

**ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS' FORUM
FRIDAY, 15TH JANUARY, 2016**

Present:- D. Naisbitt (Oakwood) (in the Chair).

Learning Community Representatives: - T. Mahon (Saint Bernard's), P. Di'lasio (Wales), D. Sutton (Maltby), L. Pepper (Clifton), L. Pepper (Clifton), D. Ball (Aston), A. Richies (Brinsworth), I. Holburn (Dinnington), P. Dobbin (Wingfield).

Other stakeholders representatives: - S. Scott (Early Years' PVI), S. Brook / F. Sprague (Teaching Trade Union Rep), J. Mott (Special Schools' Rep), A. Richards (Secondary Governors' Rep), D. Ashmore (Teaching School Rep), P. Bloor (PRUs' Rep), K. Merrin (Rotherham Colleges, on behalf of G. Alton), M. Badger (Support Staff Trade Union Rep).

Also in attendance: - D. Fenton (CYPS, School Planning, Admissions and Appeals Service), P. Williams (CYPS, Inclusion), E. Shepherd (CYPS, on behalf of K. Borthwick), V. Njelic (Finance).

Observing: - M. Young.

Apologies for absence were received from: - K. Borthwick (E. Shepherd representing), G. Gillard, S. Mallinder, J. Robertson, Councillor L. Pitchley, J. Morrison (Swinton), C. Harrison (P. Williams representing), K. Sherburn (Rawmarsh), P. Gerard (Early Years).

18. LYNNE PEPPER OBE.

Lynne Pepper OBE, was congratulated on gaining her honour in the 2016 New Year honours list. Everyone agreed that it was well deserved by Lynne.

19. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 4TH DECEMBER, 2015.

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum held on 4th December, 2015, were considered.

Paula Williams questioned the figures within Minute number 16 (Rotherham Total Schools' Budget Monitoring as at 31st October, 2015) in relation to SEN placements and top-up funding. She did not recognise the number of placements that were being funded. This matter would be looked into.

Agreed: - That the minutes of the last meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum held on 4th December, 2015, be agreed as a correct record.

20. CONTINGENCY FOR PUPIL GROWTH FUNDING ALLOCATIONS.

Consideration was given to the report submitted by Dean Fenton, Service Lead, School Planning, Admissions and Appeals, that outlined the rising pupil numbers within the Borough and the need to increase the number of school places available. There was a need to allocate transitional funding (7/12 for maintained schools and 12/12 for academy schools) that had created new places before the census generated income for new pupils.

The 2015/2016 budget allocation had out-turned at £469,108.

The following allocations were proposed from the pupil growth element of the Schools' Block for the 2016/2017 academic year: -

Aston Hall (4 of 4)	£ 32,711 based on 15 pupils
Sandhill (1 of 4)	£ 56,076 based on 15 pupils
Foljambe Campus (1 of 1)	£ 56,076 based on 15 pupils
Eastwood Village (Y5)	£ 62,556 based on 30 pupils
Brinsworth Howarth (3 of 4)	£ 32,711 based on 15 pupils
Wickersley SSC (Y7-8)	£125,112 based on 60 pupils
Listerdale (3 of 4)	£ 56,076 based on 15 pupils
Brampton Ellis Primary	£ 32,711 based on 15 pupils
TOTAL	£454,028

Discussions were continuing about the amount of transitional funding that would be required at the Eastwood Village Primary School. Conversations were planned to finalise the amount, including due diligence of the School's prepared budget.

The Rotherham Schools' Forum members in attendance considered their options of setting an overall budget for the Pupil Growth fund which was likely to be sufficient to cover the largest amount of transitional funding that the new primary school required. As discussions were continuing this amount was not yet finalised or known. With due diligence this amount could be finalised and any un-used amount would be carried-forward into the 2017/2018 financial year reducing the call on the Schools' Block at that point.

Agreed: - (1) That the report be received and its content noted.

(2) That the Pupil Growth funding 2016/2017 allocation from the Schools' Block be £800,000 (surplus to be used to reduce the call on the Schools' Block in 2017/2018).

(3) That the allocations to eight schools as outlined in the submitted report, totalling £454, 028, be approved.

(4) That discussions and negotiations continue with the Eastwood Village Primary School in order to agree the amount of transitional funding required in 2016/2017.

(5) That a future meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum consider the

pupil growth projections for coming years.

21. DEDICATED SCHOOLS' GRANT, 2016/2017.

Consideration was given to the 2016/2017 Dedicated Schools Grant, which had been announced by the Education Funding Agency on 17th December, 2015.

The total 2016/2017 DSG allocation was £220,046,000. This amount was split between the three Blocks: -

- Schools' Block - £187,254,000;
- Early Years' Block - £12,795,000 (provisional);
- High Needs' Block - £19,997,000.

The Rotherham Schools' Forum were asked to consider the amounts that could be retained centrally by the Local Authority relating to the following budget headings: -

1. Servicing of Schools' Forum – historically been set at £3,000 for the last three financial years (the RSF needed to vote on this);
2. Growth fund (previous item refers) (the RSF needed to vote on this);
3. Schools in Financial Difficulty (de-delegated) (the primary maintained representatives of the RSF needed to vote on this);
4. Central Licences (the RSF needed to note the amount set by the Department for Education).

Discussion was held on the level of funding allocated to the High Needs' Block, and on some broader formula issues: -

- An urgent review was required to stop funding a deficit and determine the value for money within the High Needs' Block;
- The emerging focus group led by Paula Williams would look at this. It was important that the group included Rotherham headteachers of all phases. It was agreed that Paula Dobbin would represent the primary phase, Paul Bloor would represent PRUs/Julie Mott would represent Special Schools and Pepe Di'Iassio would represent the secondary phase;
- In the 2015/2016 financial year the Director of Childrens' Services had moved £2.954m from the Schools' Block and £432k from the Early Years' Block to the High Needs' Block (Minute number 114, 24th April, 2015 refers. 'Proposed Total Schools' Budget 2015/2016 (Estimate)). Was this proposed for the 2016/2017 financial year?;
- The Secondary Governors' Representative asked for consideration to be given to a special school governor joining the Rotherham

Schools' Forum to strengthen governance relating to the High Needs' Block;

- Was there any confirmation of a move to a national funding formula? – there was no announcement at the time of the meeting;
- The Teaching School Representative requested that a future meeting of the RSF receive a model of different Guaranteed Unit of Funding levels.

The Rotherham Schools' Forum turned their attention to the areas of centrally retained DSG for Statutory Services: -

1. Servicing of Schools' Forum – a vote was taken on whether to de-delegate an amount of £3,000 for the servicing of the RSF. £3,000 had been allocated in the previous three financial years.

The Rotherham Schools' Forum voted on a unanimous basis to centrally retain £3,000 for the servicing of the Rotherham Schools' Forum.

2. Growth fund – vote taken in the previous item (Minute Number 20).

An amount of £800,000 was agreed to be centrally retained on a majority basis by the Rotherham Schools' Forum.

3. Schools in Financial Difficulty. This funding was de-delegated from the budgets of local authority maintained primary schools. Information about the background and history of Schools in Financial Difficulty funding had been forwarded to all of Rotherham's local authority maintained primary schools and they were asked to indicate whether they supported the principle of SiFD. Maintained primary schools were given a week to reply. In total there were nineteen responses – 16 in support of maintaining the fund and principle of SiFD, and 3 votes against maintaining the fund/ principle.

Two detailed comments were received and considered about the SiFD. One school felt that the number of local authority maintained primary schools was declining to such a level that the pot of money would be reduced and become an ineffective amount. Another school felt that it would be fair for schools to repay the amount following their financial recovery.

The local authority maintained primary school representatives in attendance voted on a unanimous basis to maintain the Schools in Financial Difficulty Fund in 2016/2017 at a value of £75k.

4. Central Licences had been negotiated by the Secretary of State at £237, 089.

£237, 089 would be centrally retained from the Schools' Block as it represented the charge for all Rotherham schools and academies relating to copyright licensing.

Resolved: - (1) That the information shared be noted.

(2) That the High Needs' Block Focus Group meet and report back to the Rotherham Schools' Forum on issues relating to the High Needs' Block, including setting an appropriate budget and achieving value for money.

(3) That consideration be given to a representative of special school governance joining the Rotherham Schools' Forum.

(4) That models be presented to a future meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum relating to differing levels of Guaranteed Unit of Funding.

(5) That the 2016/2017 budget allocations be confirmed as: -

- a) £3,000 from the Schools' Block to be retained centrally for the Servicing of the Rotherham Schools Forum;
- b) £800,000 from the Schools' Block to be retained centrally for the Growth Fund;
- c) £75k to be de-delegated from local authority maintained primary school budgets for the Schools' in Financial Difficulty Fund;
- d) £237, 089 from the Schools' Block to be retained centrally for copyright licence fees.

22. SEMH UPDATE.

Paula Williams, Service Leader, gave an update to the Rotherham Schools' Forum on the continuing development of the new Alternative Provision.

- A series of meetings were planned in the next two weeks regarding establishing locality-based provision;
- It was important to establish which schools were engaged at this stage, although the local authority was keen for the models to be shaped by schools themselves;
- The primary discussions were in the early stages of discussion, secondary was much more developed. Eventually it was thought that the separate primary/secondary locality groups would join into one locality group.

Feedback from the Rotherham Schools' Forum about the process included that it had not been productive to separate the early discussions into 'primary' and 'secondary', nor was it useful for primary to be further behind in terms of progress at this stage. This was in the context that the

process could identify savings and opportunities to re-deploy funding. Not having both sides fully engaged could have slowed this process.

It was agreed that feedback from the locality meetings would be provided to the next Rotherham Schools' Forum meeting.

Resolved: - (1) That the information shared be noted.

(2) That the standing update be provided to the next meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum to be held on 4th March, 2016.

SEMH Partnership Events

- **North Partnership, 13th January, Town Hall, John Smiths Room**
- North Primary 9.30 -11.30
- North Secondary 1.00-3.00
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- **Central Partnership, 18th January, Town Hall, John Smiths Room**
- Central Primary 9.30-11.30
- Central Secondary 1.00-3.00
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- **South Partnership, 22nd January, Town Hall, John Smiths Room (am) and Room 3 (pm)**
- South Primary 9.30-11.30
- South Secondary 1.00-3.00
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23. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETINGS: -

(1) That the next meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum take place on Friday 4th March, 2016, to start at 8.30 am in the Rockingham Professional Development Centre.

(2) That future meetings take place on: -

- 22nd April, 2016;
- 17th June, 2016.

To start at 8.30 am in the Rockingham Professional Development Centre.