

EDUCATION BUDGET SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 6 January 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
David Bradshaw, Head of Education, Care and Health Services Finance
James Mullender, Senior Accountant
Nina Newell, Head of Schools, Early Years Commissioning and Quality
Assurance
Amanda Russell, Head of Schools Finance Support

37 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

38 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.

39 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

No questions had been received from members of the public.

40 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16TH OCTOBER 2014 AND MATTERS OUTSTANDING

The minutes were agreed subject to Item 25: Declarations of Interest being amended to read:

“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.”

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 16th October 2014 be agreed.

41 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - 2ND QUARTER 2014/15

Report FSD14061

On 26th November 2014, the Council's Executive received the 2nd quarterly capital monitoring report for 2014/15 and agreed a revised Capital Programme for the four year period 2014/15 to 2017/18. 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 response to a question from the Chairman, the Head of Schools, Early Years Commissioning and Quality Assurance confirmed that the allocation of a further £150k from unspent Dedicated Schools Grant funding would support private, voluntary and independent providers to create additional early education places for two year olds where it had been identified that further places would be required.

RESOLVED that the revised Capital Programme agreed by the Executive on 26th November 2014 be recommended to the Portfolio Holder for Education for approval.

**42 EDUCATION PORTFOLIO BUDGET MONITORING REPORT
2014/15**

Report ED15099

The Sub-Committee considered a report setting out the budget monitoring position for the Education Portfolio based on expenditure to the end of November 2014. The Schools' Budget, funded from the Dedicated Schools' Grant and other specific grants was forecast to be in an underspend position of £606k, which would be carried forward into the next financial year. The controllable part of the Non-Schools' Budget, funded from Council Tax, Revenue Support and other specific grants was forecast to be in an underspend position of £41k, assuming that £387k would be drawn from contingency at the end of the financial year to offset the expected reduction in Education Services Grant.

In considering the budget monitoring position for the Education Portfolio, the Chairman noted that there was currently a predicted overspend of £264k in the Bromley Adult Education College budget. This was a continuation of an overspend which had been projected through 2013/14, and work was being undertaken to identify how this could be addressed. The Assistant Director: Education advised Members that Bromley Adult Education College would undertake negotiations with the Skills Funding Agency in early Spring 2015 for the provision of approved qualification courses for the 2015/16 academic year. There had been an annual cut in grant funding for approved qualification courses since 2010/11 and it was expected that would be a further cut in grant funding for the 2015/16 academic

year, which would be taken into consideration as part of the negotiations for future provision.

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

43 EDUCATION PORTFOLIO BUDGET 2015/16

Report ED15031

The Sub-Committee considered a report setting out the draft Education Portfolio Budget 2015/16, which incorporated future cost pressures and initial budget saving options to be reported to the Executive on 14th January 2015. Members were requested to consider the initial budget saving options proposed and identify any further action to be taken to reduce the cost pressures facing the Local Authority over the next four years.

The Head of Education, Care and Health Services Finance advised Members that approximately £900k savings had been identified across the Education Portfolio for 2015/16. This included savings in essential car users' allowances, the redesign or reorganisation of some services, including the Youth Service and Schools and Early Years Commissioning and Quality Assurance Service, the reorganisation of contracts related to some services, and increased income generation targets for Children and Family Centres.

In considering the draft Education Portfolio Budget 2015/16, The Portfolio Holder for Education noted that no additional growth pressures had been identified in the Education Portfolio for 2015/16, but that there had been an additional allocation of funding relating to the full year effect of the reduction in the Education Services Grant and the closure of the outreach service. There would be further significant reductions in the Education Services Grant provided to the Local Authority as more Local Authority maintained schools converted to academy status, although the pace of transfer had now slowed. It was expected that the Local Authority would lose £6m per annum between 2013/14 and 2016/17 as a result of the conversion of Local Authority maintained schools to academy status.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The financial forecast for 2016/17 to 2018/19 be noted;**
- 2) Members' comments on the initial draft saving options proposed by the Council's Executive for 2015/16 be noted; and,**
- 3) Members' comments on the initial draft 2015/16 Education Portfolio budget be provided to the meeting of the Council's Executive on 11th February 2015.**

44 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2015/16

Report ED15032

The Sub-Committee considered a report outlining the early estimates of how the Dedicated Schools Grant for the 2015/16 financial year would be allocated.

The Dedicated School Grant was made up of three blocks comprising High Needs, Early Years and Schools. Following the release of the Fairer Funding Review in 2014, the Schools Block allocation for 2015/16 had been confirmed as £4,545.22 per pupil, which would total an estimated £189,416,865. Added to the 2013/14 figures for the High Needs Block and an estimated figure for the Early Years Block, it was projected that the Dedicated Schools Grant for the 2015/16 financial year would total approximately £246m.

A number of changes would come into effect for the 2015/16 financial year. This included a reduction in the Two Year Old funding, which would now be funded on a participation basis, and changes within the High Needs Block to reflect savings identified within individual services. Additional funding would be provided to the Local Authority to support it in calculating the funding for any free schools within the Borough, but this would be recouped by the Department for Education. Individual school and academy funding had been calculated using the formula element from revised Option One, as agreed at the meeting of Education Budget Sub-Committee on 16th October 2014, and therefore included the additional allocation of £19.5m. Two areas of additional funding had also been identified for consideration which comprised primary growth funding for bulge classes and a need to review the Early Years Funding Formula.

RESOLVED that the proposed allocation of Dedicated Schools Grant for the 2015/16 financial year, including the potential shortfall in funding, be noted.

45 USE OF UNSPENT DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT

Report ED15030

The Sub-Committee considered a report providing an overview of unspent Dedicated Schools Grant and outlining proposals for its use.

The Local Authority had carried forward a total of £8.946m of Dedicated Schools Grant to 2014/15 from underspends of £1.697m, £2.984m and £4.265m in the respective financial years 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14. A number of proposals had been developed for the use of this unspent Dedicated Schools Grant. These comprised the distribution to schools as a one-off exceptional payment for which a mechanism would have to be agreed with the Department for Education, the creation of a Growth Fund to support a rate increase for early years providers and an increase in bulge class funding, and the purchase and contribution to the refurbishment of Beacon House.

Members were advised that the proposals would be presented to the Schools'

Forum for consideration at its meeting on 15th January 2015, and should they be supported, the Secretary of State for Education would then be approached to agree the proposals.

In considering the proposal to utilise unspent Dedicated School Grant to purchase and contribute to the refurbishment of Beacon House, the Portfolio Holder for Education noted that it was anticipated that Beacon House would offer 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, which would enable Bromley pupils to benefit from a high quality in-Borough alternative provision.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder for Education be recommended to agree the proposed use of unspent Dedicated Schools Grant, subject to any further comments from the Schools' Forum on 15th January 2015.

46 USE OF THE PUPIL PREMIUM BY SCHOOLS

Report ED15127

The Sub-Committee considered a report providing information on the way that the Pupil Premium was used by Bromley schools to target the gap in attainment for pupils who were eligible for free school meals.

The Pupil Premium was introduced in April 2011 and was allocated to schools to support pupils who had been registered for free school meals at any point in the previous six years to improve their outcomes and close the gap in attainment. For the 2014/15 financial year, the Pupil Premium was £1300 per primary pupil and £935 per secondary pupil, and had been used to fund a range of activities across Bromley schools including home and school support, access to enrichment activities such as school trips and music activities, and funding places at before and after school clubs. Where there was a concern that children in receipt of Pupil Premium were performing and progressing less well in comparison with their peers in Local Authority Maintained schools, specific support was provided by the Local Authority. Bromley schools were encouraged to share good practice on the use of their Pupil Premium, which had been supported through discussion at Governors Forums and a presentation by Steve Higgins, Professor of Education at Durham University at the Conference for Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors in November 2014 where a Teaching and Learning Toolkit was made available to schools. Future plans to support the use of the Pupil Premium by Bromley schools included the introduction of a rolling programme to check school websites to ensure they published all required information, such as how Pupil Premium funding was utilised. Data would also continue to be analysed with targeted support provided to Local Authority Maintained schools where the gap in attainment was not considered to be closing effectively.

In considering the use of the Pupil Premium by schools, the Portfolio Holder noted that any future Bromley Governors Forum would have a key role in promoting best practice in the use of Pupil Premium by schools, as well as considering how to

maximise the take up of Pupil Premium by eligible pupils at schools and early years settings across the Borough.

Members were pleased to note that Perry Hall Primary School and Burnt Ash Primary School had both received an award in the Key Stage 2 category of the Pupil Premium Awards 2015, and requested that the Portfolio Holder for Education write to both schools to congratulate them on their achievement. Members also requested that a report be provided to the meeting of Education PDS Committee on 10th March 2015 outlining Pupil Premium funding provided to schools across the Borough and how this impacted the gap in attainment.

RESOLVED that the use of Pupil Premium in Bromley schools be noted.

47 EDUCATION PORTFOLIO INFORMATION ITEMS

a) ATTAINMENT FIGURES FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES SIMILAR TO BROMLEY

Briefing ED15128

The Sub-Committee considered an information briefing providing a comparison of the performance of Bromley schools in relation to its statistical neighbours for the 2013/14 academic year.

Bromley schools continued to perform well against its statistical neighbours, and were in the top 3 for performance for 19 of the 26 measures. This included having the highest number of children achieving the required standard at 81% in Year 1 Phonics, and the highest percentage of children making two levels of progress in reading and mathematics at Key Stage 2. Figures recently published by the Department for Education showed an improving picture in relation to the achievement of children attending Bromley schools who were in receipt of Pupil Premium, with achievement at Key Stage 4 Level 4 increasing by 8% on the previous year.

The Head of Schools, Early Years Commissioning and Quality Assurance advised Members that attainment in Writing continued to be a national issue. Bromley's performance in Writing had improved in the past year, although not in every school, and Writing would continue to be a key focus for school improvement into the future.

RESOLVED that the information briefing be noted.

48 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

49 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Education Budget Sub-Committee would be held at 7.00pm on Tuesday 3rd March 2015.

50 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006 AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business listed below as it was likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.

51 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16TH OCTOBER 2014

RESOLVED that the Exempt (Part 2) minutes of the Education Budget Sub-Committee meeting held on 16th October 2014 be agreed.

The Meeting ended at 7.37 pm

Chairman