

Formula Review Meeting

Minutes

Thursday 6th January 2022

Microsoft Teams Meeting

Present:

Patti Jones
Julie Cheung
Kath Greenhalgh
Susan Tailor

Secondary Governor
Primary Head Teacher
Primary Business Manager
Special Head Teacher

Lisa Butcher
Julie Edwards
Helen Joseph

Head of Finance
Schools Finance Manager
Schools Finance Officer

Apologies: Apologies were received from Jo Briggs, Dave Bevitt, Andrea O'Callaghan and Alex Devany.

1. Welcome

JB had sent apologies therefore JE welcomed everyone to the meeting. JE will meet with JB to brief her on this meeting. The meeting had a low attendance due to the start of term however all sectors were represented.

2. Minutes 4th November 2021

Minutes were agreed.

3. School Funding Arrangements 2022-23

Budget Settlement – JE provided an update on the DSG settlement and the impact of the change in pupil numbers and growth – £4.3 million on Schools block and £0.5 million on High Needs block. Total Schools block for 2022-23 is now £257.9 million and High Needs block £51.3 million. The Early Years block is an indicative budget at the moment awaiting the Spring census data. Once the funding was fed into the formula it was almost affordable (£130K shortfall). Previously this has been balanced using the Deprivation factor (free school meals element) due to changes in data. It is proposed this year that the Area Cost Adjustment is removed and that funding used to fund the shortfall and also the transfer to the high needs block. Only 0.39% would be available to transfer from the Schools block instead of the 0.5% (£294K lower), but additional funding for the High Needs block from DSG and the Supplementary Grant will be received in the budget

settlement. This method will make the formula simpler and fair. JC asked when High Needs funding will be increased by DfE as the LA will still be in a deficit position despite the additional money. JE agreed that although the funding will balance the current budget there is concern over the amount of growth in numbers that is anticipated. LB mentioned that the SEND review later in the year and the Schools Reform Group may have an impact.

Consultation – JE informed the group that there was a good attendance at the budget briefing in December (117 attendees) and only 10 responses were received to the consultation– all in agreement to the three proposals to transfer 0.5% to high needs block, MFG of 2% and use NFF values. The majority of responses also agreed to continue with the dedelegation items.

Budget Report - The DfE announced additional funding following the the DSG settlement and this will be paid in the form of a separate grant – School Supplementary Grant. This grant will be included within DSG from 2023-24. Actual allocation amounts have not been notified yet as the Early Years data for spring is required to finalise this, it is estimated that will be £7.5 million for Schools and £1.9 million for High Needs. The funding rates are based on formula factor values (in anticipation of this grant being part of the NFF in 2023-24). Rates are:- £24 per pupil in Early Years, £97 per pupil in Primary, £137 per pupil in KS3 and £155 per pupil in KS4. In addition to this a lump sum for each school of £3,680 will be paid. Special school rates to be confirmed. This grant is to assist with significant cost pressures that schools will face in 2022-23, e.g. increase in national insurance rates and energy cost increases. This information will be fed to schools via PPR consultation, Schools Forum etc.

There will be an increase to the Early Years hourly rate and it is intended to pass on the full increase to providers. Also, an increase to the Pupil Premium rate will be published soon.

4. Insurance Arrangements from April 2022

RPA (Risk Protection Arrangement) is an insurance scheme now available to all schools (previously Academies only) as an alternative to commercial insurance. As the LA is due to retender the insurance contract earlier than anticipated, schools can join this scheme from April 2022. The cost is much lower than the current scheme and is charged at £21 per pupil e.g. annual cost is around £6,000 cheaper for a primary school. Cover is comparable to previous and add-ons are available for items such as vehicles. DfE looking into whether Bolton schools can do a block transfer to the RPA rather than arranging separately. Online weekly information sessions are available for schools. Along with the School Supplementary Grant, the saving on insurance costs will help schools to pay for the increase in energy costs anticipated from April 2022. PJ enquired as to how schools with diocese insurance will be affected.

Action:- JE to contact diocese regarding RPA insurance cover

5. Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) – Collection of Royalties Data

Periodically, the CLA carry out a survey of schools to assess the items that schools are using, copying etc in order to calculate royalties. Bolton is in the survey for Summer Term 2022 and the CLA will choose a sample of schools to visit. Information will be posted on the extranet to make schools aware of this.

6. Schools Forum Agenda

Item to be included:- the budget report.

7. Forward Plan

JE to provide an analysis of the funding changes and impact on schools.

8. Any Other Business

Fraud Training – Barclays are providing online training sessions. JE to contact KW to arrange through Primary Admin Group.

Union Duties – JE mentioned that one comment was received as part of the consultation regarding the maternity scheme and if non-LA schools that belong to a Multi Academy Trust could join. The group agreed that the response remains that this would not be allowed.

Oracle Cloud – JE informed the group that payroll has now transferred across to the new Oracle Cloud system. There has been some teething problems with miscoded maternity costs which is being looked into.

9. Date of Next Meeting

24th February 2022 8.30am

MS Teams