

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Loxley House, Nottingham on 21 April 2016
from 13.46 - 15.43**

Membership

Present

Mark Precious (Chair)
Sian Hampton (Vice Chair)
Susie Artis
David Blackley
Caroline Caille
Paul Halcro
Gary Holmes
Andy Jenkins
Judith Kemplay
Chris Manze
Annwen Mellors (substitute)
Janet Molyneux
Tracy Rees
Terry Smith
James Strawbridge
Marcus Wells
Dawn Whitmore
Tracey Ydlibi

Absent

Bev Angell
Sally Coulton (sent substitute)

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Alistair Conquer	- Head of Education Partnerships
Pat Fielding	- Director of Education
Julia Holmes	- Finance Analyst, Children and Adults
David Hooker	- Principal, Djanogly City Academy
Kathryn Stevenson	- Finance Analyst, Children and Adults
Michael Wilsher	- Inclusion Officer
Phil Wye	- Governance Officer

37 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Bev Angell
Sally Coulton (sent substitute)
Ceri Walters
Councillor Sam Webster

38 CHANGE TO MEMBERSHIP

The Chair of the Forum welcomed the new members of the Schools' Forum, following their nomination and appointment.

RESOLVED to

- (1) note the appointment of Maria Artingstoll, Governor at Dunkirk Primary School, as Maintained Primary Governor representative;**
- (2) note the appointment of David Blackley from the Hospital and Home Education PRU as Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) representative;**
- (3) note the appointment of Dave Hooker from Djanogly City Academy as Secondary Academy representative from September 2016;**
- (4) note the appointment of Dawn Whitemore from New College Nottingham as Further Education (FE) Provider representative.**

39 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

40 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Subsequent to the addition of apologies from Caroline Caille, the minutes of the meeting on 25 February 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

41 WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme for the next meeting of the Forum was noted, with the addition of future Forum dates for the 2016/17 academic year.

42 PROPOSALS FOR A SCHOOLS NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA AND HIGH NEEDS FUNDING REFORMS

Julia Holmes, Finance Analyst, gave a presentation on proposals for a National Funding Formula for schools, highlighting the following:

- (a) the Department for Education (DfE) has stated that the principle behind a National Funding Formula is to develop a funding system that supports every child to achieve their potential, whatever their background. They have stated that the new funding system will be fair, efficient, transparent, simple, predictable and get funding straight to schools;**
- (b) the DfE have undertaken the first of two consultations on the implementation of the National Funding Formula. The following is currently proposed:**

- move to a school-level national funding formula from 2019-20, after two years' transition where local authorities still be able to set the formula locally if they wish;
- ring-fence the Schools Block during the transitional years so that all schools block funding is passed onto schools;
- introduce a new Central Schools Block, meaning that there will be four blocks in total from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) – Schools, Central Schools, High Needs and Early Years;
- the Pupil Premium will remain a separate grant;

(c) there will be four factors in the formula:

- per pupil costs, with different basic rates for primary, key stage 3 and key stage 4;
- additional needs, including deprivation factors, low prior attainment and pupils who have English as an additional language;
- a lump sum for all schools;
- area costs, including sparsity funding for schools in rural area, rates, split sites, exceptional circumstances and growth;

(d) factors which are currently in the local formula which will not be in the national formula include Looked after Children, Mobility and Post-16;

(e) the new Central Schools Block will be for ongoing duties that local authorities hold for maintained schools and academies. Funding will be distributed using a simple per-pupil formula;

(f) the first stage consultation closed on 17 April 2016 and focused on the summary and the case for change. It does not include more details of the proposed weightings of the formulae as this will form part of the second stage consultation;

(g) Nottingham City Council (NCC) responded to the first stage consultation, commenting particularly on the ring-fencing of funding blocks as it does not think this is best as there may be unforeseen pressures in certain areas. NCC also believes that the per-pupil rate should have separate key stage 1 and key stage 2 levels, and that it is not suitable to allocate funds to local authorities based on historic spend;

Kathryn Stevenson, Finance Analyst, gave a presentation on proposals for high needs funding reforms, highlighting the following:

(h) a new funding formula is proposed for high needs, to determine the distribution of funding to local authorities. All funding blocks will be ring-fenced so funds from other blocks will not be available for high needs;

(i) the high needs funding formula will include the following factors:

- basic unit of funding for pupils in specialist SEN institutions;
- population;
- health and disability, based on census data and disability living allowance;

- low attainment, based on pupils not achieving level 2 in reading at the end of key stage 2, and pupils not achieving 5 A*-G GCSEs at key stage 4;
- deprivation, based on pupils eligible for free school meals;
- 2016-17 spending level;

There will also be area cost adjustment to take account of the relative costs of teachers' pay in different areas. The weightings of these factors within the formula are not yet known;

- (j) the proposal for funding alternative provision funding is to use population and deprivation factors. It is likely that in the longer term funding for alternative provision will be distributed to schools rather than the local authority to align to the accountability of schools under the White Paper proposals. There are no specific funding proposals for hospital education yet;
- (k) for some local authorities current high needs spend will be higher than the funding available. The DfE are proposing extra capital funding for the creation of new special Free Schools and expanding existing SEN provision, collaborative working between local authorities including sharing of services and extra help to ensure that institutions are as efficient as possible;
- (l) NCC responded to the first stage consultation, disagreeing particularly with the use of a population factor in the new formula (other than for the alternative provision element) and the use of free school meals for the deprivation factor rather than the Ever 6 free school meals measure. NCC also argued for the retention of flexibility to move funding between blocks and raised the urgency of a framework for hospital education funding;

The date of stage 2 for both consultations is not yet known but will be later this year.

RESOLVED to note the information in the presentation.

43 ALTERNATIVE PROVISION MODEL 2016/2017

Pat Fielding, Director of Education, introduced the report consulting the Forum on the detailed proposals to move to a new model for Alternative Provision for the 2016/17 financial year, involving the devolution of high needs funding to maintained schools and academies under a Service Level Agreement (SLA) in order to support early intervention and make provision for pupils with challenging behaviour in schools. Pat highlighted the following:

- (a) secondary schools will be required to meet the ongoing costs of provision for all pupils including those that they permanently exclude. The funding will be adjusted to reflect a charge for any pupils permanently excluded after April 2016, initially at £15,000 per pupil;
- (b) some primary schools will be piloting clusters in their area to test and evaluate a collaborative approach to alternative provision. Participating clusters will also receive devolved funding and be responsible for meeting all costs associated with pupils they permanently exclude;

- (c) the cost of devolving these funds will be £5.565m over 5 years, including £500,000 to cover potential risks. If nothing was done and the current alternative provision model continues it would cost substantially more based on recent trends in permanent exclusions, therefore making this option unviable financially. Devolving funds directly to schools also pre-empts the direction of alternative provision nationally, as individual schools will be accountable for all permanently excluded pupils from 2017;
- (d) school heads have been consulted on several occasions over the last year on the proposals, and all heads were invited to a meeting on the subject on 4th February 2016 at Nottingham Racecourse. Most secondary schools have agreed in principle. Benefits include supporting early intervention, collaboration between schools and between primary and secondary schools and improved outcomes for pupils;
- (e) the future of Denewood and Unity Pupil Referral Units remains unclear. They may be subject to an academisation order and continue as free schools however individual schools will be responsible for commissioning alternative provision;

The following comments were made during the conversation which followed:

- (f) many pupils who are permanently excluded from secondary schools were ill-prepared in their transition from primary school, so positive collaborative working between primary and secondary schools is imperative to prevent this. Some academy trusts such as the Greenwood Academy Trust have planned to develop separate blocks to aid transition. One of the proposed primary clusters will be in Clifton, and it hopes to collaborate with the secondary school there;
- (g) colleges are working with local schools and have secured money to fund coaches and identify secondary pupils at risk that they can work with;
- (h) pupils currently on roll at Denewood and Unity still need to be funded until they finish. The initial devolved funding will be reduced to reflect these costs;
- (i) the funding for the new model will be presented to Executive Board in May 2016 for agreement. Once this has been agreed, the proposals can go ahead and be implemented before September;
- (j) primary heads are unaware of the range of alternative provision available in Nottingham and elsewhere. A directory of this provision would be helpful to allow them to make informed decisions.

RESOLVED to

- (1) note the proposal to devolve funds to individual secondary schools for the 2016/17 financial year in accordance with the formula specified in the report, under a Service Level Agreement (SLA);**
- (2) note the proposal that under the SLA the charge for pupils that are permanently excluded be set at £15,000 per annum (pro-rata) for 2016/17;**

- (3) note the proposal to pilot the devolution of funds to 1 or 2 clusters of primary schools as of September 2016;**

- (4) note that the implementation of this model will require an estimated £5.565m from the Statutory School Reserve over the next 5 years. Of this £0.825m is already ring fenced for this area of activity within the Reserve. £0.500m of this requirement is ear-marker to cover any potential risks.**