

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Schools Forum held on Wednesday, 15 February 2017 at 4.30pm in the Guildhall, Portsmouth

Present

Karen Stocks	Head Teacher	Nurseries
Jackie Collins	Head Teacher	Primary
Sue Wilson	Head Teacher	Primary
David Jeapes, Chair	Head Teacher	Secondary
Ian Hunkin	Head Teacher	Special
Steve Labeledz	Academy	Secondary
Clive Good	Governor	Primary
Steve Sheehan	Governor	Primary
Lynne Stagg	Councillor	Liberal Democrat
Colin Galloway	Councillor	UKIP
Carole Damper		Early Years Providers
Stella Mbubaegbu		16-19 Representative

7. Apologies

Apologies were received from Alison Beane, Fiona Calderbank, Gareth Hughes, Bruce Marr and Councillor Neill Young.

8. Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

9. Membership Changes.

Richard Webb, Finance Manager informed members of the following changes:

- Karen Stocks had been reappointed to represent head teachers in the nursery phase.
- Sue Wilson had been reappointed to represent head teachers in the primary phase.
- Carole Damper will be stepping down as the representative for the early years' providers after the meeting. Anthony Harper will be organising the appointment of a new representative.

10. Minutes and matters arising from the previous meeting held on 18 January 2017.

DECISION: the Schools Forum agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2017.

Matters Arising.

Agenda item 52:

The two outstanding responses had been received and will be reviewed.

Julia Katherine will present an update on the pressures, developments and changes to High Needs in October.

11. 2017 - 2018 Early years funding arrangements.

Richard Webb introduced the report and added that at the Cabinet Portfolio meeting on 13 February, the Cabinet Member for Education had:

Approved the proposed local early years funding formula for 3 and 4 year olds, as set out within this report *and agreed that this should be reviewed as part of the budget setting process for 2018-19; with recognition of the hourly funding rate provided by the DfE.*

(The highlighted text shows the wording added to the recommendation).

This was in addition to the agreeing the other recommendations in his report.

The Schools Forum is therefore also asked to consider endorsing the amended recommendation c as set out above.

In response to questions, Anthony Harper, Service Manager: Early Year's and Children's Centres (Central Locality) and Richard Webb clarified the following points:

- Two nurseries in the north of the city are expanding. The council is reasonably confident that there will be sufficient places to meet demand.
- A letter had been presented and a deputation made to the Cabinet Member for Education. The providers explained that they felt that the national funding level was insufficient, but recognised that the Council was allocating as much funding as it could.
- The Cabinet Member has agreed that a representation be made by the Council to the DfE, to draw their attention to the concerns of some providers that the move to 30 funded hours, at the funding level proposed nationally, may reduce opportunities for cross subsidy which have benefitted providers in the past; and the need to keep under review the financial viability of sufficient provision to meet the needs of the city.
- The Cabinet Member has also agreed that the Council will explore the options available to it for supporting providers, by mitigating where possible, the increases in the provider cost base
- Any underspends on the Early Years budgets be treated in the same way as they currently are within the DSG.

Ms Damper added that providers had expressed concern regarding the significant increase in business rates.

Action

An update on the actions agreed by the Cabinet Member to be brought to a future meeting.

DECISIONS

School Members and the Early Years representative:

- a. Noted the changes made by the Department for Education to the Early Years national funding formula, following the results of the national**

consultation which closed on 22 September 2016, as summarised within this report.

- b. Noted the results of the local consultation with early years providers as set out in Appendix 1.
- c. Endorsed the proposed local early years funding formula for 3 and 4 year olds, as set out within this report and agreed that this should be reviewed as part of the budget setting process for 2018-19; with recognition of the hourly funding rate provided by the DfE.
- d. Endorsed the proposed changes to the local 2 year old funding arrangements for 2017-18 as set out within the report.
- e. Noted the work being undertaken by the Early Years Team to ensure providers are aware of potential future levels of funding, and to help providers develop their service provision to enable them to mitigate the impact of any potential reductions in funding.
- f. Agreed the funding held centrally to support the determination of the eligibility of early years pupils for prescribed early years provision, early years pupil premium and free schools meals.
- g. Endorsed the proposed changes to the Dedicated Schools Grant Budget for 2017-18 as set out in Appendix 3.

(All agreed unanimously).

12. Dedicated schools grant budget monitoring for the third quarter 2016-17.

Richard Webb introduced the report and in response to questions he and Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director of Children's Services explained that

- The final closing position for Redwood was not known yet.
- The increasing cost of out of city placements was due to both the increasing complexity of children's needs and the increasing provider costs.
- The pressure on the Post-16 budgets would be ongoing because the duty of care had been extended to 25.

DECISION the Schools Forum noted the forecast year-end budget position for the Dedicated Schools Grant as at the end 31 December 2016, together with the associated explanations contained within this report.

13. Future school revenue funding arrangements.

Richard Webb introduced the report and in response to questions explained that the DfE's illustrative funding examples for Portsmouth, showed an overall increase in funding for the city under the proposed funding arrangements. However there was some concern that the proposed distribution of the deprivation funding is creating a reduction in funding for the most deprived schools in the city.

Richard also advised that the further investigation into the proposed funding floor protection mechanism is required and it is unclear as to how long it will remain in place.

Alison Jeffery, Director of Children's Services explained that lobbying had started elsewhere and that Portsmouth should be louder in its response to the

consultation. She said that Portsmouth as a whole would benefit from the proposed national formula arrangements, although our concerns need to be expressed in relation to the deprivation funding proposals. The council's response to the DfE should therefore need to highlight these points more clearly.

The Chair noted that there would be one response from the Local Authority and one from the Schools Forum. In general terms the Forum is happy with the formula and direction but was concerned about the proposals relating to the deprivation funding allocation. He asked that Forum members provide feedback for the consultation response to Richard by early March.

The Forum noted that primary schools would lose a considerable amount of their budget.

DECISIONS The Schools Forum:

- a. **Noted the Department for Education's proposed changes to the school funding arrangements and the potential impact of these changes, as set out within this report; and in particular that:**

2018-19

- i. **2018-19 will be a transitional year. Funding to Local Authorities will be allocated on a national formula basis, but Local Authorities will continue to distribute funding to schools based on a local formula.**
- ii. **The 'Schools Block' funding will be ring-fenced within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).**
- iii. **The creation of a new 'Central Schools Services Block' which will include the 'retained duties' element of the Education Services Grant (ESG).**
- iv. **The introduction in 2018-19 of a formulaic method for distributing High Needs funding from central to local government.**
- v. **The mechanism for allocating place funding to Resourced Units will be changing.**
- vi. **The proposed flexibility for local authorities to transfer funds, from the funding schools are due to receive through the schools formula to their high needs budget**

2019-20

- vii. **The implementation of a single National Funding Formula from 2019-20 (at a school level), with funding being passed directly by the Education Funding Agency.**

- b. **Endorsed the proposed draft submission of the response to stage 2, of the Department for Education's consultation, as shown at Appendix 1; subject to finalisation of the responses indicated and to specifically highlight the local concerns regarding the proposed distribution and weighting of the individual deprivation funding factors and the impact on individual schools; whilst recognising that the illustrative DfE examples show that overall Portsmouth would benefit from the proposed national formula arrangements.**

(All agreed unanimously).

14. Any other business.

Members agreed the following meeting dates:

24 May 2017

12 July 2017

18 October 2017

13 December 2017

(All meetings start at 4.30pm, except the 18 October which starts at 5pm)

There was no other business.

The meeting concluded at 5:30pm.

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Chair