies are reimbursed the salaries of the representatives who are employed by them.
- i) It would be difficult for individual schools to negotiate their own policies and schools participating in the trade union arrangement would benefit from harmonising policies which would provide consistency, providing assistance for schools' leaders and stability.
- j) It was requested that in future, a more detailed report be provided for the forum members which would include a breakdown of costs.

Resolved

- (1) that maintained mainstream primary schools approve the de-delegation of funding for senior trade union representatives at a rate of £1.55 per pupil and a lump sum of £1,571 per school (noting that these charges will generate a £0.155m projected income and were based upon 69 maintained schools and academies buying into the scheme);**
- (2) that maintained mainstream primary schools noted that the total funding requested to be de-delegated by maintained mainstream primary schools was £0.63m, made up of £0.017m generated by pupil's numbers and £0.046m lump sum funding.**