

SCHOOLS FORUM
MEETING HELD ON 8 DECEMBER 2015

PRESENT:

Primary School Headteachers: Mrs S Randle, Mrs J Conway (Chair), Mrs M Carlton and Mrs J Rea

Primary School Governors: Mrs S Symington, Mrs J Gair and Mr B Winter

Secondary School Governor: Mr J Thompson

Secondary School Headteacher: Mr C Walker

Academy Representatives: Mr B Jordan and Ms B Atkinson

Diocesan Representative: Mr C Hammill

Officials: Mr D New – Senior Finance Manager
 Ms D McConnell – Head of Schools and SEN
 Mrs E Barrett – Secretary to the Schools Forum

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 were submitted on behalf of Cllr A McCoy, J Bailey, J Humphreys, L Chilton, Cllr C Clark, M O'Connor and S White.

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 20 OCTOBER 2015**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2015 be approved as a true record.

5. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

5.1 **Funding examples**

D New tabled two reports, one detailing the Primary position and one for Secondary. This highlighted the pressures on School budgets across a three year picture using the base figures from 2012/13 as a comparative.

B Jordan joined the meeting.

- Salary costs were approximately 80% of any Schools budget;
- The impact of the 2016/17 increases in employers National Insurance contributions and full year effect of the teacher pensions was reflected;
- It was assumed that there would be a 1% pay award for Staff across

2016/17 and 2017/18;

- This highlighted that across both the Primary and Secondary sector there had been an upward trend in the difference between the total budget provided and the actual staff costs of 4% in 2015/16, 7% in 2016/17 and an anticipated 8% in 2017/18.

5.2 Governor's Financial training

S Symington explained that St John the Baptist Primary School were arranging some external training for Governors that included analysing budgets. The date of the training would be advised for finance representative to attend.

S Symington

6. DELEGATION / DE-DELEGATION 2016/17

D New outlined that this paper had been presented at the previous Schools Forum meeting in order that members could take the time to consider the decisions to be made. Delegation and De-Delegation pertained only to maintained Schools and all decisions were binding across the sectors. There were 7 Primary and 2 Secondary representatives eligible to vote. A table summarising the budgets proposed for continued de-delegation with £394,839 total funding split across £295,682 for Primary and £99,157 for Secondary Schools had been circulated. This related to 48 Primary Schools and 3 Secondary Schools.

Eligible members were invited to participate in a vote and the following was recorded:

6.1 Contingencies

RESOLVED to:

- a) de delegate the £26,710 Primary allocation for Contingencies;
- b) de delegate the £7,744 Secondary allocation for Contingencies.

6.2 Contingencies – Support to Schools Partnership Fund

RESOLVED to:

- c) de delegate the £68,241 Primary allocation for Contingencies – Support to Schools Partnership Fund;
- d) de delegate the £19,963 Secondary allocation for Contingencies – Support to Schools Partnership Fund.

6.3 Staff Costs Supply Cover – TU Facilities Time

A letter of support from the Trade Unions of de delegation had been circulated at the last meeting, a copy was tabled for members information.

RESOLVED to:

- e) de delegate the £20,029 Primary Allocation for Staff Costs Supply Cover – TU Facilities Time;
- f) de delegate the £5,788 Secondary Allocation for Staff Costs Supply Cover – TU Facilities Time.

6.4 Behaviour and Support Services

RESOLVED to:

- g) de delegate the £106,818 Primary Allocation for Behaviour and Support Services;
- h) de delegate the £54,663 Secondary Allocation for Behaviour and Support Services.

6.5 Free School Meals Eligibility

RESOLVED to:

- i) de delegate the £31,344 Primary Allocation for Free School Meals Eligibility;
- j) de delegate the £9,057 Secondary Allocation for Free School Meals Eligibility.

6.6 Support to Underperforming Ethnic Minority Groups And Bilingual Learners

RESOLVED to:

- k) de delegate the £42,539 Primary Allocation for Support to Underperforming Ethnic Minority Groups and Bilingual Learners;
- l) de delegate the £2,212 Secondary Allocation for Support to Underperforming Ethnic Minority Groups and Bilingual Learners.

7. HIGH NEEDS REVIEW UPDATE

S Symington outlined the work that had been completed by the High Needs sub group. A report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Further details would be provided at the January meeting.

D McConnell highlighted that through the Governments Spending Review, there may be a move towards a national High Needs Funding Formulae which could impact on the role of Schools Forum. It was suggested that more interim measures were proposed with short term solutions. This would be reviewed at the January meeting.

S Randle commented that raising awareness of High Needs and generating discussion had been a positive aspect of the sub group's ongoing work.

8. SPENDING REVIEW AND AUTUMN STATEMENT 2015

D New referred to a previously circulated report. The focus was the impact on future planning and budget implications. The paper referred to the Governments spending plans up to 2019/20. Further details were required before the total impact could be understood however there was a clear direction evident.

Childcare

- This outlined the extension of the 15 hours free childcare entitlement to 30 hours per week for eligible working families. This would commence September 2017;
- Additional nursery places would be created using £50 million of capital funding nationally;
- An enhanced hourly rate would be available for childcare providers;
- Early Years would be moving to a national funding formulae, the LA provided an hourly rate currently;
- J Conway explained that she had met with C Azam and J Wright to discuss a local response to the paper including places and how to meet the additional need. Members were invited to join the working party. M Carlton agreed to join the group.

Schools

- A national funding formulae will be introduced for Schools, High Needs and Early Years;
- Universal Free School Meals would continue;
- Pupil Premium would be protected at current rates;
- There were many questions around the funding formula regarding settings and top ups, there would also be some differences with a rigid formula as opposed to the flexible 14 factors currently in place;

- The role of Schools Forum was also in jeopardy with a move towards ending the LA role in running Schools and converting all Schools to Academy status;
- There will be support for 800 additional National Leaders of Education (NLE);
- There would be investment to attract new Teachers into the profession;
- There would be £600 million of savings made on the ESG with consultation in 2016 around policy and funding proposals;
- J Conway noted that many Schools would be facing a redundancy situation through increased costs and tight budgets. It was suggested that HR resend out the advice and guidance on the redundancy process;
- D McConnell explained that she had attended a meeting with the Schools Commissioner who was forecasting a 10% reduction in the Education Services Grant with statutory duties removed from the LA. Schools would be encouraged to form groups / Multi Academy Trusts (MAT), nationally some LA were sponsors of MAT's. A green paper would be published in Spring 2016 to highlight the areas that would be consulted on. School to School support would be redundant as grants would be made directly;
- Locality clusters would be important;
- B Winters discussed more powers for Teachers however B Jordan explained that within an Academy model there was more accountability.

HR / Secretary

RESOLVED that members noted the report.

9. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There were no further items of business to discuss.

10. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED that the next meeting would be held at 1:30pm on Tuesday 26 January 2016 at The Education Centre in Stockton Sixth Form College.