

## SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Schools Forum held on Wednesday, 13 December 2017 at 4:30pm in the Civic Offices, Portsmouth

### Present

Jackie Collins	Head Teacher	Primary
Dave Jones	Head Teacher	Primary
Karen Stocks	Head Teacher	Primary
Sue Wilson	Head Teacher	Primary
David Jeapes, Chair	Head Teacher	Secondary
Steve Sheehan	Governor	Secondary
Steve Labedz	Academy	Secondary
Stewart Vaughan	Academy	Secondary
Suzy Horton	Councillor	Liberal Democrats

#### 42. Apologies

Apologies were received from Alison Beane, Councillor Colin Galloway, Gareth Hughes and Bruce Marr.

#### 43. Declarations of Interest

Beverley Pennekett is a governor at Mayfield School and a trustee at the University Technical College.

Steve Sheehan is a governor at Craneswater School.

#### 44. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 21 November 2017.

### DECISION

The Schools Forum agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2017 subject to the following amendment:

**Karen Stocks was present.**

#### Matters Arising.

Page 2 - The letter to primary schools with reception intake has been drafted and will be sent to the 12 schools at the start of the new term.

#### 45. Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring Report for the Second Quarter 2017/18.

Alison Egerton, Group Accountant introduced the report and in response to questions, clarified the following points:

In response to questions from members, she explained that:

- The High Needs block is still under pressure. Officers are currently developing the 2018-19 budget and a report will be brought back to the

January meeting for endorsement and approval. The Department for Education has not yet sent the funding allocation or pupil data which are needed to calculate budgets and allocations for 2018/19.

- Four more schools will have converted to academies by the end of this financial year. A number of others are considering converting next year.

## **DECISION**

### **The Schools Forum:**

- 1. Noted the forecast year-end position for the Dedicated Schools Grant as at the end 30 September 2017, together with the associated explanations contained within this report.**
- 2. Endorsed the necessary adjustments to the Dedicated Schools Grant early years budgets and DSG income budget, to reflect the changes in grant funding due to pupil number changes (*agreed unanimously*).**

#### **46. School Funding Arrangements 2018-2019**

Beverley Pennekett, Finance Manager introduced the report and in response to questions, clarified the following points:

- We should know by January if the cap can be lifted, which will allow "gaining" schools to benefit fully from the formula redistribution .
- The schools contribution towards central services was £11.95 per pupil in 2017/18, for the 7 months from September 2017 to March 2018; it is proposed that this year it will be £20.50, which is the same cost, but pro rata for a full year. Even so, this will not cover the council's costs.
- Officers had attempted to disaggregate the costs of retained duties from overall services, but services have not been costed at that level of granularity, which makes it very difficult to demonstrate clearly the cost of specific services provided as retained duties.
- If the contribution is not agreed, the council would have to fund the shortfall from corporate resources in addition to the savings which are already agreed.

The Chair read out an email he had received from Gareth Hughes who could not attend this meeting in which he expressed concern regarding the costs: *'The ones that we use we already pay for through SLAs. I also think that the costs fall disproportionately on secondary schools. If present I would vote against this recommendation.'*

He noted that in the past the forum had tried to mitigate significant fluctuations in funding for individual schools and tried to bring in the budgets in line over time.

He reminded the forum that 64% of maintained schools had endorsed the proposed charges during the consultation and that many academies buy in services from the council.

Alison Jeffery, Director of Children's Services clarified the costs that were attributed to her role in appendix 2 (page 27 of the agenda pack): Only half her role is for schools and she shared a Personal Assistant with two Councillors. She also asked the forum to note that the council is already having to find a significant amount of savings.

Members reported primary Head Teachers concerns that some of the retained duties shown had very similar headings e.g. finance and that maintained schools felt that they were being asked to pay twice in order to subsidise academies.

They also noted that the council must be experiencing the impact of the reducing number of maintained schools contributing towards central services.

#### Actions

- Any future request for funding to be supported by clear details and costs of core support services.
- The Finance Manager to be invited to primary head teachers briefings in future to discuss funding issues as appropriate and where timescales allow.

### **DECISIONS**

#### **The Schools Forum**

- a) **Endorsed the proposed changes to the mainstream funding formula factors for 2018-2019, as informed by consultation with schools and approved by the Cabinet Member as set out in section 4, specifically;**
  - **To retain the Reception Uplift factor.**
  - **To calculate initial funding allocations for 2018 to 2019 based on the proposed unit values shown in the table at paragraph 4.6.**
  - **To add the Primary Free School Meal factor to the list of proposed factors whose financial value could be adjusted to maintain overall affordability following the receipt of the October 2017 census data in December 2017.**
- b) **Agreed for maintained schools to make a contribution of £20.50 per pupil towards central services as set out in paragraph 5.3.**

#### **47. Dates of Future Meetings.**

The following meeting dates were agreed:

17 January  
28 February  
11 July.

The meeting concluded at 5:15 pm.

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David Jeapes  
Chair