

CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education held on Wednesday, 16 December 2020 at 4.00 pm as a virtual meeting.

Present

Councillor Suzy Horton (in the Chair)
Councillors Terry Norton
Jeanette Smith
Judith Smyth

12. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

13. Declarations of Members' Interests

Councillor Horton declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest as she is a governor at Craneswater Junior School. Councillor Norton declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest as he is employed at Mayfield School through a cover agency, his partner is employed at Mayfield School and his daughter attends it. Councillor Smith declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest as she is a paid official for Hampshire branch UNISON and represents support staff in Hampshire schools.

14. School Funding Arrangements 2021-22

The report was introduced by Angela Mann, Finance Manager.

Councillor Horton thanked Angela for the summary of the report.

DECISIONS: The Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education:

- 1. Noted the Department for Education's proposed changes to High Needs Block revenue funding arrangements for 2021-22 as set out in this report.**
- 2. Approved the funding arrangements for Maintained and Academy Special Schools and Independent Special Schools in relation to the Teachers Pay Grant, Teachers Pension Employer Contribution Grant and the Supplementary Grants from April 2021, as set out in Table 1.**
- 3. Noted the responses from schools with regards to the:**
 - briefing regarding the proposed changes to the school funding arrangements and the mainstream Education Health and Care Plan banding**

- **consultation regarding the proposed carry forward of the Growth Fund balances for the same use in future years.**

As set out in section 6 and Appendix 2.

4. Approved the proposed carry forward of Growth Fund balances for the same use in future years as set out in Section 6.

5. Approved the proposed hourly rates to Early Years providers for 2021-22 as set out in section 7 and Table 4.

15. School Modernisation and Sufficiency Programme Update

The report was introduced by Chris Williams, Pupil Place Planning & Capital Strategy Officer.

Despite it being a challenging year Chris was pleased to say that all parties had worked really hard in completing the projects to increase school places at Trafalgar School, Admiral Lord Nelson School, Charter Academy, The Portsmouth Academy and St Edmund's Catholic School, with little if any disruption to pupils starting their new school provision in September.

Chris advised that the planning application for the new 66 place special free school in Wymering was due to be submitted in December, however this will be delayed slightly due to a pre consultation exercise which now means it will be submitted in January 2021. It was explained that due to a historic right of way being identified across the site entrance area in favour of the NHS, a sum has been identified within the existing capital programme to re provide the area and enable the right of way to be surrendered.

In response to questions Chris explained that the £600,000 allocated to highway works and car parking at Admiral Lord Nelson School was due to having to relocate the car park from the front of the school back towards the side entrance. In addition to that there has been some work done with highways as part of the planning process to change the access point that comes out onto the main highway. The access arrangements in the earlier scheme weren't considered to be sufficient for the needs of the highway and therefore a lot of work went into the redesign exercise which unfortunately costs the additional sum of money identified. Chris confirmed that the additional money had to come out of the school places funding as it was part of the education project.

Mike Stoneman stated that this was not uncommon and many of the big capital projects over the last few years around sufficiency have often involved these additional works. It is something that the government recognise when they allocate basic new funding to councils for sufficiency schemes as they do often impact on highway schemes.

With regards to the apparent shortage of places of early secondary school and the possibility of pupils not getting their first choice schools Chris advised that the increase in primary school numbers had started to impact on the

secondary schools last year which showed the need to put in the additional places this year. The additional places for the five secondary schools mentioned within the report will start to put a lot more capacity into the city and that also brings with it greater parental choice. Chris was certain that there will be enough capacity at a secondary level to cope with the year 6 numbers coming through, although there is not a great deal of surplus capacity at secondary level. By working closely with a number of schools they are looking to see how they can put in more flexible spaces which are not permanent expansions but are more cost effective solutions to deal with the flexible need for only a year or two.

Chris was confident that there would be enough secondary places and that there would be enough choice certainly at the centre of the city at this point in time.

Councillor Horton thanked Chris and the teams for their hard work in completing their projects over the summer.

DECISIONS: The Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education:

1. The Cabinet Member noted the progress on the school modernisation "urgent condition" projects, the secondary school sufficiency projects and the special school sufficiency projects.

2. The Cabinet Member formally approved the schemes agreed with the Lead Member since the last report.

16. Quarter 2 Children, Families and Education Portfolio Budget Monitoring

The report was introduced by Angela Mann, Finance Manager.

In response to questions regarding the costs of the unaccompanied asylum seekers budgets Alison Jeffery (Director of Children, Families and Education) advised that the government had considerably increased the allowance per child per week for unaccompanied asylum seekers to the point that more money was coming in than was being spent per child. Alison explained that when the young people pass the age of 18 and become care leavers the position switches, which means that more money is then being spent than what is being received from the government.

DECISIONS: The Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education:

1. Noted the Children, Families and Education Portfolio forecast revenue and capital budget positions, as at the end of September 2020, together with the variance and pressure explanations.

2. Approved the proposed Education capital scheme budget virements to realign the budgets in-line with the capital scheme changes as set out in the Schools Modernisation Programme report and section 6 of this report.

17. 2020-21 Early Years Providers Covid-19 Additional Grant

The report was introduced by Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director of Children, Families and Education.

Councillor Horton recognised how difficult it has been for early years settings and that this grant will provide a little bit of a boost and will be very welcome. Councillor Horton also expressed that if after quarter four there is an opportunity to provide another boost to early year's providers then it would have her support.

Councillor Smith added that it was imperative that the sector is kept going and fully supported the additional funding that was being proposed.

DECISIONS: The Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education:

1. Approved the grant values as set out in section 4.3 to be paid in the autumn term 2020.

2. Noted that a further review of the Dedicated Schools Grant Early Years block funding and expenditure will be undertaken in quarter four of the 2020-21 financial year, in relation to a potential further grant payment in the spring term 2021 as set out in section 8.2.

18. Quarter 2 Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring

The report was introduced by Alison Egerton, Group Accountant.

Alison explained that as of the end of September the grant is forecasting an under spend of £1.4million the reasons for which are identified in the report, however particular attention was drawn to the following areas:

- The growth fund forecast planned under spend of £284,000 which the consultation with schools reported in the earlier report sets out the reason for carrying forward
- The early years has an under spend which again the proposals in the earlier report cover

As of the end of September payments have been made relating to both high needs settings and the early years providers for the summer term, initial payments have also been made for the autumn term. Forecasts are based on those actual payments plus any projected changes to pupil numbers which has been based on the 2019 activity for both high needs and early years. This is due to the Covid 19 impact.

There has been lower than expected expenditure for the summer term, in particular some of the high needs budgets which is unusual. This could be linked to the national lockdown as this has potentially reduced the number of pupils that have moved either between settings or have requested a new education and healthcare plan assessment.

The net position provides a forecast carry forward of £4.6million as of the end of September. The potential impact of outstanding decisions on any of that

carry forward balance has been set out in table 8 of the report.

DECISIONS: The Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education: Noted the forecast year-end budget position for the Dedicated Schools Grant as at 30 September 2020, together with the associated explanations contained within this report.

Councillor Horton thanked all officers and all the schools for their efforts throughout this year.

The meeting concluded at 4.45 pm.

Councillor Suzy Horton
Chair