

**ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS FORUM  
FRIDAY, 2ND MARCH, 2012**

**Present:-** David Silvester (in the Chair).

**Primary Schools:** - Lynne Pepper (Clifton), Kay Jessop (Wingfield), Sue Warner (Wickersley), Geoff Jackson (High Greave J & I), Donna Humphries (Aston), John Henderson (Brinsworth), Jane Fearnley (Oakwood).

**Secondary Schools:** - Bev Clubley (Thrybergh), Ann Abel (Oakwood), Paul Blackwell (Dinnington), Roger Burman (Winterhill).

**Faith Learning Communities:** - Angela Heald (St Pius), David Butler (St Bernard's).

**Early Years:** - Margaret Hague,

**Other School:** - Nick Whittaker (Special Schools), David Ashmore (Rotherham Teaching School Alliance).

**Non-School:** - Val Broomhead (Unison), Susan Brook (NASUWT), Karen Borthwick (14-19), Michael Waring (School Business Manager Representative), Geoff Gillard (Sheffield Diocese).

**Also in attendance were:** - Vera Njegic (Financial Services), Joanne Robertson (Financial Services), Dorothy Smith (Schools and Lifelong Learning, Rotherham CYPS).

**60. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence had been received from: -

**Secondary Schools:** - David Sutton, David Naisbitt (represented at the meeting by Ann Abel) and Stuart Wilson.

**Non-School Members:** - Councillor Jane Havenhand.

**61. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 20TH JANUARY, 2012.**

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum held on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2011 were considered.

In relation to Minute 50 (Thornhill Primary School Pupil Number Change) it was noted that the item would form part of the Forum's forward plan of items for consideration at a future meeting.

A clarification was recorded in relation to Minute 53 (Early Years PVI Budget Requirement). The record of the agreed decision at part (3) would read:

In respect of the 2012/2013 financial year, the Rotherham Schools' Forum approved **Option 1**, as detailed in the submitted report.

A clarification was recorded in relation to Minute 55 (Consultation Responses: Distribution of Extended Services to Individual Schools). It was confirmed that

the different sections of the agreed decision should be organised under different subheadings to provide clarity as the decision related to the Extended School budget headings, which were within the Centrally Retained Grant allocations, and the overall Centrally Retained Grant.

This would mean that Minute 55 would now read: -

Agreed: -

**Extended Schools Grant: -**

[1] That the Schools' Forum agrees that, from the 2012/13 financial year, the former Extended Services Grant shall be delegated to schools and form part of the 'Individual Schools Budget', with each school receiving an allocation through an agreed formula (i.e.: this funding shall not be retained by the Borough Council).

[2] That the Extended Services funding be allocated on the basis of 50% on pupil numbers and 50% on free school meal numbers.

**Centrally Retained Grant: -**

[3] That the Roma/Slovak premium element of the former centrally retained grants be reduced from the 8% allocation in 2011/12 to 6% in 2012/13. To fund the salary of PS (Education Welfare Officer) and to be distributed to schools on a per pupil basis.

Agreed: - That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum held on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2012, be approved as a correct record.

**62. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES.**

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes that were not covered by this meeting's agenda items.

**63. SCHOOLS' BUDGET FORECAST OUTTURN POSITION, 31ST MARCH, 2012.**

Joanne Robertson, Finance Manager – CYPS Business Partnering, presented a report that outlined the forecast outturn position of the Rotherham Total Schools' Budget to the end of March as at 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2012. The estimate was based on actual expenditure to the end of January, 2012, and the most up-to-date financial forecasts from individual schools.

The forecast for the financial year 2011/12 showed an underspend of £4,475 millions, which equated to -2.43% of the total budget. After the application of carry forward balances the forecasted outturn showed an underspend of £64k (-0.03%).

An overview of the main pressures on the budget was considered, as shown at 6.1.2 of the submitted report. Areas of underspend were considered at 6.1.3.

Risks in relation to the budget's outturn included the needs-led nature of many of the budget headings, and in particular, the Special Educational Needs budgets.

Another risk included reductions in grant funding to centrally managed services for schools during 2010/11 and 2011/12. Needs-led budgets were being used to offset the overspends in these areas. If the demands on the needs-led budget increased, this may result in an overspend position on the overall DSG.

Discussion ensued, and the following were noted:

- Increasing PFI charges
- Academy recoupment
- Possible breakdown of the school contingency budget heading

Agreed: - That the report be received and it's content noted.

#### **64. (REVISED) ESTIMATED 2012/13 SCHOOLS' BUDGET.**

The revised estimated schools' budget for the 2012/13 financial year was received.

The Rotherham Schools' Forum were asked to note that there would be a need to revisit the budget once the Final Outturn position for the current financial year was known.

Agreed: - That the contents of the report be noted.

#### **65. ROSIP FUNDING.**

David Ashmore, Rotherham Teaching School Alliance, provided a verbal update in relation to the deployment of funding for the Rotherham School Improvement Partnership (RoSIP). It was noted that the overall budget was £768k for the 2012/13 financial year.

The funding available had been allocated to the five objectives of the RoSIP.

Priority one was to improve outcomes at Key Stage 2. This involved the deployment of external National Leaders of Education (NLEs), 23 Local Leaders of Education (LLEs), investment in EMAG software, and a contribution towards funding Fischer Family Trust software within vulnerable primary schools at Key Stage 2. The proportion of the overall funding that had been targeted to improvements at Key Stage 2 was around £250k.

Priority two was to improve outcomes at Key Stage 4. An allocation of £180k had been made available to provide key teachers in Maths, English and Science within vulnerable secondary schools.

An allocation of £150k had been made available to support special and mainstream schools with regards to special educational needs issues. This work was being led by Nick Whittaker.

An allocation of £180k had been made available to fund ten additional Graduate Teacher Placements across Rotherham.

Further work was underway in relation to building the capacity of the Rotherham Leadership programme. The National College was inviting bids

from all Teaching Schools for a licence to deliver levels one, two and three of it's leadership accreditation programme.

Wickersley School and Sports College had initiated a bid to the National College on behalf of the Rotherham Teaching School. External partners also involved in the bid included two Sheffield teaching schools and two Sheffield secondary schools and the bid represented the whole of the South Yorkshire region. If successful, the partners involved would be the sole providers of National College leadership accreditation up to NPQH level for four years (licensable period). Projected income was around £1.2m over the four year period.

It was anticipated that the DSG as currently deployed would cease to exist from 2013/14 onwards, so agreement was now sought to profile the budget in relation to RoSIP's work over three-years and the facility to carry forward balances to enable RoSIP to bid for the National College Licence and to appropriately organise it's activities if the bid should be successful.

Joanne Robertson also pointed out that the projected carry forward of any balance allocated in the current financial year to next would impact on the Forecast Outturn position reported at item 3 on the agenda (Schools' Budget Forecast Outturn Position). As such David Ashmore agreed to provide details of the profiled budget requirement over the three academic years referred to.

Agreed: - (1) That a carry forward balance as at 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2012, be approved for the Rotherham School Improvement Partnership budget heading within the DSG.

(2) That the three-yearly profiling of the Rotherham School Improvement Partnership budget heading within the DSG be provided to Joanne Robertson to ensure accurate updating of the Authority's General Ledger.

(3) That a future report be presented to the Rotherham Schools' Forum detailing the deployment of the Rotherham School Improvement Partnership's resources.

## **66. PRIVATE FINANCE INITIATIVE - UPDATE.**

Jonathan Baggaley, PFI Finance Manager, Financial Services, Resources Directorate, and Rob Holsey, Principal Project Manager, Children and Young People's Services Capital Projects, were welcomed to the meeting to provide an update to the Rotherham Schools' Forum in relation to the Group Schools' PFI project.

A contract review report that the Local Authority's strategic finance partner, PriceWaterhouseCoopers LLP, had undertaken on the project in April 2011 had been circulated to the Forum to give context to the discussion.

There were a number of overarching recommendations within the report that were suggested for implementation between the Local Authority and Transform Schools, the providers of the PFI programme. Broadly, these actions covered:

- Governance and Performance
- Vandalism Charging Processes

- Lifecycle Works
- Cleaning and Caretaker Services
- Charges for Additional Works

A series of performance management meetings had been arranged to include all stakeholders that would monitor progress against action plans.

The PFI Finance Manager provided an update to the Rotherham Schools' Forum in relation to the financial commitments within the PFI contract. Financial contributions were linked to the RPIx index of inflation, which was currently around 5%. The contract was also subject to five-yearly benchmarking exercises where the contract's provider can 'catch-up' recoupment on their increased costs in relation to wage charges, inflation and so on.

The contract was continually reviewed to ensure best value for money was being achieved and any potential savings/efficiencies were accessed.

Discussion ensued, and the following salient points were raised: -

- Overall the performance of the contract was broadly in-line with expectations.
  1. Some issues within individual schools were raised.
- Increased charges to the DSG for the PFI contract meant less funds available within other budget headings.
- Vandalism charges that went beyond the set contract level were passed on to individual schools.
- Wage increases.

Agreed: - (1) That the PFI Finance Manager and Principal Project Manager be thanked for their update to the Rotherham Schools' Forum and the information provided be noted.

(2) That a further report be presented to the 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2012 meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum relating to the increased charges that had been applied under the PFI contract over the past three financial years and providing an update on the ongoing contract negotiations.

## **67. EDUCATION CATERING.**

David Silvester, Chair of the Rotherham Schools' Forum, provided an update in relation to Minute 56 (Commissioning – Value for Money Review of Education Catering Service) of the previous meeting, held on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2012.

The Chair now reported that, following the conclusion of the Council's value for money review of the Service, a decision had been taken to not invite a competitive tender based on the information gained in the recently completed review.

The Dedicated Schools' Grant agreed to be paid over to the Education Catering Service in 2012/13 had been reduced by £249k to £178k.

Agreed: - That the Manager of the Schools Catering Service produce a report to be presented to the 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2012, meeting of the Rotherham Schools'

Forum in relation to these issues.

**68. LEARNING COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES AND ELECTION OF THE RSF CHAIR IN THE APRIL MEETING.**

David Silvester, Chair of the Rotherham Schools' Forum, indicated to the meeting that his term as Chair was due to end on 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2012. It was also noted that Learning Community Representatives on the Rotherham Schools' Forum were due to be nominated for the same term. At the next meeting a Chair would be elected for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2012 – 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2013.

It was noted that, within the current representation from Learning Communities, there was a balance between Primary and Secondary Schools and that it would be beneficial if this was maintained for the next term.

Agreed: - (1) That current Learning Community Representatives approach their learning community headteachers to agree a school representative to join the Rotherham Schools' Forum for the forthcoming financial year.

(2) That learning community representatives on the Rotherham Schools' Forum be emailed to the current Chair by 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2012.

(3) That the communication to the current Chair also indicate whether the representative for the 2012/13 financial year wishes to be nominated as Chair of the Rotherham Schools' Forum, for consideration at the 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2012, meeting.

(4) That a Vice-Chair of the Rotherham Schools' Forum for the 2012/13 financial year be elected at the 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2012, meeting.

**69. BUDGET FOR PRUS - UPDATE.**

Further to Minute 51 of the previous meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum, Martin Fittes, Assistant Head of the School Effectiveness Service, Vulnerable Groups, attended the meeting to provide an update in relation to 2012/13 budget for Pupil Referral Units.

A paper was circulated to the meeting that showed the forecast outturn budgets of each Pupil Referral Unit at the end of the 2011-12 financial year, and the estimated outturn for the 2012/13 financial year.

A decision was now sought by the Assistant Head of the School Effectiveness Service in relation to the management of vacancies within the service and deployment of resources and loss of funding streams. Issues included: -

- The role of Re-integration Officer
- Funding for the role of Anti-Bullying Officer
- The role of Curriculum Adviser for Behaviour
- Deployment of additional SEN funding to prevent exclusions and resulting out of authority placements

Discussion ensued and the following issues were raised: -

- The potential to conduct a value for money review of the service to assess impact and purpose of settings
- Future legislation impacting on the procedure of permanent exclusions

Agreed: - (1) The Rotherham Schools' Forum unanimously voted to maintain the Pupil Referral Unit and Educated Other than at School budget for the 2012/13 financial year at the same level of the previous year, £2,502m.

(2) That an initial rationale and scope be drafted in relation to conducting a value for money review on the Pupil Referral Service to be reported back to a future meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum.

## **70. ROTHERHAM CHARTER FOR PARENT CHILD AND VOICE.**

The Chair welcomed Pip Wise, Head of the Rotherham Parent Partnership, Claire Whiting, Educational Psychologist, and Jayne Fitzgerald, Rotherham Parent Carers' Forum. A report had been submitted that proposed the Rotherham Schools' Forum contribute towards a mixed funding business plan to address issues of capacity within the Educational Psychology Service to lead, co-ordinate and support sustainable and meaningful roll-out of the Parent and Child Voice Charter to Rotherham schools and services.

The report described the background of the development of the Charter, and its link to the recommendations of the Lamb Inquiry within the 'Special Educational Needs and Parental Confidence' publication.

The Charter supported school improvement through the implementation of the new Ofsted Framework by addressing the increasing responsibility schools had to promote high expectations and achievement for all learners, which included a broader range of pupils with additional needs, as described in the SEN Green Paper 'Support and Aspiration'.

The Rotherham Charter had received endorsement from Brian Lamb OBE, the DfE and was perceived nationally to be an example of excellent practice of collaborative working.

The report set out the reasons why a range of proposed financial contributions had been made and representations from the agencies attending also provided information in relation to the role and importance of the Charter. The requested funding would enable:

- a. Development of the research design and method of analysis that created the Charter
- b. Lead the development of the training package and roll-out programme
- c. Apply psychological theory and practice to the transfer of skills to parents, school and service staff
- d. Lead in the facilitation of multi-agency involvement and commitment to equality of voice (child, parent and service/school/LA)
- e. Lead in the preparation of a variety of materials
- f. Apply psychological skills to producing an evidenced-based approach that would realistically help schools evaluate Charter implementation

It was envisaged that, after the Charter had been embedded within Rotherham, skills could be confidently transferred to parents, school and other service staff. Packages of support also included observation and coaching elements for school staff that would enable them to become 'Charter Champions' for other schools within their Learning Community. As parents and others became more confident, involvement by the EPS and other core team members should reduce to an advisory role.

Three options for consideration were detailed in the submitted report. Each option had been costed and examples of savings through prevention and early intervention had been noted. The cost to the DSG fund for each option was:

**Option 1: additional Schools' Forum investment:**

Bursary for 2 trainee Educational Psychologist plus on-costs £21,000 each per year

2 days administration time over one year £ 9,493

**Total investment: April 2012-April 2014 - £102,986.**

**Option 2 additional Schools' Forum investment:**

Cost of full time Educational Psychologist plus on-costs £53,687 each per year

2 days administration time over the year £ 9,493

**Total investment: April 2012-April 2014 - £126,360.**

**Option 3 no additional Schools' Forum funding:**

**Total investment: £0.**

The Rotherham Schools' Forum discussed with the representatives from the Rotherham Parent Partnership, Educational Psychology Services and Parent Carers' Forum the delivery proposals and financial options within the submitted report. Reference was made to the impact the work had on supporting families and it's welcome reception.

[The representatives from the Rotherham Parent Partnership, Educational Psychology Services and Parent Carers' Forum left the meeting so that the Rotherham Schools' Forum meeting could deliberate the proposals].

A vote was taken on the three options within the paper and an additional option to defer consideration of the proposals as suggested by the Chair.

Agreed: - (1) A majority vote of the Rotherham Schools' Forum supported Option 3 within the submitted report.

(2) That the Rotherham Schools' Forum record concerns in relation to promises made in the initial stages of work around the Rotherham Parent and Child Charter that cannot be delivered or sustained within the current resources available to the group.

## 71. CITY LEARNING CENTRES - UPDATE.

The Chair welcomed Karen Borthwick, Head of the School Effectiveness Service, Schools and Lifelong Learning, Children and Young People's Services, to the meeting.



An update had been prepared for the Rotherham Schools' Forum in relation to the management and deployment of Rotherham's City Learning Centres. Issues considered covered: -

- The Service's current and previous staffing structures
- The CLC Management Group: -
  - o Would report to the Rotherham Schools' Forum
  - o Would liaise with the New Technologies Working Group to measure impact and work on technology offers to schools
- Income generation

Roger Burman commended the proactive work that had taken place within the CLC Service. It was now streamlined, fit for purpose and operating within a mixed economy model.

Agreed: - The Rotherham Schools' Forum agreed the estimated budget allocation of £163k to the City Learning Centre budget heading for the 2012/13 financial year.

## **72. RATES - FUNDING REVIEW.**

This issue was deferred for consideration at the 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2012 meeting.