

**ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS' FORUM
FRIDAY, 13TH JANUARY, 2017**

Present:- Mr. D. Naisbitt (Oakwood High School - in the Chair); Learning Community representatives:- Mrs. D. Ball (Aston Learning Community), Mrs. P. Dobbin (Redscope Primary School), Mrs. L. Pepper (Clifton Learning Community), Mr. P. Di'lasio (Wales High School) and Mr. R. Wheatcroft (Brinsworth Academy).

Other stakeholders:- Mrs. J. Mott (Special Schools); Mrs. S. Brook (NASUWT); Mr. D. Ashmore (Teaching Schools); Mr. G. Gillard (Sheffield Diocese) and Mr. M. Badger (UNISON).

Also in attendance:- Mr. M. Chambers (RMBC Finance) and Mrs. V. Njelic (RMBC Finance). Together with Mr. D. Fenton (RMBC Children and Young People's Services – for Minute No. 24) and Mrs. A. Chambers (RMBC Children and Young People's Services – for Minute No. 28)

Apologies for absence were received from:- Mr. T. Mahon (St. Bernard's RC High School), Mrs. R. Staples (Dinnington Comprehensive School), Mr. P. Bloor (Pupil Referral Units), Mr. M. Young (Eastwood Village School), Mr. S. Scott and Mrs. J. Gray (Day Nurseries - Private, Voluntary, Independent) Mr. P. Gerrard (RMBC Early Years and Childcare Service), Mr. J. Morrison and Mrs. R. Hibberd (Swinton Academy), Mr. P. Baylis (FE Colleges), Mr. A. Richards (Secondary Governors) and Mr. F. Sprague (NUT).

21. LEARNING COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER REPRESENTATIVES - CONFIRMATION AND NOMINATION/ELECTION

Details were submitted of the current membership of the Rotherham Schools' Forum for the 2016/2017 academic year. The Learning Communities would be asked to confirm the membership in order to ensure accuracy and maintain the balance of academy and non-academy schools being represented on the Schools' Forum.

Agreed:- (1) That there shall be continual review of membership to ensure that the balance of academy and non-academy schools represented on the Rotherham Schools' Forum accurately reflects the balance of the sectors in the Rotherham Borough area.

(2) That the membership details shall in future include the type of school being represented.

22. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 9TH DECEMBER, 2016

Agreed:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Rotherham Schools Forum, held on 9th December, 2016, be approved as a correct record.

23. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Discussion took place on the following items from the minutes of the previous meeting:-

(1) (Minute 15 – High Needs - Update) – the Service Leader, Inclusion (Rotherham MBC) will submit a first draft report about the allocation and use of the High Needs Block funding to the next meeting of the Rotherham Schools’ Forum.

(2) (Minute 18 – 2017/2018 De-Delegated Services – Guidance) – it was noted that there was no specific direction for the Rotherham Schools’ Forum to undertake the annual consideration of funding for the various services which may be de-delegated. It was confirmed that any request for items/services to be funded in this manner would have to be included on a meeting agenda by a voting member, for consideration by the full Schools’ Forum membership.

24. CONTINGENCY FOR PUPIL GROWTH FUNDING ALLOCATIONS 2017/18

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Service Lead, School Planning, Admissions and Appeals, describing the proposal to increase the number of school places available to meet current and projected demand. The submitted report outlined the transitional funding (7/12 funding for maintained Schools and 12/12 funding for Academies) required to support the creation of additional school places in the Rotherham Borough area until school census funding generates the income for new pupils.

The detailed proposals were:-

School	Amount
Wath Church of England Primary	£56,076 based on 15 pupils
Listerdale Primary	£56,076 based on 15 pupils
Sandhill (Rawmarsh) Primary	£56,076 based on 15 pupils
Brinsworth Howarth Primary	£32,711 based on 15 pupils
Cortonwood Church of England Infant	£56,076 based on 15 pupils
Brampton Ellis Church of England Primary (two classes)	£112,152 based on two cohorts of 15 pupils each
Wickersley School and Sports College	£62,556 based on 30 pupils
Laughton Junior and Infant	£36,491 based on 30 pupils
Total	£468,214

nb – refer also to the related, supplementary decision of the Schools’ Forum on this issue, as recorded at Minute No. 25(a) below.

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

(2) That 2017/18 allocations specified in the submitted report be approved and funded from the Pupil Growth element within the Schools Block.

(3) That a further report be submitted to a future meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum concerning the requests for transitional funding for 2018/19.

(4) That a progress report about the provision of a new primary school for the Waverley community be submitted to the meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum to be held on 28th April, 2017.

25. ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS FORUM - DECISION-MAKING

Consideration was given to a summary sheet of decisions required of the Rotherham Schools' Forum, as follows:-

(a) Contingency for Pupil Growth Funding Allocations 2017/18 – further to Minute No. 24 above, the Schools' Forum was informed that the overspent sum of £122,679 (due to an additional allocation for diseconomies of scale to Eastwood Village School – as agreed at the Schools' Forum's meeting on 4th March, 2016), should be funded from the 2017/2018 budget.

Agreed:- That, in addition to the budget of £468,214 (Minute No. 24 above refers), the 2017/2018 budget for the Pupil Growth element of the Schools Block be increased by the forecast overspend to £590,893.

(b) Education Services Grant – referred to at Minute No. 26 below.

(c) Dedicated Schools Grant – Schools Block Contribution to the Admissions Service - referred to at Minute No. 27 below.

(d) Schools in Financial Difficulty, de-delegated funding – (i) it was agreed by the representatives of the maintained schools that the funding should not be de-delegated in 2017/2018; and (ii) it was also agreed by the Schools' Forum that there is no requirement for any review of this decision and that any alteration of this decision must first necessitate a case presented by a representative of a maintained school being considered at a full meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum.

(e) Trades Unions' Facilitator, de-delegated funding (funding of this issue had ceased on 31 March 2015) – acknowledging the previous expressions of support for this issue, it was noted that the Trades Unions would wish to consult again with the maintained schools, particularly the primary schools, although that consultation process could not be completed to enable consideration of any funding for the 2017/2018 financial year. It was noted that the Trades Unions still intended to

consult with the maintained schools and inform them of the cost per pupil, prior to further consideration of this matter at the next meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum to be held on 10th March, 2017.

(f) The decisions recorded at the previous meeting on 9th December, 2016 (Minute No. 19 refers) were also noted.

26. EDUCATION SERVICES GRANT (ESG)

Further to Minute No. 17 of the meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum held on 9th December, 2016, consideration was given to a report presented by the Head of Finance (CYPS) concerning the cessation of the Education Services Grant on 31st March, 2017. The background to this matter, transitional arrangements, the key issues for the Education budget and guidance from the Government Department for Education were all summarised within the submitted report.

The report stated that the Retained Duties element of the Education Services Grant would continue and be contained within the main Schools Block, as additional funding. The recommendation was to transfer this retained element to the Council to part fund the statutory functions that the Council previously funded through the wider Education Services Grant (Retained and General).

A further document was distributed at the meeting, summarising the activities and functions covered by the Education Services Grant.

The recommendation of the submitted report asked the Rotherham Schools' Forum to agree to the transfer of £646,000 to the Local Authority from the Schools Block in the 2017/2018 financial year.

Members of the Rotherham Schools' Forum expressed the views that there should be more detailed analysis and scrutiny of the activities and functions covered by the Education Services Grant, prior to any decision being made by the Schools' Forum.

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

(2) That the Head of Finance (CYPS) provide further information to the Schools' Forum members attending today's meeting, about the activities and functions covered by the Education Services Grant and they be requested to respond to the Head of Finance (CYPS) and to the Chair of the Rotherham Schools' Forum with their considered views on this matter, especially if there is specific opposition to the recommended transfer of £646,262 to the Local Authority (and Schools' Forum members should inform the Chair by 20 January 2017 if they do not wish to accept the transfer).

27. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT - SCHOOLS BLOCK CONTRIBUTION TO ADMISSIONS SERVICE

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Head of Finance (CYPS), concerning the request from the Local Authority that schools provide a contribution totalling £154,000, from the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant, for the School Admissions Service and co-ordination of the school admission arrangements in the Rotherham Borough area.

A further decision was required of maintained schools, with the Local Authority requesting a contribution of £84,000 in the 2017/2018 financial year.

It was noted that this request for funding affected only the 2017/2018 financial year. In future financial years, such funding will be included in the new Central Services Block allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

The Schools' Forum also noted that the special schools were not affected by this issue.

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

(2) That a maximum contribution, totalling £154,000, be approved in respect of the funding of the School Admissions Service in the 2017/2018 financial year.

(3) That the representatives of the maintained schools be requested to consider a possible contribution of £84,000 in the 2017/2018 financial year, for the School Admissions Service.

28. EARLY EDUCATION FUNDING RATE 2017/18

Further to Minute No. 8 of the meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum held on 14th October, 2016, consideration was given to a report, presented by the RMBC Early Years and Childcare Manager, concerning the outcome of the Government Department for Education consultation requiring local authorities to allocate the funding to early education providers based on a local single funding formula. The report stated that local authorities were required to fund all providers at the same base rate and must include a deprivation supplement for three and four year-olds' early education funding, with the option of including additional supplements. Local Authorities were permitted to retain 5% of the three and four year-olds' budget allocation to fund central services. The early years national funding formula operational guide (December 2016) stated that:-

"Schools' forums must be consulted on changes to local early years funding formulae, including agreeing central spend by 28th February, although the final decision rests with the local authority".

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

(2) That the decisions made and approved by the RMBC Children and Young People's Services Departmental Leadership Team regarding the Early Years 2017/18 allocation, as detailed within the appendix to the report now submitted, be noted.

29. EARLY YEARS - UPDATE

The Rotherham Schools' Forum noted that this Early Years update item was contained within the subject matter of Minute No. 28 above.

30. HIGH NEEDS - UPDATE

In accordance with Minute No. 23(1) above, it was agreed that a first draft report about the allocation and use of the High Needs Block funding would be submitted to the next meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum, to be held on 10th March, 2017.

31. FORMULA FUNDING 2017/2018

Discussion took place on proposed changes to the Formula Funding for Rotherham schools for the 2017/2018 financial year. The Schools' Forum noted that:-

- under the current Formula Funding, secondary-age pupils receive more funding per head than primary-age pupils;
- a reduction in the basic entitlement rate per pupil was required in order to achieve the necessary savings on the High Needs Block;
- the suggested maximum reduction of 1.5% equally for all schools would achieve savings of approximately £3 millions in the 2017/2018 financial year, although further savings would be required in future years;
- it was acknowledged that the increasing demands being placed upon the High Needs Block would necessarily limit the amount of savings capable of being achieved.

The Schools' Forum membership requested additional information about this matter, if possible including the individual detail for each school.

Agreed:- That this matter be considered further at the next meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum, to be held on 10th March, 2017.

32. STAGE 2 CONSULTATIONS - NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA AND HIGH NEEDS FUNDING FORMULA

The Rotherham Schools' Forum learned that the Government Department for Education was currently undertaking a process of public consultation about the following two issues:-

- National Funding Formula
- High Needs Funding Formula

The closing date for responses to the consultation documents, for both issues, was Wednesday, 22nd March, 2017. It was noted that the impact of any alterations to both Funding Formula would take effect at the beginning of the 2018/2019 financial year.

Agreed:- That the responses being prepared by the Local Authority, to the Department for Education's consultations on both of the above issues, be reported to the next meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum, to be held on 10th March, 2017, enabling the Schools' Forum members to consider whether they would wish to formulate their own individual responses.

33. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- (1) That the next meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum take place on Friday 10th March, 2017, at the Rockingham Professional Development Centre, commencing at 8.30 a.m.

(2) That future meetings of the Rotherham Schools' Forum shall take place at the Rockingham Professional Development Centre, commencing at 8.30 a.m. on the following dates:-

- Friday 28th April, 2017
- Friday 16th June, 2017