

EDUCATION BUDGET SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 3 March 2015

Present:

Councillor Neil Reddin FCCA (Chairman)
Councillor Teresa Ball (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Kathy Bance MBE, Nicholas Bennett J.P. and
Alan Collins

Councillor Stephen Wells, Portfolio Holder for Education

Also Present:

Jane Bailey, Assistant Director: Education
Mary Cava, SEN Implementation Manager
James Mullender, Senior Accountant
Amanda Russell, Head of Schools Finance Support

52 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Judi Ellis.

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Nicholas Bennett JP.

53 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman noted that Declarations of Interest made by Members at the meeting of Education PDS Committee on 2nd July 2014 were taken as read.

54 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

No questions had been received from members of the public.

55 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6TH JANUARY 2015 AND MATTERS OUTSTANDING

In considering Minute 45: Use of Unspent Dedicated Schools Grant, the Portfolio Holder for Education advised Members that the Secretary of State for Education had recently confirmed that he was minded to agree the proposals for the use of unspent Dedicated Schools Grant, which had been supported by the Schools' Forum, and work was also being undertaken to identify how Dedicated Schools Grant might be used more flexibly in future to fund one-off projects where

appropriate. Early years providers were seeking a greater involvement in the Schools' Forum, which worked to advise the Local Authority on matters relating to schools budgets.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 6th January 2015 be agreed and that matters outstanding be noted.

56 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - 3RD QUARTER 2014/15 & ANNUAL CAPITAL REVIEW 2014 TO 2018

Report FSD15019

On 11th February 2015, the Council's Executive received the 3rd quarterly capital monitoring report for 2014/15 and agreed a revised Capital Programme for the five year period 2014/15 to 2018/19, which included new capital schemes supported by Council Directors as part of the annual capital review process for approval. The Sub-Committee considered a report outlining the changes agreed by the Council's Executive in respect of the Capital Programme for the Education Portfolio.

In considering the Capital Programme for the Education Portfolio, the Chairman noted that the Glebe School expansion project was currently on target and was expected to be completed by September 2015. It was anticipated that the refurbishment of Beacon House to deliver a new alternative provision offering a wide variety of vocational courses at Key Stage 4 and 5 to both male and female pupils identified as having social, emotional and mental health difficulties would be completed in time for the 2016/17 academic year. The Portfolio Holder for Education advised Members that work was being undertaken with Langley Park School for Boys and Langley Park School for Girls around the possibility of utilising the school sites to deliver Bromley Youth Music Trust services in future.

RESOLVED that the revised Capital Programme agreed by the Council's Executive on 11th February 2015 be recommended to the Portfolio Holder for Education for approval.

57 EDUCATION PORTFOLIO BUDGET MONITORING 2014/15

Report ED15061

The Sub-Committee considered a report setting out the budget monitoring position for the Education Portfolio based on expenditure to the end of January 2015. The Schools' Budget, funded from the Dedicated Schools' Grant and other specific grants was forecast to be in an overspend position of £257k, which would be set against the underspend carried forward from previous years. The controllable part of the Non-Schools' budget, funded from Council Tax, Revenue Support and other specific grants was forecast to be in an overspend position of £99k, assuming that £360k would be drawn from contingency at the end of the financial year to offset the expected reduction in Education Services Grant.

Members were advised that the Council's Executive would be requested to approve a number of carry forward requests for 2015/16. This included carry forward requests of £200k from the SEND Implementation (New Burdens) grant to support the Local Authority in implementing Special Educational Needs and Disabilities reforms, and a £19k grant from the Department for Education to support the implementation of the Early Years Pupil Premium which had recently been announced.

The Assistant Director: Education explained that there had recently been an unexpected overspend in the Education budget due to a change in the education provision of some children and young people with complex special educational needs. Work was being undertaken to offset a projected overspend in the Special Educational Needs Transport budget with other Revenue Support Grant funded services.

In considering the budget monitoring position for the Education Portfolio, the Portfolio Holder for Education confirmed that the Youth Offending service budget would be transferred to the Education Portfolio from the 2015/16 financial year, but that the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Safety would continue to have a close involvement in the delivery of the service. Members requested that a report on the Youth Offending service be provided to the next meeting of the Education Budget Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED that the latest 2014/15 budget projection for the Education Portfolio as at the end of January 2015 be recommended to the Portfolio Holder for Education for approval.

58 PHASE 2: DRAWDOWN OF GOVERNMENT (NEW BURDENS) GRANT FUNDING HELD IN CONTINGENCY TO SUPPORT THE LOCAL AUTHORITY IN IMPLEMENTING THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS REFORMS

Report ED15082

The Sub-Committee considered a report outlining Government grant funding to support the Local Authority to meet the statutory duties and implement special educational needs and disabilities reforms introduced by the Children and Families Act 2014, including the transition to Education, Care and Health Plans. Local authorities had three years to implement the transition to Education, Care and Health Plans, but were required to be statutory compliant in all other areas of change from 1st September 2014.

To support the delivery of these reforms, the Government had provided New Burdens Grant funding which commenced in 2014/15 and would continue into 2015/16. The New Burdens Grant for 2014/15 had been announced in August 2014. Due to a range of factors, including the timing of the grant announcement and the need to create temporary posts and engage skilled personnel to increase staff capacity to deliver the reforms, there was a projected underspend of £200,000 in New Burdens Grant funding for 2014/15. It was proposed to carry

forward the projected underspend and to release the remaining £107,357 in New Burdens Grant funding for 2014/15, and to request the drawdown of £148,343 from the New Burdens Grant for 2015/16, with the remaining £28,476 to remain in contingency, ring-fenced for drawdown at a later date if required.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) Members' comments on the report be noted; and,**
- 2) The Council's Executive be recommended to**
 - a. Approve the carry forward of the underspend in 2014/15 of £200,000 and the drawdown of the remaining £107,357 funding from the Council's central contingency for the 2014/15 SEND Implementation Grant, totalling £307,357; and,**
 - b. Approve the drawdown of part of the SEN New Burdens Grant 2015/16 of £148,343, with the remaining £28,476 to remain in contingency, ring-fenced for drawdown at a later date if required.**

59 UPDATE ON MANAGEMENT ACTION TAKEN BY SCHOOLS WITH SIGNIFICANT REVENUE SURPLUS BALANCES OR DEFICITS

Report ED15062

The Sub-Committee considered a report providing an update on management action taken by schools with significant revenue surplus balances or deficits.

The Schools Finance Team worked closely with all schools with deficits and large surpluses throughout the financial year, with all Local Authority Maintained schools required to submit details of their budgets, as approved by their Governing Bodies, and a detailed budget monitoring report to the Schools Finance Team at the end of each quarter. Following consideration of the most recent quarterly budget monitoring reports, the two Local Authority Maintained schools identified as having deficits were expected to have fully repaid these deficits by the end of the 2014/15 financial year. Similarly, all Local Authority Maintained schools identified as having large surpluses had budgeted to reduce these surpluses by the end of the 2014/15 financial year.

All Local Authority Maintained schools would be required to submit an annual financial return to the Schools' Finance Team at the end of March 2015. This information would be checked for accuracy and consolidated into the Local Authority accounts with details of all Local Authority Maintained schools balances reported to Members in Summer 2015.

In considering the management action taken by schools with significant revenue surplus balances or deficits, the Chairman noted proposals by schools to reduce significant revenue surplus balances. The Head of Schools Finance Support advised Members that surplus revenue balances were often used to fund capital

projects, and that these could be subject to delays to the next financial year or be offset by capital funding from the Local Authority.

The Portfolio Holder for Education underlined the need for significant revenue surplus balances to be utilised to deliver improved educational outcomes for children and young people, and highlighted the importance of ensuring that significant revenue surplus balances continued to be monitored closely as the funding received by schools increased from the 2015/16 financial year.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

60 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

61 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

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

The Meeting ended at 7.33 pm

Chairman