

SCHOOLS FORUM

18 December 2018

Commenced: 10.00am

Terminated: 11.35am

Present:	Karen Burns (Chair)	Primary Schools – Academies
	Maire Wright	Primary Schools – L/A Maintained
	Lisa Lockett	Primary Schools – L/A Maintained
	Lisa Gallagher	Primary Schools – L/A Maintained
	Andy Card	Primary Schools – LA/ Maintained
	Simon Wright	Primary Schools - Academies
	Heather Farrell	Primary Schools - Academies
	Susan Marsh	Governor, Primary Schools – L/A Maintained
	Anthony McDermott	Governor, Primary Schools – LA Maintained
	Donal Townson	Governor, Primary Schools – L/A Maintained
	Elizabeth Jones	Governor, Secondary Schools – L/A Maintained
	Richard O'Regan	Secondary Schools – L/A Maintained
	Gill McFadden	Secondary Schools - Academies
	Elaine Horridge	Diocesan Representative
	Alison Hampson	TCC
	Councillor Feeley	Executive Member, Lifelong Learning
	Tim Bowman	Assistant Director, Learning
	Christine Mullins	Finance Business Partner
	Louisa Siddall	Senior Accountant
	Wendy Lees	Senior Finance Officer

Apologies for absence: Councillor Fairfoull

Executive Member, Performance and Finance

10. CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular, new Governor representative; Donal Townson.

11. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 23 October 2018, having been circulated, were approved as a correct record:

12. SCHOOLS FORUM TERMS OF REFERENCE, PRINCIPLES AND CONSTITUTION

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Governance and Pensions, giving details of the updated Terms of Reference for Schools' Forum, which included the guiding principles and constitution of the Forum. It was explained that these documents had been updated to reflect the Department for Education guidance for Schools' Forum published in September 2018.

RESOLVED

That the Terms of Reference for Schools' Forum, including the guiding principles and constitution of the Forum with the following amendments:

- (i) **That the first sentence of the 'Schools Members' section read: 'Members should be Heads, Governors or Bursars'; and**

- (ii) That the fourth paragraph under '*Meetings and Proceedings of the Schools Forum*' read as follows: 'A Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected annually from those members present at the first meeting of the academic year; the term of office being one year. Any elected member of officer of the authority cannot stand as Chair'.

13. SCHOOLS BLOCK 2019/2020 FUNDING FORMULA

The Assistant Director Finance submitted a report giving details of the outcome of the School funding 2019/2020 Consultation and the principles to be applied for the allocation of the schools block for 2019/2020.

It was explained that, throughout November 2018, consultation had taken place in a number of ways with schools and schools leaders.

Local Authority Officers met with the School Funding Group to discuss in detail proposals for the 2019/2020 funding formula. This included a review of the impact for primary schools on a move to National Funding Formula and the introduction of an Area Cost Adjustment for secondary schools, as this would form the basis of the 2019/2020 consultation. The Group requested that a presentation would be beneficial to all Head teachers, a secondary sector representative fed back to TASH and Local Authority officers presented an overview of the impact at the Primary Head teachers briefing and separately to the Special Sector with the opportunity for questions on both occasions. The consultation documents provided opportunity for schools to contact the finance team for any queries or further clarification as required. A very small number of schools had contacted officers for further information.

The overall response rate to the consultation was low, with only 12 schools responding (12%). The consultation questions, outcome and conclusions were included in an appendix to the report.

Further to the response received and the conclusions drawn, the Local Authority was planning to move to the National Funding Formula rates as detailed in the report. It was further explained that two sets of rates had been included as the funding formula must be affordable within the final allocation issued by the DfE in late December 2018. Therefore, the implementation of the Area Cost Adjustment would need to be assessed to ensure affordability.

In moving to the National Funding Formula rates, the Local Authority also planned to remove the reception difference and move to using the EAL data set when calculating the funding. The funding factor for IDACI F and FSM6 would also be included in the funding formula for the Primary sector.

The Local Authority would seek to implement a 0% MFG and a 2.5% Gains Cap in line with the modelling information released in the consultation, dependent on affordability. The Local Authority would need to assess this to ensure the overall budget balances within the final allocation from DfE and would look to balance the overall budget in a way that provided maximum benefit to all schools.

As a result of the consultation outcome, the Local Authority were seeking agreement to continue with the existing criteria for growth funding for 2019/2020, details of which were appended to the report. Further consideration needed to be given to the most appropriate way to fund growth going forward and the Local Authority planned to continue consultation on this area of funding.

Forum members commented on the consultation process and officers answered specific points in relation to this.

In response to queries with regard to the existing criteria for the growth fund, officers clarified that agreement was sought for points 1, 2 and 3 of Tameside's Existing Growth Fund criteria 2018/19. as detailed at Appendix B to the report. It was further noted that the two paragraphs in Appendix B

under 'Suggested New Growth Criteria from 2019/2020' had been added in error and should be ignored.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the content of the report be noted and the consultation process, as detailed in the report, be supported; and**
- (ii) That the criteria for the growth fund, as set out in Points 1, 2, and 3 of Appendix B to the report, be agreed.**

14. COMMISSIONED PLACES 2019/2020

A report was submitted by the Assistant Director of Education, informing Forum members on the Local Authorities Commissioning intentions for High Needs Places for 2019/2020 in Special Schools and Resourced Units.

It was explained that initial meetings had taken place with special schools leaders and a number of proposals around funding in year growth and addressing under and overcapacity in year. Feedback on the proposals and any subsequent changes to funding would be implemented in September 2019.

There were no changes since the October Forum meeting on budget position with current projected overspend of £1.072 million by the end of 2018/19. A further update would be made following real time movement exercise which was due to be completed by end of December 2018.

The school funding consultation proposes that no block transfer movements to the High Needs block be made in 2019/2020.

Commissioning discussions regarding the number of places to be commissioned in special schools, resourced units and Further Education Institutions from September 2019 were taking place with the relevant providers.

For academies and colleges, the places commissioned were submitted to the DfE on the 16 November 2018 and final places with other providers would be confirmed by the end of December 2018 in preparation for release of 2019/20 budgets in February 2019.

Further details on commissioned places by individual school was provided in the report.

It was further explained that a review of the places commissioned at Schools Based Resource Units had also been carried out and further details of commissioned places for 2018/19 alongside the proposed commissioned places was also provided in the report.

It was reported that, overall, the commissioning of Resourced Units at September 2019 would see a reduction in place funding allocated of £60,000 on a full financial year.

In respect of Further Education Institutions, there was no suggested change to the place numbers to these institutions in Tameside.

The next area under review in the High Needs block was the funding for in-year growth of places in the Special School Sector.

It was acknowledged that commissioning places in October/November for the following September was often a difficult task and good planning and early commissioning discussions were essential. There would be situations where not all growth had been commissioned, and conversely, there may be occasions where places were unfilled.

Whilst there should be processes in place to support schools seeing growth beyond commissioned numbers there should also be acknowledgement that not all growth would warrant additional funding but resources should target need.

Discussions had started in respect of a number of potential growth models with the Special School Heads and Business Managers. This was to consider which was the most appropriate model to be adopted going forward, to achieve a balanced approach of funding as described in the report. The outcome of any of these decisions would be fed back to Schools Forum at a later date.

Discussion ensued with regard to the content of the report and in particular the unprecedented growth of pupil numbers in Tameside schools and the increased level of specialist provision required in the Borough.

RESOLVED

That the content of the report be noted, including the review of the funding of overcapacity of places in the Special School sector and the outcome of the review, be reported to a future meeting of the Schools' Forum.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED

To note the date of the next meeting of the Schools Forum as Tuesday 12 February 2019 at 10.00am, Discovery Academy, Porlock Avenue, Hyde.