

## Schools Forum

### Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 23 September 2019

#### Present:

#### Secondary Sector Headteachers:

**Primary Sector Headteachers:** Mike Cooke, Patricia Adams,

**Primary Sector Governors:** Nichola Davidge, Michael Flanagan

**Special School Headteachers:** Alan Braven

**Special School Governor:**

**Academy Representatives:**, Ian Fenn, Elizabeth Fritchley, Michael Carson, Edward Vitalis

**Pupil Referral Unit Representative:**

**Nursery School Representative:** - Joanne Fenton

**Non-school members:**, Isobel Booter, Antonio De Paola, Councillor Stone, John Morgan

**Council Officers:** Amanda Corcoran (Director of Education), Reena Kohli, (Directorate Financial Lead - Children and Families), Anne Summerfield (Principal Finance Officer – Schools)

**Apologies:** Gillian Houghton, Emma Merva, Cath Baggaley, Helen McAndrew, Saeeda Ishaq

#### **SF/18/25. Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

The Forum received nominations to appoint Ian Fenn to Chair the Forum for the next twelve months, and for Andy Park to be appointed as Vice Chair for the same period. Both nominations were seconded and the Forum voted by acclamation. The Forum unanimously voted to appoint both nominees.

#### **Decision**

To appoint Ian Fenn as Chair of the Forum for twelve months and to appoint Andy Park as Vice Chair for the same period.

#### **SF/18/26. Minutes**

Antonio De Paola and Tony Daly said that they had been incorrectly recorded as absent from the last meeting.

#### **Decision**

To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2019 as a correct record subject to the amendments above.

## **SF/18/27. School Funding Settlement**

The Forum considered a report of the Directorate Finance Lead – Children and Schools which discussed the recently announced three-year School Funding Settlement and an outline of the potential impact on Manchester. The Settlement included funding for pupil growth, inflation, High Needs funding and cash increases for schools that currently receive core funding below the national minimum funding levels. The Forum was asked to note the settlement headlines at national level only, because at the time of the meeting Manchester had not received confirmation of the settlement. This therefore meant that any estimates of grant increases contained within the report were based on the interpretation of recent announcements. Further information would be provided by central government in October 2019. Dedicated School Grant (DSG) allocations for next year would be provided in December 2019. It was also highlighted that where actual DSG additional allocations were lower than forecast and the projected deficit 2019/20 increases in this term, the Council may need to seek a 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.

The Directorate Finance Lead – Children and Schools took the Forum through the key themes of the reports block by block.

A member asked whether there was any intention to move away from the Local Authority's Local Funding Formula or transfer to National Funding Formula (NFF) values. Due to a lack of certainty around Manchester's exact settlement the Forum was informed that the matter would remain under review for the time being.

### **Decisions**

1. To note school funding settlement headlines.
2. To note that Manchester has yet not received the confirmed settlement and at this stage the estimates of grant increases are based on interpretation of recent announcements.

## **SF/18/28. Early Years Block**

The Forum considered a report of the Director of Education and Directorate Finance Lead - Children's and Schools which discussed Early Years Block funding pressures and a need to review the sustainability of funding to consider how the Council can manage the risks.

An overview of Early Years Block funding that had been allocated to Manchester for 2019/20, information on the overspend on the Early Years Block in 2018/19, and an analysis of risks and uncertainties around future funding were also set out. It was highlighted that final allocations would not be confirmed until July 2020 with a risk that funding could potentially be lower than what the Council has paid to providers. It was also highlighted that this year's outturn would not be as high as last year's £2.19m deficit. The Council would therefore monitor the position closely, with further updates for the Forum.

The Directorate Finance Lead - Children's and Schools took the Forum through the

main aspects of the report and responded to questions.

**Decision**

To note the risks to Early Years block funding

**SF/18/29. Special Schools Formula Review**

The Forum considered a report of the Directorate Finance Lead – Children and Schools which provided an update on the ongoing review of Special Schools funding arrangements and outlined planned actions, next steps and discussed the approach that is required to finalise the change process. In particular, the Forum was invited to note the timeline of events that was scheduled as part of the review and to undertake a consultation with Special Schools as part of that process.

**Decision**

To note the report.