

SCHOOLS' FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held at 4.30 pm on 26 September 2013

Present:

Andrew Downes (Chairman)	Secondary Academy Governor
David Bridger (Vice-Chairman)	Non-School Representative (Church of England)
Colin Ashford	Primary Academy Governor
Geoff Boyd	Primary Maintained Governor
Angela Chapman	Primary Maintained Governor
Patrick Foley	Primary Maintained School Head Teacher
John Hunt	Non-School Representative (14-19 Partnership)
Neil Proudfoot	Non-School Representative (Joint Teacher Liaison Committee)
Karen Raven	Secondary Academy Head Teacher
Alison Regester	Non-School Representative (Early Years)
Keith Seed	Special Head Teacher/Governor
Aydin Önaç	Secondary Maintained Head Teacher

Also Present:

David Bradshaw	Head of Education and Care Services Finance
Amanda Russell	Head of Schools Finance Support
Kerry Nicholls	Democratic Services Officer

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

Andrew Downes was nominated as Chairman. This was seconded and the nomination was agreed.

David Bridger was nominated as Vice-Chairman. This was seconded and the nomination was agreed.

RESOLVED that Andrew Downes be appointed Chairman and David Bridger be appointed Vice-Chairman for the 2013/14 academic year.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Anna Boshier (Non-School Representative – Catholic Church), Nick Cross (Secondary Academy Head Teacher), Matt Rampton (Primary Academy Head Teacher) and Councillor Stephen Wells (Portfolio Holder for Education).

Apologies were also received from Sam Parrett (Non-School Representative – 14-19 Partnership) and John Hunt attended as her substitute.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18TH JULY 2013

In considering the minutes of the previous meeting, Colin Ashford noted that he had sent his apologies for the meeting and requested that this be reflected in the minutes.

The Head of Schools Finance Support confirmed that the parent who had contacted the Chairman of the Schools' Forum with concerns about the current primary Age Weighted Pupil Unit level compared to the secondary level had been advised to submit a formal Freedom of Information request.

RESOLVED that, subject to the correction set out above, the minutes of the meeting held on 18th July 2013 be agreed and matters arising be noted.

5 DSG USEAGE FOR EXPANSION OF GLEBE SCHOOL

Report ED13098

Members of the Forum considered a report outlining the progress of the planned expansion of Glebe school.

The number of children diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the Borough was growing, and it had been identified that there would be a projected shortfall of 120 specialist ASD places for young people aged 11-16 years and 36 places for young people aged 16+ years by 2021.

On 25th July 2012, the Council's Executive gave 'in principle' approval to the expansion of Glebe School by 2 forms of entry (16 pupils) from September 2014, with 12 additional pupil places in Years 12 and 13. This would be subject to statutory consultation and would provide a total of 104 additional places at the school which could be used to provide places to both new pupils and existing Bromley pupils who currently received schooling out of the Borough. At the meeting, the Council's Executive requested that the outcome of the consultation be reported back and, subject to a satisfactory outcome, that the Executive approve a loan from the Council's reserves of £4.8m to complete the necessary building works to be repaid by the Dedicated Schools Grant over 6 years and the procurement of the consultancy relating to the building.

The consultation for the proposed permanent expansion of the school had run from 11th January to 15th February 2013, and produced 36 responses which were largely supportive of the proposals. The Governing Body also supported the proposed changes to school organisation, as did the School Council, which accepted the reasons for expansion and the subsequent increased student numbers but expressed a number of concerns that would be addressed by the school on an ongoing basis. In consideration of this, the Portfolio Holder for Education had resolved to proceed with formal statutory proposals to implement the permanent expansion of the Glebe Foundation School from September 2014.

On 12th June 2013 a statutory notice was published in the News Shopper, inviting comments or objections to the proposal to enlarge the school by 16 places per year from September 2014. This was displayed as required on the school gates, in local libraries and circulated to all interested parties, as well as published on the Bromley Council website, for a six week period ending 24th July 2013. No objections to the proposals had been received, and this was reported to the meeting of the Education Portfolio Holder on 21st August 2013. Following consideration, the Education Portfolio had resolved that the expansion of the Glebe Foundation School with effect from 1st September 2014 be approved as set out in the statutory notice.

In considering funding of the expansion of Glebe School, it had been identified that there was an underspend of £5.4m of the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2012/13, which would be carried forward into future years until required and would negate the requirement for the loan from reserves. The expansion would therefore be funded from an £800k contribution to capital in the Dedicated Schools Grant budget for 2013/14, supplemented by the Dedicated Schools Grant carry forward as and when required.

RESOLVED that the report to the meeting of the Council's Executive on 11th September 2013 be noted.

6 2013/14 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT FINAL ALLOCATION

Report ED13099

Members of the Forum considered a report outlining the final Dedicated Schools Grant allocation for 2013/14. Following the deduction of the academy and high needs recoupment, Bromley's final allocation had been confirmed as £129,123,000. The Local Authority expenditure was unchanged with the exception of academy and high needs expenditure which was now showing as recoupment and was therefore offset against the income.

A surplus of income over expenditure had been identified which totalled £1,085,452. This was mainly due to the increase in the number of pupils used to calculate the Early Years Funding, which was likely to be offset by an increase in in-year expenditure on these pupils, and a decrease in the amount of funding that had been recouped from the Local Authority for academies, relating specifically to the adjustment for Special Educational Needs funding for the period April to August 2013.

In considering the surplus of income of expenditure for 2013/14, the Head of Schools Finance Support confirmed that this funding could only be utilised in the Early Years or High Needs funding blocks for the 2013/14 year, however this restriction would not apply if the funding was carried forward as a surplus to 2014/15.

Alison Register highlighted the importance of ensuring the Special Needs supplement, which provided support for children in Early Years settings who had been identified as having additional needs, continued to be funded. The Vice-

Chairman confirmed that any proposal to reduce or discontinue this supplement would be provided to the Schools' Forum for its consideration, at which time alternate funding options could be explored.

In discussion, Members of the Forum noted that surplus of income of expenditure for 2013/14 might be utilised in part or in full by the increase in the number of pupils used to calculate the Early Years Funding, and that no alternate funding options should be considered for the 2013/14 financial year. Any remaining surplus should be carried forward to 2014/15, when the use of these funds could be considered across all three funding blocks.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The final Dedicated Schools Grant allocation for 2013/14 be noted; and,**
- 2) The surplus of income of expenditure not utilised in-year to fund the increase in Early Years pupils be carried forward to 2014/15.**

7 OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION ON 2014/15 FUNDING REVIEW

Report ED13100

Members of the Forum considered a report providing an update on the proposed changes to the Local Authority Funding Formula based on the outcome of consultation undertaken with schools.

The Department for Education had recently issued further guidance to assist local authorities and Schools' Forums in planning the local implementation of the reformed funding system for 2014/15. Changes included a reduction in the upper limit of the lump sum to £175,000, the potential use of a different lump sum for primary and secondary schools, and the attainment measure for secondary schools changing to target pupils achieving Level 3 or below in either English or Maths rather than in both.

The way that these changes to the funding system would impact Bromley had been considered by the Schools' Forum at its meeting on 18th July 2013. It had been agreed that the lump sum provided to secondary and primary schools would be adjusted to £175,000, but that there would be no other changes for primary schools. For secondary schools the changes would be more significant as the number of pupils eligible for funding under the new attainment measure had increased from 1249 to 3441 pupils. As a result of this, and following consultation with the Schools' Forum Working Group, it had been proposed that the per pupil sum for attainment be adjusted to reflect the increased demand with the allocation of £2,500 for pupils not attaining in English and Maths in 2013/14 reduced to £1,250 in 2014/15 for any pupil not attaining in English or Maths. It had been thought that pupils who were not attaining in both subjects would receive £2,500, which was equivalent to the 2013/14 funding allocation, however recent guidance from the Department for Education advised that the same amount of funding

would be allocated to each pupil, whether they were achieving Level 3 or below in English, Maths or in both. Additional funding in excess of £1m would be required to support the proposal to allocate £1,250 as the per pupil attainment measure, and the Schools' Forum Working Group had considered whether this funding could be taken from the Age Weighted Pupil Unit or from the lump sum.

In considering how to fund the change to the attainment measure for secondary schools, seven consultation responses had been received from schools in the Borough. One response from a primary school supported funding the change through the Age Weighted Pupil Unit and noted that primary schools could not afford a further reduction in budgets. A late response to the consultation had also supported this option. Two responses from secondary schools supported the use of a zero lump sum. The remaining four responses highlighted that Bromley Head Teachers did not support either of the proposed funding mechanisms and requested that the Schools' Forum consider the issue in more detail. Mrs Karen Raven had subsequently circulated an alternative solution to secondary schools which proposed that the secondary lump sum be retained by schools and that the existing £250,000 fund attributed to the attainment measure would be reallocated over the increased number of students, providing a reduced allocation of £907 per pupil with the minimum funding guarantee applied as appropriate. A total of 12 Secondary Schools had indicated their support for this proposal to either Karen Raven or Aydin Önaç.

The Chairman advised members of the Forum that he had received a letter from the Head Teachers of Langley Park Boys and Girls Schools voicing concern around how the proposed models developed in response to the changes to the funding system would impact their school budgets.

In considering the outcome of the consultation on the 2014/15 funding review, the Chairman noted that there were two issues to consider. These comprised the level at which funding should be set for the attainment measure and whether the secondary lump sum should be retained for 2014/15.

The Head of Schools Finance Support advised members of the Forum that to support the identification of an appropriate level of supplement for pupils who were achieving Level 3 or below in English, Maths or in both for 2014/15, the 2013/14 eligible pupil figures would be used. This agreed per pupil amount would then be allocated to those pupils that qualified in 2014/15, which could total more than the £250,000 fund agreed by the Schools' Forum to be set aside for the attainment measure if there were more pupils eligible for the additional funding than in 2013/14.

A spreadsheet was provided to members of the Forum that demonstrated the difference in funding for all Bromley secondary schools using the proposed attainment measure figures of £1,250 and £907, both with and without the £175k lump sum, against the 2013/14 budget. In considering this financial data, it was confirmed that the Minimum Funding Guarantee moderated the impact of any changes to a School's budget to no more than a 1.5% change in overall budget in any one year. Those schools with a higher proportion of students eligible under the new attainment measure would benefit most from the change, although it was

noted that schools with a large number of students who had previously received funding at the higher level would likely see a reduction in funding.

In discussion, the Chairman highlighted the potential to reduce the value of secondary Age Weighted Pupil Unit to offset any increased costs incurred through the level of attainment measure set for 2014/15, but noted that this would cause other issues. Karen Raven underlined that it was more important to work within the funds already identified for the measure of attainment than access additional funds through other measures which might be destabilising for the overall budget. Aydin Önaç supported the need to work within existing funds and noted that pupils of all abilities should receive a fair share of the funding available to support their education.

As the decision was in relation to the funding formula, all schools representatives and the Early Years Provider were entitled to vote. Following a vote, it was unanimously agreed to set the measure of attainment for secondary pupils at £907 for 2014/15. Following a further vote it was unanimously agreed to retain the £175,000 lump sum for secondary schools. Members also noted the outcome of the consultation on the 2014/15 Funding Review, which had been undertaken both for the initial proposals to fund measure of attainment and informally with secondary schools for the alternate option developed by Karen Raven.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The measure of attainment for secondary pupils be set at £907 for 2014/15;**
- 2) The £175,000 Lump Sum be retained for secondary schools; and,**
- 3) That the outcome of the consultation with schools on the 2014/15 Funding Review be noted.**

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The venue for future meetings will be confirmed prior the meeting.

4.30pm, Thursday 21st November 2013

4.30pm, Thursday 23rd January 2014

4.30pm, Thursday 13th February 2014

4.30pm, Thursday 20th March 2014

The Meeting ended at 5.35 pm

Chairman