

SCHOOLS FORUM

WEDNESDAY, 17 JANUARY 2018

Maintained School Members: Rhian Cockwell, Primary Headteacher
Mark Edwards, Governor - Secondary
Charles Law, Special Governor
Alison Lowe, Primary Headteacher
Jackie Smith, Special Schools Headteacher
Ray Williams, Primary Governor
Fiona Godfrey, Mainstream Academy
Andrew Henstridge, Mainstream Academy

Academy Members: Emma Leigh-Bennett, Mainstream Academy
Bob Linnegar, Mainstream Academy
James Povoas, Mainstream Academy
Karen Pyman, Mainstream Academy
Clive Zimmerman, Mainstream Academy
Nick Capstick, Special Academy

Non-School Members: Peter Smith, Trade Unions
Jo Morris, Early Years

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

Apologies for absence were received from Ben Slater (Pupil Referral Unit Headteacher), Janet Urban (Primary Headteacher), Emma Lindsay (Diocese of Bristol) and Steve Wain (16-19 Partnership).

22. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved - That the minutes of the meeting held on 5th December 2017 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

23. Public Questions

Mr Alastair Dixon - Patterson of Lydiard Park Academy, Swindon, enquired whether the census figures used to calculate the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) in the models presented in the report included pupils receiving special resourced provision. The Chair advised that a written response would be provided.

Mrs N Wilding of Tadpole Farm Church of England Primary Academy, enquired when the classroom set up funding allocation of £11,500 per form of entry had last been reviewed. The Chair advised that a written response would be provided.

24. 2018_19 Dedicated Schools Grant Settlement and Budget

The Finance Manager, Education, presented a report updating the Forum on the 2018/19 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) settlement, including (a) estimates of the level of expenditure to be allocated to Early Years, Schools and Academies,

High Needs settings and the Central Schools Services centrally retained budgets, (b) the submission of the Authority Proforma Toolkit to the Education Funding Agency, enabling mainstream 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, External Placements, 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 2018.

The Finance Manager, Education, tabled an update at the meeting relating to paragraphs 3.30 to 3.39 (Schools Formula funding factors 2018/19) and 3.49 to 3.50 (Pupil Growth – Schools Block) of the report and explained that this information should be reviewed in conjunction with the report circulated before the meeting. The officer explained that the information submitted within the tabled document was created as updated Schools Block data was received from the Education Funding Agency necessitating an update to be submitted to members. Particular points that were identified related to the Early Years funding for disadvantaged 2 year olds and 3 and 4 year olds that are paid on a participation model, the timescale for the Early Years settings to submit bids to increase school placements in September 2018 relating to the Childcare Sufficiency report and the three options available for members to balance schools' budgets for 2018/19,

Following the introduction of the report, the Finance Manager, Education, with the Head of Finance, Technical and Head of Education, responded to members' comments and questions in respect of the following matters:

- The tendering and procurement processes for the Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency projects.
- The ring-fencing of the Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency projects budgets.
- The allocation of school places for September following completion of the Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency projects.
- The award of secondary low prior attainment funding through the Department for Education and the data used for primary and secondary low prior attainment for all settings.
- The audit of maintained and academy schools by the Copyright Office to review Copyright licences.
- The modelling exercise to be carried out when reviewing future High Needs Contingency funding.
- The exercise undertaken by external consultants to determine the reasons for the high number of pupils with special educational needs in Swindon.
- The recouping of post 16 expenditure funding by the Education and Skills Funding Agency would recoup.

The Chair concluded the discussion by highlighting the positive achievements of the Local Authority and schools in creating bespoke packages for pupils with complex needs to ensure they were catered for within the borough, resulting in a reduction of pressure on the high needs budget. It was noted that Swindon had the lowest rate of out of borough placements in England. The Head of Education explained that other local authorities were experiencing the same issue and this was affecting their DSG balances. He echoed the Chair's comments and thanked the

Schools Forum members for their support in using bespoke packages to reduce the risk of an in-year overspend on the DSG.

Resolved - (1) That with regard to the Dedicated Schools Grant Funding Settlement 2018 - 19, it be noted that:

(a) the Early Years block 2018/19 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) settlement would be subject to revisions by the Department for Education ('DfE') in light of Early Years census information in January 2018 and January 2019 and that the final settlement would not be confirmed until July 2019.

(b) the estimated DSG balance at the end of 2018/19 was expected to be £0.258m.

(c) Swindon was expected to receive a total DSG settlement of £176.765m in 2018/19.

(2) That with regard to the 2018/19 DSG Expenditure Budget, the following be agreed:

(a) The proposed 2018/19 Early Years funding rates as shown in Table 7, which would take effect from 1st April 2018.

(b) The 2018/19 Early Years budget of £14.025m as shown in Table 7.

(c) The retained budget or reserves created from an underspend of the retained Early Years extended hours entitlement would be used to create the additional Early years places required by the Childcare Sufficiency report, up to £0.350m in total.

(d) The Primary Low Prior Attainment be set at 80% weighting and all factors including the flat rate / lump sum are paid at 98.675%.

(3) That with regard to the 2018/19 DSG Expenditure Budget, the following be noted:

(a) A Childcare Sufficiency Assessment was completed during Autumn 2017 and a strategy would be drafted once the final report had been published.

(b) The completed Authority Pro-forma Tool was to be returned to the Education and Skills Funding Agency by 19th January 2018.

(c) Following the implementation of 2d above in this report, the DSG budget would be balanced within its funding blocks as detailed in Table 9.

(4) The Notional SEN funding top ups payable for 2018/19 at a total estimated cost of £0.400m, be noted.

(5) The following de-delegations for one year from April 2018 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, Technical, of the decision made by each Association.

(a) Free School Meal eligibility administration would be charged at £4.80 per pupil in 2018/19 and was supported until 31st March 2019.

(b) Trade Union release time would be charged at £1.25 per pupil in 2018/19 and was supported until 31st March 2019.

(c) Nylands Campus Outreach Team would be charged at £12.33 per primary pupil in 2018/19 and was supported until 31st March 2019.

(6) A total 2018/19 pupil growth budget of £0.508m, be agreed.

(7) That with regards to the Central Schools Services block Budget, the following be agreed:

(a) The Admissions budget as detailed in paragraph 3.51.1.

(b) The Schools Subscriptions and Licenses budget as detailed in paragraph 3.51.2.

(c) The Schools Forum budget as detailed in paragraph Para. 3.51.3.

(d) The Travellers Children budget as detailed in paragraph 3.51.4.

(e) The Equal Pay budget as detailed in paragraph 3.51.5.

(8) The retainment of £0.523m, of DSG schools block funding by the Local Authority to cover the statutory duties that it provides for all schools and academies, be noted.

(9) The Schools Block budget £131.117m for 2018/19 as shown in Table 12, be noted.

(10) The place funding budget for 2018/19 of £7.310m, be noted.

(11) The top-up funding budget for 2018/19 of £9.161m, be noted.

(12) The proposed introduction of a new supplement provided for Reception to Year 11 pupils in Special Resource Provision setting that do not receive an average of £4,000 of mainstream funding plus £6,000 place funding, be noted.

(13) The non-requirement of the Minimum Funding Guarantee budget for specialist settings, be noted.

(14) The Local Authority's proposals for High Needs Budgets as described in paragraphs 3.64 to 3.80 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.

(15) That, the Finance Manager, Education, be requested to circulate further information regarding bidders for Early Years placements projects before the next meeting of the Forum.

(16) That, the Finance Manager, Education, be requested to circulate information on how funding for Primary and Secondary Low Prior Attainment was awarded.

(17) That the Head of Education be requested to circulate links to reports regarding the high number of pupils with special educational needs in Swindon, before the next meeting of the Forum.

(18) That, before the next meeting of the Forum, the Finance Manager, Education, be requested to confirm whether the Post 16 High Needs Top-up funding was applied to both colleges and sixth forms in Swindon.