

## **CALDERDALE SCHOOLS FORUM**

### **14 November 2024 – Virtual Meeting Via Teams**

#### **PRESENT:**

**Karen Morley** (Academy) – Co Vice Chair  
**Mungo Sheppard** (Primary Maintained)  
**Lauren Watson** (Primary Maintained)  
**Brenda Monteith** (Roman Catholic)  
**John Eccleston** (Academy Primary Governor)  
**Stephen Baines** (Academy Secondary)  
**Stuart Hillary** (Academy Secondary)  
**Karl Veltman** (Post 16 Representative)  
**Debbie Sweet** (Special School)  
**Dan Burns** (Academy Primary)  
**Phil Hannah** (Academy AP)  
**Gareth Morris** (Primary Governors Maintained)  
**Richard Horsfield** (Academy Secondary)  
**Rachel Harling** (Academy Secondary)

#### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

**Jemima Flintoff** (AD Education and Inclusion)  
**Amanda Farron** (Senior Finance Officer - Observing)  
**Connie Beirne** (Interim Service Manager for Early Years and School Strategy and Performance)  
**Emma Ingham** (SEND & Inclusion Service Manager)  
**Hamish Heald** (Union Representative)  
**Ian Hughes** (Legal Officer)  
**Mick Burns** (Union Representative - Observing)  
**Jane Davy** (Finance Manager)  
**Martyn Sharples** (Senior Finance Officer)  
**Victoria Coyle** (SEN Manager)  
**Lee Broadbent** (Health, Safety & Wellbeing Manager)  
**Debby Simpson** (Governor Support Officer)  
**Steve Drake** (Finance Manager)  
**Richard Morse** (School Organisation & Access Manager)

#### **APOLOGIES**

**Andrea Dyson** (Early Years Rep)  
**Cllr Wilkinson** (Cabinet Member – Observing)  
**Denise Gwizdak** (Early Years Rep)  
**Gill Shirt** (Secondary Governor Maintained)  
**Louise Downing** (Primary Governors Maintained)  
**Adam McNichol** (Academy Bursar)  
**Ivan Kuzio** (Academy Bursar)

**1. Substitutes nominated for this meeting and apologies for absence. (To be notified in writing 24 hours in advance.)**

No substitutes were nominated.

**2. Members Interests –** Members are reminded of the need to declare any interest they might have in relation to the items of business on this agenda.

John Eccleston is a member of the Calderdale Partnership Improvement Board  
Karen Morley is a trustee at Together Learning Trust, representing primary academies including Scout Road. She is a governor at Christ Church Pellon and trustee and Burnley Road Academy.

Rachel Harling is a trustee at Together Learning Trust and a governor at St Augustine's School which is part of Learning Accord Multi Academy Trust.

**3. Admission of the Public -** it is not recommended that the public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the items of business on this agenda.

Amanda Farron – Calderdale's Senior Finance Officer  
Mick Burns – National Education Union

**4. Minutes of the Schools Forum held on 27 June 2024**

David Graham had an action to approach the special schools cluster and to gain a representative for High Needs group which has been completed

Capital projects on special schools in relation to the School Rebuilding Programme will be an agenda item at the meeting in January.

The minutes were approved by the Vice Chair and forum members

**5. Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

No members of Schools Forum nominated themselves to take on the role of Chair and Vice Chair. The current Vice Chair agreed to lead the meeting today and strongly encouraged members to put themselves forward for the meeting in January.

**6. Review of Schools Forum Constitution including an update on the CMBC Schools Academic Year 24/25 (Maintained/Academy)**

Ian has consulted the constitution review and commented that even though the document was from 2021, he stated that this document is still fit for purpose and asked if there are any concerns from forum members then to let him know.

The Vice Chair highlighted that once we have the Multi Academy Trust (PALT) established there will be a different dynamic, there will need to be a review of the representatives on

Schools Forum. The Vice Chair agreed to review the constitution to check it is still fit for purpose.

## **7. Education Function for Maintained Schools - Health & Safety funding request**

Martyn Sharples Q: What schools would Lee be servicing from this funding?

The schools that are to stay maintained, 41 community and 3 special schools totalling 44 schools.

Vice Chair Q: Does the costing consider the schools that will convert to academies? I have been assured Calder High school and associated schools will have been considered. In the guidance it states if the school does convert to an academy and money is taken, this should be paid back.

It is assumed this would be the case if a school choose to continue to receive the service as an academy they would have to pay on a commercial basis. Calder High school presently pay as part of the traded service. If Todmorden High school convert to an academy after the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025, the money would stay with the LA until September 2025. After the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025, it is believed the LA keep the money for the full year and school will be entitled to the service.

Vice Chair Q: Dow do you take this from the budget? Do you remove pro-rata pupil basis from the maintained schools?

JD - This is different to de-delegation as every school receives their allocation. This is deducted on a per pupil basis and will not be included in the Individual School Budget Share figures, the estimate is £4.10 based on £40k in October 2023, not including the 3 academies. Yes, the vote is for all maintained schools.

**Vote for all maintained school for the Health & Safety finding request:**

**Approve - 3**

**Oppose - 1**

## **8. Education Function for Maintained Schools - Governor Support funding request**

Vice Chair Q: Does this include the present secondary maintained schools? Has Calder High and Todmorden High leaving us been considered? Similarly, do the calculations consider the primary schools that will have academised by next financial year?

Yes, it has been taken into account because last year £9503 was the figure for subscription to NGA for Standard Membership and Learning Link and we are asking for £8,752 for this year. I also take into account that we have Federations, and this is 1 governing body rather than one for each school. I have not been given a figure from NGA for the cost of what they will charge us this year as they don't know yet but, they have promised me I will be the first to know when they do. Last year this was a significant rise. For next year, we have put for subscriptions to NGA: This year's cost (£221) for 39 schools (taking off Calder Trust, Tod High, Midgley and Old Town) = £8619, added £133 as a possible rise in cost for NGA totalling £8752. Overheads have then been added. Regarding this and the other part of my statutory duty (LA appointments) - £5815 is for my time to undertake the work involved. £2913.49 for overheads

Vice Chair Q: Are special schools included?

Yes, they are included. We have a statutory duty to these schools and are included in the prices.

Vice Chair Q: What would be the per pupil amount and what is the cost per school/amount to be deducted from each of their budgets?

Based on current pupil numbers, it will be £1.77 per pupil. This will change when the October 2024 PLASC data is received.

**Maintained schools were asked to vote. Schools Forum members unanimously agreed to the Governor Support Funding request.**

## **9. Indicative Schools Funding Formula 2025-26**

At the time of the meeting, the ESFA have not released the indicative funding. The MFG has been reduced from 0.5% to 0% and the LA are proposing to continue the MFG at the maximum amount allowed.

Schools' Forum members unanimously agreed to the LA applying for the MFG disapplication.

**School forum members unanimously agreed to bring the PFI funding back in line with the LA increases and reduce Basic entitlement to fund this increase**

## **10. Growth Fund**

Schools Forum are being asked to vote to agree on what to do with the carry forward money and are asked to vote on this in item 12 and if this is to be put towards the 0.5% transfer. It was noted that school forum members agreed with the approach by the LA to put any excess growth fund towards the 0.5% transfer.

## **11. Falling Rolls Fund**

Analysed the data, not expecting any schools to be in receipt of falling rolls. If we are in receipt on the funding, would like to put towards the 0.5% transfer. It was noted that school forum members agreed with the approach by the LA to put any excess falling rolls fund towards the 0.5% transfer.

## **12. Proposed School Block Transfer 2025-26**

This will reduce all maintained school budgets by £1million the basic entitlement will be adjusted first, followed if necessary by free school meals, FSM6 and then lower priority attainment. Any growth fund and falling rolls fund received by the LA will be used towards the 0.5% transfer.

Emma Ingham assured Schools Forum that every single aspect of the transfer will be put back into schools and the High Needs Reference Group will be monitoring this. The consultation for this transfer showed a 50/50 split from schools. Schools Forum are to be reassured that this is not the only mechanism being worked on over the next 12 months. There are risks of pushing this into exceptional funding. The LA are trying to improve

inclusion in mainstream schools and the LA is supporting settings with this. The funding will predominantly be spent on the AP Strategy.

Gareth Morris Q: Do you have an estimate of what the Calderdale's share of the additional £1bn in the High Needs Block is likely to amount to?

JD-This looks to be around 6% of the HNB. A college in Bradford said "Of the £1bn more for high needs, **only about 60% of this seemingly will go into the HNB for local authorities to use**. 40% will be taken by continuing separate high needs grants out to special schools and AP. The DfE has said that HNB allocations will work between a 7% pp floor and a 10% pp ceiling in 2025/26. So, this does mean more money, but the sums involved here are not massive in terms of fundamentally improving our HNB forecast. Whilst the DfE has said that additional funding will be provided for schools for the NI increase, it is not at all clear whether additional funding will come to local authorities for our increased NI costs direct and indirect – direct increased central staffing costs (especially in the HNB) and indirect increased charges from independent schools looking to recover their higher salaries costs."

John Eccleston expressed the view that there is a lot currently happening to help Calderdale be more able to cope with the increase in children with complex needs. John is concerned he doesn't know how this is being managed in terms of a very complex change in situation for numbers and the plan. He highlighted that primary head teachers will show concern around anything that takes money from their schools.

Emma reassured Schools Forum that the DSG Management Plan and High Needs Reference group will demonstrate their plans for this. This will show unmitigated costs if we do nothing and the mitigated costs from the actions. Emma will refine the plans and present to Schools Forum at the January meeting.

Dan Burns stressed that there is concern from academies due to the amount of strain and money being expected and Dan thanked Emma for her reassurance around the work being completed. Emma would like to work differently in terms of the models and focus on how the LA operate across the borough. She assured Schools Forum that this there will be a clearer come December.

The Vice Chair declared the basic need entitlement should be a priority and come first. She felt the split for the consultation was due to schools feeling there is a lack of transparency from the LA. For the meeting in January, the Vice Chair would like to have a better understanding of the position we are in, plus a report on Capital Projects including Special Schools. The Vice Chair assumed that if Schools Forum vote against the proposal, the LA would consult with the Secretary of State and the vote would be likely to be overturned.

Mungo Sheppard highlighted to Schools Forum that this time last year, there was very different response from head teacher as they felt there was a lack of clarity but feels this is currently not the case due to seeing how this money would be beneficial. His only reservation is the impact it will have on individual school budgets.

Jemima Flintoff felt it is important to recognise where head teachers feel concern as it is a large amount of money. If the LA are successful, we want to be transparent about our plans and be more frequently with any updates. The LA will be focusing on a review of the SEND bands and will be sharing timelines for the AP and ARP and Capital Projects around SEND to keep schools informed.

## **Vote on proposal to move 0.5 % to High Needs Block**

**Approve - 8**

**Oppose – 3**

**Schools Forum unanimously agree on the £2k estimate carry forward from Growth Fund is used to fund the 0.5% and the methodology on the basis the report is corrected and that basic entitlement comes first.**

A report is to be brought to the January meeting to focus on transparency and keep schools informed. Jane Davy will provide Schools Forum with the actual figures in January once they are known.

### **13. DSG Management Plan Report (Termly Review)**

The High Needs Deficit Reference group will be monitoring this monthly and an updated version of the report will be submitted for Schools Forum in January. The report will be in existence with Schools Forum.

### **14. De-Delegation of School Improvement Functions (Maintained Schools)**

Connie Beirne explained there is an effective School Improvement model providing successful outcomes with pupils and schools. Calderdale have 89.5% schools rated as good and outstanding which shows excellent relationships and working collaboratively. Survey feedback was positive and the self-assessments schools complete for their risk assessments shows a 75% engagement across all schools. Risk assessment is fluid throughout the school year meaning ongoing factors can affect the overall RAG rating. Risk assessments are revisited each year, focusing on children being placed in schools with EHCP and EAL. School clusters monitor this closely. Stakeholders and service providers assure best outcomes for children and engagement of Calderdale schools is at 95% plus. Calderdale have 2 maintained schools which are judged as “Requires Improvement” but Connie is confident during their next inspection this will improve. Connie directed Schools Forum to the 3 models outlined in the report and would like to continue with Model 1.

Mungo Sheppard agreed and commented on the effective system already in place, head teachers value this service and the current model. He feels some support for green RAG rated schools is essential and that the RAG rating system overall is not fit for purpose, especially around the attainment data and narrowing gaps.

Phil Hannah Q: What are the daily costs of the associated to provide support?  
£550 a day. The funding will not be increased and is expected to come from schools however, they receive this back by gaining a free service.

John Eccleston agreed with Mungo Sheppard. He has an interest in this item and agrees we need to keep implementing the model already in place. Rachel Harling and Gareth Morris also agree and commented the support is invaluable.

**Schools Forum maintained representatives unanimously agreed on Model 1.**

### **15. De-Delegation of Union Facilities Funding 2025-26**

Hamish Heald is asking Schools Forum to decide on the options put forward and if the central budget could be used to help reduce the deficit in part or in total. The decision will impact pupil rates going forward.

Vice Chair Q: What is the rationale with regards to the different rates for Primary and Secondary pupils?

The presumption is that it follows the NFF where secondary per pupil funding is more than primary schools. Hamish wants to focus on a phased increase of primary per pupil funding to moving closer to the secondary amount. The gap will become wider as times goes on by increasing per percentage. Other LA's have a flat rate for all their pupils.

Vice Chair Q: What is the evidence of the costs incurred in the primary and secondary sector to establish the differences per pupil?

The differential is based on the funding coming in and there is no data on the facilities time used. They (the unions) make themselves available to all schools who pay in to facilities time.

Vice Chair Q: Has the exercise started with those academies that do not buy in on establishing if they are compliant? I encourage the academy representatives of Schools Forum to check they are compliant to be more economical as I see the value of facilities time.

Yes, the exercise is a big focus this year. There is support from regional officers who are taking the lead on this. There are currently negotiations with TLT and we feel close to establishing a better understanding. We have met with Mick Kay at Impact Multi Academy Trust and had a conversation with Greater Heights Academy Trust. This was positive and they will be rejoining the scheme however they are not currently compliant and will require a level of facilities arrangements in current formats. This could be due to a lack of understanding the scheme.

Vice Chair Q: What is the logic for asking for the deficit to be funded from the central budget, the central budget must benefit all schools?

We are considering different ways to help schools without having to put up the per pupil charge to cover the deficit. It does benefit all schools and academies are invited to join and this was just a suggestion for Schools Forum to consider.

Vice Chair Q: Can information on income/expenditure per annum & carry forward deficits be provided?

I will send the Union Facilities I & E for 22-24 and 23 – 24 document to be distributed with the minutes.

Vice Chair Q: How can we vote on the secondary per pupil funding if there are no secondary school forum members at the meeting to represent?

Calder High and Todmorden High continue to be maintained schools. The Union representative thought that the Chair would have the casting vote if no secondary members were represented. The Legal Officer advised that the Chair could only vote if there had been a non majority vote. Moving forward, this could be a good reason to have a flat rate for all pupils so that the voting was by both primary and secondary jointly.

Rachel Harling Q: If academies join, could charges exceed costs and if so what would the actions be?

The surplus would be taken to next year, hopefully this can reduce that cost or keep as the same flat rate.

The Vice Chair asked for comments from Schools Forum on using the central budget to fund the deficit. She feels the central budget should not be used for union facilities due to it accumulating over the last few years. She highlighted that academies in the scheme will be underpaying and that is only fair that a methodology is adopted whereby the deficit is recuperated from them and maintained schools.

Gareth Morris has declared a previous interest in this item due to being a member of NEU. He highlighted that the amount was not set at the correct level in the past. Looking to the future he presumes there is a mechanism for setting budget.

Gareth Morris Q: Will the proposal ensure the money is correctly distributed in the future? Is the money being allocated going where it is needed? The money not being allocated correctly is leading to some unions being under resourced and some not using the overpayment.

Unions are currently having conversations with the LA around a new agreement for the facilities due to the current one being set in 2012. There will be a focus on the correct amount of facilities time being distributed. Unions have been asked to submit their membership numbers to Jane Davy. This will be discussed in the coming weeks and months leading to a recalculation which could affect the budget. If gaining more trust for the pooled arrangements is successful, there will be more facilities time available.

**Schools' Forum Primary representatives unanimously agreed to support the delegation for Primary Schools .**

**A report is to come back the meeting in January and representation from Secondary is needed as a priority to vote.**

## **16. Options Paper on Contingency Fund and Calderdale Headteachers Health and Wellbeing strategy 2025-2028**

Connie Beirne updated Schools Forum that there are 19 new head teacher this academic year. She would like there to be a focus on valuing and supporting existing head teachers and creating succession planning. The networks for primary and secondary school head teachers being run by 2 associates has been well met and the feedback has been positive. The Sowerby Bridge cluster want to conduct a Health and Wellbeing conference on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2025 for primary head teachers. The conference would cost £2520, CPHA agreed each cluster would fund £30 per head towards the conference. Connie is asking for a £5k contribution towards running the conference to support and maintain our existing head teachers and for CPHA and CASH to launch a strategy at their summer conferences which Connie would be involved in.

John Eccleston felt this should be supported due to the current pressures on head teachers and it would be positive for them to take advantage of this. Brenda Monteith will endorse this as she also understands the support needed for head teachers. Rachel Harling commented that head teacher are a valuable resource, we need to support them and it is a small amount to be able to do this.



**Schools Forum unanimously agreed to funding £5k towards the Calderdale Headteachers Health and Wellbeing conference to support the new strategy.**

**17. Scheme for Financing Schools (Maintained Schools)**

The data was updated during school holidays and has been published on the schools intranet for consultation. Jane Davy updated the insurance however, there are no actual changes to the scheme and no directed changed from the ESFA. Jane Davy will arrange this to be posted to the Schools Forum website for members to view.

**18. Any Other Business**

Questions to be submitted a **minimum** 3 days prior to the meeting in writing to:

[CalderdaleSchoolsForum@calderdale.gov.uk](mailto:CalderdaleSchoolsForum@calderdale.gov.uk)

Questions will only be permitted if relevant to the business of the Forum and at the discretion of the Forum Chair.

**19. Future Dates**

16 January 2025

24 April 2025

3 July 2025

All meetings will start at 4pm

Venue: virtual Teams Meeting