

Bristol Schools' Forum

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 27th November 2018
 at 17.00 hrs at City Hall**

Present:

Karen Brown	Academy Secondary Governor Rep, St Mary Redcliffe & Temple
Emma Cave	Special School Governor Rep, Claremont
Simon Eakins	Academy Primary Headteacher Rep, Cathedral Primary
Rob Endley	Recognised Teaching Professional Association Rep
Peter Evans	Special School Headteacher Rep, Knowle DGE
Simon Holmes	Nursery Head Rep, St Phillips Marsh Nursery
Sarah Lovell	Academy Secondary Headteacher Rep, Bristol Metropolitan Academy
Kate Matheson	Maintained Primary Governor Rep, St Barnabas Primary
Aileen Morrison	PRU Rep, St Matthias Park
Sam Packer	PVI EY Rep
Cllr Ruth Pickersgill	Nursery Governor Rep, Rosemary Nursery
Chris Pring	Maintained Primary Headteacher Rep, Cabot Primary
Carew Reynell	Academy Secondary Governor Rep, Henbury School
Cedric Sanguignol	Maintained Primary Governor Rep, Bishop Road Primary
Simon Shaw	Maintained Secondary Headteacher Rep, St Mary Redcliffe & Temple
Will Shield	Academy Primary Governor Rep, Cathedral Primary
Christine Townsend	Maintained Primary Governor Rep, Whitehall Primary
David Yorath	Academy Secondary Governor Rep, Cotham School
Wendy Weston	Support Staff Rep

In attendance:

Billy Forsythe	Clerk to Schools Forum
Sally Jaeckle	Service Manager, Early Years
Cllr Anna Keen	Councillor
Denise Murray	Service Director Finance
Alan Stubbersfield	Interim Director Education Learning & Skills Improvement
Mary Taylor	Business Manager SEND
David Tully	Interim Finance Business Partner
Emilie Williams Jones	Head of Special Education, Autism & Travel
Travis Young	Corporate Finance

Observers:

William Brown
 Anne Sheridan
 Alderman Brian Price
 Michelle Willis

	Action
1. Welcome and introductions	
The Chair opened the meeting at 17:00.	

<p>2. Forum standing business</p> <p>Apologies Massimo Bonaddio, Jo Butler, Graham Clark, Trish Dodds, Tracey Jones, Garry Maher, Emma McAvoy, Jez Piper, Clerk confirmed meeting was quorate.</p> <p>New members None</p> <p>Vacancies: Maintained Primary Head – requested applications Academy Primary Head – A Rutherford not continuing – requested applications</p> <p>No declarations of interest were expressed.</p>	
<p>3. Minutes of the meeting held on 25th September 2018</p> <p>Minutes were accepted as correct:</p> <p>Matters Arising Item 3 Core funding. AS advised this has been resolved – he is visiting schools and a visit to St Bedes is also arranged. DY questioned what had been resolved. AS advised that the process has been completed under the control of ESFA and external timescales. If there are issues remaining then AS will engage with individual schools.</p> <p>Wording of growth fund – AS reported that Legal advice had now been received. This indicated that the Growth Fund policy is for the LA not the Forum whose role is advisory. The substance of advice is that it looks like a discriminatory policy and is not advised. LA will take this into account and Jacqui Jensen & AS with cabinet member will decide. CT asked which aspect of Growth fund is for the LA to decide. AS added that all aspects are within LA authority. CT disagreed and asked where this was set out in law. AS referred to the regulations on the website. AS added that having had Forum’s views he will bring a report back on the Growth Fund for consideration by Schools Forum.</p> <p>DY asked if a decision had been taken on High Needs block. DT advised that cabinet did agree and Council endorsed the decision of SF.</p> <p>CP added that the TwS financial report has cleared up the differences between previous reports, but an issue of what happened to the surplus of £1.7m remains. CR suggested this issue is parked until Central Services report later and if not resolved we will ask for a report.</p>	AS
<p>4. Correspondence</p> <p>No Correspondence. BF advised that there would be an ESFA presentation on the school self assessment tool in January before the meeting.</p>	
<p>5. DSG Budget Monitoring 2018/19</p> <p>DT provided an update on Period 6 and reported an improvement.</p> <p>EY figures have included the full impact of May census which has created a larger</p>	

<p>underspend but this is still a tentative figure and is heavily dependent on census in January.</p> <p>Forecasting an overall £1.4m underspend in year. Forum noted the position</p>	
<p>6. DSG Overview 2019/20</p>	
<p>CR advised that the Forum would debate all the reports and return to look at recommendations.</p> <p>DT advised that it is unclear what amount the DfE will supply for growth fund – it could be £5.2m or £3.9m.</p> <p>Schools have been consulted about transfer to High Needs from Schools block and Central Services block and the outcomes are reflected in report. 29 responses with 75% strongly agreed, agreed or neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal to transfer £2m. 75% strongly disagreed, disagreed or neither agreed nor disagreed with the transfer of £3m.</p> <p>High Needs budget has also been reviewed – pointing to a deficit of £7.5m by end of March 2020.</p> <p>LA is seeking Forum’s view on transfer and this week is the deadline for submissions to DfE.</p> <p>WS asked if the small number of replies reflected a lack of understanding. He also asked if 1% pay increases had been factored in.</p> <p>DT advised that the consultation had attempted to be as user friendly as possible and any suggestions for improvement would be welcomed. SH added that he hadn’t seen the consultation. DT advised it was distributed via the weekly Heads bulletin to all Heads, School Business Managers and Governors.</p> <p>DT confirmed that they did not factor in inflationary pressures. And the DfE will provide a grant for pay rises beyond 1% and full pension increase. The raw data was left for individual schools to consider for themselves.</p> <p>AS added that this will have a massive impact on DSG & High Needs and we all have a responsibility to balance budgets. We are in a highly problematic situation and need to face clearly the different problems.</p> <p>AK advised that consultation is a heated discussion. We are a political administration but have to be very careful what we say as we cannot be seen to be biased.</p> <p>DM added that we need to be able to demonstrate a balanced global view across all sections and phases. We have to ask if the responses are representative of the education picture in Bristol.</p> <p>AM pointed out that money taken from DSG to High Needs will go back into schools as</p>	

<p>top up. SH added that the 12 nurseries in Bristol don't get any money from High Needs Block.</p> <p>CP asked if the fact that the de-delegation consultation only received 10 responses meant that either people are missing emails or have too much to do. CT added that until you are at Forum you are not aware of the discussions at Forum and this makes having a representative body so important.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) DSG position noted. b) Forum agreed to transfer £0.566m from Central Services to High Needs block. c) Forum did not support a transfer of £3.4m from Schools block to High Needs block but Forum did support a transfer of £2m from Schools block to High Needs block. d) DY proposed the Forum look at a different amount but as this cannot be predicted Forum agreed to support any amount of Growth Fund beyond £3.9m to be transferred to the High Needs budget, too. 	
<p>7. Schools Block De-delegation and formula 2019/20</p>	
<p>DT advised that consultation took place on funding formula headroom distribution via deprivation, EAL or prior attainment. Response was 3 to 1 in favour of distribution via NFF values. DT asked if Forum was happy to endorse that view but added that there may not be much headroom and will not know until January.</p> <p>CR said that this approach seems to be in line with previous discussions.</p> <p>DT advised that De-delegation was consulted on and outcomes included in paper.</p> <p>RE gave information on the importance of the TU Facilities fund.</p> <p>CP asked about FSM eligibility. There has been a real decline in service as new portal EYES does not give the facility to schools. LA database was supposed to be carried across but the service is much worse than it used to be. Come January schools will have a huge problem re pupil premium, CP will give AS the name of the Project Manager.</p> <p>CT asked for an explanation of the numbers in table 3.</p> <p>BF advised the names of the 5 maintained Primary and 2 maintained Secondary delegates in attendance who were entitled to vote on the de-delegation.</p> <p>PRIMARY – all de-delegated apart from H&S Roving Reps Premises Insurance- 5 for, none against Free School Meals- 5 for, none against Maternity -5 for, none against Schools in Financial Difficulty- 4 for 1 against TU Facility Time -3 for 2 against H&S Roving Reps – 0 for 5 against Education Psychologists 5 for 0 against</p>	<p>CP</p>

<p>SECONDARY – all de-delegated Premises Insurance- 2 for, none against Free School Meals- 2 for, none against Maternity - 2 for, none against TU Facility Time -2 for, 0 against H&S Roving Reps – 2 for 0 against Education Psychologists - 2 for 0 against</p> <p>Recommendations: 2.1 Outcomes of consultation noted 2.2 Forum agreed to support LA view of how to apply the local formula. . 11 for none against. CT pointed out the differences in Appendix 2 and what NFF will allocate. CR advised that Forum previously agreed to keep current formula to protect schools for as long as possible. CP asked about NNDR -TY advised that this will be added to the formula. 2.3 voted as above 2.4 voted as above</p>	
<p>8. Central Services</p>	
<p>AS advised that there would be a written report at next meeting. CR asked if this could pick up the budgetary issues of TwS.</p> <p>CP added that there are 2 years of TwS income missing and Forum has not seen where that has gone. This surplus is made on the back of schools and some services increased charges by10%.</p> <p>AS advised that he would not expect 10% increases but some services do have to reflect commercial reality.</p> <p>SH added that maternity costs went up excessively and this was discriminatory as nurseries have high proportion of female staff.</p>	<p>AS</p>
<p>9. High Needs Update</p>	
<p>EWJ advised that 44 applications had been received at Top up panels totalling just over £500K. 22 applications were reviewed as only 2 Heads turned up so could not panel all.</p> <p>There are currently 2,293 EHP plans with 276 young people attending alternate learning provisions.</p> <p>Our SEN profile is similar to Nottingham, Liverpool & Sheffield.</p> <p>There is a clear rising level of need and most applications to the Top up panel were requesting Band 4 funding. We have made no changes to the process or bands.</p> <p>Table 1 of the report shows the High Needs forecast for period 6. Table 2 shows forecast for current commitments. Appendix 1 shows components of High Needs forecasts.</p> <p>There are four High Needs work streams with projects being set up -Top up funding,</p>	

early intervention scheme, hospital education and sensory support.

Following the judicial review the revised budget was quashed. The consequences of increased demands and before any transfer of funding means a culmulative forecast of £7.5m deficit by the end of 2019/20.

AM asked about the 30 places in resource bases not being used. EWJ advised she was in discussions with settings to gain a broad overview of children placed. Numbers agreed are set for next academic year and have allowed flex. Some decreases made in consultation with heads. Many young children with complex autism needs are not being met within existing settings.

AM referred to page 6 para 6.13 and inflationary assumptions. This isn't made for Bristol's own special schools. MT advised that the independent settings have not asked for any inflationary increases before and now have to. We always negotiate with schools and we scrutinise the costs to ensure value for money.

PE asked if their funding comes out of the same funding. MT advised it did – from other SEN provision and there was more information on the report slides.

EWJ reported that the LA has limited resources available for social care and care homes. This is a large area continuously under scrutiny.

RP asked who the stakeholders were and if young people are being considered as well as young parents not being served by Meriton and young deaf people?

EWJ advised they were all being engaged with and many more.

RP asked if the response is low are we getting the accessibility right. EWJ replied that we are now getting a much higher response.

SE asked what the LA was doing nationally to get more funding. AS advised that the local government association had commissioned research to look at this.

SH asked for information on birth to 5. EWJ will let SH have the figures as working with teams to pull together data set of the full local area of SEND from 0 – 25.

CT asked about the consultation on benchmarking. EWJ advised that the consultation with special schools re occupancy and staffing was completed in August but unfortunately the quality of the report was below par. There was no benchmarking and the report was not fit for purpose.

CT was concerned that public money is being wasted and asked what framework QA do we use to ensure quality of work.

DM advised that the cost will be within the delegated cost of the Director. This needs to be checked to ensure process was followed and a response will come back to Forum.

AS advised that we all need to reconcile complex issues and pressures on LA budget and DSG and school level budgets. There is a requirement for all to balance the budgets.

EWJ

DM

<p>DY added that if we transfer some money from schools block to High Needs Block there will still be a gap of £5m.</p> <p>AM added that it would be helpful to understand the LA strategic plan as a free school ALP is opening which will take money from HN budget.</p> <p>DM advised that the last forum paper outlined the pressures facing services and it will take some time to improve. Shortfall in funding affects us all and we are lobbying at all opportunities. This is being grappled with nationally.</p> <p>Cllr Keen added that the LA had written to the Secretary of State in July and the Mayor has talked to MPs. This has never been such a headline topic. It will not look the same in 5 years as complexity of need is changing and this will impact on the provision.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>2.1 - budget forecast noted 2.2 - Forum commented as minuted on projected forecast 3 – progress with High Needs project transformation noted</p> <p>PE asked that the minutes record the unease of Special schools that £0.5m was going out to independent non maintained schools.</p>	
<p>10. Early Years</p>	
<p>SJ reported that EY is not immune from financial pressures and although an underspend is predicted that could change as EY settings do not get core funding – just the hourly rate per child and National funding does not meet the rate needed.</p> <p>Bristol is quite well resourced compared to other LAs.</p> <p>The proposal is to protect the hourly base rate by absorbing the 1p reduction and maintain local maintained nursery supplement.</p> <p>This will be consulted on next week.</p> <p>RP advised that she totally agrees with the proposal and we should invest more on EY SEN to save money later on.</p> <p>SP added that colleague in CCs are aggrieved that Nurseries are getting extra money that CCs are not.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>2.1 a – LA to consult with all settings once DfE update received 2.1 b – proposals for funding would be as indicated in December 2017 if no change in EYNFF 2.1 c – cost of continuing the local supplement and SEND cost pressures may have to be calls on EY budgets</p>	

All the above noted by Forum	
11. Forum Constitution & Membership	
<p>Forum asked to adopt unchanged.</p> <p>CT raised issue of representation as ALP provision third sector do not have any representation on the Forum and other sectors with fewer children do..</p> <p>CT also raised if Post 16 providers should have additional reps and is there a rationale for the Diocese having reps.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>Forum agreed to ask the LA to review the composition of the Forum.</p> <p>Forum also agreed to adopt the Constitution pending the review.</p>	AS
12. AOB	
None	

The meeting closed at 19.45hrs