

## CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **SCHOOLS FORUM** held at Room 15, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Monday, 23 June 2014

### PRESENT

(Chairman)  
(Vice-Chairman)

|                         |                          |   |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| School Members:         | David Brandon-Bravo      | Headteacher, Parkfields Middle School                 |
|                         | Paul Burrett             | Headteacher, Studham CofE Lower School and Pre-School |
|                         | Shirley-Anne Crosbie OBE | Headteacher, The Chiltern School                      |
|                         | Angie Hardy              | Headteacher, Clipstone Brook Lower School             |
|                         | Richard Holland          | Governor, Harlington Upper School                     |
|                         | Sue Howley MBE           | Governor, Greenleas Lower School                      |
|                         | Sharon Ingham            | Headteacher, Hadrian Academy                          |
|                         | Jim Parker               | Headteacher, Manshead Upper School                    |
|                         | John Street              | Academy Middle School Representative                  |
|                         | Stephen Tiktin           | Governor, Beaudesert Lower School                     |
| Non-School Members:     | Mr M Foster              | Trade Union representative                            |
| Observer:               | Cllr M AG Versallion     | Executive Member for Children's Services              |
| Apologies for Absence:  | James Davis              |   |
|                         | Mrs E Grant              |   |
|                         | Caroll Leggatt           |   |
|                         | Mrs M Morris             |   |
|                         | Mrs S Mortimer           |   |
|                         | Sarah Stevens            |   |
|                         | Rob Watson               |   |
| Officers in Attendance: | Mrs M Clampitt           | Committee Services Officer                            |
|                         | Ms D Hill                | Senior Finance Manager - Children's Services          |
|                         | Miss H Redding           | Assistant Director School Improvement                 |

**CBSF/14/1 Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman for 2014/15**

The Forum were invited to make nominations for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Central Bedfordshire Schools Forum.

Jim Parker was the only candidate nominated and seconded. He was therefore appointed Chairman.

Richard Holland was the only candidate nominated and seconded. He was therefore appointed Vice-Chairman.

**RESOLVED**

**1. that Jim Parker be elected Chairman of the Central Bedfordshire Schools Forum 2014/15.**

**2. that Richard Holland be elected Vice-Chairman of the Central Bedfordshire Schools Forum 2014/15.**

**CBSF/14/2. Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman reminded the Forum that the March meeting had been postponed as all of the business had been for noting.

The Chairman welcomed Colin Anderson from the EFA who would be observing the meeting.

The Chairman thanked Richard Holland for his work as Chairman for the previous two years.

The Forum requested that a letter of thanks be sent to Carol Leggatt, PVI Early Years Providers Representative, who was retiring at the end of the school year, for all of her work and involvement with the Forum.

**CBSF/14/3. Members' Interests**

(a) **Personal Interests:-**

None.

(b) **Personal and Prejudicial Interests:-**

None.

**CBSF/14/4. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising****RESOLVED**

**That the minutes of the meeting of the Central Bedfordshire Schools Forum held on 20 January 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.**

**CBSF/14/5. Report on Activity during 2013 of Early Years Reference Group**

The Forum received a report which provided an update on the activity of the Early Years Reference Group.

The Head of Child Poverty and Early Intervention provided the Forum with an overview of the work carried out by the Early Years Reference Group over the past year. In particular the following areas were highlighted:

- Biggest 2 year old initiative
  - Ensuring the original target of 20% (449) places for the most deprived 2 year olds from September 2013;
  - From September 2014, this will be 40% (889) places
  - Providing the places was not the difficulty but rather finding children to use the places
  - Summer 2014 approximately high 300s for places taken up
  - 3yr olds to 4yr olds 98%

The Forum noted that there had been no change to the overall funding formula however minor changes in the funding level had been noted during 2013. There was a one off payment of an additional 10p per child/hour in the base rate paid, due to available carry forward. It was noted that the formula had remained static since its introduction.

From 2014/15 it is proposed that an additional 5p per child/hour, which the Early Years Reference Group considered at its March meeting. In addition an additional payment of 20p per child/hour will be considered for Social Deprivation raising the payment in those areas to 40p per child/hour. A table showing the new rates was set out in paragraph 6 of the report.

There were three levels of funding available for social deprivation. The funding was based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) using January 2013 data and was distributed based on the child's level of deprivation using their postcode.

- 40p per hour for the 0-30% most disadvantaged (increased by 20p from 2014/15)

- 15p per hour for 31-60% disadvantaged (increased by 5p from 2014/15)
- 0p per hour for the remaining 61-100%

The quality factor applies to PVI's only and is at three levels:

- 20p per hour for qualified teacher (QTS) and early years graduate with early years professional status (EYP)
- 15p per hour to an early years graduate without EYP and
- 10p per hour to a level 4

Nursery and Lower schools receive a substantial Lump Sum which is not paid to PVI's, and Rates costs were also covered for Maintained Settings.

It was noted that Tribal was now used thus reducing the amount of paper. The Support Strategy had been approved for use where intensive support for settings who require improvement or are inadequate.

The EYRG had considered the Government documents called More Great Childcare and More Affordable Childcare. It was noted that no substantive changes required in Central Bedfordshire as localised rules had not been included in the funding framework.

The local agreement had been updated and approved by the EYRG to cover two, three and four year olds. Concerns were expressed at the appropriateness of two year olds in school settings in some circumstances.

The Childcare Funding Panel had met on three occasions during 2013 and approved the following funding:

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Inclusion:                          | £45,436                                     |
| New Childcare Places:               | £ 76,800 (including places for 2 year olds) |
| Quality Improvements:               | £ 44,214                                    |
| Sustainability:                     | £117,611                                    |
| Capital for Two year old Expansion: | £210,000                                    |

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. The activity of the Early Years Reference Group be noted.**
- 2. The use of Contingency to increase the base rate be agreed in principle.**

### **CBSF/14/6. School Specific Contingency Budget**

The Forum considered a report which provided an update on the use of the School Contingency Budgets to 2013/14, which had been split into three

notional blocks: Schools, High Needs and Early Years with each block holding its own contingency budget.

#### Schools Contingency

It was agreed at the Schools Forum meeting of the 20 January 2014 (minute CBSF/13/23 refers) £500k of the 2013/14 balance would be added to the Individual Schools Budgets (ISB) for 2014/15 and redistributed to all schools via the pupil's basic entitlement (AWPU).

The balance had been earmarked and carried forward to 2014/15.

#### High Needs Contingency

It was agreed at the Schools Forum meeting of the 20 January 2014 (CBSF/13/21 refers) that the High Needs Contingency budget would be renamed Outreach Service and be reported as part of the annual report for Use of Centrally Retained Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

The balance had been earmarked and carried forward to 2014/15.

#### Early Years Contingency

The Early Years Contingency budget has been set aside to fund the headcount adjustment that is allowable within the regulations.

The balance had been earmarked and carried forward to 2014/15.

### **RESOLVED**

**That the School Specific Contingency Budget spend for the financial year 2013/14 be noted.**

#### **CBSF/14/7. Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)**

The Forum considered a report which provided an update on the 2013/14 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and Growth Fund outturn, the 2014/15 DSG allocation and the 2015/16 funding consultation.

From 2013/14, the DSG would be split into three notional blocks: Early Year, High Needs and Schools.

The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations defines the local authority education budgets for the 2013/14 financial year only. The

Regulators provided simplified local formulae, greater delegation to schools and new arrangements for funding pupils with high needs.

The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) was set at negative 1.5% **per pupil** For 2013/14 and 2014/15.

It was noted that the Chief Finance Officer (CFO), annually signed two statements; the Actual deployment (outturn) and the Budget Allocation of the DSG, which confirmed it had been fully deployed in support of the School's Budget in accordance with the condition of the grant and the School Finance Regulations.

### **DSG Outturn 2013/14**

The Schools Block is based on a per pupil unit of funding of £4,144.47 multiplied by 34,747 pupils as reported on the October 2012 census.

The Early Years Block is based on a unit of funding of £3,979.80 multiplied by 2,421 full time equivalent number of pupils as reported on the January 2013 census. In April 2014, the block was updated for 7/12ths of the January 2014 pupil numbers to cover the period September 2013 to March 2014.

The High Needs Block is a single block for high needs pupils/student age 0 – 24. For 2013/14 the block is split into two parts, pre-16 and post-16 (ages 16-24). The Forum noted that since August 2013, the post-16 funding has combined three previous budgets: SEN block grant, specialist placements funding and the cost of high needs student in Further Education (FE).

The distribution of the 2013/14 DSG based on the 47 Academy conversions at March 2014 was £178,842 (£78,632 went to Academies). Direct payments to Academies included Early Years = £267k and High Needs = £2.978k. Paragraph 11 of the report provided a breakdown of the centrally retained DSG of £16.2m.

The DSG outturn for 2013/14 was £13.979m with an in-year underspend of £2.2m. £1.665m has been allocated to School's individual budgets for 2014.15. The balance of £1.4m had yet to be allocated.

A technical sub group would be set up to deal with High Needs Funding.

### **Growth Fund Outturn 2013/14**

The Growth Fund is for significant pre-16 growth in schools. Funds are available to both maintained schools and academies. Where a school has elected to expand they are not eligible for the Growth Fund.

The amount for 2013/14 was set at £800k and has been overspent by £217,831. The Forum approved an increase to the budget of £200k making the total Fund £1m for 2014/15.

### **2014/15 DSG Budget Allocation**

The final DSG for 2014/15 is £182.388m. This is based on:

- Schools Block: £145.460m
- Early Years: £12.116m
- High Needs: £24.812m

The above amounts included payments directly to Academies of £83.832m, Early Years of £677k and High Needs of £3,272m.

Paragraph 26 of the report provided a breakdown of the centrally retained DSG of £18.3m for 2014/15.

### **Fair Schools Funding in 2015/16**

The Forum noted that in March 2014 the Department for Education (DfE) launched a consultation on Fair Schools Funding in 2015/16. The DfE proposed to allocate an additional £350m and increase the per pupil budgets for the least funded local authorities. It was noted that no local authority would receive less funding as a result of this proposal.

The funding will be allocated based on minimum funding levels that a local authority should attract for its pupils. If the local authority falls below the level then their budget will be increased to meet those levels.

Paragraph 29 of the report provided an overview of the indicative minimum funding levels for each factor and for comparison Central Bedfordshire's 2014/15 Funding levels. The indicative allocation for Central Bedfordshire is £3.8m but is subject to consultation responses and updating using 2014/15 data.

The Technical Sub Group had met on 8 April and provided a response to the consultation document. Minutes were attached to the report. The Technical Sub Group were thanked for their time.

### **RESOLVED**

- 1. That the 2013/14 DSG Outturn be noted.**
- 2. That the 2013/14 Growth Fund outturn be noted**
- 3. That the update on the 2014/15 DSG allocations be noted.**
- 4. That the 2015/16 consultation be noted.**

The Forum received and considered a report which provided the spend from the Schools Forum Budget for 2013/14.

The Senior Finance Officer confirmed that at the 31 March 2014 the remaining balance for the year was £1,444. It was noted that the unspent budget would be carried forward to the next year.

Members of the Forum were reminded that they could submit travel claims for attending the Forum meetings.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the School Forum spend for the financial year 2013/14 be noted.**

### **CBSF/14/9. Schools Forum Membership Review**

The Forum considered a report which provided detailed the proposed changes to the composition of the Schools Forum from 1 September 2014.

The Forum noted that the number of maintained schools converting to academies since 2012 were as follows:

Lower Schools: 14 since 2012  
Middle Schools: 7 since 2012  
Upper/Secondary: 1 since 2012

It was requested that the Lower School Academy representation be increased from 1 to 3 members.

It was requested that the Middle School Academy representation be increased from 1 to 2 members.

The Forum inquired about the vacancies which currently remained in the membership. It was noted that whilst requests for volunteers had been made not volunteers had been received except from Academy representatives who were not eligible for the relevant vacancies.

The Forum agreed that the Chairman, the Senior Finance Officer and the Committee Services Officer would write for volunteers to fill the vacancies for a period of 1 year until the elections in 2015.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the Schools Forum Membership Interim Review be implemented with effect from 1 September 2014 as set out in paragraph 15 of the report.**

**CBSF/14/10. Letter from Chairman to EFA - Funding Lag**

The Forum received an update from the former Chairman of the Schools Forum, Mr Holland, who had written to the EFA regarding the Funding Lag for Academies. A draft letter had been sent to Forum members, for comment, prior to submission to the EFA.

The EFA wrote and confirmed that the information in the letter was correct and have subsequently been in correspondence with the school stated in the letter.

It was noted that schools can liaise between themselves for the transfer of pupil premium if students move between schools. This followed a debate by the Schools Forum on how to deal with the funding lag. (Minute No. CBSF/13/3 refers) and there was a subsequent clarification in Minute No. CBSF/13/12 as follows:

**Age Range change Schools**

A query was raised regarding the pupil premium for those schools taking on Year 5 students from September. The Senior Finance Officer explained that if the pupil was already in the school in Year 4 then their funding would remain with the school. However, if the pupil was at another school in Year 4 then their pupil premium would not transfer unless there was a local agreement between the two schools for the funds to be transferred. The Local Authority cannot provide the funds to the new school without agreement.

The Forum noted that the EFA were unlikely to change the Policy.

**RESOLVED**

**That the update be noted.**

**CBSF/14/11. Funding Allocations 15/16 Schools Block and High Needs Technical Sub Group**

The Forum received a request from the Senior Finance Officer to note two dates in their diaries for Schools Block Technical Sub group to meet. The dates are

9 September from 2pm – 5pm at Priory House

And

23 September from 9.30 – 12.30 at Priory House

It was noted that the modelling for the 2015/16 funding allocations would be considered at the 9 September meeting. In addition the following items would be considered:

Growth Fund & ICS Criteria  
Disapplication of Regulations to take account of age range changing  
DACI data  
Early Years Formula Review  
Outcome from 15/16 consultation re additional funding

The Technical Sub group would finalise the modelling at 23 September meeting.

**CBSF/14/12. Future meeting dates**

The future meeting dates for the 2014/15 municipal year are as follows:

15 September 2014 – 6.00pm – Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford  
24 November 2014 – 9.00am – Watling House, High Street North, Dunstable  
26 January 2015 – 9.00am – Watling House, High Street North, Dunstable  
09 March 2015 – 6.00pm – Priory House, High Street North, Dunstable

(Note: The meeting commenced at 6.00 p.m. and concluded at 7.30 p.m.)

Chairman .....

Dated ..... ..