

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM

Wednesday, 3 July 2013

Present:

M Kophamel (Vice Chair)

Schools Group

S Allen	A Moore
B Cummings	S Peach
W Fairman	C Penn
C Hughes	K Podmore
L Ireland	M Walker
B Jordan	J Weise
S Lloyd	G Zsapka

Non-Schools Group

J Kenny	B McGregor
D McDonald	N Reilly

In Attendance:

D Armstrong	S Dainty
P Arista	K Lloyd
P Ashcroft	D Marchant
S Ashley	C McGowan
J Bevan	A Roberts
Cllr. W Clements	P Sheridan
C Chow	

Apologies:

M Brown	S Higginson
E Cogan	D Kitchin
S Davies	R Longster
P Dixon	
K Frost	S McNamara
J Gordon	J Owens
J Hassall	G Pritchard

234 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes from the meeting were accepted as a true record.

235 **MATTERS ARISING**

The proposals from the Transport Consultation are due to go to Cabinet on Thursday 11th July 2013.

236 **SCHOOLS BUDGET OUTTURN 2012-13**

Andrew Roberts presented the provisional outturn figures for 2012-13, showing an under spend of £472,000. There is, in total, £2m of DSG funds

held in reserve. This is earmarked for JE and harmonisation (£668k), the cost of automatic readers (£415k), school contingency (£194k), CLCs (£115k), ASTs (£136k) and an unallocated balance (£472k).

Resolved

The Forum noted the report.

237 SCHOOL BALANCES AS AT 31ST MARCH 2013

Sue Ashley reported that the school balances have risen as at 31st March 2013 by £1.8m to £11.9m. Schools should be clear about why they hold balances and how they plan to use them.

Although 4 schools finished the year with deficit balances only 1 school has requested a deficit budget for 2013-14.

Resolved

The Forum noted the report.

238 HIGH NEEDS OPTIONS

Paul Ashcroft explained that the consultation for High Need top ups was prepared by the Forum's SEN Steering Group. The paper will be sent to schools shortly; the consultation will run until October half term. It is a comprehensive consultation split into the following sections:-

- Special schools
- Base provision in mainstream schools
- Alternative provision
- Mainstream schools
- Post 16 provision

The non-teacher representative commented that the proposals need more clarification and an analysis/review is required for each school in order to identify each student's needs and requirements, this should help allocate the correct levels of top up funding in a fair and transparent manner. This comment will be considered alongside the responses from the consultation.

Resolved

The Forum agreed to consult on the proposals and consider the responses at the next forum meeting.

239 NURSERY SCHOOL FUNDING

Kath Lloyd informed the Forum of the increased entitlement and funding for 2 year olds.

Andrew Roberts highlighted the need to consult schools and early year's providers on:-

- The changes arising from the national review of the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) and proposals to simplify it.

- The additional costs incurred by maintained nursery schools compared to other providers and how that might be better reflected in the formula.

Resolved

The Forum noted the report and agreed to consult with schools and early years providers regarding changes to the EYSFF.

240 DFE AND LOCAL FUNDING FORMULA PROPOSALS

Andrew Roberts summarised the DfEs changes to the schools' funding formula in 2014-15 along with some proposed local amendments. Schools will be consulted on the following changes:-

- Low cost, high incidence SEN – for secondary schools the national indicator will change to children who do not achieve level 4 in English or Maths.
- English as an additional language (EAL) – it is proposed locally to allocate the funding for EAL children for the first 3 years in the education system, instead of 1 year.
- Looked after Children (LAC) – The DfE will require LAs to change the indicator from children looked after for 6 months to children looked after for 1 day. In addition, a view on whether there should be a local change to the amount, e.g. to double this funding to £1,125.
- Delegation of free school milk – it is proposed to delegate this funding on the basis of Free School Meals (FSM) pupils only.
- Split sites – to consider sites split by a road and with more than 1 reception area.

There are no suggested changes for pupil led funding, deprivation, mobility, or the lump sum.

An academy representative on behalf of other head teachers requested that deprivation funding is looked at again, particularly as pupil premium is set to rise in 2014-15. A KS3 pupil on FSM could generate £7356.21 compared to £3891.65 for a KS3 child who is not on FSM. As we move towards a national funding formula other forum members stated that they would prefer that deprivation is not consulted on at this time.

The discussion moved to the Pupil Premium funding, the impact on raising achievement and the significance OFSTED are placing on it.

Resolved

The views of the Forum were sought on the proposed consultation and a report on the outcome will be brought to the next meeting.

241 TRADED SERVICES UPDATE

David Armstrong briefed the Forum about the move to a consistent approach for Traded Services under the leadership of Stuart Bellerby. Meetings have taken place with the 2 Headteacher groups with recommendations made that are similar to those agreed in principle by Wirral's Chief Executive Strategy Group. The recommendations were:-

1. In principle to manage school traded services cost effectively and efficiently across the LA under the Assistant Chief Executive / Head of Universal & Council Infrastructure Services utilising existing council frameworks from 2013/14 and to include all current school traded services.
2. The current traded service budgets and staffing are reviewed taking account of the income generated.
3. All traded service budgets for 2013/14 are reviewed in agreement with Corporate Finance and the relevant Departmental leads. Appropriate service charges for the overheads of a coordinated traded service are developed.
4. Any proposed or new traded services from Wirral Council are considered to come under the new traded services organisation and follow similar principles as the current traded services.
5. The new traded services organisation considers new business opportunities and legal structures and reports back to a future meeting.

Resolved

The Forum noted the report and endorsed the recommendations agreed by the Headteacher management group and CESG.

242 CITY LEARNING CENTRES REVIEW

Following the request for a review of City Learning Centres (CLCs) by secondary schools Phil Sheridan summarised the current position as follows:-

- CLCs are funded through a combined budget
- Each CLC has its own governance, management and staffing structure.
- Current funding does not allow for equipment replacement of technology that is in need of repair and dated.
- There is no intention for the LA to reduce funding at this time, but if they did any reduction would be delegated to schools. Delegation is the favoured position of secondary schools and academies.

Resolved

The Schools Members of the Forum voted on the following proposals:-

1. That the combined budget for CLCs should be reduced (3 for, 8 against, 3 abstentions). Therefore, the overall CLC budgets should remain at their current level.
2. That the governance and management structure of the CLCs should be reduced to one and a business plan produced (13 for, 1 abstention).
3. That in principal, the number of CLCs should be reduced from 3 to 2, however, the final decision should be taken by the Management Committee. (10 for, abstentions 4).

243 FUNDING HIGH NEEDS STUDENTS AGED 16-24 UPDATE

Paul Arista updated the Forum about high needs (SEN) students aged 16 – 24 years. Since April 2013 the Local Authority has been responsible for distributing high needs support above the place funding amount of £10k. Wirral has 331 learners who require funding for 2013/14. There is an estimated budget shortfall of £27k which will have to be met from elsewhere in the DSG. Discussions are continuing with the EFA, this is an area where there are likely to be increasing budget pressures.

Resolved

The Report was noted.

The Forum unanimously agreed to continue dialogue with the EFA to highlight future budget pressures that are not sustainable beyond 2013/14.

244 SCHEME FOR FINANCING SCHOOLS - APPROVAL FOR CHANGES

Sue Ashley confirmed that the Scheme changes had been consulted with schools.

245 FORUM MEMBERSHIP

Sue Ashley updated the meeting on the current Forum representation, vacancies and future changes.

Resolved

The report was noted

246 WORKPLAN

The dates of future meetings were noted:-

13th November 2013

22nd January 2014

2nd April 2014

2nd July 2014

247 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Thanks to Morag Kophamel for her work as vice-chair and as a Primary headteacher representative, and good luck in her new role.

Thanks, also, to Paula Dixon for her contribution as a secondary Headteacher representative and more recently as an academy representative.

Welcome to Wendy Fairman the new PRU member of the Forum.