

TO: **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

14 December 2017

FROM: **EDUCATION BOARD**

9 November 2017

7. PROPOSED EDUCATION BUDGET FOR 2018/19

Members agreed to vary the order of items on the agenda so that Item 21 (Proposed Education Budget) 2018/19) was moved into public session and considered next.

Members considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services regarding the proposed Education Budget for 2018/19 and the following points were made.

- The Chamberlain noted that the proposed budget involved an increase just over £1m based on an increase of the City Premium Grant to each full secondary and primary school in the City of London Academies Trust, composed of £250k per secondary and £100k per primary.
- The City of London Academies Trust Chief Executive Officer (COLAT CEO) noted that the City was currently the top performing sponsor in the United Kingdom and the proposed increase would allow the Trust to maintain that position. The interventions funded by the City Premium Grants would be mainly academic and pastoral, and resources would be targeted at the most disadvantaged children.
- A Member expressed three concerns with the proposal. First, he was not clear from where the additional £1m would be funded. Second, the report contained no details on the interventions that the City Premium Grants would secure. Third, if approved the additional funding ran the risk of the City being accused of utilising resources that were unavailable to other academy trusts or local authorities, which would be difficult to rationalise and defend in the absence of clear information on the source of the monies and the reasoning underpinning how and where they were applied.
- In response, the Chairman noted that the Away Day in January 2018 would provide an opportunity to align the Education Strategy with the proposed 2018/19 budget, and agreed with the fact that a significant increase in spend would potentially have reputational impact for the City that would have to be managed. Equally he felt that the Board should not be afraid to make clear that maintaining the City's premier status as an academy sponsor entailed the application of commensurate resources. The Chamberlain added that the proposed increase represented new spend that would have to be approved by the City's Policy and Resources Committee.
- A Member reiterated that he would welcome the submission of data to Members underpinning the proposed increase. In particular he queried how the figures of £250k and £100k for secondary and primary schools were arrived at and sought a better understanding on what the funds might be spent on. The COLAT CEO noted that it would be possible to secure that data, but a complicating factor was that interventions each year were identified by each academy school on the basis of data that was published towards the end of the previous academic year and that this information was only available after the City had set its budget for the relevant year.
- The Director of Community and Children's Services noted that school interventions often had positive impact beyond the individual pupil and school community. For example, positive behaviours were often passed on to siblings and peers in the wider local community.

- The Chairman requested that a report be brought to the Board in March 2018 detailing how the 2017/18 City Premium Grant was spent and recommending how the 2018/19 CPG would be allocated by recipient schools.
- A Member noted that it was important for Board Members to act as ambassadors for the work of the City Family of Schools and requested that the Board be provided with concise briefing note so they were in a better position to articulate to other Members of the Court and more generally, the importance to the City Schools of items such as the City Premium Grant.

RESOLVED, that Members:

- Approve the proposed Education Budget for the 2018/19 Financial Year, **subject to Policy and Resources Committee approval.**
- Note the longer-term funding implications of any budget decisions, including further funding requirements in future years as new academies are opened.
- Receive a report be brought to the March 2018 Education Board explaining how the 2017/18 City Premium Grant was spent and to the July 2018 meeting explaining how the 2018/19 Grant would be allocated.
- Receive a briefing note setting out the advantages derived from the funding the City offers to the City's family of schools.