

## CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **SCHOOLS FORUM** held at Committee Room 2, Watling House, High Street North, Dunstable on Monday, 26 January 2015

### PRESENT

Jim Parker (Chairman)  
Richard Holland (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  
Sue Howley MBE Governor, Greenleas Lower School  
Sharon Ingham Headteacher, Hadrian Academy  
John Street Academy Middle School Representative

Non-School Members: Mr M Foster Trade Union representative  
Mrs S Mortimer Post-16 Education Representative

Observer: Cllr M AG Versallion Executive Member for Children's Services

Apologies for Absence: James Davis  
Mrs M Morris  
Stephen Tiktin  
Rob Watson

Substitutes:

Members in Attendance: Cllrs ,

Officers in Attendance: Mrs M Clampitt Committee Services Officer  
Mrs S Harrison Director of Children's Services  
Ms D Hill Senior Finance Manager - Children's Services  
Miss H Redding Assistant Director School Improvement  
Mrs S Tyler Head of Child Poverty and Early Intervention  
Mr D Waller Policy & Implementation Manager, Human Resources

**CBSF/14/20. Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the first Schools Forum meeting of 2015.

In addition, the Chairman welcomed Sue Harrison, Director of Children's Services and Sarah Mortimer, Post-16 Education Representative to the meeting.

The Chairman advised that he would be varying the order of business and would take items 9 and 7 before considering the remainder of the agenda in its original order.

**CBSF/14/21. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising****RESOLVED**

**That the minutes of the meeting of the Central Bedfordshire Schools Forum held on 15 September 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.**

**CBSF/14/22. Members' Interests****(a) Personal Interests:-**

None.

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

None.

**CBSF/14/23. The Academy of Central Bedfordshire (ACB)**

The Forum received a report seeking to secure the future viability of the Academy of Central Bedfordshire (ACB) from the Academy's Governing Body.

The Forum noted that the Academy had launched successfully and had improved the results for students, attending the ACB. It was noted that both Ofsted and HMI had praised the arrangements and had suggested that other Authorities visit to see how it operated and see the strength of partnership between the Academy, the Council and schools.

In 2013/14 there had been 79 Group 1 students at risk of permanent exclusion or permanently excluded who accessed a full time place at the Academy, which is a rise from those who previously had accessed the Pupil Referral Unit on which the original commission was based. Schools had approached the ACB and expressed an interest of commissioning full time

rather than part time Group 2 places for students who may struggle with the mainstream school and needed an alternative curriculum.

In the proposals put forward transportation costs were not included in the funding requests as transport is not currently funded by DSG. Paragraphs 24 – 26 of the report provided details of the extra funding requested. The total amount would be £383,150.

The Assistant Director, School Improvement confirmed to the Forum that this situation had been highlighted during last year's discussions. It was further noted that the funding was now similar to Special Schools funding of £10k per pupil with a top up. The additional request has been calculated using the same mechanisms as the calculation used for special schools.

It was further noted that the governance arrangements were very thorough with both middle and upper school representatives responsible for the outcomes. It was noted that some students moved to Oak Bank due to SEN requirements if necessary.

#### **AGREED**

- 1. That the proposed recalculated rate of top up funding for Group 1 and Group 2 students at the Academy of Central Bedfordshire that reflect the need to offer the full broad, balanced and relevant curriculum to both groups of students be noted.**
- 2. That the request for additional allocation from the High Needs Block as proposed of £384,539 in order to ensure transparency and certainty of the revenue funding for The Academy of Central Bedfordshire be supported.**
- 3. That a review of the provision of transport to ensure cost effective, efficient transport arrangements for both Group 1 and Group 2 students and meets with the Council's legal obligations be supported.**

#### **CBSF/14/24. Trade Union and Professional Associations**

The Forum considered a report which sought approval for the continuation of funding for facilities release time for Trade Unions and Professional Association. This would be through the de-delegation (where appropriate) for maintained Primary and Secondary Schools. Nursery and maintained Special Schools would be invoiced directly, subject to their agreement to release funds for this purpose.

The estimated annual cost would be £56,080 (£3.31 per pupil), of which £53,694 is proportioned to the Primary and Secondary phases. The sum was calculated using the actual cost per pupil rate from 2015/16 multiplied by the number of pupils, according to the October 2014 census.

Trade Union membership numbers also affects the overall costs and cost per pupil. The figures used were based on 2014/15 arrangements..

The Policy & Implementation Manager, HR Policy and Development explained that the representatives who had carried out work were working across a number of schools and the fund allows for cover arrangements to be put into place, where the teacher works. The unused fund returns to the DSG.

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. That the de-delegation of Trade Union and Professional Associations funding, at no more than £3.31 per pupil, from the Lower / Primary Phase be agreed.**
- 2. That the de-delegation of Trade Union and Professional Associations funding, at no more than £3.31 per pupil, from the Secondary School Phase be agreed.**

**The voting was unanimous for the Lower / Primary Phase and the Secondary Phase.**

### **CBSF/14/25. Two Year Old Funding**

The Forum considered a report which proposed the transfer of the DSG funds allocated by Government for the extension of Two Year Olds to be allocated and managed by the Early Years Childcare Panel and a proportion to be allocated as capital to support the required extension.

The Head of Child Poverty and Early Intervention Services informed the Forum that in September 2009, Central Bedfordshire introduced the Funding for free provision for two year olds offer of 10 hours a week, term time only, for 57 children from amongst the 15% disadvantaged two year olds.

In November 2011, Central Government announced the extension to the funding to support 20% of the disadvantaged two year olds (500) and increasing from September 2014 to 40% (1000) for 15 hours a week, term time only.

The hours of provision have increased from 22,230 (2009), 292,500 (2013) and 585,000 (September 2014).

Additional funding has been allocated to Local Authorities to support the delivery. Central Bedfordshire Council has been allocated £348,738 capital funding and £261,651 trajectory funding within the DSG. The Early Intervention Grant had been reduced by a greater amount.

The Forum were asked to agree that the trajectory funding grant to be used for capital projects to provide space for the additional children. The Childcare Funding Panel would allocate the funding as previously.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the transfer of authority of £261,651 identified in the DSG notification as Trajectory Funding for the extension of Two Year Old places to the Early Years Childcare Panel, be agreed.**

### **CBSF/14/26. Report on Activity during 2014 of Early Years Reference Group and proposal to increase funding rates**

The Forum received a report which provided an update on the activity of the Early Years Reference Group and asked for agreement to the proposed funding changes.

It was noted that the number of two year olds eligible for free places was 913 names, according to most recent data, however only 647 had taken up the offer as at the Autumn term. It was noted that most parents do not believe that this is an actual offer. A considerable publicity campaign has been launched including: posters, side of bus advertising, back of bus tickets and nationally there has been advertising on the back of Argos receipts. In addition, social media via Twitter and Facebook have been launched by Central Bedfordshire Council's Communications Team.

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
  - Autumn 2014 approximately 647 places taken up

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 was agreed that an additional 5p per child/hour be added to the base rate, which the Early Years Reference Group considered at its June meeting. It was noted that there was a funding difference between Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) groups and Schools, with Schools receiving a lower rate. Schools received an amount for a senior manager post and payments for rates, utilities and administration as part of a school formula,

whilst PVIs received this as a lump sum. The lump sum was deemed inappropriate and removed. It was proposed to increase the hourly rate, from April 2015, by 5p per child per hour for PVIs and 15p per child per hour for schools. The table in paragraph 6 of the report sets out the new rates.

The Group met and approved the local agreement in line with the new national framework for two, three and four year olds with effect from September 2014. It is anticipated that a further changes will be made in September 2015 to the EYFS in relation to Out of School clubs, ratio and qualification requirements and increasing the registration requirement to 3 hours.

The Group had received reports from the Support Strategy which provided intensive support for setting which require improvement. Central Bedfordshire had a higher level of good and outstanding outcomes compared to our neighbours, statistical neighbours and national average.

The Group ran both a two half day Two Year Old Conference in November 2014 and held network meetings for the schools and childminders taking Two Year old children. Subjects covered were: Literacy and Communication (Spring), Fun on a shoestring (summer) Ofsted and Partnerships (autumn).

The Childcare Funding Panel had met on two occasions since March 2014 and approved the following funding:

Inclusion:	£48,296
New Childcare Places:	£46,200 (including places for 2 year olds)
Quality Improvements:	£24,657
Sustainability:	£38,500
Capital for Two year old Expansion:	£447,330

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. That the report on the activity of the Early Years Reference Group be noted.**
- 2. That the increase in base funding rates be agreed.**

### **CBSF/14/27. Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Update and 2015/16 Funding Allocations**

The Forum received a report which provided an update on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and Growth Fund allocation for 2014/15, sought approval of the 2015/16 DSG De-delegation, Growth Fund, Admissions and Schools Forum and to note the 2015/16 funding announcement.

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

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

It was noted that the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) is no longer required to complete two statements annually instead the DfE have now requested one annual outturn statement, confirming that the DSG received by the Authority was fully deployed in support of the school budgets in accordance with the conditions of the School Regulations. In addition it will also include a Non Maintained Special School (NMSS) statement and Fraud cases reported in school statement.

### **DSG Outturn 2014/15**

The Schools Block is based on a per pupil unit of funding of £4,144.47 multiplied by 35,148 pupils as reported on the October 2013 census.

The Early Years Block is based on a unit of funding of £3,979.80 multiplied by 2,587 full time equivalent number of pupils as reported on the January 2014 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 2014/15 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 48 Academy conversions at December 2014 was £183,434 (£83,790 went to Academies ISB). Direct payments to Academies included Early Years = £716k and High Needs = £3.481k. Paragraph 14 of the report provided a breakdown of the centrally retained DSG of £19.3m.

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

### **Growth Fund Outturn 2014/15**

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 2014/15 was set at £1m and has been overspent by £428,470. The Forum noted that any overspend would be the first call against the 2015/16 allocation for Growth Fund. An adjustment is due from the EFA of £248k in respect of a Growth Fund payment to Academies. The adjustment will be included in the 2015/16 Growth Fund.

## **De-delegated Services**

The Forum noted that funding for de-delegation services must be allocated through the formula but can be de-delegated for maintained mainstream primary and secondary schools with School Forum approval. The de-delegation does not apply to academies, special schools, nurseries or PRUs. The decision to de-delegate is made separately by primary and secondary maintained schools. Middle schools are deemed secondary. The decision to de-delegate is made on an annual basis for that school year only.

## **Centrally retained services**

The Forum noted that there were several services for which funding could be centrally retained with the Forum's agreement annually. There are limitations of no new commitments or increases in expenditure from 2014/15 being permitted.

The services which can be retained centrally include:

- Funding for significant pre-16 pupil growth, including new schools set up to meet basic need, whether maintained or academy;
- Funding to enable all schools to meet the infant class size requirement;
- Servicing of schools forum (limitation of no new commitment)

It was noted that budgets could not be increased but any unspent funding could be carried forward to the following year.

## **Contingencies**

The Forum were asked to consider a funding request for de-delegated services in relation to deficits of closing schools which would exceed £1m. The amount requested was £30.82 per pupil per school for school contingencies. The Forum did not support this proposal and instead requested that Officers look for alternatives. The Forum also agreed to be available should an urgent meeting of the Forum be required to agree a proposal.

## **Growth Fund 2015/16**

The Forum noted that the Growth Fund for 2015/16 would be set at £2m. The increase in the amount was agreed in principle at the end of October 2014 to enable the proforma APT return to be submitted to the EFA.

## **Admissions**

The Forum noted that the budget for admissions would remain at the 2014/15 level of £260k. An additional officer was added to the team in 2014/15 to help with the increasing complexity of admission arrangements in Central Bedfordshire as a result of schools changing age ranges and an increased number of own admission authorities.

## **Schools Forum**

The budget for 2015/16 for servicing the schools forum would remain at the 2014/15 level of £3k. The budget allowed for membership in the F40 group, meeting expenses and travel/training costs.

## **2015/16 DSG Budget Allocation**

The Forum noted that on 17 December 2014, the DfE announced the DSG for 2015/16 and that it would remain split into three notional blocks: school, high needs and early years. There will be an additional 1 off uplift to £1.5m from Early Years and and High Needs blocks. The additional £5.2m awarded to the LA is included in the table on paragraph 38.

The final DSG for 2015/16 is £190.087m. This is based on:

- Schools Block: £154.171m – which is based on the SBUF plus a cash transfer to bring non-recoupment academies into the LA's overall budget calculation. The CRC deduction of £7.51 will be made to DSG allocations.
- Early Years: set at the same rate as in 2014/15 of £2,587 x January 2014 census. It will be adjusted in July 2015 and be based on the January 2015 pupil numbers.
- High Needs: £25.395m – 2014/15 has been carried forward plus increase in places for the academic year 2015 to 16 and an additional top up of £47m distributed based on 2 – 19 aged population in each LA.

The above Schools Block included a cash transfer (£341k) for CBC's University Technical College which is based on what the UTC would have received in the 2014/15 formula based on pupil numbers in the October 2014 census and uplifted by the Minimum Funding Level (MFL).

Paragraph 38 of the report provided a breakdown of the indicative DSG Revenue allocation of £190M for 2015/16.

Paragraph 42 provided a list of the single national licence managed by the Department for all state-funded schools in England. The Forum noted that four new licences had been added. It is estimated this will cost £237k.

## **Pupil Premium Grant**

The DfE announced on 11 November 2014 an extra £22.5m funding for the pupil premium. Primary schools will now receive £1,320 (an increase of £20). Schools will continue to receive £1,900 for pupils who are looked after, Secondary schools £935 and Service children £300. The actual allocation will be announced in June 2015.

## **Education Service Grant (ESG)**

The 2015/16 ESG General Funding Rate for LAs is £87 per pupil in mainstreamed schools, £326.25 per pupil in PRUS and £369.75 per place in Special Schools. The October 2014 census will be used to calculate the

General Funding pot for 2015/16. Adjustments will be made quarterly to take into account academies opening since November 2014. The initial allocation is £1.7m.

The total ESG retained duties is £15 x the number of pupils aged 3 to 19 in maintained schools and academies. The indicative amount for 2015/16 is £608k.

There will be no top-up payments for academies in 2015/16. The General Funding Rate for 2015/16.

### **Universal Infant Free School Meal Grant (UIFSM)**

Funding has been available since September 2014 to provide all infant-age pupils with a free school meal. The rate in 2014/15 was £2.30 for each meal. The rate for 2015/16 will be confirmed later in the year.

### **F40 update: 016/17 and beyond schools funding**

The F40 Executive Committee meeting held on 6 December 2014 advised that proposals for the national funding formula for schools had been discussed but final information would not be available until after the General Election in May 2015 and will take into account:

- The total budget that DfE will have to spend, which will be agreed in the next spending review;
- Any funding policy changes that the new government decides to make before allocation of the 2016/17 funding.

### **RESOLVED**

1. **That the update to the 2014/15 DSG allocations be noted.**
2. **That the update to the 2014/15 Growth Fund be noted.**
3. **That the De-delegation of £30.82 for Schools Contingency (i) Primary (ii) Secondary phases be refused.**
4. **That the 2015/16 DSG allocation for Growth Fund to be set at £2m be approved.**
5. **That the 2015/16 DSG allocation for Admissions to be set at £260k be approved.**
6. **That the 2015/16 DSG allocation for Schools Forum to be set at £3k be approved.**
7. **That the Department for Education funding announcement for 2015/16 be noted.**

**CBSF/14/28. Use of centrally retained Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in 2014/2015**

The Forum received a report which outlined how the centrally retained DSG had been used in 2014/15 and identified required use of centrally retained High Needs Block for 2015/16. The Assistant Director, School Improvement highlighted the changes between the 2014/15 budget and the 2015/16 expected spend.

<b>Para.</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Changes</b>
5	Early Years Area Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators – SEND Team	Due to an increase in the number of schools needing support an additional Area SENCO will be hired.
7	Therapies	Therapies could become part of personal budgets. Speech and language therapies will be reviewed this year.
8	Statements / EHC Plans	Change in applications and is demand driven.
10	High Cost Pupils	There is an increasing need for additional psychiatric support. Recruitment is needed in this area. CAMHs will provide the support.
11	Pre-16 out of county placements	The number of children placed out of county have reduced except for severe needs. Two appealed via tribunal and there are independent placements.
16	Virtual School management and delivery	The service now supports students both pre and post 16.
17	Commissioned Services	This services was previously centrally retained but is now commissioned out to school based providers.
18	Hearing Impairment Service	There have been recruitment of: Part-time peripatetic teacher Speech and Language Therapy Asst.
21	Medical Needs Service	The number of hours available to students, where appropriate, have been changed to allow as many as they can cope with. Supply staff are difficult to fund

		Recruitment of additional staff follow regulation changes. Additional changes are anticipated
22	Jigsaw Centre	There has been an increase to the contract price due to demand.
28	DSG contribution to Central Overheads	The number of specialist places commissioned from Special Schools and Specialist Provisions have been increasing and the needs of some children being more complex. A 5 year plan is being developed for special schooling.
29	DSG contribution to Central Overheads	Oak Bank School is considering extending its age range to include pre-16 pupils.
30	DSG contribution to Central Overheads	4 additional places have been commissioned at Manshead School for 2015/16 to reflect secondary status and will be re-commissioning primary provision in 2016 following Streetfield's closure.
32	DSG contribution to Central Overheads	16 places have been commissioned for children with speech and language needs.
36	DSG contribution to Central Overheads	The table shows the financial breakdown and differences between 2014/15 and 2015/16 spend.

The Forum requested that a technical sub group be formed to consider the High Needs paper and convened during the summer term. The following Forum members volunteered:  
Shirley Ann Crosbie OBE  
Sue Howley MBE  
Sarah Mortimer  
Angie Hardy

### **RESOLVED**

- 1. The centrally retained High Needs Block has been used in 2014/2015 to support high needs provision, be noted.**
- 2. That the allocation of High Needs Block for 2015/16 be agreed.**
- 3. That the distribution of unspent DSG in 2014/15 be agreed.**

**4. That the transfer of the balance of unspent High Needs Block DSG to support capital development in specialist provisions in 2015/16.**

**CBSF/14/29. Dedicated School Grant Contingency Budgets**

The Forum considered a report which provided an update on the use of the School Contingency Budgets, as at 31 December 2014, 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 on the 14 October 2013 that the de-delegated contingency budget for 2014/15 would remain at the 2013/14 per pupil level of £5.63.

The balance as at 31 December 2014 for the Schools Contingency is £206,904.

**High Needs Contingency**

It was agreed at the Schools Forum meeting of the 20 January 2014 that unallocated 2014/15 High Needs Block funding would be held in contingencies until funding issues resolved, unspent funding will be redistributed to schools in 2015/16.

The balance as at 31 December 2014 for the High Needs Contingency is £1,284,495.

**Early Years Contingency**

The balance of unspent funds of £117,746 from 2013/14 had been carried forward to 2014/15. The balance, as at 31 December 2014, for the Early Years Contingency is £1,021,371.

**AGREED**

**That the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Contingency spend to 31 December 2014 be noted.**

**CBSF/14/30. Schools Forum Budget**

The Forum received and considered a report which provided an update on the Schools Forum Budget for 2014/15.

The Senior Finance Officer confirmed that at the date of the meeting the remaining balance for the year was £3,316 of which £1,444 had been carried forward from 2013/14. It was noted that any unspent budget would be carried forward to the next year. It was noted that the budget for 2014/15 would be £3,000, with the continued membership of F40.

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

### **RESOLVED**

**That the Schools Forum Budget position statement as at 31 December 2014 be noted.**

#### **CBSF/14/31. Revised Schools Forum Constitution and Terms of Reference**

The Forum received a report which advised of changes to the membership of the Schools Forum as identified in the Schools Revenue Funding 2015 to 2016.

The Forum at its meeting held on 23 June 2014 (minute CBSF/14/9 refers) agreed to increase the Lower and Middle Academy representation. The Forum is now being asked to note that in December 2014, the new regulations required that two additional representatives be added to the membership. An AP representative and a special academy representative. The increase to the Forum membership means that the quorum level must also be increased from 7 to 10.

In addition the new regulations required that additional consultation processes be given to the Forum. The details are attached at Appendix A to these minutes.

### **AGREED**

- 1. That the change of membership to the Schools Forum required by the Department for Education as detailed in their report, titled Schools Revenue Funding 2015 to 2016 be noted.**
- 2. That the additional consultation responsibilities regarding special spaces and AP places commissioning be noted.**
- 3. That the adjustment to the quorum for the Schools Forum from 7 to 10 be noted.**

**CBSF/14/32. Work Programme**

The Schools Forum Forward programme was reviewed and noted. Forward Programme, requests would be emailed to the Committee Clerk for inclusion for the next meeting.

AGREED

That the Outline Forward Programme be noted.

**CBSF/14/33. Future Meeting Dates**

The Forum noted that the dates of future meetings were as follows:

Monday 9 March 2015 at Priory House at 6.00pm (5.30pm for technical questions)

Monday 15 June 2015 at Priory House at 6.00pm (5.30pm for technical questions)

Monday 07 September 2015 at Priory House at 6.00pm (5.30pm for technical questions)

Monday 19 October 2015 at Priory House at 6.00pm (5.30pm for technical questions)

Monday 18 January 2016 venue to be confirmed

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.00 a.m. and concluded at 11.50 a.m.)

Chairman .....

Dated ..... ..