

SCHOOLS FORUM

TUESDAY, 17 JANUARY 2017

PRESENT: -

**Maintained
School Members:**

Janet Urban, Chair - Primary Headteacher
Jackie Smith, Vice-Chair - Special Headteacher
Rhian Cockwell, Primary Headteacher
Charles Law, Special Governor
Alison Lowe, Primary Headteacher
Jackie Smith, Special Schools Headteacher
Ray Williams, Primary Governor

**Academy
Representatives:**

Wendy Conaghan, Academy Headteacher
Andrew Henstridge, Academy Headteacher
James Povoas, Academy Headteacher
Lauren Costello, Academy Headteacher
Clive Zimmerman, Academy Headteacher

Non-School Members:

Jo Morris, Early Years
Peter Smith, Trade Unions

Officers:

Ian Burbidge (Head of Finance, Technical)
Anne Mackay (Finance Manager, Education)
Peter Nathan (Head of Education Services)

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Ram Thiagarajah (Black and Minority Ethnic Representative), Mr Mark Edwards (Secondary Governor), Ben Slater (EOTAS), Jane Wheatley (Mainstream Academy, Primary) and Ruth Lee (Diocese of Clifton).

Also Present: Councillor Fionuala Foley, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Karen Reeve (Director of Children's Services) and Andrew Ferguson (Head of Litigation and Personal).

21. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 18th October 2016 be confirmed and signed as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of the following amended:

Minute 20 (Any Other Business),

"Mr Gareth Cheal, Strategic Planning Manager, explained that in 2014, the Great Western Academy was granted permission to open a Free School in North Swindon and he referred to the work being undertaken in the area.

He advised that the Department for Education (DfE) was reviewing future forecast of school places and decided that a minimum of 120 pupils would be required as the schools' first intake to make it viable. Discussions with the DfE had

been undertaken as they had requested Swindon underwrite the first cohort of 120 pupils.

Resolved: That members of the Committee submit comments to the Strategic Planning Manager regarding this arrangement by 4th November 2016.

22. Public Question Time

No public questions were asked.

23. Schools Forum Membership Update

The Head of Education Services presented a report requesting the Forum to confirm the appointment of members to the Schools Forum following the resignations of Sue Banks, Secondary Headteacher and Kate Adams, Early Years representative.

Resolved - That the Schools Forum confirms the appointment of Mark Edwards as Maintained Secondary Representative and Jo Morris as the Early Years Representative.

24. 2016-17 Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Position

The Finance Manager, Education, presented a report setting out the latest position of the 2016/17 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget.

Mrs Mackay advised that, based on information at the end of November 2016, the latest projection of £0.353m below budget was forecast against the retained DSG Budget for the current financial year. She confirmed that the DSG figures were submitted monthly to the Corporate Management Team and drew attention to the projected increase of the unallocated DSG to £0.562m. The Head of Education Services, advised that the projection may change and the DSG Balance be reduced. This was due to current pressures adversely affecting some local schools.

Mrs Mackay specifically highlighted the pressures of new out of borough placements but confirmed that these had been offset by 3 placements ending. She advised that due to the impact of the new academic year intake, the Post 16 High Needs Provision had been revisited and savings had been identified and forecast.

In response to a question regarding High Risk Areas, Mrs Mackay confirmed that these encompassed demand led budgets that included short term placements within the Tuition Service.

Resolved - (1) That it be noted that:

- a) the latest projection on the 2016/17 retained budget was £0.353m below budget.
- b) following the projected out-turn position, the unallocated DSG balance will increase to £0.562m.

(2) That the Finance Manager, Education, be requested to circulate an update on short term placements.

25. 2017-18 Dedicated Schools Grant Settlement and Budget

The Head of Finance, Schools, presented a report updating the Forum on the 2017/18 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) settlement, including (a) estimates of the

level of expenditure to be allocated to Early Years, Schools, Academies High Needs settings and centrally retained budgets, (b) the submission of the Authority Proforma Toolkit to the Education Funding Agency, enabling main stream budgets to be calculated, (c) expenditure proposals for all High Needs block funded items including High Needs students in Mainstream schools, Special schools, Special Resourced Provisions, Alternative Provision, Post-16 and Further Education, Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools and Other Local Authority Commissioned High Needs, and (d) submission of the Section 251 Budget Statement to the Education Funding Agency by end of March 2017.

Mr Burbidge guided members through the key points in the report, commenting on the most significant implications. He explained that a review of the baseline for the early years, high needs and centrally retained expenditure had been undertaken, resulting in the Education Funding Agency incorporating this into the DSG settlement for 2017/18. He drew attention to the increase in funding for disadvantaged 2 year olds which equated to £3,032.40 per child per year.

Following the introduction of the report, Mr Burbidge, with the Head of Education Services, responded to members' comments and questions in respect of the following matters:

- The basic uplift to be received by all mainstream schools from the 1st April 2017.
- Differences between the various Early Rates Funding Rates due to the increase in staffing requirement for 2 year old children.
- There were no proposals to top slice 2 Year Old funding, and clarity was being sought from the Department for Education on future allocations.
- The basic rate payable to all settings will be £3.86 per hours. A supplement providing an uplift of 14p per hour was allocated for all 3 and 4 year old settings and therefore places would be funded at £4.00 per hour, with two further levels of supplement available.
- The criteria being used by the Local Authority to determine Early Years deprivation.
- The impact on Swindon schools due to the EFA's review of the IDACI (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index) rates.
- Actions on transitions funding to be undertaken after March 2017.
- Financing LA compulsory statutory services and how this may impact Voluntary Aided schools.
- Lack of parity, for central expenditure, between the various maintained school settings and if the Local Authority may offset any difference from the DSG.
- Centrally agreed licences provided by the DfE for all schools and academies across England and these do not cover the Early Years Sector. Schools and academies will potentially also have further licence fees to pay directly to providers.
- The statutory differences between School Place Planning and School Admissions and the proposal to increase the Admissions budget by £35,800 to recruit staff in the Schools Admissions Department due to increased workload.
- The differences between the remits of School Place Planning, School Admission Services and Traded Services.
- Funding in the Stratton Pupil Referral Unit was fixed from the previous year.

- High needs contingency and when the Local Authority would have to use out of borough services.

Resolved: (1) That with regard to the Dedicated Schools Funding Settlement 2017-18, it be noted:

(a) The Early Years block 2017/18 DSG settlement would be subject to revisions by the Department for Education in light of Early Years census information in January 2017 and 2018 and that the final settlement would not be confirmed until July 2018.

(b) Swindon expected to receive a total DSG settlement of £171.115m in 2017/18.

(c) The estimated DSG balance at the end of 2016/17 was £0.562m.

(2) That with regard to the 2017-18 Dedicated Schools Grant Expenditure Budget:

(a) The proposed 2017/18 Early Years funding rates as shown in Table 8, which will take effect from 1st April 2017 be agreed.

(b) 2017/18 Early Years budget of £13.633m as shown in Table 8, be agreed.

(c) The new funding rates as detailed in Table 9 be agreed.

(d) It be noted that the DSG budget was balanced within each of the funding blocks, as detailed in Table 10.

(e) The Notional SEN funding top ups payable in 2017/18 at a total estimated cost of £0.400m be noted.

(f) The individual schools average pupil led funding as detailed in Annex B be noted. This would be used by the Local Authority to claw back funding for excluded pupils during 2017/18.

(g) The following de-delegations for one year from April 2017 be agreed, with the understanding that each phase of maintained schools refer them to their Association for agreement and to advise the Head of Finance, Schools, of the decision made by each Association.

a) Free School Meal eligibility administration would be charged at £4.80 per pupil in 2017/18 and was supported until 31st March 2018.

b) Trade Union release time would be charged at £1.25 per pupil in 2017/18 and was supported until 31st March 2018.

c) Nylands Campus Outreach Team would be charged at £12.33 per primary pupil in 2017/18 and was supported until 31st March 2018.

(h) the retainment of £498k of DSG schools block funding by the Local Authority to cover the statutory duties that it provides for all schools and academies be agreed.

(i) Maintained Schools Forum Members agree the charge of £22.50 for mainstream school pupils and £33.75 for special and alternative provision commissioned places to cover the cost of the statutory duties that the Local Authority provides for them for the period September 2017 to March 2018.

(j) The Total 2017/18 pupil growth budget of £0.580m be agreed.

(k) A total budget for Centrally Retained Services of £1.054m in 2017/18, as shown in Table 13, be agreed.

(l) The overall mainstream school budget for 2017/18, as shown in Table 14, and the inclusion of the central overheads budget in the High Needs Block budget be noted.

(m) The place funding budget for special schools and special resource provision for 2017/18 of £7.695m be noted.

(n) The top-up funding budget for special schools and special resource provision for 2017/18 of £9.220m be noted.

(o) The Minimum Funding Guarantee budget for specialist settings of £1k for 2017/18 be noted.

(p) The Local Authority's proposals for High Needs Budgets as described in paragraphs 3.66 to 3.77 of this report, and listed below be noted:

- a) Alternative Provision.
- b) Commissioned High Needs Services.
- c) Post 16 High Needs Budgets.
- d) Mainstream School Top Up Funding.
- e) External Placements (Pre 16).
- f) High Needs Contingency.
- g) Other Centrally Retained High Needs Services.

(q) the Head of Finance, Schools, be requested to include information on the criteria for Early Years Deprivation supplement at the next meeting of the Forum in March 2017.

(r) That, before the next meeting of the Committee, the Head of Finance, Schools, be requested to circulate information showing the future need of growth funding based on future pupil demographics.

(s) That the Head of Finance, Schools, be requested to include information regarding the differences in remits for School Place Planning, School Admissions and Traded Services to the next meeting of the Schools Forum.