

**ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS FORUM  
FRIDAY, 13TH MAY, 2011**

**Present:-**

David Silvester	Wath C.E. <b>IN THE CHAIR</b>
Karen Borthwick	14-19 Partnership representative
Paul Blackwell	Dinnington Comprehensive
Sue Brook	NASUWT
Val Broomhead	Unison
David Butler	St. Bernard's R.C.
Steve Clayton	Thrybergh SSC
Bev Clubley	Thrybergh SSC
John Day	Wales High
Jane Fearnley	Herringthorpe Junior
Mr. G. Gillard	Sheffield Diocese
Geoff Jackson	Governor, High Greave Infant
Margaret Hague	The Arnold Centre
Angela Heald	Wath Our Lady and St. Joseph's
John Henderson	Canklow Woods/Whiston Worrygoose
Donna Humphries	Aston LC/Aston Hall J&I
Kay Jessop	Roughwood Primary
Helen Nartey	Hilltop Special
Lynne Pepper	Herringthorpe Infant
Dave Pridding	Swinton Comprehensive
Dave Sutton	Maltby Academy
Sue Warner	Wickersley Northfield Primary
Stuart Wilson	Rawmarsh Comprehensive

**Officers:-**

Rob Holsey	EDS, RMBC
Vera Njegic	Financial Services, RMBC
Joanne Robertson	Financial Services, RMBC
Dorothy Smith	CYPS, RMBC
Sue Wilson	CYPS, RMBC

Apologies for absence were received from Roger Burman, David Naisbitt and Joyce Thacker.

**178. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 8TH APRIL, 2011**

Agreed:- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2011, be approved as a correct record.

**179. ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS FORUM - CONSTITUTION**

Reflecting discussions that had taken place at previous Schools Forum meetings, a copy of the new constitution was submitted for approval.

It was highlighted that under No. 11 (Review of Constitution) it stated that the constitution and membership would be reviewed annually but under No. 3 (Membership) that the term of office would be for a maximum of 3 years.

Agreed:- That the constitution be amended accordingly.

## 180. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT - OUTTURN STATEMENT AND BUDGET COMPARISONS

Joanne Robertson, CYPs Finance, circulated the outturn statement for the Centrally Managed Services 2011 including the proposed 2011/12 DSG allocation and the former Centrally Retained Specific Grants transferred into the DSG allocation.

Attention was drawn to the various budget lines that had a variance (overspend/underspend). Discussion took place on the document with the following issues highlighted/clarified:-

### Centrally Managed Services

- This was the final budget for 2010/11 with the amount of funding available for DSG for the services listed
  
- A query was raised in relation to the heading 'Playing for Success' regarding the description shown on previous versions of the DSG budget. JR confirmed that this was match funding from DSG for the former a Standards Fund Grant. Details to be confirmed at next meeting.
  
- The Chair asked for an explanation regarding the reduction in % of DSG funding allocated to the Services shown on the spreadsheet. JR explained that there was no specific decision regarding the % of funding from any source, but for the financial year 2011/12 the allocation was agreed at the same level as in 2010/11 with the exception of those items no longer funded, Early Years, Private, Voluntary and Independent Sector funding and the Schools PFI allocations. The % of DSG for each service will depend on the amount of revenue, other grant an income deemed to be available. For some areas in 2011/12 there had been reductions in other sources of grant funding, revenue and income. Therefore the resulting % would change despite the allocation being the same.
  
- Trade Union activities -
  - o Currently if a Union had 30 members in a school, the school would provide 2 lessons cover for that Trade Union representative. This could have a big impact for secondary schools and would be paying out more for Trade Union time than the original agreement. Should there be full-time Trade Union activity in the Authority and in a school? Was this the best way?
  - o It had been the understanding that the time was for when Trade Union members met Local Authority Members to discuss Local Authority issues and not individual school issues
  - o It was more beneficial for issues to be dealt with at a local level rather than national
  - o The budget would not be able to sustain a small primary school that had to provide 3 Union representatives but could with regional representation
  - o Time was required to negotiate and clarify as to why funding was at that level

- Money was saved through local knowledge and the understanding that had been built up over many years
- The funding had been reduced to £56,442 from £112,883
- It had to be ascertained exactly what the funding covered and where independent schools sat within it

The 2 options before the meeting were (i) £112,443 budget with a short period of time to clarify the points above and then reconsider it at a future meeting with a view to the original budget figure retained or budget cut or (ii) £56,442 budget and clarity of the budget.

A vote then took place on the 2 options.

Agreed:- (1) That the budget for Trade Union activity be set at £56,442 with clarity on exactly what the money was used for.

Sue Brooks declared a personal interest in the above item and did not vote thereon.

Agreed:- (2) That a breakdown be submitted to the next meeting on the Schools Contingency Fund.

(3) That 3 monthly budget updates be submitted to future Schools Forum meetings.

(4) That a schedule be prepared for the next meeting showing the % split of all sources of funding for each service currently funded by DSG in 2011/12 and a comparison with 2010/11.

(5) That the Forum or a Sub-Group consider the budget in January/February, 2012.

#### **Former Centrally Retained Special Grants transferred into DSG Allocation**

- An explanation regarding the former centrally retained specific grants now included in the DSG allocation for 2011/12 was given. It was noted that there was a reduction in the funding earmarked as being equivalent to 2010/11 specific grant allocations.
- Overall 21% reduction due to the reduction in pupil numbers. It had been fixed pro rata apart from the Extended School Sustainability
- The Local Authority had in effect 'lost' £1M compared to what it would have received under the previous regulations. Previously the Authority received dual funding for any child with dual registration; DSG had now been withdrawn for dual registered pupils so there was only single funding
- Extended School Sustainability
  - In agreement with Joyce Thacker, Sue Shelley was going to use the remainder for the sustainability element for 2010/11 on staff pay up to the end of August, 2011. Sue was now seeking clarification on the remainder that was available for 2011/12. Did schools want her to spend it over an academic year, financial year or on the Extended

Service at all?

- Although the money had been put into the funds with the budget headings all was subjective in terms of if not being ringfenced any more, therefore, the money that sat next to each of the headings could be spent in a different manner or decided to maintain structure and arrangements in a different way
- Not to allocate it in the present method would mean unpredictability and instability for schools
- Concern with the current model. If your school was not in an action zone you had to use the money in your school budget to give equality/opportunities. Had the action zones been reviewed given the demographics of Rotherham had changed significantly since their inception 3 years ago?
- Schools needed to plan for the future and any withdrawal of funding had to be planned for
- Any review of the action zones needed to carefully consider what their benefits were so that rationale decisions could be made to allow for adjustment to financial changes
- Concerns had been expressed by Head Teachers with regard to the number of Roma/Slovakian children in their schools for which, at the present time, there was no real support as there was no funding through EMAC nor in terms of Pupil Premium. It had been requested that some consideration be given as to how Roma/Slovakian children could be supported through the allocation of funding
- The action zones were not just about the amount of funding they received but the impact they had on children's lives and how that was measured
- Notice would be given to staff next week. When a decision was made in June it may be that some of them could have moved on
- Identify any surpluses by City Learning Centres
- It was almost impossible to look at the budget headings and make changes for the current financial year. Planning should take place for 2012/13
- There was frustration by families that could not access it whose children would benefit
- Some schools were already providing their own provision
- Request the Finance Sub-Group to put together different scenarios for the use of the funding

The 2 options before the meeting were (i) that the funding be allocated to the Extended Services but with greater flexibility in the criteria or (ii) defer

until the June meeting after the Finance Sub-Group had met.

A vote then took place on the 2 options.

Agreed:- (6) That the funding be allocated to the Extended Services with greater flexibility in the criteria.

(7) That a number of Head Teachers work with Sue Shelley to look at the criteria.

#### **181. CARETAKING OF SCHOOL PREMISES**

A report was circulated setting out the current position with caretakers properties.

Currently there were 58 properties occupied by school caretakers at non-PFI schools in Rotherham. The rental income was collected by Housing Services for which they charged an 16% administration fee resulting in a net income of approximately £110,000 per annum.

It was proposed that the rental income be kept centrally and would be used solely to service, maintain and improve the properties. The servicing and maintenance requirements would be captured and then managed by the building managers as they currently did. The remaining income would be spent on improvements to the properties on a rolling programme determined by need and when properties became vacant due to a change in caretaker. The income would be fully spent each year with no contribution needed from other funding sources.

An annual report would be produced showing how the income had been spent, which properties benefited and the programme for the following year.

Agreed:- That the report be noted and communicated to all schools.

#### **182. YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE GRID FOR LEARNING - FUNDING FOR 2011/2012**

Sue Wilson, Performance and Quality Manager, gave a brief reminder of the background to the above issue.

The New Technology Working Group had met and considered what Rotherham Schools wanted and needed. They had received a presentation on the Yorkshire and Humber Grid for Learning on what it could provide that was not currently tapped into and there had been a cross over in the services. A plan was to be put together on who would provide what. It was hoped to improve the service through video conferencing and skype.

It was acknowledged that it had not been a great success in the past but there was a willingness to improve the service.

Agreed:- That the £100,000 be taken from DSG and that the New Technology Working Group continue to ascertain the merits of YHGL so as a decision could be made in December, 2011, as to whether a notice to quit was served.

**183. NHS POSTS**

Consideration was given to a letter sent to all Head Teachers by the NHS Foundation Trust regarding the Health funded posts Health Education Nurse Advisor, Speech and Language Therapist and the Moving and Handling Co-ordinator.

2 of the 3 posts were funded by DSG, the third post by the NHS.

It was acknowledged that more children with multiple and complex needs were coming through the mainstream school system. Staff were not experts or trained in how to move and handle such children. Since the letter, negotiations with the NHS had achieved funding for the Speech and Language Therapist post but not the remaining 2. Should the services be not funded, schools that used them would have to buy them in for a child with specific needs.

The issue would be discussed at the Value for Money meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2011.

Agreed:- That funding for the 2 posts be supported.

(Helen Nartey declared a personal interest in the above item.)

**184. ANY OTHER BUSINESS****DFE Consultations**

Joanne Robertson reported that there were currently 2 consultations taking place:-

1. Academy funding
2. Schools funding from April, 2012.

The closing date for both was 26<sup>th</sup> May.

The DFE was requesting responses from individual schools and governing bodies. It was suggested that the Finance Sub-Group consider the 2 consultations but that in future consultations be submitted to the Forum in the first instance.

**Funding Request**

A request had been received from Asset Management seeking further funding from DSG for the shortfall in the fund for training drivers and escorts for children with disabilities.

Agreed:- That the request be discussed at the Value for Money meeting.

**185. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - FRIDAY 24TH JUNE 2011 AT 8.30 A.M.**

Agreed:- That a further meeting be held on Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2011, commencing at 8.30 a.m. at the Rockingham Teachers' Centre.