

WIRRAL SCHOOLS' FORUM

28th September 2016

MINUTES

Present: Jill Billinge (Chair)

Schools Group

L Ayling	A Heron
S Baker (substitute)	L Ireland
B Chadwick	N Lightwing
E Cogan	D Marchant
S Dainty	J McCallum
M Forber	T Taylor
J Goalen	A Whiteley (Vice Chair)

Non-Schools Group

S Bennett	I Harris
M Bulmer	N Prance
A Donelan	

In Attendance:

S Allen	J Hassall
D Armstrong	I McGrady
S Ashley	M Morris
K A Brown	A Ryecroft
Cllr W Clements	A Roberts
A Davies	M Simpson
R Edwards	Cllr P A Smith
C Fenlon	S Talbot

Apologies:

A Baird	J Pearson
S Davies	K Podmore
J Devine	P Young
S Duggan	T Quinn
S Higginson	

1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Jill Billinge was elected as Chair and Adrian Whitely was elected as Vice Chair for 2016-17.

2. Minutes from the Meeting held on 6th July 2016

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

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. Traded Services Update

Ian McGrady updated the Forum on Edsential's first year of trading and highlighted the following:-

- Each school will have an Edsential business manager as a single point of contact.
- A new website is to be launched.
- Parent Pay is to be provided to Primary Schools who sign up for a 3 year catering SLA.
- A new music centre has been established at Mosslands School.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

5. Apprenticeship Levy

Andy Davies briefed the Forum on the Apprenticeship Levy which will be introduced in April 2017. The levy will be charged at 0.5% of payroll costs for those organisations with a pay bill of over £3m. Maintained schools will be included within the LA paybill. Funds will be accessed through a new digital account to be set up for each employer. How schools will access this is still unclear.

Further updates will be provided when more information is released.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

6. Budget Monitoring Update

Andrew Roberts outlined the schools budget position for 2016-17. There is an indicative overspend of £157k in respect of a number of central school budgets, particularly within Special Educational Needs. It was noted that the TU facilities time has an indicative shortfall of £20k due to reduced income. This will be discussed further with the Professional Associations.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

7. Update on School Budget Position

Sue Ashley updated the Forum on the indicative school balances for March 2017 and 2018. The overall financial position has improved compared to earlier reports. The Forum noted that this has resulted from the preparation and approval by headteachers and governors of robust and challenging financial plans. However, there are a number of schools projecting a deficit for the financial year 2017-18 and these will continue to be closely monitored.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

8. School Funding 2017-18

Andrew Roberts summarised the funding arrangements for School Budgets in 2017-18 following the deferral of the National Funding Formula for Schools and High Needs until 2018-19.

The arrangements are broadly similar to the current year, with no changes to:

- DSG pupil funding
- Minimum Funding Guarantee (-1.5%)
- allowable funding factors in the Wirral local formula
- de-delegation

There will, however, be some changes to:

- IDACI bandings to ensure funding is allocated to the most deprived children.
- Prior attainment to use new KS2 assessments.
- A review of allowable central costs.
- The transfer of Education Services Grant (£730k) to DSG.

The EFA's Operational Guidance will form the basis of the Schools Budget for 2017-18 and the report to the January meeting.

Resolved

Forum notes the report

9. Early Years Funding Consultation

Lynn Ireland highlighted some of the proposals identified in the National Early Years consultation paper:-

- The national funding hourly rate to be paid to Wirral will increase from £3.79 to £4.31
- The LA central spend is to be restricted to 5% of overall Early Years funding
- The same base rate must be the same for all providers by 2019-20
- The existing funding for maintained nurseries will be protected for 2 years
- A new disability access fund will be introduced
- LAs are to promote use of SEN inclusion funds
- Local formula supplements for early years are to be no more than 10% of the available funding.

The response to the Early Years National Funding Consultation was included for information.

Resolved

Forum noted the report and the response to the consultation paper.

10. PFI Formula Consultation

Andrew Roberts informed the group that 16 responses were received for the PFI Formula Consultation, with 8 being from PFI schools.

The consultation has 2 proposals:

1. To fund additional PFI facilities management costs through top slicing all schools budgets. This was supported by the PFI schools, but not by the other respondents. The Forum discussed an alternative means of funding using changes in combined budgets and historic commitments. This would remove the need to top slice budgets.
2. To delegate the PFI Affordability Gap. This proposal was supported.

Resolved

The school representatives on the Schools Forum agreed:-

- to introduce a PFI element within the funding formula, to cover the facilities management costs and the PFI affordability Gap.
- that the £400k will be met by reallocated central budgets and headroom, avoiding a top slice of school's budgets.
- that the FM costs are allocated on building size

11. Proposals for High Needs Places 2017-18

Margaret Morris summarised the changes in High Needs places since 2010. The decrease of pupils in mainstream provision and the increase in the special school population reflects the changes nationally. There has been an increase in both temporary and permanent exclusions which has had a significant effect on Emslie Morgan.

The report proposed changes in high needs places from September 2017 to take account of pressure on provision as follows:

- Claremount - places to increase by 12 to 216
- Emslie Morgan – places to increase by 20 to 100
- Birkenhead Park Academy inclusion base to close – reduce by 20 places
- Kingsway Academy inclusion base to close – reduce by 20 places
- Hilbre High Inclusion base – places to increase from 15 to 30 places

Post 16 provision is also increasing with a possible increase of 42 places required in 2017-18.

Resolved

- Forum noted the report.
- Forum referred the pressures described to the working group for further discussion.
- Schools will be consulted on the place changes.

12. Behaviour Support

Kirsten Brown, Headteacher of Gilbrook School, provided a summary of the services provided by Gilbrook Outreach to primary schools, which includes consultation and advising school staff, observation and assessment of children's emotional and social and mental health, training and support. The work is monitored closely and there are currently 136 cases open with 44 schools. Feedback from schools who receive the service is positive.

Mick Simpson, Acting Headteacher of Kilgarth school, outlined the Kilgarth Outreach Support provided to secondary school pupils who may be disengaged, disaffected and

have challenging behaviour. Sessions are tailored to individual students needs and can cover a large variety of areas from stress to anger management. Feedback from school staff and pupils about the service received has been positive.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

13. Pensby Amalgamation

Andrew Roberts updated the Forum on the request to the EFA for Pensby High School to retain some of their combined lump sum in the school funding formula for a further year. The additional protection should not exceed 70% of the combined lump sums, and will provide the school with an additional protected amount of £40k in the delegated budget for 2017-18.

Resolved

The Forum agreed that the LA should apply for an exceptional needs factor for the additional lump sum for Pensby High School in 2017-18.

14. Scheme for Financing Schools

Sue Ashley outlined the revisions to the Scheme for Financing Schools for maintained schools and confirmed that the updated Scheme will be issued shortly.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

15. Membership and Elections Update

Sue Ashley updated the Forum on the membership of the Forum. There are currently 27 members and 3 vacancies, 2 primary governor vacancies and 1 academy vacancy.

There were also 3 terms of office due to end, 1 academy, 1 FE and 1 PVI rep.

Arrangements are currently in place to fill the vacancies.

Particular thanks were expressed to Ken Frost, who has resigned as a governor rep, for all his hard work on Schools Forum since 2006.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

16. Date of Working Parties

Early Years	- 1 st November 1:30pm, Birkenhead Town Hall
High Needs	- 4 th November 9:30am, Birkenhead Town Hall
School Funding	- 15 th November 1:30pm, Birkenhead Town Hall

17. Workplan

The workplan was provided for information.

The dates of the meetings for this academic year are:-

Wednesday 18th January 2017

Wednesday 26th April 2017

Wednesday 5th July 2017

18. Any Other Business

There was no other business