

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Schools Forum held on Wednesday, 27 September 2017 at 4.30pm in the Civic Offices.

Present

Jackie Collins	Head Teacher	Primary
Dave Jones	Head Teacher	Primary
Sue Wilson	Head Teacher	Primary
Gareth Hughes	Head Teacher	Secondary
David Jeapes, Chair	Head Teacher	Secondary
Ian Hunkin	Head Teacher	Special
Clive Good	Governor	Primary
Steve Sheehan	Governor	Primary
Alison Beane	Academy	Special
Nys Hardingham (for Steve Labedz)	Academy	Secondary
Suzy Horton	Councillor	Liberal Democrats
Colin Galloway	Councillor	UKIP
Kara Jewell		Early Years' Representative

28. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Fiona Calderbank, Steve Labedz (Nys Hardingham deputising), Bruce Marr, Stella Mbubaegbu, Karen Stocks and Councillor Neill Young.

29. Declarations of Interest.

Richard Webb, Finance Manager informed members that he will be temporarily acting as Finance Manager for Adult Social Care and Public Health. In his absence, Beverley Pennekett, will be acting as Finance Manager for the Children's Finance Team and have responsibility for Schools Forum and the school funding arrangements.

The Chair wished him well in his new role.

Beverley Pennekett declared the following non-prejudicial interest: she is a governor at Mayfield and Harbour Schools and is a trustee at the University Technical College.

30. Membership Changes.

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

Leavers.

Councillor Lynne Stagg, Liberal Democrat Party.

Joiners.

Councillor Suzy Horton, Liberal Democrat Party.

Vacancies

One Primary Academy representative.

Two Academy Secondary representatives.

One Labour Party representative.

One Independent Group representative.

The tenures for Fiona Calderbank and Clive Good come to an end on 23rd October and 4th November respectively.

31. Minutes and matters arising from the previous meeting held on 12 July 2017.

DECISION

The Schools Forum agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2017.

Matters Arising.

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

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Anthony Harper will provide an update to the Schools Forum Meeting in September in respect of the Early Years Provision. As the data is still being collected the update will come to a future meeting.

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The responses to the questions raised had been circulated.

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It is understood that the letter was not issued, as the proposed action was overtaken by events. Further documents have now been published in respect of the new funding arrangements. Further details of which are covered in item 7 on this agenda.

32. Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring Report - First Quarter 2017/18.

Richard Webb introduced the report.

In response to questions, he explained that his team is preparing detailed forecasts based on the latest available, both to supporting the budget monitoring processes for this financial year, as well as the forecast budget requirements for 2018-19. Further details will be reported within the future budget monitoring reports.

DECISION

The Schools Forum:

- 1. Noted the forecast year-end budget position for the Dedicated Schools Grant as at the end 30th June 2017, together with the associated explanations contained within this report.**
- 2. Endorsed the decision to delegate authority to the Section 151 officer to make the necessary adjustments to Dedicated Schools Grant budgets throughout the year, to reflect the conversion of schools to academy status.**
(Agreed unanimously).

33. Special Schools Element 3 Top-Up Banding Descriptors.

Julia Katherine, Head of Inclusion and Alison Egerton, Group Accountant introduced the report.

Members discussed the potential financial risks involved in the new banded funding model.

In response to questions, the Forum was informed that:

- The band headings have been discussed and agreed with the special schools head teachers. Additionally, the proposals contained within the report were agreed by the Cabinet Member for Education on the 14th September.
- An increase in the number of school referrals is not expected. However, this will be monitored and if it becomes unaffordable, officers would look at amending the funding rates.
- There are few pupils on the lower bands.
- The impact on mainstream schools of having SEN pupils will be examined in the SEN Strategic review.
- In response to a question, Julia clarified that the majority of pupils may not necessarily be on the 'Core' funding band. Pupils will be allocated to a 'band' based on their level of need.

Actions

- An update will be brought to the February meeting detailing the number of referrals received over the last 12 months, as well as the number of pupils that are currently on funding rates that are lower than that for the new core band.

DECISIONS

The Schools Forum:

- 1. Endorsed the decision of the Cabinet Member for Education to approve the introduction of the new banding descriptors for new pupils as set out in Appendix 1 from the start of the new academic year in September 2017.**
- 2. Endorsed the decision of the Cabinet Member for Education to approve the Element 3 Top-up funding rates allocated to the new banding descriptors as set out in Appendix 2 from the start of the new academic year in September 2017 and for the financial year 2018-19.**
- 3. Endorsed the decision of the Cabinet Member for Education to approve the Element 3 top-up rates for 2018-19 as set out in Appendix 3 for those pupils continuing at the Special Schools and funded via the current A to H banding framework.**
- 4. Note that the financial impact of the proposed changes will continue to be monitored both centrally and at a school level; and that both Redwood Park and Willows school funding will be reviewed in Summer 2018 due to the changing complexities of the children in these schools.**

(all agreed unanimously).

34. Future School Funding Arrangements.

Richard Webb introduced the report and explained that the Cabinet Member for Education endorsed the proposals for implementing the funding formula arrangements at her decision meeting on 14th September.

Beverley Pennekett added that although the government has published further guidance on the 14th September, further technical and supporting information is yet to be published. As soon as this additional information is available, the team will start to analyse and review it.

DECISIONS

The Schools Forum:

- 1. Noted the Department for Education's proposed changes to the school revenue funding arrangements for 2018 to 2019 and 2019 to 2020, as set out in sections 4 and 5.**
- 2. Noted that full national funding formula for 2018 to 2019 and 2019 to 2020 will be confirmed by the Department for Education in September alongside the responses to the national funding formula consultations.**

3. Noted that the Local Authority level allocation for 2018 to 2019 for the schools, central school services and high needs blocks will also be published by the Department for Education in September. Final allocations will follow as usual in December, on the basis of pupil numbers recorded in the October census.

4. Endorsed the proposals for implementing the funding formula arrangements locally as set out in section 6
(agreed unanimously).

35. Future Meeting Date.

Due to the delays in the publication of the technical and supporting information in respect of the future school funding arrangements, it was proposed that the October meeting be cancelled and that an alternative meeting be arranged in November. Following discussion it was agreed that the next meeting take place on:

Tuesday 21st November 2017, 4.30pm, Conference Room A.

The meeting concluded at 5:45pm.

David Jeapes
Chair