

Sefton Schools Forum Minutes

Minutes of Sefton Schools' Forum Meeting Monday 19th November 2018 1.30pm PDC, Formby

Forum Members present: - Dorothy Lee Ogden (Chair), Ian Raikes, Simon Penney, David Jones, Cathy Earley, Matt Symes, Isobel Macdonald-Davies, Danny Macareavy, Niki Craddock, Toni Oxtan-Grant, Sharon Cowey, Nicky Walsh and Sue Kerwin

In attendance:

Colette Jones -	Clerk to Sefton Schools Forum	(CJ)
Mike McSorley –	Head of Schools and Families	(MM)
Nick Carbonaro-	Corporate Finance	(NC)
Kevin McBlain -	Corporate Finance CS Finance	(KM)
Jacqui Kerr-	Team Leader SEN	(JK)

Actions

- Apologies**
1 Malcolm Parry, Jon Horrocks, Anna James
- Minutes of the previous meeting**
Forum agreed the minutes from the previous meeting
- Matters arising from Minutes**
9. Trade Union Facility Time
Facility Time was raised at the STJNC meeting, Unions are keen for academy schools to sign up and will provide an update of their membership to the LA. This information will be circulated. Forum requested a breakdown of facility time for maintained schools and academies and the redistribution of any underspend
- Ofsted Framework**
Matt Symes gave a presentation to Forum on 'Towards the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) September 2019 by Joan Bonefant, Senior HMI and Helen O'Neill HMI. Matt Symes highlighted slide 39 to Forum as the critical page which outlines the new framework Ofsted will use to inspect schools from September 2019. The 3 I's Intent, Implementation and Impact with the focus on curriculum, in design, delivery and progress, schools will need to articulate why a subject has been chosen. Joan Bonefant will attend a meeting with Sefton Headteachers on Thursday 10 January at 4pm PDC, Formby.
- SEND Review Update**
Jacqui Kerr gave a brief overview at the mid-point of the SEN Review; Sefton has
 - Lower proportion of EHCP than national average
 - Higher EHCP cohort in specialist provision 47% against national average of 36%
 - More EHCP in secondary and FE Sectors
 - Level of inclusion in mainstream is a challenge
 - No shared vision-need to work closer together
 - Shared awareness of existing problems

- Equal frustration but matched with determination to improve
- Major challenge from parents
- Weak outcomes effect plans-High Needs Funding
- Need a sharper focus to present clear outcomes

The final report will be presented to SEN Strategic Partnership on 30 January 2019 by Michael Watmough.

6 Early Years 2018/19 Forecast Spending

The Local Authority have paid all Sefton Providers a universal hourly rate at £4 per hour for 3-4 year old childcare provision since April 2017; and this rate has continued into 2018/19, including the extra hours of free entitlement for 3-4 year olds based on working parents. The Disability Access Funding allocation is £615 pa per child is still available to providers along with Early Years Pupil Premium. Two year old funding is paid at £4.90 per hour, as similarly has been since April 2017.

For Early Years children with High Needs, the SEN Inclusion Fund was established to meet demands, and this year, £200k was agreed to be moved to the High Needs Funding block towards Nursery Inclusion costs, as these have increased further in 2018/19 due to the expansion on the extra 15 hours childcare support for working parents.

The forecast outturn for Early years suggests an initial under spend across Early Years of £664K this may be used to assist with balancing the High Needs Funding at outturn. Early Years block overspent in 2017/18, and this underspending partially reflects some underfunding of the 3-4 year old for the extra hours of childcare from September 2017. Catch up funding and ongoing full year funding of the extra hours has been received from the DfE from July 2018, based on actual headcount and hours recorded in the Early Years Census at January 2018.

Kevin McBlain to provide a breakdown of the Early Years for the next meeting

Funding for Early Years is estimated, unlike schools, who have exact figures and therefore the government can also take back funding should numbers/hours decline.

Cathy Early stated that she believes the Early Years contribution of £200k towards High Needs is disproportionate to primary and secondary contributions and requested a breakdown of the early years funding and spend for the next meeting.

Kevin McBlain mentioned that the Maintained nursery schools receive special transitional funding over 3 years (2017 to 2020) to cover exceptional costs of operating as schools. There have been no further announcements of this funding continuing post 2020, which may see some nurseries close if they become unviable. He said that the 2019/20 National Formula allocation for Early Years is due out shortly, and if the rates of allocation for 2 year old and 3-4 year olds is increased for Sefton, the Authority may consider raising the universal hourly rates payable to providers in 2019/20.

7 Update on the Schools and High Needs Formula Funding for 2019/20

On 5 November 2018, the Local Authority consulted all schools over the significant demand pressures and overspend on the High Needs budget and asked schools to consider increasing the School Block contribution to the maximum 0.5% Schools Block level (c.£0.796m) from the £0.450m already agreed by Schools Forum on 24 September 2018. All schools were asked to

vote on whether they would increase the contribution, or not, and the results would be shared at Schools Forum. Out of 93 Schools who were asked:

67 - No not to increase and for the Local Authority to make a disapplication to the Secretary of State for a determination of the extra contribution

7 - Yes to increase

19 Schools eligible did not vote

Primary and Secondary School Forum Members were asked to vote on the increased contribution and the vote reflected the schools feedback:

8 No and 1 Yes recorded

Schools felt that they couldn't support the extra contribution towards High Needs and wanted the Local Authority to make a point on spending pressures felt by schools, through making a disapplication to the Secretary of State.

The Local Authority will therefore commence the process to make a disapplication to the Secretary of State with a response expected by January 2019.

Some points raised around the High Needs budget issues included

- No extra funding received for Post 16 but increased claims on High Needs funding to support further education - unfair
- Health should provide a greater contribution to schools funding for those with health issues rather than learning issues
- Clawing back funding from school reserves (School Balances report at the next meeting) a consideration – but discounted, as any schools' balances for re-use, would need to be recirculated through the schools formula rather than go to High Needs, and this would give Academy schools an unfair share of any redistribution, whose accounts are separate to the Authority's maintained schools.
- Local Authority recently won a High Needs tribunal

It was felt by Forum members that the Government doesn't appear to accept reality of High Needs cost pressures and demands and it has been a long-standing problem which affects most of the Local Authorities in the North West Region, with many now in a deficit position on their High Needs DSG. The Local Authority has made it clear that it has no reserves to balance the DSG budget.

The Local Authority were also concerned to inform members of Forum, that should the Secretary of State refuse the dis-application request, the Authority would need to make some early cost reductions, which may impact on the most inclusive schools and most vulnerable children.

A strategy to reduce High Needs costs is being considered in line with the findings of the High Needs consultation. Some actions may need to be implemented earlier, should the Secretary of State refuse the Local Authority's case for disapplication of extra Schools Block funding contribution for 2019/20.

8 National Fair Funding Report

Paper for information only

9 Early Years Sub Group

Cathy Early will provide a report for the next Schools Forum meeting in January on the make-up and future of the Early Years sub group meetings.

10 Guidance on sponsorship in schools

Deferred until the next meeting 14 January 2018

11 AOB

Capital Funding

Government have announced capital funding for schools £10k for primary and £50K for secondary. No announcements have been made for special schools and nurseries. Real allocations by school will be announced in the New Year. This funding may be given as part of the DFC mechanism.

North West Finance Officers meeting

Kevin McBlain and Nick Carbonaro attended NW Finance Officers meeting and updated Forum with a presentation. Overall Sefton schools receive more funding using a local funding formula model in comparison to many other LA's who are using the NFF model. The NFF model may not be agreed for roll-out nationally as we move forward, and the earliest roll out could be 2021. Danny Macareavy thanked Kevin and Nick for their hard work putting the models together for schools. Finance will receive information from the DfE in December and will meet in early January with both SAPH/SASH to present models to headteachers. The next Schools Forum meeting will decide on the preferred model before submitting to the DfE by the end of January 2019.

Colette Jones to circulate the presentation to members

Date of Next Meeting

Monday 14th January 2018, 1.30pm-3.30pm, PDC, Formby