

**SCHOOLS FORUM**  
**MEETING HELD ON 6 MAY 2014**

**PRESENT:**

Primary School Headteachers: Mrs J Conway and Mr T Gittins.

Primary School Governors: Mr H Smith and Mr C Wilson

Secondary School Headteacher: Mr C Walker

Secondary School Governor: Mr L Wadey

Academy Representative: Mr B Jordon and Mrs M O'Connor

Diocesan Representative: Dr P Mackie - Chair

L A Representative: Councillor Mrs C Clark

Trade Union Representative: Mr D Campbell

Officials: Mrs L Brown – Head Education, Early Years and Complex Needs  
 Ms J Humphreys – Corporate Director, Children, Education and Social Care  
 Mr D New – Senior Finance Manager  
 Mrs N Fletcher – Secretary to the Forum  
 Mrs E Barrett – School and Governor Support service

Also in attendance: Mrs J Wright – Planning and Partnership Manager

1. **EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

Members noted the evacuations procedures to be used to exit the building in an emergency.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs A Cains, Mrs E Horne, Mrs M Carlton, Mr G Leck and Mrs J Rea.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Members were invited to declare any personal or business interests they may have in any item included on the agenda.

No interests were declared.

4. **MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING – 11 FEBRUARY 2014**

**RESOLVED**

- a) that the minutes of the 11 February 2014 be amended to indicate that Ms J Humphreys did offer her apologies under agenda item 2;
- b) that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2014 as amended be approved as a true record.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

6. EARLY YEARS – 2 YEAR OLD UPDATE

J Wright updated members on Free Nursery Entitlement for 2 year olds. The free entitlement had stimulated increased demand amongst communities, where there had previously been limited provision.

The scheme had been promoted to all Schools although the initial take up had been low, with only 7 Primary Schools joining the programme.

*M O'Connor and C Walker joined the meeting*

The 2 key priorities were;

- a) to ensure there would be sufficient capacity in the Borough;
- b) to increase awareness of entitlement.

The key actions were to:

- a) bring forward the September 2014 criteria to May 2014;
- b) implement a marketing and promotion campaign;
- c) offer funding to settings in priority areas;
- d) source a new information management system;
- e) facilitate training and partnership with settings.

The full DfE allocation for 2 year olds was included in the budget agreed by the Forum in January. This included £330k trajectory funding and this together with £410k of expected underspend from 2013/14 would be used to help deliver the priorities and key actions detailed above.

It was explained that the child minding sector had been approached to participate in the scheme. An information event had been held.

Members questioned if Schools with high percentages of children eligible for Free School Meals could partner up with local nursery settings. J Conway noted that Harewood Primary already had a partnership with High Flyers provision.

P Mackie questioned whether the 3 year olds currently in School nurseries were applying for this funding. It was noted that School Bursar's were aware of the funding and eligibility.

RESOLVED to accept the key actions as detailed in the document and above, utilizing the funding identified.

*J Wright left the meeting*

7. DfE ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA 2014 – 2015

D New presented the key points of the DfE Schools Block Funding Formulae 2014 – 2015 report. He highlighted the following points:

The data presented was based on Schools returns from January 2014. There were 2 mandatory factors, Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) and Deprivation factors.

Stockton's AWPU value was 70% of total spending compared to the national range of 61% - 87%.

The deprivation indicator used by Stockton was Free School Meal and Ever 6 eligibility. Over 12% of the schools block funding was allocated to Schools through the deprivation factor which compared to the national range of 1% - 20%.

Looked After Children (LAC) were supported with £1,245 (0.26%) funding per child. with most LA's who are using this factor allocating below £1,250 per child.

The Prior Attainment factor was used by Stockton and was £1,037 per Primary pupil and £1,032 per Secondary pupil. The national range for Primary was £115 - £2,874 and for Secondary was £36 - £3,229. Stockton contributed 4% of the funding to prior attainment compared with the national range of 2% - 6%.

English as an Additional Language (EAL) factor was supported by Stockton with 0.46% of the total funding allocated per pupil with all LA's allocating less than 5%.

Mobility factor was not used by Stockton.

Pupil Led factors were an amalgamation of all the above factors combined. This amounted to 88% of the Schools Block funding allocated where the minimum stated by EFA was 80%. The national average was 89%.

The Lump Sum allocated to both Primary and Secondary Schools was £169,000 which equated to 10.7% of total funding. This was higher than the national average of 8.5%.

Sparsity factor was not used by Stockton.

Overall the Primary to Secondary funding ratio was 1:1.28 compared to the median LA ratio of 1:1.29.

SEN notional allocation is within the Schools budget at 8.78% compared with the majority of LA's in the range of 7.5% - 10%.

The Growth Fund budget had been agreed at £160,000 for 2014/15.

Falling Roles factor was not used by Stockton.

Members questioned if the Growth Fund had been utilized in the previous year. D New explained that approx. £70,000 of the £150,000 had been allocated to Schools.. It was also noted that £1 million had been allocated to the High Needs block.

Overall the exercise showed that Stockton compared favorably with the national picture.

RESOLVED that members note the report.

#### 8. UPDATED DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT POSITION 2014 – 2015

D New confirmed that the DfE had awarded Stockton £973,000 based on a High Needs submission. However, this included post 16 High Needs provision (which in 2013/14 had been treated outside of DSG) which would be recouped by DfE relating to Horizons Academy Trust leaving the School Budget £80k better off than expected.

*L Brown joined the meeting*

#### 9. DfE FAIRER SCHOOLS FUNDING

D New updated members on the DfE Fairer Schools Funding 2015 – 2016 consultation paper. It was noted that the consultation period had ended on 30 April 2014.

The focus of the paper was that the Government had decided not to introduce a national funding formula for Schools from 2015 – 2016. There would be an additional £350 million available for those LA's that were less well funded. It was highlighted that no LA would receive less funding as a result of this proposal.

The allocation of the £350 million would be based on pupil led factors. It was proposed that 62 LA's would be eligible for the additional funding.

Stockton would not be eligible for any additional funding as we receive £4 million above the DfE determined minimum funding level. The minimum funding guarantee would remain at -1.5% per pupil.

RESOLVED to note the DfE Fairer Schools Funding 2015 – 2016 report.

10. DfE CONSULTATION – EDUCATION SERVICES GRANT 2015 - 2016

D New presented the Savings to the Education Services Grant (ESG) 2015 – 2016 paper. It was noted that this was a live consultation with a response date of 19 June 2014.

It was outlined that the proposals would equate to 20% cuts in DfE spending to LA's.

The LA would formulate its own response to the consultation which would be shared with Schools Forum. Academies may wish to make their own response.

P Mackie asked members if they would like to make a response to the consultation on behalf of Schools Forum. Members suggested that they view the LA response in conjunction with their own reply.

Members discussed the various statutory duties that the LA had to undertake and the costs involved. It was agreed that Stockton had already made substantial savings and further cuts would impact on childrens' education.

*T Gittins left the meeting*

J Conway was concerned that as a Schools Forum, there should be a formal response. B Jordon reiterated the purpose of the Schools Forum.

RESOLVED to arrange an additional Schools Forum meeting to formulate a Forum consultation response. All members to be invited to a meeting which would be held on 6 June 2014 at 8.30am at The Education Centre.

11. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business raised.

12. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED that the next meeting would be held at 1:30pm on Tuesday 8 July 2014 at the Media Centre, The Grangefield Academy.