

# WIRRAL SCHOOLS' FORUM

27<sup>th</sup> September 2017

## MINUTES

**Present:** Adrian Whitely (Chair)

### Schools Group

|                      |             |
|----------------------|-------------|
| L Ayling             | T Kelly     |
| S Baker (Vice Chair) | N Lightwing |
| B Bellamy            | E Neal      |
| K Brown              | D Spencer   |
| S Duggan             | T Taylor    |
| C Hibbard            | V Woods     |
| H Johnson            | K Podmore   |

### Non-Schools Group

|           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| S Bennett | A Donelan |
| M Bulmer  | I Harris  |
| S Davies  | N Prance  |

### In Attendance:

|          |           |
|----------|-----------|
| S Allen  | D Gornik  |
| S Ashley | M Morris  |
| J Bush   | L Rice    |
| A Davies | A Roberts |
| C Fenlon | A Rycroft |

### **Apologies:**

|              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| J Billinge   | S Jamieson    |
| B Chadwick   | R Mahony      |
| M Forber     | Cllr C Meaden |
| Cllr P Hayes | Cllr B Mooney |
| S Higginson  | T Quinn       |
| L Ireland    |               |

#### **1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Adrian Whitely was elected as Chair and Steve Baker was elected as Vice Chair for 2017-18.

#### **2. Minutes from the Meetings held on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

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

### **3. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising, however Deborah Gornik gave an update on children's Services including the following:-

- A new Director Children's Services (DCS) - Paul Boyce (currently the DCS at Knowsley Council) has recently been appointed. The offer is subject to usual clearances but plans are that Paul will take up his appointment on the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017.
- The LA's budget setting process is underway for 2018-19. The financial position for Children's Services and the Council as a whole remains very challenging.
- Work is ongoing with Ofsted. Improvements are being made, as detailed in the letter following the latest monitoring visit which took place on the 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017. A clear yardstick is that - we are making progress, but we are not there yet.

### **4. Library Services update**

Louise Rice updated the Forum on the recent changes to the Library Service. Most of their funding is through de-delegation from Primary Schools. In addition they are developing a premium service which will have a small charge. Library Services are also available to academies through an SLA. A new Year 7 service for secondary schools is being piloted at Ridgeway High and will be available to all Secondary Schools next year.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

### **5. Contingency, Special Staff Costs and Insurance**

Shaun Allen outlined the purpose and use of Contingency, Special Staff costs and Insurance budgets. These budgets are currently de-delegated. There is funding held in Primary Contingency for Managed Moves which Forum should consider transferring to Behaviour Support in 2018-19.

Resolved

Forum noted the report.

### **6. Early Years Update**

Carol Fenlon updated the Forum on the additional 15 hours of childcare for working families and an Early Years Funding consultation that has been sent to all providers.

The DfE's evaluation from the pilot implementation of 30 hours childcare identified that this provided increased flexibility for those parents looking for work, less reliance on informal care and a positive impact on family finances.

Although there had been technical issues at a national level for parents registering for the extra 15 hours, at the date of the Forum meeting 75% of applications had been validated, and can therefore take up their entitlement this term. Work to develop take up will continue as parents register for the spring term.

The introduction of the extra 15 hours does not appear to be causing any issues with sufficiency at this time.

A copy of the Early Years consultation was included in the Agenda. The consultation seeks the views of the Early Years sector in the following areas:-

- The Inclusive Practice Fund
- The introduction of monthly payments
- Claims received after the termly count
- The amount of grant passed onto early years providers
- Existing formula supplements.

The Consultation will run until Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October.

#### Resolved

- Forum noted the report
- Inclusive practice fund changes are implemented subject to the views of the consultation
- The outcome of the consultation is reported to the December meeting.

### **7. PFI Budget Update**

Andrew Roberts updated the Forum on the PFI budget and the work carried out by the PFI support team. The National Funding Formula will increase the PFI element in line with inflation. The 2 PFI CLCs are now being used for other purposes.

A further round of benchmarking for facilities management costs is due to commence, with an implementation date of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018. A working group will be set up to discuss this.

There are ongoing discussions with the EFA concerning future use of Kingsway School.

#### Resolved

Forum noted the report

### **8. National Funding Update – Executive Summary**

Andrew Roberts highlighted the main areas included in the recent announcement on the National Funding Formula (NFF), as detailed in appendix 1. It was also noted that the LAC Pupil Premium will increase to £2300 in 2018-19 as a result of a Looked after Children element not being included in the NFF.

The NFF information is based on October 2016 pupils and will be updated for 2018-19 using the October 2017 Census. The Formula Working Group will meet in late October/Early November to approve a consultation document, which will seek the views of all schools on any changes to be introduced as a result of the NFF. The outcome of the consultation will be reported back to the December Forum Meeting.

#### Resolved

Forum noted the report.

## **9. Pressure on High Needs Funding 2018-19**

Margaret Morris updated the Forum on the continued pressures on High Needs Funding. The Tables compared pupil numbers and places in special schools and bases in mainstream schools in September. Numbers will be closely monitored and any adjustments required will be brought back to the Forum.

The High Needs Working Group will meet to discuss places and other budget pressures in October. Colleen Hibbard agreed to be a primary representative on this working group.

### Resolved

Forum noted the report and referred the funding issues to the High Needs Working Group.

## **10. High Needs Funding for Sensory Services**

Margaret Morris explained the proposal to change an element of funding for sensory children. The plan is to move to an approach which is consistent with the other SEN needs in schools. Mainstream schools will be expected to cover the first £6000 of support from their Low Cost High Incidence (LCHI) element of their delegated budget before further funds are allocated from the High Needs budget. Further discussion is required through the High Needs Working Group during the autumn term.

### Resolved

The Forum noted the report.

## **11. SEND Support Services**

Margaret Morris explained the proposed services for SEND support. It is planned to change the structure of the service to include Educational Psychology Assistants and Clinical Psychologists. This is a long term move to provide appropriate support services for children, which meet needs. The changes will be monitored to ensure effective outcomes. The project aims are identified in section 3 of the agenda paper. The CAMHS team will be included in discussions to avoid overlap or duplicated services.

### Resolved

Forum noted the report and referred the proposal to the High Needs Working Group.

## **12. Home Education**

Margaret Morris updated the Forum on the changing needs of the Home and Continuing Education Service, a service which supports pupils who cannot attend school for physical or mental health reasons. Demand for services is growing and it is currently taking longer for children to re-integrate into mainstream schools. The report outlined changes to increase staffing capacity and to introduce charges to the pupils home school after receiving one terms support. It is expected that the service will have an additional cost of £50k.

### Resolved

- Forum noted the report, the shortfall of funds, and the need to consider the additional funding as part of the 2018-19 budget.

### **13. Budget Monitoring Update and Final DSG**

Shaun Allen updated the Forum on the Schools Budget for 2017-18. At this time the schools budget is expected to balance. DSG income will be reduced in year to take account of 4 primary schools who converted to Academy status in June and a reduction of 3/4 year olds taking up free places. These changes result in a matching reduction in expenditure within the budgets.

The final DSG for the 16/17 financial year was £169m, this was slightly higher than expected due to additional Pupil Premium numbers.

#### Resolved

Forum noted the report

### **14. Update on School Budget Position**

Sue Ashley informed the Forum on the indicative school balances for March 2018 and 2019, which are reducing. The number of schools with expected deficit balances in future years continue to rise. Work is ongoing in schools to review projections and ensure plans are financially sustainable. The projections used do not take account of the effect of the National Funding Formula in future years.

147 pupils were identified in the summer term to transfer to other Schools from Kingsway in September. Receiving schools will receive pupil led funding for these pupils. For those schools who have accepted pupils since September these will be included in the October census and funded from the start of the next financial year.

#### Resolved

Forum noted the report

### **15. ESG Update**

Shaun Allen informed the Forum of the changes to the former Education Services Grant (ESG) and highlighted the services covered by this grant. The grant was removed from April 2017 and replaced by a transitional amount to August 2017 and a block of funding within DSG. In addition a further amount was de-delegated by maintained schools for part year costs from September. In 2018-19 the de-delegation from maintained school would increase to £500k.

#### Resolved

Forum noted the report and referred it to the report to the Funding Working Party for decisions in respect of the 2018-19 funding.

## **16. School Funding Operational Guidance**

Andrew Roberts summarised the school funding guidance which sets out the framework for budgets in the following year.

### Resolved

Forum noted the report and referred the contents to the Formula Working Group

## **17. Workplan and Dates of Future Meetings**

The workplan was provided for information.

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

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2017 (additional meeting)**

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2018

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2018

## **18. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.