

CITY OF YORK SCHOOLS FORUM

Minutes of the Schools Forum held on Thursday 12th April 2018 at 9.00am

Attendance list:

Members:

Brian Crosby	Academy Representative and Chair
Gail Brown	Academy Representative (Deputising for Richard Ludlow)
Richard Crane	Maintained Secondary Representative
Dan Furniss	Academy Representative (Deputising for Andrew Daly)
Debbie Glover	Maintained Primary Headteacher
Helen Gratton	Early Years Sector Representative
Tracey Ralph	Maintained Primary Headteacher
Lorna Savage	Academy Representative

Observers / Advisors:

Jon Stonehouse	Director of Children, Education & Communities
Maxine Squire	Assistant Director, Education and Skills
Richard Hartle	Head of Finance, City of York Council
Salli Radford	Coordinator and Clerk
Tom Chamberlain	School Services Manager – Policy and Strategy
Cllr Jonny Crawshaw	Councillor for Micklegate Ward / Observer

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received with consent, from Trevor Burton – Academy Representative, Andrew Daly – Academy Representative (represented by Dan Furniss), Tricia Head – Pupil Referral Unit Representative, Richard Ludlow – Academy Representative (represented by Gail Brown) and Bill Scriven – Maintained Secondary Headteacher (VA school). Alison Birkinshaw – FE Representative, Claire Rigden – Maintained Nursery Representative and Adam Booker – Special School Representative were absent from the meeting.

3. Membership update

Previously distributed. The update was noted. Salli Radford advised that a governor representative was still being sought and would be chased prior to the July meeting.

4. Minutes of the York Schools Forum meeting of 5th February 2018

Previously distributed.

The minutes of the meeting of 5th February 2018 were agreed to be a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

5. Action Plan and Matters Arising

Previously distributed. With reference to the action plan:

Point 1 – Completed.

Point 2 – To be taken under item 6.

Point 3 – To be taken under item 9 other than the YSAB report which would be taken to the July Forum meeting.

Point 4 – Gail Brown advised that Paul Murphy had discussed Early Years issues with the Headteacher of St Paul's Nursery School as part of the Inclusion Review work.

Points 5 and 6 – Completed.

Matters Arising:

In response to a question regarding item 10, Forward Plan, and when the decision had been taken to defer a report from the YSAB (formerly the SICG) to July, Maxine Squire advised that the YSAB would need to meet to inform the plan which would be brought to the Forum. The Chair confirmed that the YSAB had oversight of allocation of funds but that the Forum approved the budget, asking whether July was early enough to allow informed decisions. Discussion followed, with Richard Hartle providing an outline of reasons for deferral. The Forum discussed this further, with members expressing their desire to ensure that automatic roll-forward of funding arrangements was not assumed, and for scrutiny of investment and related outcomes to be enabled. The Forum requested a special emergency meeting to consider the following specific funding streams:

- £400k School Improvement fund
- £150k CPD fund
- £65k wellbeing workers
- £30k cluster funding
- £30k city-wide group work
- £291k School Improvement funding passed back to schools for school improvement activities. It was noted that failure to adequately account for the use of this funding might result in it being lost as a future funding stream.

Decision: An extraordinary meeting would be held on 3rd May at 9.00am.

6. Infant Class Size Funding – Criteria and Allocations

Previously distributed. Richard Hartle invited questions on the paper, which had been drafted in response to questions arising at the previous Forum meeting. It was noted that the paper provided background to Infant Class Size Funding (ICSF) funding and funding criteria, with information on allocations to individual schools since 2013/14.

Richard outlined the arrangements for ICSF since 2013 and the previous decision of the Forum to retain as a separate funding stream.

The Forum noted a budget of £450k ICSF for 2018/19. Richard advised that he anticipated continuation of this funding into 2019/20, with the Forum to decide whether to continue to allocate under set criteria, within the parameters of school funding regulations.

Helen Gratton joined the meeting at 9.30am.

The Forum discussed the paper, with members querying whether ICSF represented the best use of resources and seeking clarification of overall admissions strategy.

Tom Chamberlain advised that some additional issues needed to be taken into account, including the right of Looked After Children to attend their first choice school. Tom advised that the October census provided information that informed the

admissions process, with SEN decisions being taken earlier to ensure places were available. It was noted that other exceptions to general admissions criteria were rarely used, with Tom advising that his remit was to both meet parental preferences and to balance school places as far as possible. It was noted that ICSF ameliorated some inconsistencies in intakes over time as these fluctuated, being particularly helpful to small schools with small intakes and to schools with admissions limits that tended to result in classes over 30.

The Forum discussed this, noting that schools used ICSF in a variety of ways to meet need. It was further noted that funding allocations were provided each January once pupil roll was confirmed by the census but that schools knew their intake and total numbers so could predict ICSF income. Tom provided examples to illustrate the admissions process and how ICSF was used by schools to manage fluctuating cohorts.

Jon Stonehouse advised that it might be necessary to develop a city-wide response to the challenge of future sustainability of small schools.

Forum members noted the criteria which they confirmed was understood. Jon proposed a Headteachers' Briefing session on school funding and how this is used strategically to benefit the city. The Chair proposed a working group to develop ideas on ICSF and implications of emerging funding arrangements for small schools with Richard Hartle, to include input from small schools and to report back to the Forum.

Decision: Working Group to be established by Richard Hartle to include Debbie Glover, Gail Brown and small school headteachers as well as others.

It was noted that MPs were regularly briefed on issues relating to school funding.

7. Pupil Growth – Criteria and Allocations

Previously distributed. Richard Hartle advised that the Pupil Growth Fund (PGF) budget of £350k enabled the LA to manage demographic growth and pressures by allocating lagged funding based on the previous October census each financial year. It was noted that the fund allowed additional budget for the period September to March (August for academies) to ensure schools were adequately supported. It was noted that growth funding was now allocated on a case-by-case basis when schools took pupils to address specific pressures and as a managed response in line with LA strategy.

Richard advised that funding was now allocated on a more targeted basis than before, following discussion with the place planning team. Richard advised that he also undertook a retrospective check to ensure that funding was allocated fairly and that no relevant issues were missed. It was noted that allocation was calculated by a formula and was based on a proportion of AWPU. Richard provided examples of the flexibility applied by the LA to ensure fairness.

The Forum discussed the mechanism for allocation of PGF in cases where school catchments crossed LA boundaries. In response to a question regarding the decision-making process for allocation of PGF, Tom Chamberlain advised that decisions were based on in-year pressure where no other alternatives were available and in response to situations where an increase in pupil numbers was pronounced and sustainable. It was noted that decisions were linked to the sustainability of funding as an increase in future AWPU would become available to an eligible school. It was noted that PGF

support was only available for growth related to York pupils or where a historic catchment area was in place that pre-dated the reorganisation of LA boundaries.

The Forum discussed the update at length.

Richard advised that it was a Schools Forum decision as to whether to make PGF available, though the DfE recommended retaining the fund and would not suggest removal.

Decision: The paper and discussion points were noted.

Richard Crane left the meeting at 10.30am.

8. School Contracts Update

Maxine Squire provided a verbal update, advising that a small number of school contracts were retained.

Schools Transport – Maxine advised that this contract provided services in line with specific criteria, generally relating to distance and SEN. It was noted that the LA used the most cost effective method to transport pupils, with very little non-SEN taxi provision. It was noted that transport was vital to the high-needs cohort. Maxine advised that a procurement process was in place with significant financial oversight to ensure value for money. The contract was project managed by LA and delivered by Pullman and Streamline.

Catering Monitoring – Maxine advised that LA involvement in catering was now restricted to monitoring which was provided on a traded basis. It was noted that this highly specialised service included deliver of the food safety aspect, working with Environmental Health, and could offer advice to enable follow-up after inspections as well as advising on kitchen efficiency. Schools were encouraged to contact Mark Ellis with any questions.

Broadband – Richard Hartle advised that a paper regarding the broadband contract would be brought to the July meeting.

9. Central Schools Services Block

Local Fostering Arrangements – Jon Stonehouse provided a verbal update on this funding element which represented a £400k per year investment. Jon advised of the principle to build local provision to ensure children remained in the city where possible. It was noted that the investment achieved significant savings against the DSG, with Jon reporting c£1.8M in on-going annual savings.

Jon advised of relatively low placement outside the city, with these children generally having very complex and challenging circumstances. It was noted that the city would continue to development strategy in line with the inclusion review.

Decision: Jon Stonehouse to provide further information to the July meeting.

School Safeguarding Support Arrangements / Safeguarding Advisor – Previously distributed. Maxine Squire advised that DSG funding had been committed to this post since 2009/10, highlighting the information on the role and work undertaken included in the paper. It was noted that the post covered school safeguarding including the statutory Prevent Duty, with the post holder being trained to deliver WRAP training

which would continue. The activity was noted. Maxine advised that the post did not hold the LADO role, with the LA currently recruiting a LADO and the role being temporarily covered by Mo Crossley. It was noted that the LA was considering the wider provision of the Safeguarding and LADO roles.

Maxine outlined the scope of the Safeguarding role and the need to continue to ensure that this support was available. It was noted that schools currently collectively contribute £50k to resource this function.

In response to a question regarding safer recruitment training costs and availability, it was noted that other costs such as venue and accreditation fees were not covered by funding for the post.

Decision: Jon Stonehouse to ensure development of the paper into a briefing that can be shared with headteachers to support understanding of the role.

10. Inclusion Review update

Maxine Squire provided a verbal update, advising that further information had been made available on the Local Offer area of the YorOK website and a map of provision developed. It was noted that capital funding had been allocated across three years which totalling £591k.

Maxine outlined the priorities identified by the review, including:

- Secondary provision
- Autism provision - Applefields/Askham Bryan partnership
- Hob Moor Oaks – small projects at the primary special school in response to an increase in pupils with complex autism
- Danesgate – to address pressure relating to primary provision as the setting had been built to meet secondary need
- Secondary Enhanced Resource Provision – being reviewed as different spaces were needed
- Central location for an external provider for personalised learning relating to employment – as part of a programme to address pressure on the High Needs Block by considering supported internship routes and routes into supported employment
- Post-18 – personalised learning pathways and safe provision

The Forum noted that the 0-25 age range covered by the scope of the review and of future provision presented a significant challenge. It was noted that Paul Murphy would continue to coordinate the review which had been very positive to date. Maxine undertook to ensure reports back to future meetings. Jon Stonehouse advised that the Inclusion Review Group included Schools Forum and YSAB members.

The Chair thanked Maxine for the update.

11. Schools Forum forward plan

Richard Hartle outlined the forward plan:

May 2018

- School Improvement commissioning - special meeting

July 2018

- Schools broadband contract
- Maintained schools outturn balances
- Outturn paper on DSG – with the Forum to consider constituent parts rather than the general carry forward
- Local fostering paper
- Working Group feedback on ICSF and small schools

September 2018

- School start budgets 2018/19 including deficits
- Budget preparation 2019/20

February 2019

- 2019/20 budget setting paper

In response to a suggestion that the consultation mechanism for the School Teachers Pay and Conditions document and pay award be reviewed, Maxine Squire advised that information generally arrived very late and during the summer holidays. It was noted that Harry Rashid would take information on this issue to a Headteachers' Briefing.

12. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

13. Date and time of the next meeting

The additional meeting would take place on 3rd May 2018 at 9.00am. The next scheduled meeting would take place on 2nd July 2018 at 9.00am.

The meeting closed at 11.15am.

Chair

Date