

**CALDERDALE SCHOOLS FORUM**  
**23 February 2023 – Virtual Meeting Via Teams**

**PRESENT:**

**Tony Guise** (Secondary Maintained) – Chair  
**Brenda Monteith** (Roman Catholic)  
**John Eccleston** (Academy)  
**Karen Morley** (Academy) – Co Vice Chair  
**Mungo Shepherd** (Primary Maintained)  
**Phil Hannah** (PRU)  
**Jo Buckley** (Primary Maintained) – Co Vice Chair  
**Julie Kendall** (Academy)  
**Adam McNichol** (Primary Governors Maintained)  
**Desmond Deehan** (Academy)

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

**Paul Tinsley** (AD Education and Inclusion)  
**Richard Morse** (Senior Commissioning Officer – School Organisation and Planning)  
**Jane Davy** (Finance Officer)  
**Connie Beirne** (Interim Service Manager for Early Years and School Strategy and Performance)  
**Martyn Sharples** (Finance Officer)  
**Michael Holgate** (Account Manager)  
**David Graham** (QA and Complaints Consultant)  
**Alex Webley** (Head of SEND)  
**Steve Drake** (Finance Officer)  
**Julie Jenkins** (Director CYP) observing

**APOLOGIES**

**Ian Hughes** (Legal Officer)  
**Mary Carrigan** (Primary Governors Maintained)  
**Gill Poole** (Unions)  
**Dan Burns** (Academy Primary)

**1. Substitutes nominated for this meeting and apologies for absence**

None.

**2. Members Interests**

Jo Buckley declared an interest item 7, as she is an Associate for the School Effectiveness Team.

John Eccleston declared an interest, as he sits on the Partnership Board and is part of the Calderdale Governors Association.

Brenda Monteith declared an interest, as she is Governor at Highbury School.

### 3. Admission of the Public

None.

### 4. Minutes of the Schools Forum held on 12 January 2023

AOB: Members asked what are the implications if maintained schools are forced to hold a deficit? Jane Davy is writing a report to go to Julie Jenkins, Director CYP, Isabel Brittain, Interim Chief Finance Officer and Elected Members hoping for a decision on a way forward. Jane should have this prepared by the end of next week. Jane and Local Authority Officers to keep Schools Forum informed.

Minutes agreed.

### 5. Admissions and School Rebuilding Programme

*To note, Schools Forum Members cannot identify where funding for posts will come from, they can just approve the posts.*

Q: with regards to the School Rebuilding, Asset Management and Fair Access Officer roles, can the roles be amalgamated in some way? Yes, proposed roles have already been combined where there is a natural fit.

Q: will the funding for rebuilding 9 schools mean there is more in the pot for other schools not identified in this rebuilding scheme? Yes, as the 9 schools were in some of the worst conditions, funds what would have needed to be spent on those schools can be used on the remaining schools.

Q: does the rebuilding funding cover a project management post? No, the DfE will procure buildings, but it will not purchase extra land, nor will it pay for officer time.

Q: can the posts be funded via LA funds and can we clarify the total costs of roles? At this time the roles have still to be graded, therefore no firm figures are available, but have been estimated by looking at similar roles within the Council.

Q: if funding is come from Central Services Block, what impact will there be on school budgets? We need to consider the implications of taking 150K out of schools budgets.

Q: if the LA are looking to use the balance of the landlord budget (whatever is left from the £87000 – about £60,500), added to the Education Welfare Service 75K underspend, there would be much less to find.

Q: has the 6K PFI funding from schools been included? Do we need a consultant, rather than a PFI Officer who will not have the required speciality knowledge? The proposal is for a combined role. Someone with the required facilities management understanding, combined with the experience of someone who can commission condition reports; and have an understanding of the Legal perspective and is able to liaise with HR and Legal colleagues over issues such as TUPE. Also to support schools with asset management of current building stock.

**Schools Forum Members are in agreement with the need for these roles.**

**Schools Forum Members requested an additional report on what each post will cost at the next Schools Forum Meeting.**

#### **6. De delegation of school improvement functions – addendum**

The Chair recognised the work that has gone into answering all the questions raised at the last Schools Forum Meeting and thanked Connie for her work on pulling together the addendum.

Connie has benchmarked what other regional LAs are doing going forward and most have a similar scheme to Calderdale.

**The Calder Learning Trust and Todmorden High School informed that they have decided not to de delegate, following discussions with both Heads and both Governing Bodies, and are therefore voting against the secondary element. This is not a reflection on how the scheme is working, it is about value for money for green schools.**

Connie informed that without secondary buy in it would mean costs are £14.33 per pupil. Paul asked to remind Schools Forum Members that the low figure for last year included 50% subsidising from the DfE which has now finished.

Connie asked for clarity around if maintained secondary schools do not go with this model, the LA will need some steer if standards should slip, where would their support come from. Tony informed that the 2 maintained secondary schools would work together in partnership.

#### **Primary vote:**

Jo met with primary heads who voted for model 1. Primary Heads feel the associate model supports them really well.

**Vote taken for model 1: approved unanimously.**

#### **To note:**

- All maintained schools voted for the Summer term at a cost of £7.77 per pupil.
- The maintained secondaries did not vote for continuation after the summer term.
- The maintained primaries agreed to fund the shortfall for the Autumn and Spring term and the summer term at a total cost of £12.66 per pupil.

Item 7b the maintained schools agreed to fund the central expenditure via education functions which totals £43,976 at a cost of £3.79 per pupil (they told me it was £45k during the meeting so I quoted £3.88 but re reading the paper this morning its £43,976hence the lower figure).

#### **7. Review of services to schools**

##### **7A:**

Q: Karen – the figures include termination costs, specifically for maintained schools in a deficit position and having extra help, academies cannot access this funding. Query whether historic commitments allow for this?

Discussion that termination costs to cover redundancies was brought forward and the LA are allowed to keep as a historic commitment, wound down 20% per year – clarification needed on this as some Schools Forum Members feel this is not a historical commitment. Jane to send the link to the legislation in the chat.

Q: discussion that this doesn't feel fair, as it is just for maintained schools, would it not be possible to be redistributed?

Martyn advised that cluster funding has not reduced as the historical element reduced, would the same conditions apply to cluster funding? Did the allocation get used last year? There is a balance, but this will be carried forward to the next year, as we are expecting a large call on this.

Education Welfare Service: proposal on forthcoming legislation. Recommendation that Schools Forum Members have sight of this prior to the deadline of 28 February 2023.

## **7B**

Work ongoing in schools to support lack of attendance.

**Vote taken on option 3B: 7 in favour, none opposed: passed by Schools Forum Members.**

High Needs Block: Schools Forum Members were advised that the LA needs to provide assurances to the ESFA within 3 years that we are living within our means and will review moving forward.

Options A and B: there is no information in the report of the implications if Schools Forum agree option B, the impact on maintained schools budgets and the justification on why this is not coming out of LA general funds.

Academies already pay for a traded service, why would they pay again, so would not approve.

Second option, confirmation that next year this would just be for maintained schools. The Chair agrees, why would academies pay for this option twice.

Schools Forum Members asked what would be the implications of postponing an agreement; Jane advised she would not be able to send APT, she needs to submit figures by 28 February 2023.

Q: could Michael confirm whether this is a statutory responsibility for the LA to provide this and can the LA legally charge for a statutory duty?

## **Vote on option A:**

**4 in favour, approved to come out of DSG, however Schools Forum Members asked that reports where members are required to provide a decision, come to Schools Forum Meetings in a more timely manner to allow members to full explore options and implications.**

## **8. Early Years funding – addendum**

Q: why cannot the EY Improvement Officers, SM role and Business Support/Finance be managed with 46K?

Q from Primary Heads: are the increases already made, or is it a proposal? If funding is not approved, will the LA continue to fund 1 officer for additional capacity in the team, as there are some discretionary services, but they are all meeting statutory duties, or is an existing post under threat if we didn't bring under DSG at this stage?

The rising management costs are due to the restructure of the SM role. Before Connie came into post, the Senior SE Officer and another person lead on early years and there was a decision to being the 2 roles together; Connie is covering this role in the interim. It has not been possible to recruit to the role Connie is covering, there was no take up even with the market supplement. The role will be split back into 2 again with 1 EY Team Practitioner and 1 Senior SE Officer. We need to ensure robust leadership for when the Family Hubs come on line. Family Hubs funding will not contribute to the management role, as streams are tied as to what they can spend money on.

**Vote on all recommendations: unanimous approval.**

## **9. Allocation of 2023/24 High Needs Block**

Q: where have we got 1M available for special school hubs, or new hubs to support increased numbers going into Ravenscliffe, is there any provision for capital investment support?

David Graham explained that the only existing hub is the Copley pilot, in effect an extension/interface of the special school, staff are employed by the special school.

The LA is looking to extend the new hub arrangements, which will help deal with the massive increase in demand for special school places. Hopefully the free school bid will be announced in the next few weeks. Budget allocation will increase, which reflects the increased numbers we will attract.

Paul explained that given additional government money from the high needs block; there are times when additional funding is requested from the high needs block. There is no additional funding for EHCPs or capital development, we need to build this funding within the existing budget to pay for that. Hopefully we will get funding to build in the extras we need re schools places.

Exclusions are currently high, so we may need to buy in more places.

The LA is looking at a planned programme for capital spend and how we can deliver services such as Behaviour Support, Specialist Inclusion Team to support schools with young people with high needs and specialist placements in independent schools and address the deficit going forward.

The planning for the Hub Model will be resolved by the end of summer term.

**Report noted.**

Q: the 1.3M for the Whiteley Academy, is that top up funding? It is – 800K from FSA. Based on full capacity and extras 80 places, additional grant mandated to give by the LA.

## **10. Work Programme**

To note, we have heard loud and clear reports need to be timely if a decision is needed. Paul will make it clear, however, there are extenuating circumstances as government provided late figures this time, Paul will make it clear to report authors that we need succinct reports submitted in a timely manner to ensure Schools Forum Members have time to read and make their decisions.

## **11. Any other business**

None discussed.

## **12. Future dates**

27 April 2023

22 June 2023

All meetings will start at 4pm via Teams.