

SCHOOLS FORUM
MEETING HELD ON 13 DECEMBER 2016

PRESENT:

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

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

Secondary School Governor: Mr J Thompson

Secondary School Headteacher: Mr C Walker

Academy Representatives: Mrs L Spellman

Trade Union Representative: Mr L Russell

PRU Representative: Ms L Chilton

Officials: Mr A Bryson – Finance Manager
 Ms D McConnell – Assistant Director, Schools and SEN
 Mr G Waller - Accountant
 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 Ms J Humphreys, Mr Gray, Cllr C Clark, Mr S White and Mrs M O'Connor.

3. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

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

There were no interests declared.

4. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

Members were asked for any self nomination to take over the Chair.

RESOLVED to appoint Mrs J Conway to be Chair for a term of two years.

5. **MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING 18 OCTOBER 2016**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2016 be approved as a true record.

6. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

6.1 **Delegation / De-Delegation**

It was noted that the Primary Schools had previously agreed the option to delegate to the LA. There was only one eligible member able to vote for the

Secondary maintained sector.

RESOLVED that the Secondary School representative voted to agree to de delegation of funds.

L Chilton joined the meeting.

7. FUNDING FORMULA 2017 - 2018

A Bryson referred to the previously circulated report. The paper had been prepared to update members on the funding changes for 2017 – 2018 that had been released on 1 December 2016. The following points were highlighted:

- Additional funds had been proposed in replacement of the Education Services Grant (ESG) which would be withdrawn;
- £50 million per year was available nationally to Local Authorities and would be allocated based on the number of maintained Schools;
- £50,000 was the minimum funding that each Authority would receive although it was anticipated that Stockton would receive more than this amount. There had been no specific details released as yet however it was anticipated that the LA Settlement would be known this week;
- £140 million per year through the Strategic School Improvement Fund for both Academies and maintained Schools to support School Improvement. Again there were no specific details however it was anticipated that this would involve a bidding process;
- There were a number of smaller additional funding streams noted in the report.

An updated Operational Guide for 2017 – 2018 had been released with the following:

- From 2017 Schools Forum can agree to de delegate further funding to support School Improvement for maintained Schools;
- Guidance was issued on the split of former ESG duties to be funded from the centrally retained block Centrally funded services are subject to limitations of no new commitments or increases in expenditure however from 2017 this no longer applied to admissions or servicing Schools Forum;
- There was one recommendation that the forum approve the use of the retained duties element of the ESG that would be transferred to the Schools Block;
- The ESG retained duties rate of £15 equates to around £440,000 which will be transferred to the Schools Block for retained duties.

RESOLVED that the forum approve the use of the retained duties element of the ESG that was transferred into the Schools Block for the responsibilities local authorities hold for all Schools.

D McConnell highlighted that the ESG was £1.8 million and was being replaced with a scheme which would only contribute £440,000 into the LA, this was obviously a huge shortfall. The Chair confirmed that there was also the option to bid for funds from the Strategic School Improvement Fund.

D McConnell outlined that a report would be submitted to cabinet in January 2017 around the reduction in ESG and how to move forward as an authority. There were difficult decisions to be made around central services. There would be an interim arrangement for one year to cover services and a new vision for the future. A consultation around these services would be launched after the report had been to cabinet.

8. EARLY YEARS CONSULTATION

A Bryson referred to the previously circulated paper. A consultation had been carried out by the Government during the summer and a response to this had been published 1

December 2016. The following was highlighted:

- Hourly rates to the LA would increase in 2017/18 from £4.56 to £4.94 per hour for three and four year old provision. For two year old provision this would increase from £5.09 to £5.39 per hour using existing criteria;
- There was a new national funding for early years which incorporated the existing 15 hours provision for three and four year olds plus the additional 15 hours for eligible working parents;
- The formula would include a minimum funding rate of £4.30 per hour to the LA;
- LA were required to pass over 93% in 2017/18 and then 95% of early years funding from 2018/19 to providers;
- The LA must use universal base rates no later than 2020, it was likely that in Stockton this would be effective 2017/18;
- There was £55 million of supplementary funding available to the LA however Stockton was not eligible for this funding;
- The LA total value of funding supplements would be capped at 10%, in Stockton this was below 10%;
- A new Disability Access Fund of £12.5 million, equivalent to £615 per child for three and four year olds would be available for those taking up free entitlement and are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance. Funding would be allocated straight to the provider;
- A local inclusion fund would need to be established by the LA and this would be built into the Early Years formula;
- A new funding formula would commence in April 2017 with the additional 15 hours provision for three and four year olds effective September 2017;
- The LA needed to consult with providers and this was in draft form and had been discussed with the working party;
- Consultation with providers will be taking place over the coming weeks with the expectation that results will be presented to the forum.

RESOLVED that members note the report.

Members questioned the impact on the LA of the Early Years funding. It was highlighted that the LA did not provide funding for Early Years, it was all centralized funding. The LA would top slice 5% as noted above.

9. SCHOOLS FORUM OPERATIONAL AND GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

A Bryson outlined that an updated operational guide and good practice for Schools Forum had been released on 1 December 2016. A self assessment toolkit had been circulated and members had been requested to complete and return the form to the Secretary.

Members

10. APPRENTICESHIP LEVY

A Bryson referred to the previously circulated paper on the apprenticeship levy. The following was noted:

- Change would be effective 6 April 2017 with some employers required to contribute to the levy;
- If a company has a payroll over £3 million then they would be required to contribute. A £15,000 allowance would be provided to offset the first £15,000 of the levy contribution;
- Maintained and Voluntary Controlled Schools – the LA would be liable to contribute;
- Academies would be liable as both stand alone and multi academy trusts;
- Foundation and Voluntary Aided Schools would be liable through the governing body and the PAYE scheme;
- Schools will be able to access the funding for their own apprentice through a government portal;

- The Government would apply a 10% top up to the funding;
- It is recommended that it is the Schools Forum responsibility to allocate the Schools element of the levy;
- In response to a number of questions, it was acknowledged that more information would be required including a list of preferred suppliers;
- Members noted that it maybe beneficial to develop a provider to deliver bespoke School training with regards to Science or Key Stage 2 to build capacity in the LA;
- There was some concern over the low salaries allocated to apprentices and that funds would only be available for 2 years once submitted to the portal;
- Schools would need to build this into their budget setting for April 2017.
- The levy can be used to pay for training and assessment for apprentices in England. **It cannot be used on other costs** such as wages, statutory licenses to practice, travel, managerial costs, work placement programmes or the cost of setting up an apprenticeship programme.

RESOLVED that:

- a) members note the report and agree to have the responsibility to allocate the Schools element of the levy;
- b) to invite Fabienne Bailey to the next Schools Forum meeting to answer any questions on the apprenticeship scheme.

A Bryson
Agenda

11. HIGH NEEDS SUB GROUP UPDATE

S Symington gave a verbal account of the circulated paper. It was highlighted that some deadlines had been extended in the plan. There was a need to review the terms of reference, objectives and timescales in the project. The next meeting of the sub group would be held on 19 January 2017 where the terms of reference would be reviewed. The update would be brought back to the next Schools Forum.

12. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

12.1 Meeting date

A Bryson confirmed that the next Schools Forum meeting date had been scheduled for 24 January 2017 at 1.30pm. The APT tool needed to be submitted to the DFE by the 20 January 2017. If further Schools Forum clarification was needed on any part of the submission then the meeting may need to be brought forward to 17 January 2017. The Secretary would email out at the beginning of January to confirm the meeting date.

12.2 NASUWT leaflet

L Russell had provided members with a leaflet with reference to the middle section around social media and NQT's. It was suggested to leave a copy in School staffrooms. It was noted that Fiona Ranson had produced a large document around social media safety. J Gair would forward to the Secretary with regards to a possible Governor training session.

13. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED that the next meeting would be held at 1:30pm on 24 January 2017 at The Education Centre in Stockton Sixth Form College.