

**EDUCATION AND YOUTH OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**19 JANUARY 2016**

Minutes of the meeting of the Education and Youth Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold on Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2016

**PRESENT: Councillor Ian Roberts (Chairman)**

Councillors: Paul Cunningham, Andy Dunbobbin, Colin Legg, Phil Lightfoot, David Healey, Vicky Perfect, Nigel Steele-Mortimer and Carolyn Thomas

**CO-OPTED MEMBERS:** Janine Beggan, David Hytch, Rebecca Stark and Bernard Stuart.

**SUBSTITUTION:** Councillor Hilary McGuill (for Nancy Matthews)

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors: Marion Bateman, Adele Davies-Cooke, Dave Mackie and Rev. John Thelwell

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillor Bernie Attridge

**CONTRIBUTORS:** Councillor Aaron Shotton, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Chris Bithell, Cabinet Member for Education, Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Education and Youth), Corporate Finance Manager and Finance Manager (Education)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Education and Youth Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Overview & Scrutiny Support Officer

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Chair welcomed Mr Bernard Stuart to his first meeting as a co-opted member.

**55. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

Councillor David Healey declared a personal interest in agenda item 3 - 2016/17 Budget for the Education & Youth Portfolio as he was a Trustee of Homestart Flintshire who have received funding from Family First in the past.

Janine Beggan, David Hytch and Rebecca Stark also declared a personal interest in agenda item 3 – 2016/17 Budget for the Education & Youth Portfolio due to the close association of family members who accessed the school music service.

**56. 2016/17 BUDGET FOR THE EDUCATION & YOUTH PORTFOLIO**

The Chairman welcomed the contributors to the meeting.

Prior to the commencement of the presentation, the Chief Officer (Education & Youth) reported that whilst there were no new proposals within the proposed 2016/17 budget for the Education & Youth Portfolio, there was an undertaking to keep the Committee informed during the 2016/17 budget process, therefore it was felt appropriate to provide the Committee with feedback from the

meeting of the School Budget Forum meeting held on 8 January, 2016. A copy of the feedback from the School Budget Forum was attached to the report at appendix 1.

The Chief Executive reported that Cabinet had approved on 19<sup>th</sup> January measures to close the gap through corporate solutions. The Cabinet report, which contained detailed information on the provisional settlement, would be considered at the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2016. A copy of the Cabinet report would be sent to all Members following the meeting.

The Leader of the Council commented on the financial pressures within the Education budget, specifically around pension contributions and pay increases. He outlined the Council's commitments to continue to protect the Education budget as much as possible without impacting on other service areas.

The Chief Executive began the presentation which covered the following areas:-

- Purpose of today's meeting
- Settlement Context
- Settlement Headlines

The Chief Officer (Education & Youth) and Finance Manager continued the detailed presentation which covered the following areas:-

- Service Business Plan Proposals (Schools)
- Service Business Plan Proposals (Education & Youth (excluding schools))
- Local Pressures and Inflation
- Schools Allocations
- Education Grants 2016/17
- Next steps and timescales

The Chief Officer (Education & Youth) provided a detailed explanation on the proposal from the Welsh Government (WG) to incorporate the Education Improvement Grant into the Revenue Support Grant (RSG). An announcement on this was expected in April, 2016. He also reported that the Young People's Co-ordinator would be making recommendations to the Operational Board on how the reduction in Families First Grant would be managed.

**The comments and questions which were raised by Members of the Committee on the presentation, together with the responses given, are detailed in Appendix 1 (attached).**

**RESOLVED:**

That the presentation be noted.

**57. ATTENDANCE BY MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no members of the public and one member of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 2.00 pm and ended at 3.02pm)

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**Chairman**

**2016/17 Budget Consultation****Education & Youth Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2016**

<b>Member Comment/Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
<p>Within the service business plan proposals it identified £523,000 savings. This differs to the £741,000 savings which were initially identified in December, 2015. Could an explanation be provided on why the identified savings have changed?</p>	<p>The initial savings identified in December, 2015 has reduced slightly as a result of the revised savings within the school music service from £61,000 to £30,000. The remaining gap is the £187,000 proposed savings through school modernisation which is shown separately as this comes under the separate schools delegated budget.</p>
<p>During the recent Children's Service Forum meeting, concerns were raised around the withdrawal of financial support to Looked After Children (LAC) leaving care and starting University. Why has this funding been withdrawn as it is a small amount of young people needing this support?</p>	<p>The only change proposed within the Education &amp; Youth portfolio affecting LAC is around the role of the LAC Education Officer. This funding may have been withdrawn because of the withdrawal of a specific grant.</p> <p>We will look into this and report back.</p>
<p>Could you provide a breakdown of the £187,000 proposed savings for school modernisation?</p>	<p>The £187,000 is a saving which has been projected by the Education Finance Team through the funding formula for individual schools. This figure includes the projected savings from the amalgamation of the infants and junior schools in Holywell and school re-organisation of Ysgol Maes Edwin, Ysgol Llanfynydd and Ysgol Mornant. The acceptability and deliverability has been assessed as a red risk as they require Cabinet decisions which are yet to be made.</p>
<p>With regard to Additional Learning Needs funding being fully delegated to schools, how does this effect the management of contracts of employment for support staff?</p>	<p>The management of contracts of employment for support staff will fall on the individual schools and the model is in line with the one adopted by many English and Welsh Local Authorities. Plans are in place to ensure that there are adequate support mechanisms from Finance and Human Resources to assist schools with</p>

	reducing budgets.
Concerned that the announcement on whether the Education Improvement Grant will be transferred to the RSG and what the likely reduction will be will not be made by the Welsh Government until April.	<p>The advice being given to individual schools is similar to the advice given for the 2015/16 budget, which is, to assume a certain reduction in the grant. The Council have spoken to officers within the Welsh Government who have confirmed that they are not looking to destabilise the grant, therefore the assumption is that the reduction won't be too high.</p> <p>The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) are also concerned about the timescales in announcing the Education Improvement Grant funding for each Local Authority and this will be raised again at a meeting with the WLGA in the next coming days.</p>