

## **SCHOOLS FORUM**

**TUESDAY, 28 MARCH 2017**

**PRESENT: -**

**School Members:** Jackie Smith, Vice-Chair - Special Headteacher  
Rhian Cockwell, Primary Headteacher  
Wendy Conaghan, Academy Headteacher  
Andrew Henstridge, Academy Headteacher  
Charles Law, Special Governor  
James Povoas, Academy Headteacher  
Ben Slater, Pupil Referral Unit Headteacher  
Jackie Smith, Special Schools Headteacher  
Jane Wheatley, Academy Primary Headteacher  
Ray Williams, Primary Governor  
Clive Zimmerman, Academy Headteacher

**Non-School Members:** Peter Smith, Trade Unions

**Officers:** Ian Burbidge (Head of Finance, Schools)  
Anne Mackay (Finance Manager, Education)  
Peter Nathan (Head of Education)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Fionuala Foley, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Andrew Ferguson (Head of Litigation and Personal), Mr Ram Thiagarajah (Black and Minority Ethnic Representative), Mr Mark Edwards (Secondary Governor), Janet Urban (Maintained Primary Headteacher), Alison Lowe (Maintained Primary Headteacher), Jane Wheatley, (Academy Primary Headteacher) and Ruth Lee (Diocese of Clifton).

### **26. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2017 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### **27. Public Question Time**

No public questions were asked.

### **28. 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. She advised that, based on information at the end of January 2017, an underspend of £0.424m was projected against the retained DSG Budget for the current financial year and an underspend of £0.633m against the unallocated DSG Budget. She drew attention to the main changes from the last report that included banding adjustments in High Needs Top ups and an increase in the risk forecast for external placements fees for

three placements. In response to a query regarding external placements, she confirmed that discussions were being conducted with Children Social Care and Health regarding tri-partite funding for these.

The Finance Manager, Education, advised that the DSG figures were submitted monthly to the Education Leadership Team and periodically to Corporate Management Team, Cabinet and the Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved - That it be noted that:

(a) the latest projection on the 2016/17 retained budget was £0.424 below budget.

(b) following the projected out-turn position, the unallocated DSG balance will increase to £0.633m.

## **29. 2017\_18 Dedicated Schools Grant Budget**

The Head of Finance, Schools, submitted a report updating the Forum on the 2017/18 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) settlement, including (a) Tuition Service Review, (b) Alternative Learning Review, (c) High Needs strategic review, (d) Special School Support, (e) Early years deprivation criteria 2017/18, (f) Apprenticeship Levy, (g) High Needs Top-up for PI SRP units, (h) Post 16 update, (i) the Local Authority's response to the National Fair Funding consultation, (j) Admissions, and (k) School Place Planning.

The Head of Finance, Schools, guided members through the key points in the report, commenting on the most significant implications. He explained that the overall value of the 2016-17 centrally retained budget was £30.695m and that this had increased to £31.498m following receipt of £0.803m of 30 Hours Implementation Funding. He advised 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 2016/17. 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, The Head of Finance, Schools, with the Head of Education, responded to members' comments and questions in respect of the following matters:

- The determination of the voluntary contribution expected from secondary schools, following the Alternative Learning Provision Review, and what the financial impact of this undertaking would be.
- The role of the part-time consultant undertaking the high needs strategic review.
- The list of stakeholders taking part in the high needs strategic review.
- Start date of the Apprentice Scheme and the number of apprentices being recruited.
- The Local Authority's responsibility to delegate the High Needs Budget and the determination of the Schools Blocks budget by Schools Forum members.
- The Local Authority's response to the National Funding consultation.

Resolved - That it be noted that:

(a) the outcomes and recommendations from the Tuition Service review are being implemented.

(b) there was a significant impact due to the Alternative Provision Review. This included the risk that an agreed voluntary contribution will be sought from all secondary schools in Summer 2017, to meet pupils' needs and reduce the requirement for additional pressures on the high needs budget for Alternative Provision.

(c) further to (b) above, following members' discussions with their respective Associations, another Schools Forum meeting be set up in May 2017 to discuss the matter further.

(d) the scope of the High Needs Strategic review was as set out in Appendix B of the report.

(e) further to (d) above, an update be submitted to the schools Forum meeting in October 2017.

(f) the Local Authority (LA) intends to use £42k of the current Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs contingency funding to support St Luke's Special School.

(g) the Schools Forum members rejected the use of £10k of the 2017/18 DSG reserves to assist St. Luke's Special School with rebranding the school.

(h) Further to (g) above, the Head of Finance, School be requested to incorporate information regarding the purpose for this funding at the next meeting of the Schools Forums' in July 2017.

(i) the LA intends to allocate the Early Years deprivation enhancement at the end of the year as an hourly enhancement for pupils in receipt of Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP).

(j) there would be potential impact on schools in Swindon due to the apprenticeship levy.

(k) the introduction of a Physical Impairment top-up fee to Commonweal Secondary School Special Resource Provision was £2,777.78 per annum.

(l) the Head of Education and Head of Finance, Schools, be requested to liaise with Human Resources Department regarding uniformity of pay bands within Special Resource Provision settings and report back to School Forum members.

(m) work was being undertaken to confirm the current location of 31 post 16 learners that have Education, Health and Care Plans.

(n) information on the Admissions Service and the overview of the Admission budget was considered by School Forum members.

(o) the Admissions Department undertook statutory and non-statutory work.

(p) information on the LA's School Place Planning function was submitted to the Schools Forum members.

(q) members of the Schools Forum responded to the Department for Education's consultation on Mainstream National Fair Funding and on High Needs funding.

### **30.**

#### **Any Other Business**

The Head of Education reminded School Forum members that currently there were three vacancies from the Academy Representatives block. He requested that members include School Forum membership as an agenda item at the next Swindon Association of Primary Headteachers and Swindon Association of Secondary Headteachers meetings.

Resolved: That Membership of the School Forum be an agenda item at the next Swindon Association of Primary Headteachers and Swindon Association of Secondary Headteachers meetings.