

EDUCATION BUDGET SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 30 June 2015

Present:

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

Councillor Peter Fortune, Portfolio Holder for Education

Also Present:

Jane Bailey, Assistant Director: Education
James Mullender, Finance Manager
Amanda Russell, Head of Schools Finance Support

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Teresa Ball declared that she was a Governor of Bromley Adult Education College.

Councillor Peter Fortune declared that his wife was a teacher at Perry Hall Primary School.

Councillor Neil Reddin declared that he was a Governor of St Olave's and St Saviour's Grammar School, and that his children attended Warren Road Primary School.

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 3RD MARCH 2015 AND MATTERS OUTSTANDING

In considering matters outstanding from previous meetings, the Assistant Director: Education advised Members that the market testing process for the commissioning of Education Services was still ongoing. Work was being undertaken to identify a preferred provider, and a progress report would be provided to the Education Budget Sub-Committee in Autumn 2015.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2015 be agreed and that matters outstanding be noted.

5 EDUCATION PORTFOLIO BUDGET MONITORING 2015/16

Report ED15091

The Sub-Committee considered a report setting out the budget monitoring position for the Education Portfolio based on the projected outturn position for 2015/16. The Schools' Budget, funded from Dedicated Schools' Grant and specific grants was projected to be in an overspend position of £774k, which would be set against unspent Dedicated Schools Grant carried forward from previous years. The controllable part of the Non-Schools' Budget, funded from Council Tax, Revenue Support and specific grants was projected to be in an overspend position of £468k, which included £328k overspend in the Adult Education Service.

Members were advised that on 10th June 2015, the Council's Executive approved a number of carry forward requests for funding to be transferred into contingency for 2015/16. This included a carry forward request for £19k of the Early Years Grant to purchase the Capita Provider Portal in preparation for the implementation of the Early Years Pupil Premium, and £46k of the SEN Preparation for Employment Grant to support the provision of internships and other preparation for employment measures to young people with complex special educational needs and disabilities. It was also requested that £77k of the Youth Offending Service Strategic Review be carried forward to fund the work required to address issues identified during the recent inspection of the Youth Offending Service, and £11k from the underspend in Education be carried forward to fund a one-off review of place planning for schools which would be supplemented by £30k of Dedicated Schools Grant and Capital funding.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Assistant Director: Education confirmed that the budget for the Youth Offending Team was within the Education Portfolio, but that the overarching management of the service was the responsibility of Kay Weiss, Assistant Director: Safeguarding and Social Care.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The latest 2015/16 budget projection for the Education Portfolio be noted;**
- 2) The Portfolio Holder for Education be recommended to:**
 - i) Endorse the 2015/16 budget projection for the Education Portfolio;**
 - ii) Agree the request to release £19k grant funding for Early Years, carried forward from 2014/15;**
 - iii) Agree the request to release £46k grant funding for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, carried forward from 2014/15;**
 - iv) Agree the request to release £11k carried forward from 2014/15 to**

support a review of school place planning; and,

- v) Agree the request to release of £77k carried forward from 2014/15 to support a review of the Youth Offending Service.**

6 EDUCATION PORTFOLIO OUTTURN REPORT 2014/15

Report ED15089

The Sub-Committee considered a report outlining the final outturn position of the Education Portfolio for the 2014/15 financial year. This showed an underspend of £246k for the Non-Schools budget, and an underspend of £940k for the Schools' budget which would be added to the £8.95m Dedicated Schools Grant carried forward from previous years, resulting in a total of £9.89m carried forward into 2015/16.

The Finance Manager advised Members that it had been proposed that a provision of £300k of Dedicated Schools Grant be set aside as a Dedicated Schools Grant Redundancy Reserve to meet some of the costs that might arise as a result of any future reorganisation within Dedicated Schools Grant funded Education Services, with any unspent amount to be returned to the Schools' budget. This proposal had been considered at the meeting of Schools' Forum on 25th June 2015, where there had been general support for the proposal in principle. Work would be undertaken to clarify the legal position around the potential use of Dedicated Schools Grant as a Redundancy Reserve before the proposal was presented to Schools' Forum for its agreement in Autumn 2015. A report would then be provided to the Education Budget Sub-Committee for its consideration, before the proposal was submitted to the Secretary of State for Education for final approval.

In considering the report, the Chairman noted the high level of Dedicated Schools Grant carried forward from previous years. The Finance Manager confirmed that of the £9.89m carried forward into 2015/16, £3m would contribute towards the refurbishment of Beacon House, £3.5m would be provided to schools in a one-off distribution, and £2m would be used to contain growth over two years, which would significantly reduce the level of Dedicated Schools Grant reserves held.

In response to a question from the Chairman, further information on a shortfall of income relating to Governor Services would be provided to Members following the meeting.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The Education Portfolio Outturn Report 2014/15 be noted;**
- 2) The Portfolio Holder for Education be recommended to endorse the 2014/15 Final Outturn for the Education Portfolio.**

7 SPENDING BY PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND SPECIAL MAINTAINED SCHOOLS IN 2014/15

Report ED15087

The Sub-Committee considered a report setting out the revenue and capital balances held by Primary, Secondary and Special Maintained Schools as at 31st March 2015, and providing a comparison to the balances held at the same time in the previous year.

The Head of Schools Finance Support highlighted that there had been an overall decrease in the level of revenue and capital balances held by schools, which reflected the increasing financial pressures caused by increases to expenditure through changes to National Insurance and pensions for school employees, and a reduction in Education Support Grant funding for academies and in post-16 funding. The Fairer Funding settlement had provided additional funding to Bromley schools for the 2015/16 financial year, but this would only alleviate financial pressures in the short term.

The Schools Finance Team would continue to work closely with all Bromley Schools to support budget management and financial forward planning, and would work with Local Authority Maintained schools identified as having no reserves or as being in deficit to develop deficit recovery plans. The Education Funding Agency was responsible for providing a similar level of support to academies identified as having no reserves or as being in deficit.

In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Schools Finance Support confirmed that St Anthony's R.C. Primary School had taken action to significantly reduce its revenue and capital balances during the 2014/15 financial year.

RESOLVED that the financial position of Primary, Secondary and Special Maintained Schools as at the end of the 2014/15 financial year be noted.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Education Budget Sub-Committee would be held at 7.00pm on Wednesday 16th September 2015.

The Meeting ended at 7.27 pm

Chairman