

**Minutes of: JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
WITH TEACHERS**

Date of Meeting: 12 February 2020

Present: Representing Bury Council

Councillors: T.Tariq (Chair), G Keeley and G McGill

Executive Director of Children's Services: Karen Dolton
Head of Strategic Business and Finance: Steven Goodwin

Representing the Teachers' Side

P Evans (NEU)
G P Hirst (NAHT)
K Hopwood (NASUWT)
B Roadnight (ASCL)
N Shears (NEU)
H Thom (NEU)
D Quayle (NASUWT)
L Shelmerdine (NEU)

Apologies: Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Briggs, Cathcart, Caserta and Pickstone.

JCC.01 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor McGill declared a personal interest in all matters under consideration in view of his wife role as an NEU Trade Union representative in Rochdale.

JCC.02 BUDGET PROPOSALS 2019/2020/DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT

The budget report was circulated to Members of the Committee in advance of the meeting. The report provided information in respect of financial performance, including a forecast underspend of £.657 million, an increase in general reserves, an £8 million savings target and £4.2 million shortfall.

The revenue budget includes a number of key planning assumptions and well as key risks which will include a one year settlement, business rates review and pay awards and economic uncertainty.

Key principles include the need to address underlying deficits – financial sustainability, need to bolster general funds/resilience, need to transform & address capacity as well as the need to align to the Bury 2030 Strategy.

- **Dedicated Schools Grant**

Steve Goodwin Head of Strategic Business & Finance attended the meeting to provide members of the committee with an overview of the Council's proposals

in respect of the Dedicated Schools Grant. The Head of Strategic Business and Finance reported that there has been a significant increase in national funding for Schools and Academies.

This report sets out recommendations in relation to the Schools budget for approval by Cabinet, the detail of which has been discussed, and agreed, by the Schools Forum.

In September 2019, the Chancellor of the Exchequer presented the 2019 Spending Round to Parliament this included notification that, nationally, schools funding would increase by £2.6bn in 2020/21, £4.8bn in 2021/22 and £7.1bn in 2022/23. The Government also advised that the high needs funding for schools would increase by £700m nationally.

The 4 blocks that make up the DSG are:

- The Schools Block
The Schools Block allocation for 2020/21 is £129.940m. This is an increase of £7.836m from the 2019/20 allocation. This is provided directly to Schools and Academies delegated budgets through the National Funding Formula mechanism.
- The High Needs Block
The 2020/21 allocation for High Needs DSG is £33.209m. This represents a £2.667m increase in the 2019/20 allocation and is managed by the Local Authority in respect to all strategic in-borough inclusion and provision priorities around Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)
- The Early Years Block
Early Years funding to providers is based on hourly rates for eligible 2, 3 and 4 year olds accessing their entitlement to free early education. The hourly funding rate applied to 3 and 4 year olds must also meet a minimum level of an average across all providers of at least £4.16 per hour. The increase for 2020/21 represents a contribution to inflation however there is concern this increase is not sufficient to cover all cost pressures faced by early years providers
- The Central Schools Service Block
The allocation of the Central School Services Block (CSSSB) is £0.774 in 2020/21

Questions and comments were invited from those present and the following issues were raised:

Responding to a Member's question, the Head of Strategic Business & Finance reported that a Council wide "Education Service Review" has commenced. The Head of Strategic Business and Finance reported that as more schools become Academies and choose not to buy back services some provision may become unviable. Ideally the Local Authority would wish to enhance the services already provided.

With regards to the additional monies allocated to schools for pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL), the Head of Strategic Business and Finance reported that this money is not ring fenced and schools have

autonomy in how that money is spent. Bury's Curriculum Language Access Service (CLAS) will provide additional targeted support. The Trade Union expressed concern that Secondary schools do not all contribute to CLAS.

In response to a Member's question, the Head of Strategic Business and Finance reported that of the £7.87m additional money from central government for the Schools Block, £5 million pounds is new money and the remainder is increased funding already anticipated in respect to increased pupil numbers and transition to the National Funding Formula factors for 2020/21.

Members of the Committee discussed SEND spend. The Head of Strategic Business and Finance reported that there are inconsistencies in relation to this matter specifically in respect to Notional SEND funding determinations by Local Authorities nationally. The Committee were advised that all schools and academies have a statutory duty in accordance to the SEND Code of Practice 2014 to ensure they demonstrate, using costed SEND provision mapping, how they have met their mandatory requirement to support all children with SEND, whether with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or not, costing up to £6,000 for every eligible child. The costed provision map evidence is used by the LA when considering additional support requirements for individual children. Schools and Academies should publish on their websites how they support SEND however no checks are currently undertaken in respect of the totality of any spend. The Department for Education is conducting a major review into this area and consulting during 2020.

It was agreed:

Information in respect of Pupil Place Planning forecasts will be provided at the next meeting of the JCC Teachers.

**Councillor Tariq
Chair**

Note: The meeting started at 6pm and finished at 6.25pm