

TRAFFORD BOROUGH MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM 9th NOVEMBER 2021

DAY/DATE/TIME	VENUE
TUESDAY 9 th NOVEMBER 2021 MAIN MEETING: 2PM	Virtual via Microsoft Teams
Christine Clarkson	Clerk to Schools Forum 0161 912 4404 christine.clarkson@trafford.gov.uk
FORUM MEMBER ATTENDEES:	
Maintained Primary Headteacher Representatives (9) of which 7 attended:	
Clive Searle	Worthington Primary
Catherine Downing	Stamford Park Junior
Wayne Hitchcock	St Mary's Primary (Sale)
Sharon Hudson	Bowdon CE Primary
Alison Kelly	Moorlands Primary
Debbie Vrlec	Victoria Park Infant
Jo Patterson	Navigation Primary
Primary Academy Headteacher Representatives (2) of which 1 attended:	
Judith Stott (CHAIR)	Old Trafford Community Academy
Maintained Primary Governor Representatives (3) of which 1 attended:	
Karen Smyth	Urmston Primary
Maintained Secondary Headteacher Representatives (3) of which 2 attended:	
Kate Worsley	Blessed Thomas Holford
Nicola Doward (VICE – CHAIR)	Stretford High
Academy Secondary Headteacher Representatives (7) of which 3 attended:	
Louise Simpson	Altrincham Girls Grammar School
Joanne Daley	Urmston Grammar
Gemma Tunstall	Wellington Academy
Maintained Special School Headteacher Representative (1) of which 1 attended:	
Sally Judge	Delamere
Academy Special School Headteacher Representative (1) of which 1 attended:	
Bev Owens	Pictor Academy
Trafford Alternative Education Provision Headteacher Representative (1) of which 1 attended:	
Lynda Thompson	TAEP
Non School Members (7) of which 2 attended:	
Scott Caplan	NEU
Dee McKenzie	Early Years PVI Sector

Total members = 34
 Quorum = 14 (40%)
 Number in attendance = 19

OBSERVERS ATTENDEES:	
Kaye Gallimore	NEU
Sally Judge	

TMBC OFFICER ATTENDEES:	
Anne-Marie Steadman	Senior Accountant – Childrens’
Amy Nield	Finance Manager – Childrens’
Michelle Perry	Senior Accountant – Childrens’
Helen Zammit	Strategic Finance Manager
Councillor Karina Carter	Executive Member Children’s Services
Karen Samples	Director Education, Standards, Quality & Performance
Vicky Davidson	HR Consultant
Christine Clarkson	CLERK

APOLOGIES	
Graeme Bentley	Director of Finance
Stephanie Gill	Altrincham Girls Grammar School
Councillor Hynes	Trafford Council
Emma Goodlet	Trafford College
Kate Sturman	Trafford HR
Linda Davidson	Holy Family Primary
Danielle Taylor	Altrincham College
Tom Johnson	Seymour Park Primary
Louise Hosson	Broomwood Primary

1. WELCOME ALL AND APOLOGIES:

The Chair welcomed everyone and requested that those in attendance used the chat function to make comments to enable the meeting to proceed effectively.

The above apologies for absence were accepted.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 22nd June 2021

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4. FORUM MEMBERSHIP

Anne-Marie presented a paper showing the current Forum membership. She highlighted that there was a vacancy for a Secondary Academy member and a number of vacancies for substitutes. Some officers were due for re-election (highlighted in yellow); these were

asked to email the clerk indicating if they were willing to continue. Nicola Doward agreed to take the vacancy for the Secondary Academy member to the next Secondary Academy Heads meeting to seek a representative.

A review of Forum membership has been undertaken to ensure representation is broadly in line with the split between academy and mainstream schools. This indicated there was potentially a requirement for another academy representative but this would be addressed for the next academic year.

Action – those members whose term of office is due to expire email the Clerk with an indication of their intention to continue as a member of Forum.

5. HIGH NEEDS BLOCK SUB-GROUP 12TH OCTOBER MINUTES.

Karen Samples outlined the current pressures on the High Needs Block. There is an expected shortfall in funding for High Needs in 2021-22 from that received through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) by around £2m. This is due to increasing numbers of children presenting with special needs, Trafford's special schools being full and the need for Out Of Borough placements which are often costly. Sally Smith has been looking at options to increase capacity within the Borough

Karen presented a paper outlining options being examined to address these pressures. These include more intervention support in Early Help, reviewing the SEND support offer to try to keep children in mainstream schools, increasing capacity in special schools and a review of bandings. These will take time to effect and will be subject to consultation and approval.

In the meantime it is considered necessary to seek approval from Forum to transfer 0.5% from the Schools Block DSG to the High Needs Block. This is permitted under the School Finance Regulations and equates to around £0.9m.

Nicola Doward responded to say she agreed with the need to invest in the service and supported the proposal. Karen Smyth asked what the timescales on the options/ proposals were. Karen Samples responded that some were 'quick wins' with others requiring more consultation and Council member approval. It was agreed that an updated paper with timescales would be presented to the next Forum in January.

The Chair raised the issue of working with Health and Adult Social Care to ensure they were contributing funding where appropriate especially in post 16 children/ adults. Karen Samples confirmed this was taking place.

**Decision – Members agreed the transfer of 0.5% (around £0.9m) from the schools Block to the High Needs Block in 2022-23.
For – 19, Against – 0, Abstentions – 0.**

Action - An updated options report with timescales be provided to the January Forum.

Michelle Perry went on to highlight some other items of note from the minutes from the High Needs Block Group meetings on 12th July 2021 and 20th September 2021.

6. MAINSTREAM SUB GROUP 21ST OCTOBER UPDATE.

Michelle Perry presented the minutes of the Mainstream Sub-Group. This had considered the 2022/23 provisional school budget shares based on the National Funding Formula (NFF) with the minimum funding guarantee being set at 2%. The provisional budgets are based on October 2020 census and will be updated mid-December for October 2021 pupil census data. It was noted that Basic entitlement had been increased in 2021/22 to redistribute the balance of the SB allocation after the NFF had been applied. The group had discussed options if there was to be a surplus from the 2022/23 allocation after the NFF and updated October 2021 pupil census data had been applied. It had agreed to meet again in January to discuss the updated position.

Michelle highlighted to forum that the schools budget position for 2022/23 will need to be updated for the 0.5% transfer agreed in Item 5.

The Group had discussed the Per Pupil Redistribution Pot (PPRP) for 22/23 and agreed that its purpose had been taken over by the MFL. They are proposing to Forum that the de-delegated amount for this be 1p in 2022/23 to retain the pot in principle if it were needed in the future.

Ann- Marie requested a change in the wording for the Redundancy Pot criteria to clarify that redundancies due to efficiencies at schools can be funded from this.

Wayne Hutchinson asked if the 0.5% transfer will affect schools on the MFG and MFL. Michelle confirmed that it may and the LA will consult with the DfE how to affect this transfer to ensure a fair and equitable 'contribution' from all schools to the transfer.

**Decision - Forum agree that the PPRP be ended in 22/23 and 1p per pupil de-delegated rate be used in 22/23 to keep the de-delegated arrangement.
For – 19, Against – 0, Abstentions – 0.**

Decision – Forum ratified the change to the Redundancy Pot criteria, to reflect that redundancies due to efficiencies can be funded from the de-delegated redundancy pot. For - 19, Against - 0, Abstentions – 0.

7. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (DSG) 21/22 AND 22/23.

Amy Nield presented the details of the current position on the DSG for 2021/22 and 2022/23.

As at Period 6 the DSG was showing a £1.9m overspend (details as below) with the main area of overspend on the High Needs Block.

Table 1 : P6 budget monitoring	DSG Budget 2021/22	Expected Outturn 2021/22	Difference 2021/22
	£m	£m	£m
Schools Block (SB)	187.120	187.068	(0.052)
Central Schools Services Block (CSSB)	1.553	1.448	(0.105)
High Needs Block (HNB)	32.619	34.689	2.070
Early Years Block (EYB)	18.754	18.754	0
Total	240.046	241.959	1.913

The LA has received provisional allocations of DSG for 2022/23; these will be updated later in the year for changes in pupil data.

Table 2 – Provisional DSG Allocations 2022/23	Schools Block £m	Central Schools Services Block £m	High Needs Block £m	Early Years Block £m	Total £m
DSG Grant 2022/23	191.093*	1.506	35.174	18.754	246.527
DSG Grant 2021/22	187.120	1.553	32.619	18.754	240.046
Difference	3.973	(0.047)	2.555	0	6.481

This shows an overall increase in grant of £6.4m with increase in schools and High Needs Block and a reduction in the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB).

The increase in the Schools Block is due to an increase in the Basic per pupil funding factors by 3%, every school to receive an increase in pupil led funding by 2% over 2021/22 and an increase in the minimum funding levels.

The report also outlined the factor values to be used in the National Funding Formula (NFF) for 2022/23, details of spend on the CSSB and further details of the funding and pressures on the High Needs Block. Pressures continue in this area and, although additional funding is welcome, it will not be sufficient to fund the increasing costs in this area. A projection of the High Needs Block funding and pressures estimates that there will be deficit of over £2m at the end of 2021/22 rising to around £4.6m by 2024/25.

Table 6 : High Needs Reserve	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m
Usable reserves brought forward	(0.181)	(2.250)	(3.253)	(4.070)
Movements in year	(2.069)	(1.003)	(0.817)	(0.578)
Usable reserves remaining	(2.250)	(3.253)	(4.070)	(4.648)

Deficits on DSG must be carried forward and funded from future DSG allocations unless the Secretary of State authorises the Authority not to do this. The LA is working with the High Needs Sub Group on identifying options to realise saving to address these pressures.

Amy also updated on the NFF. There is now a clear intention from the DfE to move from local to national formula funding.

Karen Smyth asked what the Primary Targeted Fund was and why it is not fully utilised. Amy responded that it is for schools in educational difficulties and only used on a small number of occasions. The Chair suggested a Briefing Paper be prepared for next Forum outlining the purpose of the pot, how much has been spent over the past few years with a recommendation of a reasonable balance to keep which can be 'topped up' annually.

**Action – A paper be presented to the January Forum on the Primary Targeted Fund.
Action – the CSSB spend be brought back to January Forum for agreement.**

8. DE-DELEGATION.

The Chair declared an interest in this item. Amy Nield presented a report outlining the items for de-delegation for 22/21. This is based on current services de-delegated – approval is currently sought in principle to the items to be de-delegated with the rates to be presented to January Forum. The report included a letter from the Unions outlining the need for de-delegation of monies for union duties. Maintained schools only to vote on this item.

Decision – the items to be de-delegated are agreed, rates to be presented to January Forum. For - 9, against – 0, Abstentions – 0.

9. AMALGAMATED LUMP SUM.

The Schools operational guidance for 2022/23 provides information on the lump sum applicable to amalgamated schools. In October 2018 Trafford Schools Funding Forum agreed to the councils request to apply to the ESFA for two amalgamated schools to receive additional lump sum protection for a second year at a rate of 60%. This was agreed by the DfE.

In September 2021 the amalgamation of Stamford Park Infant and Junior schools took place. The Forum are therefore asked to consider the amount of second year protection that should be requested for Stamford Park and any schools that amalgamate in the future.

Members suggested 60% be the rate applied and this was voted upon.

Decision – Forum agree the amount of second year protection for amalgamation of schools be at a rate of 60% for all future amalgamations. For – 19, Against – 0, Abstentions – 0.

10. SCHOOLS BLOCK TRANSFER REQUEST.

This was covered and agreed in Item 5.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

DfE Consultation on School Improvement Grant.

Karen Samples informed Forum of a recent DfE consultation to discontinue the School Improvement (SI) Grant and allow schools to de-delegate funding to the LA to fund this function. The LA currently has 2 SI Officers supporting schools. The LA will be drafting a response and encourages as many schools as possible to respond to the consultation which ends on 26th November 2021.

Date of the next Funding Forum meeting:

Tuesday 18th January 2022 2pm – venue to be confirmed nearer the time.