

**ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS' FORUM
FRIDAY, 14TH OCTOBER, 2016**

Present:-

Learning Community representatives:- Mrs. D. Ball (Aston Learning Community); Mrs. G. Hemming (Wales Learning Community); Mr. D. Naisbitt (Oakwood High School); Mr. P. Goward (Rawmarsh Children's Centre School); Mrs. L. Pepper (Clifton Learning Community);

Other stakeholders:- Mr. P. Bloor (Pupil Referral Units); Mrs. J. Mott (Special Schools); Mrs. S. Brook (NASUWT); Mr. D. Ashmore (Teaching Schools); Mr. S. Scott (Day Nurseries - Private, Voluntary, Independent); Mr. A. Richards (Secondary Governors);

Also in attendance:- Mrs. K. Borthwick (RMBC Head of School Effectiveness Service); Mrs. A. Chambers (RMBC Early Years and Childcare Service); Mr. M. Chambers (RMBC Finance); Mrs. V. Njegic (RMBC Finance).

Apologies for absence were received from:- Mr. T. Mahon (St. Bernard's High School); Mr. A. Riches (Brinsworth Academy); I. Treloar (Thrybergh Academy); Mr. J. Morrison and Mr. A. Kitchen (Swinton Academy); Mr. C. Eccles and Mr. I. Holborn (Dinnington Academy); Mrs. P. Dobbin (Redscope Primary School); Mrs. K. Sherburn (Rawmarsh Monkwood Primary School); Mr. D. Silvester (Wath CE Primary School); Mr. M. Young (Eastwood Village School); Mr. G. Gillard (Sheffield Diocese); Mrs. P. Williams (RMBC Inclusion); Mr. P. Bayliss (FE Colleges); Mr. F. Sprague (NUT); Mr. M. Badger (UNISON).

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE 2016/17 SCHOOL YEAR

Agreed:- That Mr. D. Naisbitt (Head Teacher, Oakwood High School), be appointed Chair of the Rotherham Schools' Forum for the 2016/2017 academic year.

[Mr. D. Naisbitt in the Chair]

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR FOR THE 2016/17 SCHOOL YEAR

Agreed:- That Mrs. D. Ball (Head Teacher, Treeton CE Primary School), be appointed Vice-Chair of the Rotherham Schools' Forum for the 2016/2017 academic year.

3. LEARNING COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER REPRESENTATIVES CONFIRMATION AND NOMINATION/ELECTION

Discussion took place on the current membership status of the Rotherham Schools' Forum for the 2016/2017 academic year. It was essential to maintain the balance of academy and non-academy schools being represented on the Forum. As more schools became academies, that balance would have to be reassessed to ensure that representation from both sectors on the

Forum accurately reflected the position in the Rotherham Borough area.

Agreed:- 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.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 17 JUNE 2016

Agreed:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Rotherham Schools Forum, held on 17th June, 2016, be approved as a correct record.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

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

[1] (Minute 38) – Partnership work with Lincolnshire County Council – the Forum noted that Commissioner Patricia Bradwell had taken over from Malcolm Newsam as the Children's Social Care Commissioner, as part of the Borough Council's improvement process. Commissioner Bradwell, as an elected Councillor, is the Deputy Leader of Lincolnshire County Council. Accordingly, there was now significant partnership work between the Borough Council and Lincolnshire County Council. Progress reports on the partnership work had to be submitted to the Department for Education at intervals of three months.

[2] (Minute 39) – New Primary Schools and Lessons Learned – the Forum noted the progress of the Eastwood Village Primary School, which had begun its second academic year in September 2016. Year 5 pupils were now on roll (ie: the 2015/16 Year 4 cohort moving up) and this Primary School was soon to admit a number of pupils with special educational needs.

Discussion also took place on the proposed new primary schools intended to be constructed within the new developments at Bassingthorpe Farm (near Greasbrough) and at Waverley (near Catcliffe). In association with the Department for Education and the Regional Schools Commissioner, the Borough Council has produced guidance notes and (in November 2016) will invite expressions of interest in respect of the planning and development of the new primary school to be built at Waverley. There was no specific timescale yet available for the Bassingthorpe Farm development.

[3] (Minute 40) – Proposed National Funding Formula – members of the Rotherham Schools Forum should maintain their awareness of the proposed National Funding Formula. However, whilst it is still the intention of the Government to introduce this Formula, the second stage of the Government's consultation process has been delayed until the Autumn, 2016.

[4] (Minute 42) - SEND update – the presentation slides for this item are to be distributed to all members of the Rotherham Schools Forum.

6. TOTAL SCHOOLS BUDGET 2015/16 - OUT-TURN

The Rotherham Schools Forum considered the Total Schools Budget Out-turn and Monitoring Report for the 2015/16 financial year. The report stated that the out-turn position for the Total Schools Budget was based on actual income and expenditure for the financial year which had ended on 31st March, 2016. This budget out-turn showed an underspend of £24,000 (0.02% under budget) for the year, including the agreed amounts brought forward from the 2014/15 financial year into 2015/16. The report included the reasons for the forecast variance on each of the three Funding Blocks:-

: Schools Block : High Needs Block : Early Years Block.

Details of the proposed amounts to be carried forward to the 2016/17 Total Schools Budget were also included in the report.

The Schools Forum's discussion of this item highlighted the following issues:-

: the rules for the virement of funds between the three budget Blocks and budget heads of account; it was noted that rules were established by the Department for Education and by the Education Funding Agency;

: the reasons for the budget overspend of the High Needs Block (a further report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Rotherham Schools Forum on this matter);

: Members of the Rotherham Schools Forum were invited to submit individual questions on the Total Schools Budget Out-turn Report (in writing or by electronic mail) to the Finance Officers.

Agreed:- (1) That the Total Schools Budget Out-turn position for the 2015/16 financial year, as contained in the report now submitted, be noted.

(2) That the proposed budget balance amounts to be carried forward to the 2016/17 Total Schools Budget, as now reported, be noted.

7. BUDGET MONITORING TO 31ST AUGUST 2016

The Rotherham Schools Forum considered the Total Schools Budget Monitoring Report for the current 2016/17 financial year. The report had been distributed in advance of this meeting, although slightly late, so as to include budget monitoring information for the period to 30 September 2016 (ie: six months of the financial year). The information within the report affected the three main blocks within the budget and the following variations to the revised budget:-

Schools Block : £39,000 underspend
High Needs Block : £4,830,000 overspend
Early Years Block : no variation

It was noted that, at its forthcoming meeting, the High Needs Budget Sub-Group would be considering the issues which have resulted in the significant budget overspend of the High Needs Block (Minute No. 10 below refers).

Agreed:- (1) That the Total Schools Budget Monitoring Report for the current

financial year to 30 September, 2016, as now submitted, be noted.

(2) That, after initial consideration by the High Needs Budget Sub-Group, a further report be submitted to a meeting of the Rotherham Schools Forum, early in 2017, concerning the reasons for the budget overspend of the High Needs Block.

8. EARLY YEARS NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA - CONSULTATION UPDATE

The Rotherham Schools Forum considered a report and received a presentation from Mrs. A. Chambers (RMBC Early Years and Childcare Service) about the Early Education National Funding Formula for 3 years' and 4 years' old children.

The report stated that all 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to 15 hours per week of early education for 38 weeks per year, from any Ofsted registered early years provider such as private day nurseries, pre-schools and childminders (Private, Voluntary, Independent) and by academy and maintained schools. The funding provided by the Department for Education for this purpose, to Local Authorities, is based on historical spending allocations and there is wide variation in the funding provided to Local Authorities and thus to providers. In addition, from September 2017 working parents will be entitled to a further 15 hours of childcare per week, making a total of 30 hours early education and childcare per week for 38 weeks per year.

The Department for Education is seeking to develop a national funding formula which provides fair and transparent funding to all Local Authorities and has consulted on this proposal during the period from 11 August until 22 September, 2016. The outcome of the consultation process may not be announced until mid-December 2016.

The Schools Forum discussed various issues arising from the report and the presentation:-

: the intended fair, efficient and effective distribution of funding;

: sharing information with primary schools and with early years' education providers;

: base rate funding of core costs; additional needs funding (eg: relating to receipt of disability living allowance); area cost adjustment (eg: general labour market measure);

: the impact of the increasing cost of business rates upon the area cost adjustment;

: the proposed national rate, within this funding formula, as well as the individual local authority rate for Rotherham; the initial rate introduced in April 2017 is likely to remain unchanged for three or four financial years;

: the use of local authority supplements (eg: deprivation; rural or sparse populations); whether other supplements are necessary;

: the Inclusion Fund for children with special educational needs; this matter will be considered by the High Needs Sub-Group;

: the proposed transitional arrangements and the intention for the new funding formula to be introduced in the Rotherham Local Authority, in full, in April 2017; notification to all providers;

: the Early Education Working Group is to develop the hourly rate and supplements for the 2017/18 financial year, using feedback from the consultation;

: the funding is likely to be self-contained and virement to and from other funding blocks will not be permitted; however, this specific issue is not mentioned within the consultation documents.

Agreed:- (1) That the contents of the report and presentation, now submitted, about the proposed Early Education National Funding Formula be noted.

(2) That the outcome of the Department for Education's consultation process on this proposal be reported to the meeting of the Rotherham Schools Forum to be held on 13 January, 2017.

(3) That the presentation slides be distributed to all members of the Rotherham Schools Forum.

9. SCHOOLS REVENUE FUNDING 2017/2018 - NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA/DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT ALLOCATION - UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 33 of the meeting of the Rotherham Schools Forum held on 22nd April, 2016, consideration was given to a report concerning the National Funding Formula/Dedicated Schools Grant allocation.

The report stated that, during July, 2016, the Secretary of State for Education announced that the implementation of the national funding formula had been delayed until 2018/19. Consequently, for the 2017/18 financial year, schools will be funded through their local formula.

Details of the Government's response to the first stage of consultation on Schools and High Needs funding will be published during the Autumn 2016, together with the second stage proposals. The second stage consultation is likely to include details of the Education Services Grant (ESG) Retained rate and General Fund rate, both of which require clarity.

The Dedicated Schools Grant funding arrangements for 2017/18 were summarised within the submitted report.

Reference was made to the Education Services Grant (ESG) funding which, in respect of Local Authority maintained schools, would cease in September 2017. However, it was noted that this ESG funding would continue for academies until the end of the 2019/2020 financial year.

The Schools Forum noted that the Dedicated Schools Grant baseline re-

alignment would result in a small decrease in the annual funding the Local Authority received for each school pupil.

The Schools Forum requested further information about the minimum funding guarantee applied to Special Schools formula funding.

Agreed:- (1) That the contents of the National Funding Formula/Direct Schools Grant allocation, as now submitted, be noted.

(2) That further information be reported to the next meeting of the Rotherham Schools Forum on the minimum funding guarantee.

10. HIGH NEEDS - UPDATE

Arising from discussion earlier in the meeting in respect of the Total Schools Budget Out-turn and Monitoring Report (Minutes Nos. 6 and 7 above refer), the Rotherham Schools Forum agreed that the reasons for the High Needs Block overspend should be referred to the High Needs Budget Sub-Group for detailed initial consideration.

The issues discussed about the High Needs Block budget were:-

: the considerable demands upon resources, which continue to increase and are at times unpredictable, meaning that services often have to be reactive at short notice;

: the length of time required to control expenditure;

: the high cost of out-of-Authority placements;

: the requirement for sufficiency, forward planning to meet the education, health and care needs of each child;

: the need to review the funding allocated for special schools.

The following arrangements were agreed for the Budget Sub-Group:-

: membership of the High Needs Block Budget Sub-Group is – Mr. P. Di'lasio, Mrs. P. Dobbin, Mrs. P. Williams (Inclusion), Mrs. J. Mott, Mr. P. Bloor, together with a representative of Early Years and with Finance Officers also in attendance;

: the Chair of the Budget Sub-Group shall be a school/academy head teacher;

: the Budget Sub-Group will arrange a meeting on a date before the date of the next meeting of the Rotherham Schools Forum;

: the Budget Sub-Group's deliberations shall be reported to a future meeting of the Rotherham Schools Forum.

11. STATISTICAL NEIGHBOURS 2015/16 FORMULA VALUES

The Rotherham Schools Forum discussed the contents of the submitted

spreadsheet containing comparative funding data for both Rotherham MBC and its local authority statistical neighbours, for the 2015/16 financial year.

Discussion took place on the factors which were permissible in terms of funding for pupil places, although those factors were not used in Rotherham's formula. One such factor was funding for this Authority's Looked After Children, for which guidance may be available.

Agreed:- That the comparative funding information for 2015/16, as now submitted, be noted.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- (1) That the next meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum take place on Friday 25th November, 2016, 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 13th January, 2017
- Friday 10th March, 2017
- Friday 28th April, 2017
- Friday 16th June, 2017