

# Bristol Schools' Forum

## Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at 18.15 hrs at Future Inna

**Present:**

Karen Brown	Governor, St Mary Redcliffe & Temple
Tim Browse	Headteacher, Air Balloon Primary
Emma Cave	Governor, Claremont
Patricia Dodds	Governor, Fishponds Academy
Peter Evans	Headteacher, Learn@ MAT
Tracey Jones	Headteacher, Bannerman Road
Sarah Lovell	Headteacher Rep, Cabot Learning Federation
Aileen Morrison	Headteacher, St Matthias Park
Chris Pring	Headteacher Rep, Cabot Primary
Dan Reed	Governor, Air Balloon Hill
Carew Reynell (Chair)	Governor, Henbury Secondary
Cedric Sanguinol	Governor Representative, Bishop Road Primary
Christine Townsend	Governor, Whitehall Primary
Sue Wilson	Headteacher

**In attendance:**

Becky Wilkins	Clerk to Schools Forum
Annette Jones	Service Manager, Additional Learning Needs
David Tully	Interim Finance Business Partner
Travis Young	Senior Accountant

**Observers:**

William Brown, Simon Eakins, Kevin Jay, Clare Pring, Anne Sheridan, Brian Price

	Action
<b>1. Welcome and introductions</b>	
The Chair opened the meeting at 18:15	
<b>2. Forum standing business</b>	
<p><b>Apologies</b>                      Jamie Barry, Jo Butler, Graham Diles, Sam Packer, Ruth Pickersgill, Anne Rutherford, Paul Smith, David Yorath, Sue Rogers, Ali Mannering, Lindsay Fuller</p> <p>Clerk confirmed meeting was quorate.</p> <p>New members – None.</p> <p>Vacancies: Currently one vacancy for the Clifton Diocese. Inger O'Callaghan has resigned and two governors have reached end of term and an election is under way for one of them. Jamie Barry has also resigned so there is now a vacancy for a primary head. BF will request nominations.</p>	BF

<p>No declarations of interest were expressed.</p>	
<p><b>3. Minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2018</b></p>	
<p>Minutes were accepted as correct.</p> <p>Matters Arising:</p> <p>BIS Information–AM spoke with JB last week and he was happy with the response.</p> <p>Funding sub group formulated, first meeting taking place on 23<sup>rd</sup> April.</p> <p>Use of benefits data for FSM. Some other local authorities are using this data; however there are questions over the legality especially with changes to data protection. Awaiting legal advice, will come back when received.</p> <p>South Bristol Catchment areas. No further information.</p> <p>TwS report. Due to receive the report on the central services block at the next meeting, it felt it would be appropriate to incorporate TwS into this report at it at the next meeting. May 2018.</p>	
<p><b>4. Correspondence</b></p>	
<p>No Correspondence.</p>	
<p><b>5. DSG Overview</b></p>	
<p>Information report showing the current position for 17/18 and providing feedback on decisions on 18/19 position.</p> <p>Confirmed Central DSG is showing a similar position to previous month, deficit of over £5 million.</p> <p>Details of Higher Needs covered in separate report.</p> <p>Current information on Jan 2018 pupil numbers may result in an underspend on early years block. This needs to be verified and hasn't been accounted for in the current figures.</p> <p>Forecast for LA maintained schools year end positions on balances. End of 16/17 balances overall £5 million surplus, with 20 maintained schools in deficit.</p> <p>Forecast position based upon Q3, 22 schools heading for deficit and the level of surplus is reducing to just less than £2m.</p> <p>Overall the DSG will be in deficit. This is a concern for the Director of Finance. Council will have to find £3m to cover the gap.</p> <p>Will be reporting in July regarding the actual position.</p> <p>The DSG team and TwS Finance have reviewed the processes for challenging and</p>	<p>CP</p>

<p>supporting schools so they have a clear strategy to manage their financial position and recover in the shortest time.</p> <p>CP asked if a flow chart for the three potential scenarios could be provided, balance budget, overall deficit and in year deficit. DT advised the flow chart provided covers all scenarios.</p> <p>CP asked if a glossary of terms could be provided for the new challenge process which is consistent. DT confirmed this was possible. CP to send in his written comments.</p> <p>SL asked if schools should submit budgets earlier, rather than 31<sup>st</sup> May. DT confirmed this date is a long standing DFE requirement.</p> <p>It was confirmed that we do not have an 18/19 end budget position at present.</p> <p>Schools forum considered budgets in January and these were signed off by Cabinet.</p> <p>Confirmation received from ESFA that the schools central services block funding for prudential borrowing will not be removed 18/19 but potentially will be removed in 19/20.</p> <p>Proposals will be put forward as to how this will be spent.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the unallocated expenditure figures in table three reflect the position agreed by schools forum.</p>	
<p><b>6. High Needs Update &amp; SEND Report</b></p>	
<p>Update provided for period nine and discussion took place.</p> <p>Overspend of £213k due to additional placements in independent non maintained schools and allocation to PFI contribution as agreed at last forum. Variance of £458k noted. £410k improvement on projected savings in year 1.</p> <p>It was confirmed that proposal for core place funding reduction wasn't agreed by the EFSA. This results in £320k being paid to Academies for empty spaces. The EFSA confirmed the LA must approach the Academies directly.</p> <p>Officers to meet with heads from the individual Academies.</p> <p>Top up produced a greater level of savings by following a very rigorous process.</p> <p>High needs officers will seek to create an equitable funding model for special schools for back office and site provision, finance, office, leadership and staffing levels. Depending on level of need for different pupil types. Discussion with special schools will be required.</p> <p>Proposal to remove the capital strategy from higher needs deficit plan and show the impact of these over a longer term.</p>	

<p>Delays due to building works, additional places will not be available until 2020.</p> <p>Primaries to assist with sustaining Early Inclusion Basis.</p> <p>Confirmed the head of Shirehampton is now chairing a working group (IRG) looking to ensure we continue with inclusive provision, focusing on the outcomes for pupils as well as spend. Very positive work so far.</p> <p>It was confirmed there are three initiatives across the city, Lansdown Park, CLF and Woodway Federation.</p> <p>It was confirmed high needs will be short of 25 places in 2018 and then 75 places in 2019.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the three year recovery plan assumes the use of unallocated funding from the previous report.</p> <p>Recommendation that a progress report is submitted to each forum meeting. Feedback on the format of these reports is welcome.</p> <p>It was confirmed Mary Taylor will be taking over reporting on the higher needs block.</p> <p>The forum wished Annette good luck in her new role.</p>	
<p><b>7. EY Report</b></p>	
<p>Discussion took place on report submitted.</p> <p>Table 1 shows a break-down of how funding for E/Y is received. It was noted that it is difficult to predict the income as it based upon pupils taking up places.</p> <p>Currently an estimated surplus on 3-4 year budget but deficit on 2 year old budget. Possible underspend of £470k.</p> <p>SJ has requested DFE guidance on how this can be used and whether it can be carried forward.</p> <p>It was confirmed that transitional funding will be removed in 18/19 and the base rate for all settings drops from £5.20 to £4.88 ph.</p> <p>Supplement for LA maintained nursery schools has been reduced by £300k. SJ is part of a parliamentary group challenging the DFE on this.</p> <p>Will be working with maintained nursery schools to look at interim proposals if funding doesn't continue at the expected level.</p> <p>Report noted. No comments.</p>	
<p><b>8. Growth Fund</b></p>	
<p>School forum to vote on a decision on the future of the growth fund.</p>	

The options detailed are:-

- Carry on with the current growth fund policy.
- Alter the policy to discount out of Bristol pupils in the calculations.
- Remove growth funding in its entirety.

Discussion took place on the support provided.

It was noted that separate fund regarding growing schools that have opened in the last 7 years, is not part of the proposal for change.

Confirmed table 2 shows offers for September.

Confirmed table 3 related to admissions criteria and it was noted some schools have always admitted children from outside of the city, however out of authority offers are low.

IB confirmed Cathedral, Colston's and St Bedes are expanding. Builds are currently in place and Colston's has a bulge class awaiting a decision on permanent expansion.

Should we look at reducing the growth fund to these schools?

DY asked if the Schools Block still contains an element related to historical spending such as growth fund. DT confirmed this is correct.

It was also noted that the growth fund payments help to protect pupils from the effect of lagged funding.

AM asked why growth funding is going to schools that are already very popular. IB confirmed that this is the case but if they are expanding without having an agreement from the LA would not receive growth funding.

IB confirmed the need to increase the number of places in the City through the free school route and also existing schools. It wouldn't be sensible to expand a school that schools parents didn't want to send their children to. Needs to be targeted to where they are required.

CT asked why schools with out of area catchments have been chosen for expansion. IB confirmed they are not the only schools that are being expanded and the LA has met all secondary schools to discuss places, and negotiated with them regarding capacity to expand. Taking into consideration the size of their site, whether they can support expansion in terms of management and the quality of education. This information is fed into the decision process. It was also confirmed that Bristol will end up in a position where the majority of schools have been extended.

It was recognised that the wording of 2.1 b needs to be altered to relate to numbers over the PAN.

CT indicated that the need to create extra school places was increased because of the responsibility to educate Bristol Children by offering places to out of City children and if this practiced was stopped we wouldn't need to increase school sizes.

IB confirmed that of the full schools offering places to out of city children, one school has an agreement with EFSA where they have receive real time funding. Of the two remaining schools one has chosen to expand so will not receive growth funding.

CT indicated that officers are asking us to fund schools that are making a choice to allocate places to pupils outside of Bristol and a saving would be made if growth funding was changed.

AJ indicated that any change would not be applied to children with SEN.

SI confirmed that Cathedral would be happy to work with other schools to put forward a business case to the EFSA for real time funding.

TD suggested that schools should be given notice to allow them time to change their admissions policies or expansion proposals.

AM asked if growth funding was clawed back. IB confirmed it was not.

IB noted that there isn't a formal agreement with schools on growth funding, however it might be open to challenge if we change the growth funding part way through the expansion.

It was noted that the option to not have a growth fund would only affect St Bedes in 2018.

TY confirmed he recently attended an ESFA growth funding workshop. EFSA are looking to work out a way of providing money to LA's specifically to fund a growth fund. LA's can still allocate the money as we choose, however the EFSA are going to calculate how much goes into the 'national' growth fund. This means we could potentially put ourselves in a position where we do not receive enough funding to cover committed expenditure. This is potentially coming into force from 19/20.

The ESFA are intending to publish recommendations in July.

Vote

On whether to continue with a Growth Fund:

- End allocation through the growth fund - 0
- Retain a growth fund in some form - 14

On whether the Growth Fund should restrict the policy to Bristol only pupils:

- Restrict the policy - 8

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not restrict the policy - 3</li> </ul> <p>On when any such restriction should take effect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a restriction to Bristol only pupils in 18/19 - 1</li> <li>• Implement a restriction to Bristol only pupils in 19/20 - 7</li> </ul> <p>Schools Forum decided that a Growth Fund should continue to operate and that it would be unchanged for 2018/19 academic year, but that from 2019/20 academic year there would be a restriction to the policy to limit support to expansions that benefited Bristol resident pupils only. The precise wording of the restriction would be agreed at a future meeting.</p>	
<p><b>9. Changes to Non-Teaching staff pay scales</b></p>	
<p>JB presented information on the national picture in terms of pay increases.</p> <p>GMB have voted to accept the employer's final offer 2% on 1<sup>st</sup> April 18 and 2% April 19. Unison is taking further branch led consultation. Unite are due to share ballot result shortly.</p> <p>JB confirmed single status has been altered by the national living wage and the five lowest scales now receive the same level of pay and as such proposed to review schools generic job paperwork and pay scales in consultation with schools to remedy this. It was noted that the draft scales will create an additional financial pressure of approximately £2m on schools using BCC payroll. The proposed consultation was endorsed by Schools forum.</p>	
<p><b>10. Forum Constitution</b></p>	
<p>Forum accepted the recommendation to adopt the revised constitution.</p>	
<p><b>11. Proposed Term dates</b></p>	
<p>It was noted the Term 6 finished date is a Monday and that this was not ideal</p> <p>IB confirmed all LA's in the South West were consulted on term dates.</p> <p>Forum agreed dates.</p>	
<p><b>12. AOB</b></p>	
<p>None</p>	

The meeting closed at 20.20hrs