

## **SCHOOLS' FORUM**

Minutes of the meeting held at 4.30 pm on 15 January 2015

### **Present:**

Geoff Boyd (Chairman)	Primary Maintained Governor
Colin Ashford	Primary Academy Governor
Leah Crawley	Primary Maintained Head Teacher
David Dilling	Primary Academy Governor
Patrick Foley	Primary Maintained Head Teacher
Lee Mason-Ellis	Primary Academy Head Teacher
Sam Parrett	Non-School Representative (14-19 Partnership)
Neil Proudfoot	Non-School Representative (Joint Teacher Liaison Committee)
Alison Regester	Non-School Representative (Early Years)
Keith Seed	Special Head Teacher/Governor

### **Also Present:**

Councillor Stephen Wells	Portfolio Holder for Education
Jane Bailey	Assistant Director: Education
David Bradshaw	Head of Education and Care Services Finance
James Mullender	Head of Education Finance
Amanda Russell	Head of Schools Finance Support
Graham Walton	Democratic Services Manager

## **25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Andrew Downes, David Bridger, Neil Miller and Karen Raven. Lee Mason-Ellis had replaced Cheryl Sutton. (Apologies had also been received from Aydin Önaç.)

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, Geoff Boyd took the chair. He welcomed David Dilling to his first meeting as a member of the Forum.

## **26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Alison Regester declared an interest in relation to the item on the Early Years Funding Formula as a nursery provider.

## **27 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20TH NOVEMBER 2014**

It was noted in relation to minute 23 that the Council's Property Division was considering how to take forward the health and safety issues, but this no longer formed part of the proposals for unspent DSG.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2014 be confirmed.**

**28            2015-16 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT**  
Report ED15033

The report provided updated information on the 2015/16 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and how it would be allocated. Two elements were not yet finalised – final details of the High Needs Block were expected later in the month, while funding for two year olds was not expected to be known until June. The overall figure for DSG, including estimates for these two areas, was £251,733,734.

A small change was proposed to the amount de-delegated from maintained primary schools for staff supply costs, which included cover for maternity leave, jury service, suspension and union duties. The amount per pupil had increased from £17.38 to £18.50 as a direct result of increased expenditure. The amount de-delegated for free school meal eligibility remained at £8.65 per pupil. It was suggested that the exact amounts for each element – i.e. for maternity cover, union duties etc, should be established, and that as maintained primary schools had not had an opportunity to discuss the proposals and come to a view the status quo should prevail.

**RESOLVED that**

- (1) The revised DSG allocation is noted.**
- (2) The proposed allocation, including changes to the Early Years Funding Formula and the additional £500k added for Growth Funding, is agreed in principle.**
- (3) The status quo on de-delegation should be maintained.**

**29            EARLY YEARS FUNDING FORMULA 2015/16**  
Report ED15035

The Forum was asked to consider proposed changes to the Early Years Funding Formula (EYFF). The EYFF had remained unchanged since its introduction in 2009, but with a number of changes to Early Years Funding it was proposed that Bromley's formula be reviewed. The following changes were proposed for 2015/16 -

- a) Base rates to be increased to include funding for inclusion previously paid as a lump sum;
- b) Quality supplement to be based on an Ofsted outcome of Good/Outstanding outcome as opposed to the current combined requirement for staff qualifications and Ofsted outcome (as a result of this a greater number of settings will attract this funding);

- c) Flexibility supplement removed – this encouraged providers to offer the free places at times to suit parents and this has now largely been achieved;
- d) Deprivation supplement – will remain the same for 2015/16 but from 2016/17 will be based on deprivation as indicated by the EYPP;
- e) No changes to SEN.

Officers reported that modelling had shown that only a small number of settings would lose money, and these would be small amounts – the vast majority of settings would gain from the proposals. However, the proposals had been discussed at the Providers Forum earlier in the week and there had been concern at the impact of the removal of the flexibility supplement and the changes to the quality supplement, especially as they faced extra costs for employer pension contributions and administration.

In view of the concerns it was decided that further consideration was needed, and a special meeting would need to be held before the end of March.

**RESOLVED that consideration of the proposed Early Years Funding Formula be deferred to a special meeting.**

### **30 USE OF UNSPENT DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT** Report ED15034

The Council had carried forward a total of £8.946m of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) from underspends of £1.697m, £2.984m and £4.265m in the 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14 financial years respectively. As part of the ongoing discussions regarding this unspent DSG, the Schools Forum was asked to consider proposals for the use of the funds.

The proposals were to distribute £3.5m to schools as a one-off payment, to fund two growth bids of £500k each for two years for early years providers and bulge classes, the purchase of Beacon House for £1.79m and to contribute £3m to the refurbishment costs of Beacon House. This would leave an unallocated surplus of £656k to be carried forward into 2015/16.

A letter had been received from Karen Raven on behalf of secondary head teachers stating that they were broadly in agreement with the proposed expenditure on Beacon House. She reiterated concerns that they had not been consulted on the decision to purchase Beacon House and sought an undertaking that they would be consulted sooner on any future projects. She also made the recommendation that the opportunity be taken to liaise more effectively with primary head teachers about the transition of year 5 and 6 pupils into Beacon House in year 7.

The Education Portfolio Holder apologised that it had not been possible to consult with the Forum about the purchase of Beacon House, but he explained that it had been necessary to move very quickly and confidentially to realise the opportunity to provide what was potentially a facility of national excellence.

The Authority was in discussion with Bromley College about the development of the Midfield campus for KS3 provision. Comments were made that, just like Burwood, the Midfield site was not ideal, being towards the edge of the borough, but it was also accepted that in other ways it was a more welcoming site than Burwood.

The Forum also discussed how schools would be notified of the additional funding – both the £3.5m from unspent DSG and the £19.5m additional funding in the Schools Block. Officers confirmed that they would give explicit guidance to maintained schools on the figures; however, the Authority did not provide information for academies.

**RESOLVED that the proposals for the use of unspent DSG be supported.**

**31            DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

A special meeting would be needed before the end of March on the early Years Funding Formula.

Dates would be circulated for ordinary meetings at the ends of June, September and November 2015, and mid-January 2016.

The Meeting ended at 5.44 pm

Chairman