

Bristol Schools' Forum

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 25th September 2019
at 17.00 hrs at City Hall

Present:

Karen Brown	Maintained Secondary Governor Rep, St Mary Redcliffe & Temple
William Brown	Union Rep, Bristol NEU
Simon Eakins	Academy Primary Head Rep, Cathedral Primary
Peter Evans	Special School Head Rep, KnowleDGE
Kris Hristakev	Special Schools Governor Rep, Woodway Federation
Simon Holmes	Nursery Head Rep, St Phillips Marsh Nursery
Sarah Lovell	Academy Secondary Headteacher Rep, Bristol Metropolitan Academy
Kate Matheson	Maintained Primary Governor Rep, St Barnabas Primary
Garry Maher	Diocese of Clifton Rep
Aileen Morrison	Pupil Referral Unit Rep, St Matthias Park
Chris Pring	Maintained Primary Headteacher Rep, Cabot Primary
Carew Reynell	Academy Secondary Governor Rep, Henbury
Cedric Sanguignol	Maintained Primary Governor Rep, Bishop Road Primary
Simon Shaw	Maintained Secondary Head Rep, St Mary Redcliffe & Temple
Christine Townsend	Maintained Primary Governor Rep, Whitehall Primary

In attendance from Bristol City Council:

Liz Cummings	Early Years
Jacqui Jensen	Director: People
Corrina Haskins	Clerk to Schools Forum
Alison Hurley	Director of Education & Skills
Cllr Anna Keen	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
Denise Murray	Director of Finance
Alan Stubbersfield	Interim Director Education Learning & Skills Improvement
Mary Taylor	Business Manager, SEND
Travis Young	Corporate Finance

Observers:

Alderman Brian Price
Kay Palmer-Green
Karen Rose
Jen Smith

	Action
1. Welcome and introductions	
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2. Forum standing business	
a. Apologies for absence	

Apologies for absence were received from David Yorath, Academy Secondary Governor Rep, Cotham School	
b. Quorate The Chair confirmed the meeting was quorate.	
c. Resignations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jamie Barry (Academy Primary Head Rep, Parson Street School);• Lorraine Wright (Academy Primary Head Rep, Elmlea Junior School);• Ruth Pickersgill (Nursery Governor Rep, Rosemary Nursery);• Massimo Bonaddio (Maintained Primary Head, Blaise Primary).	
d. Appointment of New Members None	
e. Notification of Vacancies The Clerk advised of the following Schools Forum Vacancies which would be advertised through the Heads/Governors Bulletins: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One Early Years/Nursery Governor;• Two Primary Academy Heads;• Three Primary Maintained Heads;• Two Primary Academy Governors;• Two Secondary Academy Heads;• One Secondary Academy Governor;	
f. Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interests.	
3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd July 2019	
RESOLVED - that the minutes be confirmed as a correct record.	
Matters Arising The Chair advised that he had received a response in relation to the issue which had been raised at the previous meeting about the Hope School, and would consider this with the Vice-Chairs to see if any further information was required.	CR/SL/CT
4. Presentation on the Role of the Forum	
AS introduced the report and drew attention to the Induction Pack which had been drafted by the Chair for circulation to new members. He suggested that Forum may also wish to consider the self-evaluation toolkits available on the Government website.	
The Chair drew attention to the current list of vacancies and reminded Members that the Forum was involved in serious decisions and it was important for the education community to be engaged in the process. He invited suggestions on how to promote the Forum and recruit	

<p>additional members to the vacant positions.</p> <p>RESOLVED - that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The report on the role of the Forum be noted; (2) The update on current vacancies be noted and suggestions on how to recruit additional members be invited. 	<p>All Members</p>
<p>5. System-wide Transformation of Bristol's Education Provision</p>	
<p>The Director: People, JJ, gave a presentation on proposals for a system-wide transformation of Bristol's Education Provision as follows:</p> <p>Ambition for the 20's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No child with special educational needs or disabilities segregated at school; • Support provided where necessary to close the attainment gap; • The best start in life, gaining the support and skills to thrive and prosper in adulthood; • School engagement and attendance improved, as with the development of young people's life skills; • Improved support for children with Special Educational Needs and Looked After Children; • Improved post 16 offer developed with clear learning, employment and skills pathways <p>Capacity for the 20's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantive director and teams: Deliver the 1 City Plan A strong, listening partner • Focus on inclusive values and SEND: Child at the forefront Needs met seamlessly • Resource to support & to put into schools: Capacity to learn for the 20's Good schools, top quartile <p>The ask for the 20's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make creative use of shared capacity • Partnerships and integrated working • Investments in capacity, consistency & creativity to deliver outcomes • Support EPS and SEND resources to build skills across the system • Be the Best for all Bristol CYP <p>The following comments and questions were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>There was no mention of poverty and Bristol has a big division in terms of some areas of the city having concentrated areas of deprivation. Children living in poverty were ten times more likely to have social workers and this was an additional pressure for schools in these areas and their ability to support families. It was important for all services to be non-judgemental in supporting these families.</i> <p>JJ responded as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there were stark differences in the city and poverty was a particular issue in South Bristol; • there was a significant amount of work being done to try and integrate services such as 	

the police; police community support officers, domestic violence support services; child and adult mental health services and Council officers working together to support families;

- as a result of the additional support for families, the number of children in care had reduced by 100 in a year and there were less children on child protection plans;
- there was still a lack of Government funding and service providers were struggling to keep pace with the level of poverty.

Funding for SEND had reduced in real terms and so how could the challenge of improving services be met?

JJ acknowledged that although the new legislation for SEND was good, it was not backed by Government funding and this was disappointing. She confirmed that the Council received £365k in funding and services would cost £1.4m to deliver.

The Council's vision for transformation of education contained wonderful aspirations, but schools needed actions which could be delivered and funded appropriately.

JJ responded that collaboration was needed between all stakeholders to ensure the plan was developed and delivered. She asked for the support of Schools Forum which would give better leverage in securing additional support.

The Plan needed to prioritise actions and set the cost of delivering the actions.

JJ confirmed that the next step would be to work up the costs associated with delivering the plan, although there were some internal actions that could be done to start delivering on the aspirations.

How was the Council planning to communicate the plan with the wider education community?

JJ introduced the new Director of Education and Skills, Alison Hurley, and confirmed that Alison would be meeting with stakeholders to discuss the plan, following which the plan would be shared more widely.

The plan was not aspirational; it was setting out base expectations.

JJ acknowledged this point, but confirmed that these expectations were not yet achieved and needed to be embedded and owned by all partners.

What had changed from previous plans which would ensure that this time the aspirations would be delivered?

JJ responded that there needed to be mutual responsibility from all stakeholders as the Council could not deliver the plan on its own.

What channels were available for the wider community to be involved, such as parents?

JJ suggested that one option was to analyse complaints from parents to identify key topics.

The views of the most disadvantaged families also needed to be sought and as these people often did not complain, there needed to be other ways of identifying areas of concern.

The view of SEND Coordinators should also be sought via the individual schools.

6. Feedback from Finance Sub Group	
<p>TY reported that the Schools Forum Finance Sub Group had considered different scenarios for how the formula funding to schools would vary according to changes in emphasis to certain funding factors (not taking into account the minimum funding guarantee):</p> <p>Scenario 1: Scale up current formula;</p> <p>Scenario 2: National Funding Formula (NFF) Additional Educational Needs (AEN) priority;</p> <p>Scenario 3: NFF Key Stage 4 priority;</p> <p>Scenario 4: Scale up NFF.</p> <p>The following comments were raised by Sub Group Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a movement towards the NFF tended to favour larger schools, although further modelling was needed to reflect the newly announced 2020/21 restrictions;• Where KS 4 priority increased there was a hit on primary schools especially for schools not part of a multi academy trust where funding differences may be offset;• It was difficult for the Sub Group to favour one scenario as no one scenario would benefit all Bristol schools;• Although the NFF was still in its “soft” phase where LAs had some local discretion over both which of the allowable factors to use, and the unit values of funding each factor awards it was moving toward the “hard” phase where there would be no local discretion;• The DfE had released a consultation on the introduction of minimum per pupil spending at the local level;• The key issues to consider were:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Scenario 1: Would Forum support a change in allocating more money for AEN and less on age weighted pupil units;◦ Scenario 2: How much money on AEN and which indicators should be prioritised?◦ Scenarios 3&4 increased the weight to KS4, would Forum support a move to NFF on this issue?• The Sub-Group also considered the falling numbers in primary schools at the impacts on budgets and suggested that Forum may wish to consider establishing a ‘falling rolls fund’ to support schools where intake reduction was necessary as a result of fewer children within the system in the short term;• 5 Bristol Primary Schools would be in this position in September 2020. <p>It was agreed that it would be useful for an Officer from Place Planning to speak at a future Forum meeting.</p> <p>The Chair reported that the Sub-Group was due to meet again in advance of the November meeting.</p>	AH
7. Dedicated School Grant (DSG) Budget Monitor 2019-20	
TY introduced the report and invited Forum to note the current situation relating to the 2019-20 Budget. In response to a question of clarification, he confirmed that the forecast included the carry forward of £2.632m.	

<p>RESOLVED – that</p> <p>(1) the latest in-year 2019/20 position for the overall DSG be noted; (2) the changes to ESFA DSG funding which include an additional £0.7m in the High Needs block and a reduction of £0.17m for the Early Years block be noted.</p>	
<p>8. Update on DSG 2020-21 with Potential Funding Levels, including consultation on De-delegation</p>	
<p>TY reported that there was emerging detail of the 2020/21 funding settlement at the national level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• national increase into the schools block of around 5%;• an average of 11% extra funding for High Needs (which would be £5.9m for Bristol), but the actual settlement could be as little as 8% (£4.3m for Bristol);• The most significant change was the rules around the funding guarantee which needed to be set at a positive figure of 0.5%-1.84% and was currently set at 0%;• A further change was a restriction to the amount of money that could be transferred between blocks without seeking permission from the Secretary of State;• Officers had made assumptions about the level of funding for Bristol based on the announcement about national funding and the budget would not be set until the actual funding levels had been confirmed;• There was a national increase of £66m for early years which represented a 1.8% increase. Applying this to Bristol would mean an additional £0.7m for 2020/21 based on current funding;• The predictions assumed there were no changes in pupil numbers or characteristics.	
<p>In response to a questions about the High Needs budget, it was clarified that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The accelerated funding of £2.4m was the first call on 2020-21 funding;• The High Needs block allocation 2019/20 in table 1 should read £59.8m and not £53.9m;• The worst case scenario was an increase of 8% funding and the best case was 17%, Bristol was anticipating an 11% increase;• There was a predicted deficit of £2.5m if predicted demand remained at the present levels of £59m;• Going forward, Officers could consider a recovery plan but this would need to align with the High Needs Transformation Programme.	

The following comments were also raised:

- maintained nursery schools were in a funding crisis and many of these were located in the most deprived areas of Bristol. It was important to support early intervention.
- There was a need for clarity about the situation regarding teachers' pay and pensions. TY confirmed that Officers were in the process of finalising the consultation.

RESOLVED – that

- (1) the potential 2020/21 indicative funding levels be noted;
(2) the proposed restrictions relating to the DSG be noted;
(3) a decision be made at the November Schools Forum in relation to de-delegation, following

the Local Authority consultation with schools.	
9. Schools Funding Formula Considerations	
This item was discussed under minute number 6 above.	
10. Financial Transparency Consultation and Scheme for Financing Schools	
<p>TY introduced the report which set out the consultation document on Financial Transparency and advised that the consultation period was due to close on 30 September. He confirmed that, although a previous Forum meeting had agreed that the Scheme for Financing Schools should be updated, as this consultation document would impact on the scheme, there would be a delay in bringing the updated scheme back to Forum. He drew attention to the main proposals in the document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The public naming of Local Authorities that did not comply with deadlines for completing assurance returns and financial collections; • Requiring maintained schools to publish local 3-year budget forecasts. <p>The following comments were raised by Forum Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should schools that do not return compliance documents by the requested date be publically named? DM confirmed that there was no proposal to do so, but that schools often needed chasing to submit the information. • Was there any need for LA maintained schools to publish annually on their websites their latest Consistent Financial Reporting statement of income, expenditure and balances as set out in proposal 8 when this information was already available on the local authority website? DM responded that officers would look into this suggestion. <p>RESOLVED - that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) the response to the Financial Transparency consultation be noted and officers consider whether to comment further on proposal 8; (2) the draft timetable for refreshing the Scheme for Financing Schools be noted. 	GB
11. High Needs Block	
<p>AS introduced the report. In relation to Sensory Provision, he clarified that the proposal in 5.4.2 to replace 1:1 sessions did not mean all sessions and they would still be used when appropriate.</p> <p>In response to a question about whether expenditure on other SEND Providers would decrease as a result of the transformation programme, AS confirmed that it was hoped that this would be achieved by investment to support SENCOs.</p> <p>In response to a further question about the other Alternative Provision listed in the table in the report, TY undertook to report back on this detail. *see below</p> <p>RESOLVED – that</p>	

<p>(1) the period 4 2019/2020 High Needs Block forecast be noted; (2) the new timescales for the Sensory Support Service and Top Up Funding redesign be noted; (3) the information provided on statutory assessment process for Education, Health and Care plans and the plan of action to improve performance be noted.</p>	
12. Early Years DSG Funding	
<p>The Chair reminded Forum Members that the Forum meeting of 15th May had agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the £0.390m DSG surplus should remain in the Early Years Block;• the use of the surplus be the subject of a full report to enable an informed view on issues raised.	
<p>Liz Cummings introduced the report and outlined the officer's proposals. She confirmed that the proposals had been supported by the Early Years Partnership.</p>	
<p>In response to a question on how the proposals would help engage hard to reach families in accessing free education for two year olds, which was an issue raised at the May meeting, LC confirmed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• since the extended offer was introduced for 3-4 year olds, a number of providers were filling places with this age group which resulted in less places being available for 2 year olds;• that the lump sum would give an explicit message to providers to make places available to 2 year olds and would encourage word of mouth amongst families;• the money would also be used to ensure that providers with places for two year olds in deprived areas would remain open;• the funding would allow practitioners to be upskilled.	
<p>Forum Members made the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• there was a problem with low take up in the areas of highest deprivation;• it was not an easy process for people to access their entitlement of places for 2 year olds.	
<p>Members of the Forum agreed with the proposals set out in the report.</p>	
<p>RESOLVED – that:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the details of the forecast position for 2019/20 be noted; and• the proposal to supplement funding for 2 years olds accessing the free early education entitlement, be agreed as set out below:• £240k support for settings to maintain and improve the quality of the early education entitlement for eligible two year olds, by enabling staff to access professional development opportunities;• A £135k funding subsidy for settings that only take eligible two year olds in areas of disadvantage where the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment indicates that there is a need for places to fulfil statutory requirements. This is in recognition of the current hourly rate	

for eligible two year olds and the lack of any identifiable economies of scale. Settings falling into this category will be invited to submit a business case requesting funding which will be reviewed and assessed by both the LA and the Bristol Early Years Partnership.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• £15k for resources, including e-learning, to relaunch Five to Thrive in early years settings and strengthen practitioner awareness of early attachment and emotional development in the earliest years	
13. Any Other Business	
There was no other business.	

The meeting closed at 7.15pm

*Following the meeting, the below information was included in relation to other AP providers:

Account (T)	p4 forecast
Hospital Provision	2,155,000
Early Intervention Bases	450,000
AP Block	675,230
AP Spot	943,480
TOTAL Forecast	4,223,710