

ST. HELENS COUNCIL
SCHOOLS FORUM

Draft minutes of the Meeting of the Schools Forum
Held on Thursday 11th January 2018 at 4.30 p.m. at the Town Hall

Members:

Primary School Head Teachers

- *Mrs C. Cropper, St Bartholomew's Catholic Primary
- Ms R. Dean, Federation of St Mary's Infants and Juniors
- Mrs J. Sweeney, Rectory CE Primary
- Mrs C. Gowan, Eccleston Lane Ends Primary
- *Mrs K. Hall, St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary

Secondary School Head Teachers and Representatives

- *Mr A. Rannard, De La Salle
- *Mrs C. Twist, St Cuthbert's Catholic High School

Special School Head Teacher

Mr W. Brookes, Mill Green

Primary School Governors

- *Mr W. Leatherbarrow, Birchley St Mary's Catholic Primary
- Mr R. Ferry, Carr Mill Primary School
- *Mr A. Simpson, Garswood Primary School
- Mrs K Gristock, Oakdene Primary School
- Vacant

Secondary School Governors

- *Mr E Bate, St Augustine of Canterbury Catholic High
- *Mr S Neal, St Cuthbert's Catholic High School

Special School Governor

- *Mr. W. Bradbury, Mill Green School

Nursery School Head Teacher/Governor

Vacant

14-19 Partnership

- *Ms. M. Williams, Carmel College

Union Representative

Mr M Burrows

PVI Early Years Provider Representative

Mrs N. Politis, Portico Day Nursery

Diocesan and Archdiocesan Representative

- *Mr. T. Warren

Academy Representative

- *Mr. S. Hughes, Hope Academy
- *Ms K. Sawe, The Three Saints Academy Trust
- *Mr R. Owens, Rainhill Learning Village Multi Academy Trust
- *Mrs J. Tallant, The Sutton Academy

PRU Representative

Vacant

Elected Member Observer

*Councillor J. Banks

*Denotes Members Present

Also Present: Mr S. Webb, Business Support Manager
Mrs D Gilchrist, Principal Accountant for Schools.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Sweeney, Mrs Dean, Mr Ferry, Mrs Gowan, Mr Burrows and Mrs Gristock.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 23rd November 2017

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Mr Owens requested information relating to the centrally retained element of the Looked After Children Pupil Premium, and what this funding had been spent on. He requested that the Virtual Headteacher is invited to the next meeting of the Forum to discuss.

Mr Leatherbarrow requested that written / verbal advice is provided to the Forum regarding the financial information relating to Looked After Children Pupil Premium.

4. Indicative School Budgets 2018/19

Mr Webb clarified the purpose of the Schools Budget report, and explained the background relating to the implementation of the National Funding Formula.

He explained that the local authority Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) had been calculated by a National Funding Formula, but local authorities would continue to use their local formulae to calculate school budgets. The government have not yet confirmed when school budgets will be calculated using a National Funding Formula. Mr Webb confirmed that the proposed school funding allocations would need to be approved by the Forum and submitted to the Department for Education by 19th January 2018.

Mr Webb informed the Forum that the DSG allocation of £140m for St Helens had been announced, which represented a £6m increase over the 17/18 funding level. The increase related to £1m for the continued implementation of free childcare for working parents, £2.3m relating to an increase in the total number of pupils in St Helens and £2.7m relating to the increase in the national level of the DSG.

Appendix 1a to the report provides a summary of the proposed school funding formula, excluding early years and high needs allocations and including a Minimum Funding Guarantee of +0.5%

Appendix 1b provides a summary of individual school budget allocations including +0.5% MFG.

Appendices 1c and 1d show the school budget allocations with -1.5% MFG.

Previously the MFG had been set nationally at -1.5%, however the regulations now allow some flexibility for local authorities to set the MFG

between -1.5% and +0.5%. Mr Webb explained that there had been a recent consultation with all schools and governing bodies regarding the level of the MFG to be used in school budget allocations. At the last meeting of the Schools Forum the local authority had clarified that their preference was to use a +0.5% MFG which would ensure that all schools would benefit from the additional funding available.

The local authority has received three responses to the consultation, 2 in favour of +0.5% MFG and 1 against.

The local authority recommends +0.5% MFG.

Mr Webb informed the Forum that the Pupil Premium Plus is due to increase in 2018/19 to £2,300. All other Pupil Premium rates remain unchanged.

A Central Services Schools Block (CSSB) has been introduced to fund local authorities for statutory duties which were previously funded from the retained element of the Education Services Grant. Appendix 2 shows the services included.

Mr Webb requested that primary and secondary school members of the Forum decide which services they wish to de-delegate in 2018/19. The delegated / de-delegated services are shown at appendix 3.

Mrs Cropper commented that the de-delegated cost of support for ethnic minorities seemed high compared to the cost of behaviour support services. Mr Webb explained that the de-delegated cost of behaviour support services was only a proportion of the total actual cost of the service which is significantly higher.

The Schools Forum noted the contents of the report and approved the proposed school funding formula with the MFG set at +0.5%.

Mrs Cropper and Mrs Twist confirmed that they would speak with their Headteacher colleagues and make decisions regarding the de-delegation of services by the middle of February, with the decisions ratified at the next meeting of the Schools Forum.

5. Any other business

Mrs Twist asked if there would be an increase in the amount of retained Looked After Children Pupil Premium due to the increase in funding from April 18.

Mr Leatherbarrow confirmed that this would be an item for the next meeting. Mr Webb clarified that the amount of retained funding would be a decision for the local authority and the virtual school Headteacher, rather than the Schools Forum.

Mr Owens asked for clarity on the Central Services Schools Block, and whether or not the cost of exclusions and admissions for academies should be charged here. Mr Webb agreed to look into this.

6. Date and time of next meeting

8th March 2018