

Bristol Schools' Forum

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 16th January 2018
 at 18.15 hrs at City Hall**

Present:

Karen Brown	Governor, St Mary Redcliffe & Temple
Colin Butterworth	Governor, Endeavour Trust
Yvonne Craggs	Governor, Elmlea Infants
Graham Diles	Headteacher Rep, St Mary Redcliffe & Temple
Lindsey Fuller	Headteacher, Speedwell Nursery
Alan Gould	Governor, Fairfield High
Sarah Lovell	Headteacher Rep, Cabot Learning Federation
Aileen Morrison	Headteacher, St Matthias Park
Sam Packer	Representative, PVI Early Years
Cllr Ruth Pickersgill	Governor, Rosemary Nursery
Chris Pring	Headteacher Rep, Cabot Primary
Carew Reynell (Chair)	Governor, Henbury Secondary
Anne Rutherford	Headteacher, Filton Avenue
Cedric Sanguinol	Governor Representative, Bishop Road Primary
Christine Townsend	Governor, Whitehall Primary
David Yorath	Governor, Cotham

In attendance:

Billy Forsythe	Clerk to Schools Forum
Annette Jones	Service Manager, Additional Learning Needs
Cllr Anna Keen	Cabinet Member for Education & Skills
Denise Murray	Director of Finance
David Tully	Interim Finance Business Partner
Travis Young	Senior Accountant

Observers:

William Brown, Simon Eakins, Kevin Jay, Clare Pring, Ann Sheridan

Item	Action
1. Welcome and introductions	
The Chair opened the meeting at 18:15	
2. Forum standing business	
<p>Apologies Received from Jamie Barry, Victoria Boomer, Tim Browse, Emma Cave, Trish Dodds, Peter Evans, Tracy Jones, Inger O'Callaghan, Michelle Willis, Sue Wilson, Chrysta Garnett, Sue Rogers,</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. BF will request nominations.</p> <p>No declarations of interest were expressed.</p>	<p>BF</p>
<p>3. Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd November</p>	
<p>Minutes were accepted as correct.</p> <p>Matters Arising:</p> <p>BIS Information– SR to provide at next meeting.</p> <p>Revised budget ready reckoner – TY sent out.</p> <p>Use of benefits data re FSM – AK advised that the LA was exploring this issue and taking legal advice on data protection issues. RP added that some LAs are already using benefits data in this way but legal advice on data protection issues vary.</p> <p>CT asked if any update on South Bristol Area with no catchment. Agreed CT will raise at next meeting with Officers.</p> <p>DY asked if the TWS report in March can address the issue of TwS Surplus as this will impact on decisions the Forum takes.</p>	<p>SR</p> <p>SR</p> <p>SR</p>
<p>4. Correspondence</p>	
<p>CR advised that the date of the next meeting has changed and will now be 20th March at Future Inns.</p> <p>CR has received a National Employers circular re the offer for non teaching staff and this highlights grade compression. Corporate HR will bring a report to next meeting for consultation with schools.</p>	<p>MW</p>
<p>5. DSG Overview</p>	
<p>CR advised that the meeting will discuss all the reports and then return to the overview report for a decision to inform Cabinet.</p> <p>DT advised that the Forum papers are the same papers that are going to Cabinet next week. The LA is seeking Forum's views on what is going to members before they make the final decision. Cllr AK will take Forum views forward.</p> <p>The final DSG allocation advised by EFSA has provided more money to Bristol recognising we have extra pupils. This additional funding has enabled the LA to agree the funding recommendations from the Forum, leaving "headroom" of £0.7m</p> <p>It was previously agreed to transfer £2m to High Needs block. Proposal is to transfer additional money to High Needs Block.</p> <p>LA has asked Secretary of State for approval for a number of issues. It has been agreed we can dis-apply MFG for PRUs but no decision yet for Special schools. Not yet</p>	

<p>confirmed that we can have a MFG of 0%.</p> <p>RP asked if the shift of SEN places to schools block would have a financial impact on schools. DT advised this should be neutral in theory as pupils will be counted in the main school formula and attract AWPU and other pupil led allocations, with a further £6k coming from the High Needs block. If there is a vacancy the High Needs block will still pay the full £10k.</p> <p>CB asked if the government has agreed to pay the £4.5m for PFI. DT advised that they recognise our circumstances and the scale of the problem. There will be a review of PFI factor for 2019/20 and the LA has been advised to reflect the PFI affordability gap in the factor. If the decision is to do nothing then the plan is the Council will meet the cost from the general fund. DM advised that the Council is in the process of agreeing budgets and from a DSG perspective it will be cost neutral.</p> <p>DY asked for clarification in 6.1 in terms of years. DT advised it is now 18 years.</p> <p>Discussion took place around the proposal to transfer the “headroom” to High Needs block. Schools understood the need to reduce the High needs overspend but schools are also under great pressure.</p> <p>Following discussion of the other papers a vote was taken and the proposal to support £0.7m of the £4.1m LA contribution (for PFI) going to the High Needs Block was agreed with 11 in favour and 4 against.</p> <p>AK added that she would take all the comments to Cabinet.</p>	
<p>6. Schools Block report</p>	
<p>DT advised that the report is in two parts – how the funding is calculated and how it is distributed.</p> <p>The next meeting will look at the growth policy for 18/19 and we are budgeting growth at a lower level than previous years.</p> <p>Section 4 shows the formula. Forum agreed the principles at the last meeting. 3a & 3b show the likely impact on schools</p> <p>In the next two years Bristol has to move to National Funding Formula.</p> <p>AM asked if PRUs will get recognition for rates costs. DT advised that the issue has been raised and it is not possible under the legislation. The costs which PRUs will incur in meeting the needs of children placed with them should be taken into account in calculating the top-ups.</p> <p>CT asked for information on which schools will lose as a result of the formula. DT confirmed this can be provided but the LA cannot do anything as the funding is based on pupil numbers and not cash protection.</p> <p>DT advised that an additional 1.5% per pupil has been allocated. The distribution is not even but is based on all of the factors in the formula that were used last year but without</p>	<p>DT</p>

<p>the cap and with the enhanced Minimum Funding Guarantee.</p> <p>Agreed that a sub group should be formed to examine issues around the funding and help the Forum with planning and help make decisions about the move to the National Funding Formula. BF will email members asking for volunteers.</p> <p>RP raised rates for Nurseries. She thought the government had asked LAs to look sympathetically on rates for Nurseries. In Bristol many EY settings are in financial difficulties. Agreed the sub-group could look at this.</p> <p>DT advised that the EY formula funding has much fewer factors so the scope is limited.</p> <p>2.1 Schools Forum endorsed the proposed arrangements for the 2018/19 mainstream funding formula;</p> <p>2.2 Schools Forum asked that there was clarity about the proposed £0.7m transfer being from Schools Block to High Needs Block.</p> <p>2.3 Schools Forum agreed to the creation of a sub group to develop detailed plans for the migration of the Bristol local formula to the National Funding Formula by 2020/21.</p> <p>SL asked when Bristol would adopt NFF. Agreed the sub group would discuss..</p>	<p>BF</p>
<p>7. Central Schools Service Block Report</p>	
<p>DT advised that Forum were being asked to agree the components of the CSB.</p> <p>Prudential borrowing has been paid off and discussions are taking place with with DFE to check if this funding will be clawed back.</p> <p>SR is undertaking a review of funding and services across the whole of the Education service. This will be a fundamental review of how her service should be configured and SR will report back later.</p> <p>SL asked if more funding would be allocated to help maintained schools with reducing balances. DT advised that finance support is part of the LA core funding so there would be a similar amount to last year. SL suggested that the LA may need to help schools more. AK advised that this was an on-going discussion.</p> <p>CP advised that the majority of schools will have a schools finance officer through TWS so they would be the first POC to help resolve it.</p> <p>It was pointed out that schools are being asked by Corporate Finance to undertake more regular finance reporting back.</p> <p>2.1 Schools Forum approved the proposed use of CSSB</p> <p>2.2 Schools Forum noted the cost of licences</p> <p>2.3 Schools Forum noted the issue of Prudential borrowing.</p>	

8. High Needs Update

AJ reported a higher than anticipated level of High Needs savings.

The impact of changing forecast and savings on a 3 year basis can be seen in Table 2.

Appendix 2 shows the forecast

Table 3 – we will be forecasting a balanced budget in 3 year period, with risks detailed in 4.3

Some risks around the additional provision planned and assumes a set level of growth based on population figures.

IRG met and are broadly pleased at how the group is supporting Forum. SEND Peer Group noted the ref group was very energetic and working on keeping inclusion on the agenda.

We seem to be making good progress and will bring updates to every school forum.

CP added that it was encouraging to come in £1m ahead but this has meant schools having less money and not getting the Top Up they need..

AJ advised that there is a need to look at mainstream schools and how they utilise their funding to best support young people. The top up panels do look robustly at the requests but have not been able to meet them all.

CR added that this is not so much a savings as a reduction in projected overspend.

CB welcomed the good progress that has been made but noted that the 3 year plan depends on a huge amount of savings. He hoped there was a risk assessment on the assumptions with contingency plans and accountability

AJ advised that the risks are now being looked at. They need to be costed and the impact analysed if not achieved. SR is the Director and AJ is responsible for managing the HNB and they meet fortnightly to manage progress.

RP noted we are reducing top-up spending by £1m but how do we measure the impact on the schools and children and the quality of inclusion?

AJ replied that we have issued the inclusion audit for schools to monitor their effectiveness and have had 63% returns. This will give an idea of the impact. This is a national issue. IRG will also look at this. Forum members are urged to encourage their schools to undertake the Inclusion audit. IRG will report back to Forum.

AK added that the SEND Peer review looked at all elements and there was positive feedback about our strengths. The LA is very mindful of impact of taking money out.

AM advised that mainstream schools are hurting from cuts in budgets but Special schools

<p>are also stretched.</p> <p>2.1 Schools Forum noted the budget outturn.</p> <p>2.2 Schools Forum noted the use of HNB in 2018/19 subject to the overview report.</p> <p>A formal report will come to Forum on the SEND Review.</p>	<p>AJ</p>
<p>9. EY Budget</p>	
<p>DT reported that this was the second year of 3 to transition to EY NFF. Bristol had the highest level of funding and by 2019/20 we will reduce to NFF level. The use of funding is prescribed by NFF.</p> <p>EY DSG determines the rates of funding and activities. This is determined by pupils on census and the LA cannot know how many children will be in the system. DFE have estimated numbers for next year and budgets are based on that estimate..</p> <p>The LA is seeking Forum views on the formula which will go to cabinet next week.</p> <p>RP asked if the LA knew that maintained Nursery support would reduce so much as this will be catastrophic. DT advised that the LA thought it was protected for 3 years and is asking the DFE for clarification.</p> <p>SP added that the PVI sector is concerned that they are losing staff to nannying and don't get the value added amount within their funding. There are many children with additional needs who need supporting on a 1 2 1 basis but there is no funding for additional staff ratios. Some PVIs have to pay business rates.</p> <p>LF advised that with transitional funding for 3 years the LA has to plan ahead as otherwise Nursery schools will not be sustainable.</p> <p>2.1a Schools Forum noted the arrangements for the EY block.</p> <p>2.1b The comments on the proposed use of the centrally retained funding were noted</p> <p>2.1c Schools Forum noted the formula values. It is difficult but with the constraints the Forum are content for these values to go to cabinet.</p>	<p>DT</p>
<p>10. AOB</p>	
<p>None</p>	

The meeting closed at 20:00hrs