

Schools Forum Meeting

Thursday 31st January 2013 at 1.30pm

Wigan Investment Centre

Minutes

Members: P Dahlstrom, V Birchall, G Hayes, L Fox, R Ward, R Halford, K Pilkington, A Isherwood, R Lewis, A Hardy (Chair), A Wells.

LA Officers: M Rotheram (Strategic Finance Manager)
T Warren (Interim Director – Skills, Education & Community Support)
C Myers (Strategic Finance Manager)
P Harvey (Finance Officer)
E Baulcombe (Service Manager – Commissioning)
S Ruffley (Clerking Service)

Observers: S Wilson (NASUWT)
C Williams (Diocese)
M Atkins (NUT)

1. Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received from S Darbyshire, D Donaldson, G Lloyd, T Frost, S Fenton and Cllr S Loudon.

The Chair informed the meeting that Tom Frost had been nominated by the Governors Forum as a replacement for John Mason.

2. Items for inclusion under AOB

- Growth Fund expenditure

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 15th November 2012 and matters arising.

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2012 were **AGREED** as a true and correct record.

Matters Arising from the Minutes

Secure Cash Collections in Schools

- M Rotheram advised that 17 LAs are preparing a specification for tender through YPO. The current contract with G4S will be extended for 3 months so there is no impact on schools this academic year.
ACTION: A paper will be tabled at a future Schools Forum once the specification and tender process has been completed.
- M Rotheram advised that the table on p3 of the minutes of 15 November 2012 (Pupil Led Factors – Submission Document) would be revised to show like for like comparisons of school budgets for 2012/13 and 2013/14 based on October 2012 data.

ACTION: A revised table will be circulated by M Rotheram before 8th February 2013.

4. School Funding Settlement for 2013/14 and Pupil Premium

T Warren highlighted key issues in the report:

- Section 2 - funding settlement detail
- Section 4.1 - implications for the Growth Fund (and therefore all schools) should Local Authorities be required to fund start-up costs and diseconomies of scale for new academy and free school provision. The Education Funding Agency had confirmed verbally that they would fund these costs. Written confirmation of this will be sought.
- Section 5.1 - DSG Early Years Block – EYBUF for Wigan of £3,385.96 per pupil.
- Section 5.4 – free early education to disadvantaged 2 year olds to be introduced from September 2013
- Section 7.1 – increase in the Pupil Premium to £900
- Appendix A – the Schools Block per-pupil Unit of Funding (£4,526.53) was reported to be slightly higher than 2012-13.

Members **NOTED** the information provided.

5. Implementation of the National School Funding Proposals – submission of the Local Authority Reform Proforma to the DfE 22 January 2013.

M Rotheram advised that the Local Authority Reform Proforma had been submitted to the DfE on 22 January 2013. This was an update of the submission made in October 2012.

- Section 2.3 highlights changes between the two submissions and shows a net reduction of -£1.184m.
- Section 3.1 identifies the de-delegated budgets.
- Section 4 – EFA have indicated that they will fund this – see earlier minute in 4. School Funding Settlement for 2013/14.
- Table 3 shows the resources available within the Schools Block
- The spreadsheet circulated as Appendix 5A shows the distribution of funds

N.B. Data in the final tab of the spreadsheet (Appendix 5A) has been transposed and should read:

‘Retained for Growth: £100,000.’

‘% Pupil Led Funding: 89.54%.’

Members **CONFIRMED** the January Proforma that was submitted to the EFA on the 22 January 2013.

Members **CONFIRMED** the Schools Block allocations.

6. Implementation of the National School Funding Proposals – High Needs Block Modeling

T Warren advised the meeting that the modeling for the High Needs Block had been challenging. He felt that Wigan had a satisfactory outcome to the process, but noted that other LAs were having problems.

Several options had been modeled for the six special schools in Wigan and the best solution found to be Proposal Five: 'match all top ups on a 'like by like basis' but realign bandings to ensure comparability with the previous years budgets in total.'

It was confirmed that children from outside Wigan, but schooled in Wigan, would attract the rate of their 'home' LA rather than the Wigan rate.

Members **CONFIRMED** the HN Block and differential top up rates

Members **CONFIRMED** the HN Block allocations in total.

7. Achieving Two Year Old Programme – Early Years Block

T Warren outlined the background and context to the funding requirements to enable the LA to deliver the Government's priorities in relation to the Achieving 2 year old programme (A2YO).

- The LA has devised two formulae (Tables One and Two), in consultation with market providers. They were in support of the proposals.
- R Lewis felt that the proposals were a suitable compromise in the context of cuts already applied to Children's Centres.
- T Warren advised that the lump sum for Nursery Heads was in the formula.
- T Warren confirmed that this funding mechanism was in place for the next two years, but the situation after that date was dependant on Government policy.

The meeting considered the Recommendations on Page 5 of the Report:

The School Forum **APPROVED** Table 1 with the increased offer of 15 hours from April 2013 be supported for the statutory place funding and the budget for 2013/14 be agreed.

The Schools Forum **APPROVED** the surplus 5p per hour be retained centrally and to be utilised to support settings with additional staffing resource for 2 year old provision for those children with additional need or SEN.

The Schools Forum **APPROVED** the summer term (2013) surplus to be utilised to fund additional eligible children identified to reach the September 13 20% target (801 children) and the September 14 40% target (1700 children) or to utilise in addition to the trajectory funding to start to grow the market place in preparation for September 14.

The Schools Forum **APPROVED** the funding requirements for the trajectory funding to build capacity used to create non statutory places in preparation for the September 2014 entitlement for 40% of two year olds as well as for work to capacity build in terms of quality.

The meeting considered the Recommendations on Page 7 of the Report::

The Schools Forum **APPROVED** the proposals in relation to the Free Entitlement for three and four year olds and agree the budget for the financial year 2013/14

That Schools Forum **APPROVED** the overall surplus on the Early Years funding block to be retained centrally to support staffing costs associated with the Local authority's delivery of the childcare sufficiency functions required under the Childcare Act 2006.

8. Any Other Business

- T Warren informed the meeting of his intention to allocate a sum of circa £100,000 from the Growth Fund to St. Philip's Primary School, Atherton, for furniture and equipment required to support the schools significant increase in pupil numbers. T Warren also advised that there was an application from a different school pending.
- The meeting were informed that member Stephen Brierley would be replaced by Peter McGhee from St. John Rigby College

The Chair thanked T Warren on behalf of the Schools Forum for his hard work and wished him well for his future employment with the Liverpool Archdiocese.

9. Date and time of next meeting.

14 March 2013 at 9:00am at Progress House.

(Members will be informed should the venue change due to building work at Progress House.)

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 2:15pm.