

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES of the meeting held Loxley House on 12 February 2015 from 1.48pm - 3.22pm

Membership

Present

Mark Precious (Chair)
Sian Hampton (Vice Chair)
Susie Artis
Caroline Caille
Carole Fearria
Paul Halcro
Gary Holmes
Andy Jenkins
Janet Molyneux
James Strawbridge

Absent

Bev Angell
Carol Barker
Sally Coulton
Judith Kemplay
Richard Matthews
Terry Smith
Wendy Vincent

Substitutes

Eleanor Tweedie (for Wendy Vincent)

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Alistair Conquer	- Head of Education Partnerships
Pat Fielding	- Director of Education
Jennifer Hardy	- Project Manager, School Organisation
Julia Holmes	- Finance Analyst, Children and Adults
Lucy Juby	- Project Manager, School Organisation
Martin Smith	- Sport, Outdoor Learning and Adventure Services Manager
Kathryn Stevenson	- Finance Analyst, Children and Adults
Jon Rea	- Engagement and Participation Lead Officer
Ceri Walters	- Finance Business Partner, Children and Adults
Councillor Sam Webster	- Executive Assistant
Laura Wilson	- Governance Officer
Phil Wye	- Governance Officer
Ann Witheford	- Public

28 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Bev Angell (The Nottingham Nursery)
Carol Barker (Special Schools)
Richard Matthews (Maintained Primary Schools)

29 CHANGE OF MEETING DATE

RESOLVED to reschedule the Schools Forum meeting on 23 July 2015 to 18 June 2015

30 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED to appoint Sian Hampton as Vice-Chair

31 CHANGE TO MEMBERSHIP

Paul Halcro was welcomed to the Schools Forum as a new secondary academy representative.

32 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

33 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Forum confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2014 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

In relation to minute 21(4), Ceri Walters, Finance Business Partner, Children and Adults, reported that a link has now been provided in Scene with further details of the Health and Safety benefits for schools.

34 WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme for the April meeting of the Forum was noted with the addition of the following reports:

- (a) Reserves Update from Ceri Walters, Finance Business Partner, Children and Adults, and
- (b) Building Resilience and Character: A Programme of Education in Nottingham from Martin Smith, Sport, Outdoor Learning and Adventure Services Manager.

35 UPDATE ON THE PUPIL GROWTH CONTINGENCY FUND

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

- (a) the remaining fund currently stands at £187,933;
- (b) the spend for two schools has changed since October:
 - the figure for Bluecoat Primary has reduced as the original amount included classroom set up costs which are no longer needed;
 - the figure for Rufford Primary has increased as the previous amount was an estimate which has been revised based on information provided by the school;
- (c) 33 children are now on roll at Bluecoat Primary which opened in January.

36 BUILDING RESILIENCE AND CHARACTER: A PROGRAMME OF EDUCATION IN NOTTINGHAM

Martin Smith, Sport, Outdoor Learning and Adventure Services Manager, gave a presentation on Building Resilience and Character: A Programme of Education in Nottingham, and highlighted the following points:

- (a) a series of interventions are taking place nationally around character and resilience building in children. Nottingham is in an ideal position to take advantage of this;
- (b) it is now recognised that too much focus is on academic qualifications and not enough is on resilience and character building. Development of the 'whole child' is therefore seen as a priority;
- (c) there has also been research internationally into these problems, for example in the USA and in Singapore. There is now evidence to show that a child with positive character traits will better develop their creativity and problem solving skills. As an example it has been demonstrated that boys who take part in outdoor activities improve their writing skills;
- (d) evidence from research can be used for social mobility of disadvantaged children, and to see if government schemes such as the Pupil Premium are being used effectively to give these children equal opportunities. This will help to put them on an equivalent footing for future employment and training prospects;
- (e) character and personal development ought to be a part of everyday school life and integrated into the curriculum. Lessons can be learnt from health services where similar evidence-based approaches have been used to improve outcomes;
- (f) the related programme in Nottingham is being called 'Opportunity Notts', which has 125 things that you must do in Nottingham before you leave school over 5 different levels. This will help all pupils to make a positive contribution to their community;
- (g) a website will go live for 'Opportunity Notts' which will engage with young people and encourage them to complete the challenges. Schools and Youth Groups will also be able to use this as a tool for accessing the activities. The website is currently in development;
- (h) four separate DfE character bids have already been made from various agencies across Nottingham. This programme will help to bring these together and build on existing partnership work;
- (i) a bid will be brought to the next Schools Forum for funding of £1m over 3 years.

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

- (j) schools can use Opportunity Notts to engage with the offer in the city, however it is not just aimed at schools. Children can also involve themselves or with their families. Children will choose their own mentors, which can be any adult, be it a teacher, a parent or somebody else;
- (k) the scheme has not been launched to schools yet but this will be soon so that their engagement can be gauged and monitored;
- (l) the bid would be welcomed by schools but it needs to be clear, well thought out and sustainable. It will need to visibly show what will be required from schools and teachers as their time can be limited;
- (m) opportunities for young people in Nottingham already exist, so duplication should be avoided. Martin is already aware of many of these and hopes to integrate as many existing opportunities as possible;
- (n) there are barriers which exist for some families such as the cost of membership or travel. The programme needs to be robust in order to allow these families to engage fully.

RESOLVED to

- (1) note the content of the presentation;**
- (2) agree for Martin Smith to return to the next meeting with a full report outlining the bid.**

37 SCHOOLS FORUM SUB-GROUP WORK PLAN AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

Ceri Walters, Finance Business Partner, Children and Adults, presented her report detailing the Terms of Reference and work plan for the Schools Forum Sub-Group (SFSG), as agreed in the last meeting on 18 December 2014. She highlighted the following points:

- (a) the SFSG has no formal powers and is purely a consultative body for the Schools Forum;
- (b) the SFSG will discuss priorities for school improvement as a part of its remit.

RESOLVED:

- (1) to approve the SFSG Terms of Reference;**
- (2) for Ceri Walters to find out if the Trade Union representative will be able to attend the SFSG meetings;**
- (3) to approve the membership of the SFSG for the financial year 2015/16, subject to determining if the Trade Union representative will be able to attend.**

38 SCHOOLS BUDGET 2015/16

Ceri Walters, Finance Business Partner, Children and Adults, presented her report outlining the Schools Budget for 2015/16, highlighting the following points:

(a) the following Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations have already been approved by the Schools Forum:

- Behaviour Support (approved for maintained primary schools only);
- Ethnic Minority Achievement;
- Trade Union Senior Representative Cover Time;
- Sports Safe Gym Maintenance Services;
- Copyright Licensing Agreement/Music Publishing Association Licenses;
- Building Maintenance Services;
- Schools and Early Years central budgets;

(b) the DSG figure does not include:

- Pupil Premium;
- year 7 Catch up Premium Grant;
- Pupil Premium Summer Schools Funding;
- funding for 2 year olds;

(c) there has been an increase in funding of £13.864m in 2015/16 compared to 2014/15. This is due to:

- transfer of responsibility to the Local Authority for non-recoupment academies and free schools budgets;
- Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) energy scheme rate increase;
- increased pupil numbers;
- indicative early years pupil premium;
- increase in high needs;

(d) the number of parents submitting forms to confirm their eligibility for free school meals has reduced amongst Key Stage 1 pupils as they are now automatically entitled to free school meals. This has not had much impact on Pupil Premium funding yet but is likely to in future years. More research needs to be done to assess the future impact of this and ways to avoid it, possibly by researching how other authorities deal with it. The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) also guarantees that schools will lose no less than 1.5% of their funding per year.

The following comments were made during the discussion:

(e) although a funding allocation was agreed for building maintenance services, more information will be expected about this in future so that the Forum can make a balanced decision as to whether it represents value for money;

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- (f) clarity would be helpful to see how funding is affected by a school or nursery's Ofsted performance.

RESOLVED to

- (1) note the value of the 2015/16 DSG schools budget is £235.459m;**
- (2) note that any unallocated DSG funds will be transferred to the Statutory Schools Reserve (SSR);**
- (3) note the allocation of Pupil Premium, Summer Schools Funding and Year 7 Catch up Premium will be confirmed in Summer 2015 and will be allocated to schools in accordance with the grant conditions;**
- (4) approve the use of reserves to support split site catering costs in 2014/15 currently totalling £0.083m.**