

Sefton Schools Forum Minutes

Minutes of Sefton Schools' Forum Meeting Monday 14th January 2019 1.30pm PDC, Formby

Forum Members present: - Dorothy Lee Ogden (Chair), Ian Raikes, Isobel Macdonald-Davies, Danny Macareavy, Niki Craddock, Toni Oxton-Grant, Cathy Earley, Julian Ward, Jenny Taylor, Nicky Walsh, Anna James and Sue Kerwin

In attendance:

Colette Jones	- Clerk to Sefton Schools Forum	(CJ)
Mike McSorley	- Head of Education	(MM)
Nick Carbonaro	- Corporate Finance	(NC)

Actions

1 Apologies

Malcolm Parry, Jon Horrocks, Simon Penney, Matt Symes, David Jones, Kevin McBlain

2 Minutes of the previous meeting

Forum agreed the minutes from the previous meeting

3 Matters arising from Minutes

None recorded

4 Facility Time

Funding for facilities time for trade unions representing school based employees at a local/branch level have been primarily funded through the de-delegation of the schools' block funding by mainstreamed schools and by formal buy into the Trade Union Facility Time SLA by some academies. It is proposed that the annual contribution from all settings should be reduced to £2.10 per primary pupil and £4.12 per secondary pupil based on pupil numbers for a 3 year period but with a 6 month opt out clause. Funding will be recovered by de-delegation for maintained schools and an 'invoice' sent to MAT/Trusts for academies. Forum agreed the recommendations for all schools to buy into the continuation of the local authority's union facilities agreements. It was suggested Trade Unions could attend SASH/SAPH to discuss facility time.

Colette Jones to contact Chairs of SASH/SAPH

5 Review of School Balances

Forum discussed the report and agreed to a School Balances Working Group and agreed to keep the School Balances Working Group in its current form. The School Balances Working Group will meet on Wednesday 16 January 2019 to discuss calling in the 14 schools identified with overspends. It was suggested that sports and pupil premium be separated out of future school balances reports.

6 Disapplication request to move funding from Schools Block to High Needs Block

The disapplication request was submitted to the Secretary of State in November 2018 and a response was received on 10 January 2019. Recent information from the DfE is that the SoS is sympathetic to the LA's position and the approach that the LA has taken to try and resolve this with schools. The disapplication request was agreed in principal and as a result the 0.5% school block

contribution was taken to support High Needs block pressures in 2019/20. The Schools Forum accepted the Secretary of State's decision and were pleased that the DfE would be providing a SEN advisor to discuss Sefton's high needs strategy and offer help with the longer-term planning process.

7 DSG Funding Allocations to Schools: Central School Services; High Needs and Early Years Blocks for 2019/20

The DfE have adopted a new method of allocating Pupil Growth based on data from the October 2018 census. This has seen Sefton's funding increase to a figure of £0.577m in 2019/20

DSG overall has increased by £2m of which £1m is for increased numbers of students in both the primary and secondary sectors. The primary sector increased by an extra +176 pupils and for the first time for a few years secondary sector increased by +70.5 pupils. The other £1m is made up of pupil growth funding and +0.5% uplift agreed by DfE as part of 2-year deal with schools.

The £1m for additional pupils has been allocated out through formula to support the increases in both sectors. £200k of the growth funding will be retained centrally to support growing schools mainly primary and this will increase the existing contingency of £150k up to £350k – which will help support approximately 7 schools each year that will be required to increase class sizes to support LA admission numbers and support infant class sizes.

£345k of the additional headroom has been transferred to high needs budgets in line with SoS letter to allow LA to take up to the maximum 0.5% school Block contribution to High Need.

In 2019/20, the minimum funding per pupil funding value set by DfE will be £3,500 per primary pupil and £4,800 per secondary pupil. In Sefton, we have 3 secondary schools in the central area of the borough who will not meet this minimum level of funding, as they have no, or little, prior attainment or deprivation. As a result, the 3 schools will require £131K of headroom funding to meet the minimum funding levels set by DfE.

The additional headroom has been allocated out using the Ever 6 FSM formula element which will increase by £25 per eligible pupil in both primary and secondary. The only other change to the local elements of the formula will be a reduction of £2.5k from the lump sum, making the revised lump sum allocation £117.5k per school in 2019/20, however this reduction will be protected by the MFG calculation.

A question was raised about Sefton adopting the NFF? Various models have shown that only a handful of Sefton schools will gain funding if we adopted the NFF, these are mainly in areas of significant deprivation and if adopted could see the majority of schools losing £3m in funding in comparison to the local formula. Schools would be protected by MFG but this would end up costing the LA more than £3m. Government has changed its standing on NFF as there will be no hard formula by 2020 and the same will be for 2021.

In November 2018, Schools Forum decided not to fund up to the maximum 0.5% Schools Block allocation as contribution towards High Needs after a consultation, but agreed a £450k contribution similar to 2018/19. Subsequently, a disapplication request was sent to the Secretary of State by the Local Authority to request up to the maximum 0.5% be taken out of the Schools Block and placed in High Needs. In December 2018, the government awarded Local Authorities additional funding of £.562m which was placed in the High Needs Block and

together with the 0.5% (agreed in principal by the DfE) will see the Projected overspend on high needs in 2019/20 reduce to £1.3m. Schools will receive the same budget as last year but with a reduction of £2.5k.

Early Years funding for 2019/20 remains the same as that awarded in 2018/19 and it is recommended that there are no changes made to the providers hourly rates for 2019/20. There have been no announcements made regards any continuing transitional funding for Maintained Nursery Schools. These schools are being supported via a special earmarked subsidy for three years 2017/18-2019/20 to recognise their higher levels of spending as schools. This ends in 2019/20 and unless additional/ongoing subsidy is agreed, these schools may become unviable.

The Schools Forum **noted** the following recommendations:

- Note the overall DSG funding for 2019/20 and the allocation assigned to each of the 4 funding blocks including any adjustments to be made.
- Note the Local Authority recommendations in support of Schools funding 2019/20 after consultation with Schools and via SAPH and SASH on 10 January 2019.
- Note the decisions taken at the previous Schools Forum meetings on 24 September and 19 November 2018 respectively, to support the transfer of £0.450m of Schools Block funding to High Needs in 2019/20, to help with budget pressures; but to disagree on any further contribution up to the maximum DfE guidance level of 0.5% of the total Schools Funding Block
- Note the decision of the Local Authority to make a disapplication request in November 2018 to the Secretary of State, requesting an increase to this contribution up to the maximum guidance level of 0.5% of the 2019/20 total Schools Block allocation.
- Note the Secretary of State's response to the disapplication request and subsequent application of the additional contribution from School's budget shares up to £0.795m in 2019/20 as requested.

Forum **agreed** the following items

- To agree, by a vote of Individual Maintained School Sector phase, as appropriate, the basis for, and, de-delegation of, specific central services as shown in para 7.5 of the report, to be pooled centrally by the local authority to provide a service to all 'maintained' schools.
Maintained Schools Primary 5 and Secondary (2) voted and agreed the recommendation
- To agree by a vote, to the central contingency allocation of £0.350m in support of significant pre-16 pupil growth in 2018/19 and in compliance with KS1 infant class size legislation and as described in Para 7.6 of the report.
All present (10) and eligible to vote agreed
- To agree by a vote to support the Central Schools Services Block funding allocation (totalling £1.271m in 2019/20) with associated services as shown in Para 7.7 of the report.
All present (10) and eligible to vote agreed

Forum **noted and agreed** the recommendation

- In accordance with the decisions made by Schools Forum which are noted; and those agreed by vote at this meeting, that Schools Forum noted the intention of the Local Authority to submit the final APT for the 2019/20 schools' formula funding to the DfE, by the deadline of 21st January 2019. This will

include any decisions made around transfer of funding between funding blocks; de-delegated amounts and centrally retained budgets.

Nick Carbonaro asked Forum for their decision on whether Sefton should consider a move towards NFF as Sefton uses the local formula. Government has changed its language and the introduction of the NFF will probably be 2021/22. Forum was concerned over the impact this would have on the majority of schools in Sefton but stated they would wish to look at further models later in the year in support of 2020/21

Schools Forum thanked Nick Carbonaro and Kevin McBlain for the report.

8 Consultation on the implementation of new arrangements for reporting deficits of the dedicated schools grant

The DfE are introducing new ways of reporting DSG deficits which they perceive as a local authority problem and not a government one. The new model will require a report from all local authorities that have an overall cumulative DSG deficit of 1% or more at the end of the 2018/19 financial year outlining their recovery plans. The local authorities will be expected to reduce their deficit and balance their DSG account within a 3-year period. For Sefton and most LA's High Needs budget is the issue and the closure of schools with deficits as the deficit remains with the LA. Notices of concern are issued to schools showing deficits.

9 Early Years Outcome Funds

Paper for information only. Localities Teams will be taking this forward

**Cathy Earley to
contact Linda
McQueen**

10 Guidance on sponsorship in schools

For guidance to schools on the key principles of sponsorship including a 'do' and 'do not' check list.

11 Early Years Report 2018/19

Early Years report will be discussed at the Early Years Sub Group as a more detailed report is needed.

**Kevin McBlain to
provide a detailed
report for the
Early Years Sub
Group**

Date of Next Meeting

Monday 11th March 2019, 1.30pm-3.30pm, PDC, Formby