

# EDUCATION SERVICE: MEETING OF CARDIFF SCHOOLS' BUDGET FORUM



**Time:** 8.30am – 10.30am  
**Date:** 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2019  
**Location:** Committee Room 4

## DRAFT AGENDA

Ref	Item	Category	Lead
1	Apologies & welcome to the SBF	Standing item	Chair
2	Minutes from previous meeting (16 <sup>h</sup> October 2019) and matters arising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Budget Process 2020/21 Update</li></ul>	Standing item (papers attached)	Chair
3	Ensuring Access to Education	Information and Discussion	Mike Tate
4	ICT grant and sustainability model	Information and Discussion (presentation attached)	Neil Hardee
5	Asset Renewal	Information and Discussion	Richard Portas
6	Any Other Business	Standing item	Chair

Future Meeting Dates:

### 2020

15.01.2020 (SLA following)

11.03.2020

08.07.2020 (SLA following)

# EDUCATION DIRECTORATE

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CARDIFF SCHOOLS' BUDGET FORUM



**Time:** 8.30am – 10.30am  
**Date:** 27<sup>th</sup> November 2019  
**Location:** Committee Room 4, County Hall  
**Present:** Sarah Griffiths - Chair (SG), Cllr Sarah Merry, Cllr Chris Weaver, Cllr Joel Williams (JW), Nick Batchelar (NB), Mike Tate (MT), Richard Portas (RP), Rob Green (RG), Neil Hardee (NH), Marc Belli (MB), Angela Jardine (AJ), Andrew Skinner (AS), Nic Naish (NN), Patrick Brunnock (PB), Ivor Gittins (IG), Suzanne Williams (SW), Ann Griffin (AG), Jane Marchesi (JM), Jane Setchfield (JS), David Silver (DS), Mari Phillips (MP), Louise Bloom – Clerk (LB)

**Apologies:** Ian Allwood (IA), John Hayes (JH), Jane Counsell (JC), David Harris (DH), Geraldine Foley (GF), Kevin Hart (KH), Karen Dell'Armi (KA), Abigail Beacon (AB), Sara Allen (SA), Tracey Stephens (TS), Adrian Dinsmore (AD), Sarah Parry (SP), Diane Gill (DG), Wayne Murphy (WM)

Ref	Conclusions/Actions	Who
1	<b>Apologies and welcome</b>	
1.1	The Chair welcomed members and accepted apologies.	
2	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising</b>	
2.2	The minutes of the meeting held on 16 <sup>th</sup> October 2019 were agreed as a true record.	
2.3	<u>Matters arising</u>	
2.4	NH noted the SLA meeting due to follow SBF has been deferred to 15 <sup>th</sup> January.  Minute 2.4:  <u>MTFP Group</u>  NH advised the next meeting of the MTFP group would take place on the morning of 17 <sup>th</sup> December; an invitation will be circulated to members by the end of the week.  <u>School Balances</u>  NH reported officers would meet the fourteen schools in excess of the local thresholds before the end of term.	NH        NH/RG
2.5	Minute 2.5: MEAG	

	NH circulated a letter, drafted by Alan Evans, urging the minister to confirm MEAG funding for 2020/21, requesting the overall level of funding be increased to take into account increased learner numbers, and staffing costs. Cllr Merry will write to the minister, echoing the concerns, following the Purdah period.	
2.6	Minute 2.6: RP discussed contingency fund redistribution in agenda item five.	
2.7	Minute 2.7: Health & Safety Pilot  RP reported discussions from the previous meeting have been passed on to Donna Jones.	
2.8	Minute 3.1 Budget Process 2020/21  RG explained due to the upcoming election on 12 <sup>th</sup> December the budget process has paused. A provisional settlement is expected on 16 <sup>th</sup> December, with WG setting their budget the same day. Final settlement is expected on 25 <sup>th</sup> February, two days before Council. As timelines are tight, finance officers have requested no change from provisional to final settlement. Consultation is anticipated in January.	
2.9	Minute 5: Post 16  NH updated:  A schools audit undertaken for post 16 provision found figures to be inflated. Therefore, this year's funding, incorporating the additional funding of £408,000 will be redistributed. An additional £100k available from WG for 6 <sup>th</sup> form teacher pensions will be distributed once received. MB thanked officers for undertaking the task.	
3	<b>Ensuring Access to Education</b>	
3.1	MT drew attention to work undertaken by the authority on the number of pupils not accessing education and looking at the reasons behind this. Some schools are not accepting pupils and some pupils are not able to attend. As a result, there are actions for the authority and for schools.  It was noted considerable money is given to schools for step three/four provision and consistency across schools is being sought. Some schools are oversubscribed. It was pointed out pupils should access a full provision where they can and receive support.  As part of the work, MT will give a presentation on protocol, process and statutory guidelines at primary and secondary head-teacher conferences prior to Christmas. A document asking for feedback will be circulated to head-teachers before the conferences. He thanked headteachers for their help with the hard to place panel, which has shown progression.  MB pointed out that some pupils admitted to schools lack pastoral support plans, which puts staff and pupils in a vulnerable position. MT gave assurances	

	<p>the reasons why pupils have been out of school for some time will be considered and the right support will be given to the school that takes on the child. MB welcomed the support and would challenge when schools are coerced to take on children by assistant head-teachers as the receiver should feel that they are in a position to help. MT held the view position of KPI's would allow consistency of protocol, at present statutory guidelines are not being followed, subsequently there would be consequences. The authority will work with head-teachers.</p> <p>Members raised concerns on lack of provision, officers detailed that over £500,000 of provision has been put in place for forty-seven hard to place pupils.</p> <p>Cllr JW shared the concerns, welcomed the work being undertaken and asked that officers engage with school governors and unions. He recommended circumstances be taken into account and risk assessments completed to mitigate risk of attacks to staff and pupils. MT agreed transparency of the system is critical to move forward.</p> <p>Cllr SM reminded members that the meeting is a budget forum and non-financial topics would be better discussed in the Education Strategy forum. She took the view however that the outcome of children if they stay out of education is extremely poor, with a blighted future and there is a collective responsibility. If pupils are not in education, financial costs show on a balance sheet but the big cost is human.</p> <p>NN drew attention to a lack of communication to schools of pupils' not in school for some time and asked for pre-communication so the school can prepare for their needs. The primary school has some year seven pupils as they do not have a place yet, which affects the primary school children. MT reiterated the system would be open, transparent and clear.</p> <p>MB suggested all schools give a percentage of funds to provide a provision for pupils out of education. MT welcomed input on the document being circulated to head-teachers.</p>	
4	<b>ICT grant and sustainability model</b>	
4.1	<p>NH referred to £50m funding from WG to expand Hwb, the Welsh Government programme for improving the use of digital technology for teaching and learning in schools. Of this, Cardiff has £700k to facilitate spend and £4.3m to spend through the national catalogue. £5m is available to spend before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019.</p> <p>Next year £30m will be allocated to Wales and £20m the following year. As a condition of the funding, authorities are asked to sign up to achieving a sustainable model across all their maintained schools. To work towards this, an ICT digital strategy group has been created, meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> November. Head-teachers from primary, secondary and special schools will attend the strategy group. The digital strategy will be refreshed and will report to the Education Strategy group. ICT leads will also be invited to attend the group.</p>	

	<p>All pupils are looked to be competent with technology by 2030. For every two children, at least one device will be available and the use of Hwb platform is to be utilised. It was noted every child in Wales has access to a Microsoft licence.</p> <p>An audit has been undertaken for every school capturing the current ICT structure and high-level requirements will be submitted to WG. Purchases, bought by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 need to be installed by the end of the academic year.</p> <p>Although not every school would receive the same in the first round as some schools have invested heavily in ICT, every school's infrastructure will be brought to a minimum level. The WG national procurement framework will be shared once known. A sustainable funding model for Cardiff and ICT SLA will be discussed further. It is hoped devices would have a life cycle of three to four years and infrastructure seven to ten years. At present schools appear to spend £3m annually on ICT, with varying results.</p> <p>JS welcomed funding for ICT, pointing out staff training is key to ensure staff are able to use the resources and packages and questioned if resources are set aside for staff training. NH confirmed some element of the funding is for training and CSC will be asked to factor in training from the beginning.</p> <p>JS recommended teachers test the packages to ensure they are fit for purpose and questioned whether the funding for the Customer Engagement post recently identified would be from this funding. NH responded the number of roles in ICT will be considered and is unknown at present.</p> <p>NH pointed out the financial security of partners is a risk, controls on parameters and conditions would be put in place.</p> <p>RP reported Nant Caerau Primary would be a pilot school; other schools may visit to see how it is working and consider the benefits/pitfalls. He hopes to pilot more primary schools. Each school's needs will be looked at individually.</p> <p>Members made the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Children could bring their own device and the school buy devices for those children not able to bring in theirs.</li> <li>· A third party working relationship broke-down due to communication.</li> </ul> <p>NB echoed the points made; the area of business will be reset, approaching investment and infrastructure together, led by pedagogical imagination, aspiration of education and use of technology. Regular updates will be brought back to the forum.</p>	<p>NH</p> <p>NH</p>
5	<b>Asset Renewal</b>	
5.1	<p>RP noted a balance of c£500k in the contingency fund. The fund supports schools in low value work the school cannot afford. Feedback received indicated difficulty in accessing the funds. A survey will therefore be circulated to schools asking whether to continue the contingency fund or remove and redistribute the money back to schools. Feedback is requested before</p>	

	<p>Christmas for a decision in February in preparation for the new financial year.</p> <p>The Chair pointed out schools have paid into the SLA fund and redistribution would need to be fair and appropriate.</p> <p>RP noted there has been a significant review of asset renewal and resources, a number of changes are being worked through including ICT, One Front Door and communication. The one front door system provides one point of contact. An annual programme for the end of year will be communicated.</p> <p>He pointed out this year there has been an underspend of £6.5m, next year spend will increase significantly, focusing on safeguarding, H&amp;S, fire improvement and a sufficiency model. RG explained the underspend is largely due to a capital grant received from WG at the end of last financial year, resulting in funding being displaced and then rolled forward to following years.</p> <p>JW raised a concern regarding the active travel policy; the Chair asked this be taken to the Education Strategy group. RP added highways would be part of the programme next year.</p> <p>NN requested a breakdown of work addressed so far and costs.</p> <p>RP advised he would talk through proposals and staffing implications, presently being discussed with unions, at a future meeting.</p>	RP
6.	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
6.1	<p>AS referred to a letter written to NB raising concerns on funding and impact on provision. NB took the position that although budgets are challenging, over the last five years better outcomes are being delivered on less resources. He pointed out at the end of the last financial year schools held significant concerns, but significant carry forwards from the primary sector. AS commented that staff sickness levels at Marlborough school have increased, he believes because of less support staff.</p> <p>Cllr SM noted the authority has tried to protect education as far as possible, but with significant cuts balancing the budget is challenging, a change in public finances would be welcomed.</p> <p>NH asked AS whether the extent of variants exasperated problems and if he feels the school is in a better position for upcoming plans, he confirmed with spend, yes.</p>	
7	<b>Date of next meeting:</b> 15 <sup>th</sup> January 2020	