

EDUCATION BUDGET SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 13 February 2013

Present:

Councillor Neil Reddin FCCA (Chairman)
Councillor Nicky Dykes (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Nicholas Bennett J.P. and David McBride

Councillor Stephen Wells, Portfolio Holder for Education

Also Present:

David Bradshaw, Head of Education and Care Services Finance
Dr Tessa Moore, Assistant Director: Education

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lydia Buttinger.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman noted that Declarations of Interest made by Members at the meeting of Education PDS Committee on 12th June 2012 were taken as read.

3 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

No questions had been received from members of the public.

4 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8th JANUARY 2013 AND MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman noted that a number of the issues arising from the minutes would be considered during the meeting.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 8th January 2013 be agreed.

5 2013/14 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT

Report ED13024

The Sub-Committee considered a report setting out the indicative allocation for the 2013/14 Dedicated Schools Grant and outlining how this funding would be allocated and expended across the High Needs, Early Years and Schools blocks in 2013/14. A total sum of £228,331,776 had been allocated to the Borough for 2013/14, which was an increase from the previous year due to increased pupil

numbers and the inclusion of additional funding streams which had been incorporated into the Dedicated Schools Grant together with additional responsibilities.

In considering the indicative allocation for the 2013/14 Dedicated Schools Grant, the Chairman noted changes to the allocation of funding for children and young people with special educational needs that meant that additional 'top up' funding from the high needs block, which was based outside the schools' budget share calculations, would only be provided for children with needs over £6k per annum. The Assistant Director: Education confirmed that schools had expressed concern at the way the new funding allocations might impact the funding schools received for children and young people with high incidence, low level needs. The Portfolio Holder for Education noted the importance of ensuring that children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties continued to receive the support they needed to remain within a mainstream school setting. Councillor Nicholas Bennett JP also emphasised the need to ensure Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors understood the new funding formula. The Assistant Director: Education confirmed that a letter had been drafted to send to Head Teachers and that information was also being provided to Governors, Parents and other stakeholders in a variety of ways.

Members considered Age Weighted Pupil Unit funding for 2013/14 and noted that funding for the Primary sector in Bromley was low compared to the median range, but that Secondary sector funding was close to the median range. The Head of Education and Care Services Finance confirmed that the decision to use a lump sum of £180k for each school as part of the calculations supported the level of funding received by Primary schools. The minimum funding guarantee would also help ensure that schools did not receive a reduction in funding from the previous year, although this would not protect schools from the impact of any reduction in pupil numbers. It was noted that a new national funding formula would be introduced from 2015/16.

RESOLVED that Members' comments on the latest 2013/14 Dedicated Schools Grant allocations for the Education Portfolio be noted.

6 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING Q3 2012/13 & ANNUAL CAPITAL REVIEW 2013 TO 2017

Report RES13035

On 6th February 2013, the Executive received the 3rd quarterly capital monitoring report for 2012/13 and were asked to approve the new capital schemes supported by Council Directors as part of the annual capital review process. The Executive agreed a revised Capital Programme for the five year period 2012/13 to 2016/17. The Sub-Committee considered a report highlighting the changes agreed by the Executive in respect of the Capital Programme for the Education Portfolio.

In considering the capital monitoring report, the Portfolio Holder for Education confirmed that the contingency budget for the secondary school investment

strategy for Langley Park Boys School had not yet been spent, and noted that funds of £316k were being held to cover potential cost pressures, including asbestos management and removal on site.

RESOLVED that the revised capital programme agreed by the Executive on 6th February 2013 be recommended to the Education Portfolio Holder for approval.

7 EDUCATION PORTFOLIO HOLDER INFORMATION ITEMS

Report ED13025

The Sub-Committee considered an information briefing outlining the Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant (LACSEG) arrangement and the new arrangements that were to be introduced from 2013/14. The Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant was paid to academy schools to fund the purchase of a wide range of services that the Local Authority was responsible for providing for maintained schools.

The change in funding aimed to use a national average rate of £132 per pupil which would be removed from the Local Authority in respect of every pupil. This amounted to a top slice from funding of £6.581m. The Local Authority, through the Education Support Grant (ESG), would be provided with £15 per pupil for all pupils regardless of where they attended school to fund statutory duties. In addition the Local Authority would receive £116 per pupil for each pupil attending a maintained school. As the Council was a low cost Local Authority with a high academy conversion rate, it would be detrimentally affected. Currently a top slice of Revenue Support Grant of £1.46m was taken from Bromley annually and early indications were that Bromley was likely to lose a further £3.3m in addition to the current top slice for 2013/14. It was also likely that the per pupil reduction would be applied on a quarterly basis rather than annually, which would further impact the level of funding received by the Local Authority and make forward planning of budgets more difficult. It was noted that Members and Officers had been in discussion with Ministers and Officers at the Department for Education to mitigate the impact of this loss, such as the introduction of a cap in the amount of funding that could be removed from a Local Authority, and that some concessions had been made.

The Head of Education and Care Services Finance noted that there was also a need for clarity in identifying the statutory duties the Local Authority had in regard to education services for both maintained schools and academies.

RESOLVED that the information briefing be noted.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

In discussing future areas for the Education Budget Sub-Committee to consider, Members requested that reports on the School Improvement Team and Special Educational Needs Transport be provided to the next meeting of the Sub-

Committee. Other areas to explore in more depth in the future might also include the Access and Admissions Service.

RESOLVED that the issues raised be noted.

9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting of the Education Budget Sub-Committee would be confirmed shortly.

The Meeting ended at 7.54 pm

Chairman