

Formula Review Meeting

Minutes

Friday 5th April 2019

Westhoughton High Business Hub

Present:

Phil Hart
Gary Johnson
Julie Hignett
Claire Whalley
Jo Briggs
Joan Saunders
John Adamopoulos
Pauline Lewis
Patti Jones
Don Grant

Secondary Head Teacher
Special school Head Teacher
Primary Head Teacher
Primary Head Teacher
Primary Head Teacher
Primary Business Manager
Secondary Business Manager
Primary Governor
Secondary Governor
Union Representative

Lisa Butcher
Julie Edwards
Janice Rigby

Head of Finance
Schools Finance Manager
Schools Finance Officer

Apologies: Paul Roach

1. Welcome

Phil Hart chaired the meeting.

2. Minutes 15th February 2019

Minutes were agreed.

All items were included in the Agenda.

3. Trade Union SLA

With effect from 1 April 2019 all schools will now be provided with the option as to whether they wish to buy into the trade union facility time arrangements via an annual service level agreement rather than operate through de-delegation.

The Trade Union SLA has been sent to schools with a response date of 26th April.

A discussion took place about the impact of not buying into the service. DG has written to trustees of the academies that do not currently buy the SLA.

Actions:

- **PH to remind secondary schools to respond**
- **price for Special Schools and Nursery Schools to be confirmed**
- **letter is addressed to Chairs of Governors as well as Headteachers – have Chairs of Governors been written to?**

4. Payroll SLA

Academies and Bank account schools are currently charged for payroll the month following the payroll run. The payroll SLA states that salaries will be charged in the month they are incurred. From September the date of recovery (ie the direct debit) will be brought forward to bring in line with the SLA.

This is for the following reasons

- the current arrangements are unfavourable to the Councils cashflow
- the risk involved in recouping monies if a setting goes into financial difficulty
- the advantageous cashflow could be masking an underlying financial problem in a setting

Following consultation at Formula Review Group all schools/academies involved will be written to with the details of the new arrangements.

5. Analysis of School Budgets excl premises costs

At the last meeting JE presented a paper to show the amount per pupil each school received. It was apparent that premises costs (rates) were skewing the figures and meant a true comparison could not be made.

JE presented the figures without premises costs. This analysis raised further questions about how much the level of capping and protection had changed since 2018-19.

Action:

- **analysis of capping/protection changes to be brought to next meeting**

6. DSG Deficit Reporting

Local Authorities have to submit a repayment plan to the DfE if the DSG deficit at 31.3.19 is greater than 1%.

Prior to being delegated to schools in 2015-16 there was a central budget contribution from DSG for Revenue Contributions to Capital, to provide capital earmarked for school places in the future. Schools are also putting aside capital reserves from delegated budgets for future projects.

As these RCCO reserves originated from DSG they would be used, in the annual accounts and when reporting to the DfE, to offset the current High Needs deficit, meaning there will be no need to submit a repayment plan.

Despite not having to report to the DfE the actual High Needs deficit remains and it is still a priority that the high needs action plan is progressed.

7. Imports/Exports Adjustments

In response to previous questions about how pupils in Special Schools are funded when they are educated inter authority JE presented 2 calculations:-

- The High Needs Formula – this evidenced that any pupils in Bolton schools on the October census are funded for element 1
- The imports and exports adjustment – calculates the net difference in pupils educated in and out of Bolton based on the January census, and an adjustment is done for element 2 funding

Action:

- **JE to send a protocol to Special Heads re additional in year funding when admitting a pupil – to share with GJ first**

8. Exclusion Charges (Academies)

The authority has received a question from an academy about the calculation of exclusion charges in that budgets are not received until September in academies so funding should not be deducted relating to a pupil in the same way as in a maintained school.

JE set out the calculation of the clawback system that showed although the funding is lagged the academy still receives the same funding for a pupil as a maintained school.

The Group supported the calculation in that the charges were being implemented correctly and no changes are required.

9. Schools Resource Management Toolkit

The authority has received an invitation from the DfE to attend a future Schools Forum meeting to demonstrate a new toolkit designed to support schools in their use of resources and data. The first version has been aimed at academies, and it is hoped it will replace SFVS in maintained schools from 2019-20

Action:

JE to invite DfE to the Schools Forum in July

10. Growth Fund In Year Pressures

The Growth Fund has been established and is mainly used for Reception and Year 7 intakes. There are currently place pressures in other year groups in Primary and schools are being asked to expand, following approval of the Executive Member.

The Growth fund would be rolled out to other year groups where schools are increasing their PAN to meet place pressures however revenue funding could not be made available immediately as the October census would have to be used as a measure to make it fair and consistent with other schools.

11. Forward Plan

JE has drafted a forward plan based on 2018-19 timetable but warned that this is likely to slip due to a potential delay in the spending review

12. Schools Forum Agenda

This was noted for information

13. AOB

No items

14. Date of next meetings

Wednesday 26th June 1pm at Westhoughton High Business Hub