



Sandwell

Metropolitan Borough Council

Minutes of the Schools Forum

Held on Monday 11th January 2016 at 5.00 p.m.

Orchard School, Oldbury

Members Present: K Bickley, D Fereday, C Gallant, S Marshall, S Harvey, B Banks, P Jones, G Linford, P Shone, B Patel, A Orgill, L Rouse, R Rickus, A Sahota, P Thompson,

Officers Present: R Kerr, P Patel, D Carter

Apologies: C Walsh, C Ward, D Meredith, D Barton, S Topper

Observers: I Iqbal, R Fisher, A Burns, S Farquharson, J Kellas

1/16 **Agenda Item 1 - Apologies**

As Above.

2/16 **Agenda Item 2 – Declaration of Interest**

B Banks declares interest for Pupil Number Growth
P Shone declares interest for Pupil Number Growth
R Rickus declares interest for Nurseries

3/16 **Agenda Item 3 – Minutes Of previous Meeting**

S Marshall queried if Pat Evans response had been included to form part of the appendix for June's minutes. R Kerr confirmed that the action had been completed.

D Fereday asked for minutes of the 12th October 2015 to be updated so that the paragraph 18/15 now read as follows “It was agreed that all future applications will be assessed against the updated criteria *for new applications*”.

4/16

Agenda Item 4 – Schools Revenue Funding 2016/17

R Kerr outlined the report and highlighted the following main points,

The EFA have updated the Schools Funding model to incorporate the October 2015 School census data and have also updated the model to use the recently published 2015 IDACI values.

For Sandwell, there is a 10% reduction in the proportion of pupils in IDACI Bands 3 to 6 normally attracting additional funding from £460 up to £888 per pupil and there is a 10% increase in the proportion of pupils in IDACI Bands 1 to 2 who do not attract additional funding for schools.

A decision has been taken to introduce a funding rate for pupils falling within IDACI Band 2 in order to stabilise the levels of IDACI funding at individual school level as well as in overall terms

P Shone asked on how MFG will effect school budgets, R Kerr confirmed MFG of -1.5% remains in place and that the MFG ceiling has been changed from 2.86% in 2015/16 to 0.38% for 2016/17 so that schools will receive 0.38% of any gain.

P Thomson queried how the Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT) 2016/17 funding will be allocated. R Kerr clarified that the NQT budget of £71,000 has been included into the overall Dedicated School Grant (DSG) budget and is proposed to be allocated to schools based on pupils numbers and this basis of allocation has been used in previous years.

P Jones asked if the High Needs Block budget had been set for 2016/17. R Kerr indicated that the 2016/17 budget for High Needs had yet to be set. P Jones requested that a report to be bought to forum showing how the High Needs budget is spent and how the 2016/17 budget is calculated.

A vote was held on each of the recommendations and the outcomes were as follows:

Schools Block Budgets for 2016/17

The recommendation was approved based on the following vote:

10 in Favour. 1 Against. 2 Abstention.

NQT Inductions

The recommendation was approved based on the following vote:

12 in Favour. 1 Against. 1 Abstention

Chair requested that forum move to Agenda Item 7 due to observers who may wish to leave early.

5/16

Agenda Item 7 – Pupil Number Growth Applications

R Kerr outlined the report and highlighted the following points

The Pupil Number Growth total spend as at 30th November 2015 is £1.622m against an allocation of £1.479m giving rise to an over spend of £0.142m.

Three schools have submitted requests for an allocation from the Pupil Number Growth Contingency. These requests were received prior to the approval of the amendments to the criteria agreed at its meeting on 12th October 2015.

P Shone raised concerns that his submitted application was not showing the full budget projections.

Members who had declared interest for Pupil Number Growth were asked to leave the room.

Forum members then discussed the three requests. A question was asked on how the overspend on the budget will be treated. R Kerr identified that the over spend would be carried forward and would have first call on future years DSG funding. R Kerr also informed the group that the Pupil Number Growth budget is not sustainable in the long term using the current criteria.

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IL0 unclassified

It was also queried that two of the applications are from academies and how do we know they haven't received funding from the EFA already. R Kerr confirmed academies were previously funded on estimated numbers and therefore would not have been eligible for pupil growth funding, however this has changed and academies are funded based on the same census dates as maintained schools, with the exception of Sandwell Academy who are still funded on estimated pupil numbers.

A vote was held on each of the applications and the outcomes were as follows:

Holly Lodge School £235,424

5 in Favour. 3 Against. 3 Abstentions

Ormiston Forge Academy £127,521

5 in Favour. 3 Against. 3 Abstentions

George Salter Academy £56,403

5 in Favour. 4 Against. 2 Abstentions

6/16

Agenda Item 5 – Nurseries (Negative Community Focussed Balances 2014/15)

R Kerr outlined the report and highlighted the following points

The negative Community Focused Closing Balance for the schools for 2014/15 were as follows:

Ferndale Primary -£104,625.97
Hateley Heath Primary -£54,214.82
Summerhill Primary -£11,595.10

S Marshall highlighted that it is the Local Authority's responsibility to monitor schools community focused budgets. A Orgil asked how the schools ran up a negative balance, R Kerr mentioned that it is the head teachers and governors responsibility to monitor and manage budgets.

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IL0 unclassified

A Timmins informed forum that a task group has been assigned to Hateley Heath Primary to support the school. S Marshall requested a report be brought back to forum for schools that are currently operating as a business and also clarification on point 4.3 – The Consistent Financial Reporting Framework and the use of DSG.

7/16 **Agenda Item 6 – New Arrivals**

A Timmins outlined the report.

A Timmins indicated that a head had been appointed for the arrivals centre and will be in place for the 1st March 2016. The head appointed is Bally Bains who will monitor the new arrivals and update forum members on a regular basis.

S Marshall requested information on how the centre will be financed over the next few years and the impact if new arrivals were to increase. P Jones requested further information on how the arrival centre will affect schools from an operational and funding viewpoint.

8/16 **Agenda Item 8 – Restructuring of membership**

A Timmins presented a table of the proposed structure for Schools Forum.

S Marshall queried there was no covering report and therefore it was unclear if the proposed structure being presented was a recommendation, for information or a consultation. S Marshall mentioned that the proposed structure did not include any union representation, and that unions are part of the forum to be a voice for the workforce and that she is appalled that trade union membership is not valued.

Forum members were asked to vote if they agreed with the proposed structure

0 in Favour 3 Against 7 Abstentions

9/16 **Agenda Item 9 – Early Years Underspend – Use of Target Budget**

R Kerr outlined the report and highlighted the following points

The budget plan identified a budget of £0.372m for 2015/16; the projected outturn is £0.178m which would give a projected underspend of £0.194m.

S Marshall requested a report to be bought back for the next forum showing how the £7 million underspend was accounted for.

The meeting was called to a close at 7.01pm

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Contact Officer:
Prakash Patel
Schools Strategic Finance Unit (SSFU)
Prakash_patel_env@sandwell.gov.uk
0121 569 8174

DRAFT