

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM

Wednesday, 26 June 2019

Present: Adrian Whiteley (Chair)

Schools Group

A Baird (Deputy)	N Lightwing
M Bellamy	C McKenna (Deputy)
R Bridges	E Neal
J Bush	T Taylor
L Davidson	J Weise
H Johnson	R Wood
T Kelly	

Non-Schools Group

S Davies	E Longbone
G Harris (Deputy)	N Prance
I Harris	S Ralph

In Attendance:

S Allen	J Levenson
S Ashley	T Lewis
S Bellerby	A Ryecroft
A Davies	S Talbot
C Fenlon	T Usher
S Gibbs	

Apologies:

L Ayling	A Donelan
S Bennett	M Forber
K Brown	R Mahoney
B Cassidy	M Morris

619 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15TH MAY 2019**

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

620 **MATTERS ARISING**

High Needs Review

The High Needs review has not been circulated to Forum members but has been shared with all special schools.

621 **SCHOOL ADMISSIONS UPDATE**

Sally Gibbs outlined the main functions of the admissions team. The report also highlights the change, from September 2019, to end primary school involvement

in grammar school selective processes. Independent Assessment Board to submit mitigating circumstances will no longer operate. The Appeals Process will be available for those who do not reach the standard, including those with mitigating circumstances.

The £40k cost of Selective tests is made up as follows: -

- £30k for drawing up the test and producing the test papers
- £10k for marking papers and contingency for additional needs, such as large print, cream paper.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

622 LACES SERVICE AND LAC PUPIL PREMIUM

Trish Lewis updated the Forum on the proposed changes to the Virtual School and the allocation of the LAC Pupil Premium (LAC PP) funding. For this financial year 2019-20 up to £1900 will be allocated directly to children at school based on effective PEPs on a termly basis, with £400 per pupil being held at the centre to cover a number of central services such as strengthening the Virtual School with a deputy, part-time Education Progress Officers becoming full-time, training Virtual school staff to train school staff, on-line resources and Boxall Profiling for all schools.

From April 2020 a pool system will operate for the payment of LAC PP to schools based on need, so if a child is in crisis extra funding can be provided, but if a child is meeting standards then less will be paid out. It was noted that some schools already have a pooling system within school if they receive a large amount of LAC PP to support those most in need.

The Virtual School is answerable to the Corporate Parents (LA) of children in care and has a governing body.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

623 ALTERNATIVE PROVISION UPDATE

Jan Levenson updated Forum on the developments to Alternative Provision within Wirral to address a number of factors. With the imminent closure of Emslie Morgan Academy the LA has had to react quickly to put measures in place to provide suitable alternative arrangements for some of Wirral's most vulnerable and challenging children. A number of pilot schemes have been set up with Progress Schools Ltd who were able to react quickly to the situation on Wirral. They already provide some effective alternative education places within Wirral. If these pilot schemes are successful they will go out to tender in 12 month's time.

The first primary setting to support children in year's 4,5 and 6 to build resilience, support self-regulation, self calming and anger management is being managed

by Evolve Enterprise at a Wirral Primary school. Early indications suggest there is a positive impact.

There are a number of providers affiliated to the Wirral Guild of Alternative Provision, but the aim is to continue to develop high quality provision in Wirral.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

624 ENERGY UPDATE

Shaun Allen updated the Forum on the procurement of utilities on behalf of schools. Electricity and Natural Gas costs are due to rise considerably over the 2019/20 financial year based on costs to schools in 2018/19 compared with the cost of purchasing fuel over the October to March 19 period, but costs are still lower than the market average. The estimated increases are: -

- Gas – 21.5%
- Electricity from British Gas – 25.7%
- Electricity from EdF – 25.2%

These increases have not been shared with schools before the report due to the timing of information from CCS, however, estimates can be provided in future years to inform school's budget setting on the understanding that they can be subject to change.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

625 TRADED SERVICES UPDATE

Stuart Bellerby updated Schools Forum on the Traded Services provided by the LA, particularly the new services including Internal Audit and Safeguarding Training. Forum requested income and expenditure statements for each service to ensure they are not profit making services. Any information that may be provided must not be for the public domain due to commercial sensitivity.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

626 EARLY YEARS WORKING GROUP UPDATE

Carol Fenlon updated Forum on the discussions at the latest Early Years Working Group. Most of the recruitment to strengthen the team is now in place. The consultation for the quality supplement will be issued in the autumn term, but it was decided not to consult on the flexibility supplement as doing so may result in providers becoming less flexible, affecting the 30 hour offer. The underspend of the DAF has been allocated in line with funding guidelines.

Resolved
Forum noted the report

627 HIGH NEEDS WORKING GROUP UPDATE

Adrian Whitely updated Forum on the discussion of the High Needs working group. Phase 2 of the Send Review is underway, with a report due in early September, with Phase 3 being completed in the autumn term. The working group requested that the report and any recommendations be shared as early as possible. The Kingsway Academy was discussed as a potential for SEN and social care provision. The working group highlighted the concerns about the lack of leadership and clarity of systems within the SEND team. The new SEND lead will be Tarun Ghosh who takes up his post on 2nd September.

The High Needs meeting in the Autumn term was agreed on 10th September 9.30am, Wallasey Town Hall.

Resolved
Forum noted the report

628 SCHOOL FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS 2020-21

Shaun Allen informed Forum of the arrangements for the consultation for the 2020-21 formula budget, which will run from early September to October half term. There will be 2 models within the consultation (current formula structure, and National Funding Formula factor values) with minus 1.5% MFG, 0% MFG and possibly a minus 0.75% MFG. Forum members noted their concerns that pension uplift is not going to be covered in the Autumn Spending Review.

Resolved
Forum noted the report

629 GROWTH FUND UPDATE

Shaun Allen updated Forum on the distribution of the growth fund to enable re-distribution of the funding for the children attending Kingsway Academy before it's closure. Remaining funds were allocated based on the net increase in pupils on roll between autumn 2017 and autumn 2018 for schools within a 5 mile driving distance of Kingsway Academy. It was proposed that additional funding received would be distributed in the same manner as above.

Resolved

1. Forum noted the report
2. Forum agreed the £173k received from the ESFA via DSG recoupment is distributed to secondary schools based on the criteria explained in Para 3.7.

3. Forum agreed the £45k received from the ESFA for Pupil Premium in respect of Kingsway Academy is distributed to secondary schools based on the criteria explained in Para 3.7.

630 **SCHOOL BUDGET MONITORING 2019-20**

Shaun Allen presented the first quarter budget monitoring position. The only variances at this stage are a £5.9m reduction in the Dedicated Schools Grant related to the academy conversion of Bebington High School, with a corresponding reduction in secondary school spend.

Cost pressures around SEN were highlighted and included some ad-hoc funding agreements with some schools agreed by the former Head of Special Education Needs.

Forum expressed concern that arrangements have been agreed outside the standard reporting lines, and without the approval of Schools Forum, although it was recognised that the schools involved had acted in good faith, and the Chair of Schools Forum will write to those schools to acknowledge this.

Forum requested a detailed report is carried out detailing all children funded by SEN, the stage of education, level of funding etc. Due to the scale of this task, it would need to be a commissioned piece of work if this was to be produced.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

631 **SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP**

Sue Ashley updated Forum on the current membership of the Forum. Due to academy conversions the Secondary representation has reduced to 1 and the academy representation has increased to 9. Forum noted that as more primary schools convert and more academy representatives are sought that it is important to keep the balance between primary and secondary schools representatives within the mix.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

632 **WORK PLAN**

The workplan was provided for information.

The dates of the meetings for the 2019-20 academic year are:-

Wednesday 25th September 2019

Wednesday 6th November 2019

Wednesday 15th January 2020

Wednesday 13th May 2020

Wednesday 1st July 2020

633 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.