

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Schools Forum held on Wednesday, 19 October 2016 at 4.30pm at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

Present

David Jeapes	Head Teacher	Secondary Schools
Jackie Collins	Head Teacher	Primary Schools
Ian Hunkin	Head Teacher	Special Schools
Sarah Sadler	Head Teacher	Primary Schools
Karen Stocks	Head Teacher	Nurseries
Sue Wilson	Head Teacher	Primary Schools
Gareth Hughes (from item 7)	Head Teacher	Secondary
Fiona Calderbank	Director,	Secondary Academies
Alison Beane	Director Ac	Special Academies
Clive Good	Governor	Primary Schools
Bruce Marr	Governor	Secondary Schools
Ruth Nabholz-Duncan	Governor	Nurseries
Yahiya Chowdhury	Councillor	Labour Party
Colin Galloway	Councillor	UK Independence Party.

29. Apologies

Apologies were received from:

- Carole Damper
- Abigail Eales
- Steve Labedz
- Steve Sheehan
- Councillor Lynne Stagg
- Lee Miller

30. Declarations of Interest

There are five declarations of interests forms that have yet to be completed and returned.

31. Membership Changes.

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

- Ian Hunkin replaced Krishna Purbhoo as the maintained Special Schools Head Teacher representative.
- Councillor John Ferrett is no longer the Labour Party representative. Councillor Chowdhury represented the Labour group at this meeting.

There is a vacancy for a Special Schools' Governor representative.

32. Minutes and matters arising from the last meeting held on 13 July 2016.

DECISION

The Schools Forum agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2016 subject to apologies for absence be added for Karen Stocks.

Matters Arising.

The actions from the meeting of the 13 July were reviewed. The letter to the Department for Education was no longer required as it had published the operational guidance for 2017-18 after the meeting. The letter to the Chairs of Governors will be issued after half term.

33. Apprenticeship Levy.

Richard Webb explained that this item has been deferred to the next meeting as further information had become available and is being reviewed.

34. Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring Report for the First Quarter 2016-17.

Richard Webb introduced the report and in response to questions, he and Anthony Harper, Early Years' Service Manager clarified the following points:

- There is currently sufficient capacity within the city to meet the needs of three-four year olds, although certain areas of the city are experiencing some pressures.
- The increased costs for out of city placements for pupils with high needs is mainly due to the increased complexity of children's needs, although some providers are seeking increased funding following the increase in the minimum wage.
- Although a very low number of pupils are educated outside of the city, they do require intensive support.
- Approximately £7,000 of the £140,000 contingency budget has been used so far. Any unused money will be carried forward into 2017-18.

DECISION

The Schools Forum noted the forecast year-end budget position for the Dedicated Schools Grant as at the end 30 June 2016, together with the associated explanations contained within the report.

35. School Funding Arrangements 2017-18.

Alison Egerton, Group Accountant introduced the report and in response to questions, she Richard Webb and Julia Katherine, Head of Inclusion explained that:

- The proposal is to re-allocate some of the funding from the Looked After Children (LAC) factor to the basic per pupil entitlement factor. This change is not expected to have an impact on how schools support those children; as this is purely a change to the funding mechanism for schools. It is a decision for schools as to how they utilise their available funding to support their pupils.
- There are no specific changes to the individual funding or support arrangements for the Looked After Children, therefore there is no specific need to notify the Corporate Parenting Board of the change in the school funding arrangements.
- The modelling is based on data from the October 2015 census data. This will be updated in December.
- A further report on the school funding arrangements will be considered by the Cabinet Member in early January; which will also be brought to the Forum.

- A notice of concern had previously been issued to Redwood Park School and the council has worked closely with the school and more recently with the Interim Executive Board. In the absence of the senior leadership team, finance team and site manager, support was immediately put in place to ensure the pupils' safety and that the school remained operational. The subsequent significant restructuring programme led to the school accumulating the current forecast financial deficit. At the end of 2015-16, the School had a revenue deficit balance of £126,278 as reported to the Forum in July. This had been anticipated to increase further this financial year to circa £300,000, but had increased further as a result of the restructure costs.
- Another Special School in city is currently under a notice of concern and also has a financial deficit, which is likely to require some financial support.
- It is the individual schools responsibility to manage their finances within their funding allocation. Where a school is going into deficit, then the provisions within the scheme for financing schools applies. Where the Local Authority identifies financial concerns within the school it can issue a notice of concern and in severe cases it can withdraw the delegated authority of the school to manage its finances.
- The budgets of schools that are converting to academies are monitored closely by the Children's Finance team leading up to conversion.
- Where a school converts to Academy status, the treatment of any deficit balances depends on the type of conversion (i.e. converter or sponsored).

Members expressed serious concerns regarding the deficit at Redwood Park and whilst they appreciate the limits of the local authority, requested reassurance that schools are being closely monitored.

Action

Schools Forum requested reassurance about the arrangements in place to mitigate potential future deficits arising; and that they will be kept apprised of any potential deficits at the earliest opportunities.

DECISION

The Schools Forum:

- a) **Endorsed the principles proposed by the mainstream working group in Appendix 1 to guide and inform the development of the funding arrangements for 2017-18.**

Schools Members:

- b) **Endorsed that, following the confirmation of the 2017-18 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), officers will amend the funding unit values to minimise the impact of fluctuations in funding at the school level and to maintain overall affordability. In order to provide schools with some certainty, where possible any changes will be limited to the following formula factors:**
 - **Basic per pupil entitlement**
 - **Prior attainment**
 - **Lump Sum**
 - **The percentage of the financial cap.**

- c) **Endorsed the proposed changes to the mainstream funding formula factors, together with choices the council has made in implementing these factors locally, as set out in section 5.**
- d) **Agreed by Phase to the de-delegation of the following budgets for central administration in 2017-18 and note the proposed rates for de-delegation (as shown at paragraph 3.41 of the consultation document), which will be finally agreed in January:**
 - i. **Behaviour Support - Primary Only** - (members requested to defer a decision to the next meeting).
 - ii. **Special Staff Costs (Union Duties)**
 - iii. **Schools Contingency Fund**
 - iv. **Licences**

For items ii to iv, all agreed unanimously by phase.

The Schools Forum:

- e) **Noted that subject to the guidance awaited from the Department for Education (DfE) and the results of the work being undertaken by the Inclusion Commissioning Manager, that the authority is not proposing to make any changes to High Needs place numbers for Special Schools, Resources Units and Alternative Provision settings for 2017-18.**
- f) **Noted that subject to the guidance awaited from the DfE that the authority is not proposing to make any changes to the annual rates for Element 3 Top-up funding for Resource Units and Alternative Provision settings for 2017-18.**
- g) **Noted that as set out in paragraph 7.2, work is being undertaken by the Inclusion Commissioning Manager to review the Element 3 Top-up funding arrangements for Special Schools.**
- h) **Endorsed the MFG exemptions submitted to the DfE by the required deadline of 30 November 2016 as set out in paragraph 7.3. (votes: 7 for, 0 against and 4 abstentions).**
- i) **Endorsed the funding allocation to Redwood Park Special School as set out in paragraph 8.2. (7 voted for, 1 against and 3 abstentions).**

36. Future Changes to Early Years Schools Funding Arrangements.

Richard Webb introduced the report and in response to questions, he and Anthony Harper, Service Manager explained that:

- Across the country funding rates differ between local authority nurseries and private providers. The DfE proposals are intended to level out the basic rate across providers.
- Data from the spring census indicated that within Portsmouth 99% of people are taking up at least some of their entitlement.
- All providers are expected to see an increase in their funding.
- In respect of the additional 15 hour trial; there are currently 415 places available; next year 1,500 children are expected to be eligible for the

additional 15 hour entitlement. Work is underway with providers who are changing their models to increase capacity. The council is confident that there will be enough places for the expected increase in children taking up places.

DECISIONS

The Schools Forum:

- a) **Noted the DfE's proposed changes to the early years funding arrangements for three and four year olds and the potential impact of these changes, as set out in within this report.**
- b) **Noted the submission of the response to the DfE's consultation, as shown at appendix 1.**
- c) **Noted the areas of the existing local funding formula that are to be reviewed in response to the DfE's proposed changes; as set out in paragraph 7.16.**
- d) **Endorsed the proposed consultation process with early years childcare providers as set out in section 11. (*this was agreed unanimously*).**

37. Portsmouth SEND Strategy: Remodelling Portsmouth Specialist Educational Provision.

Julia Katherine introduced the report and asked the forum to note that to date over 600 statements and learning disability assessments had been converted to education health and care plans, not 400 as stated in section 4.2.1 of the report.

In response to a question she explained that overall, outcomes for Portsmouth pupils compared favourably nationally except for those who do not have a health care plan. The focus therefore needs to be on pupils without an education health and care plan, who require SEN Support and work will continue with mainstream colleagues to ensure outcomes improve for this group.

DECISIONS

The Schools Forum:

- a. **Noted the progress made so far in implementing the SEND Strategy, including the remodelling of the specialist educational provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities.**
- b. **Noted the investment that has been made to improve and develop the specialist educational provision in Portsmouth for children with special educational needs and disabilities.**

38. Redwood & Cliffdale Capital Works.

Julia Katherine introduced the report and in response to questions, explained that:

Local authorities have recently been invited to bid for funding for new free special schools. As funding is not available for small schools, Portsmouth City Council is talking to Hampshire County Council regarding a possible joint bid.

It is not anticipated that another report on further use of the DSG will be brought to the Schools Forum.

Action.

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Julia Katherine agreed to bring a further update report to the Forum early in 2017.

DECISIONS

The Schools Forum

1. **Noted the progress and programme of design for works at both Cliffdale Primary Academy and Redwood Park School.**
2. **Noted the phased delivery approach being taken for both of the identified projects within the £3.2m available and support any future bidding opportunity that may arise.**

39. Future Meeting Dates.

DECISION

The Schools Forum agreed the following meeting dates:

7 December

18 January

15 February

24 May

12 July

40. Any Other Business.

The University Technical College

Members expressed concern about the potential impact of the funding arrangements for the UTC on the secondary schools in the city.

Action

Information on the funding for the University Technical College and the potential impact on schools will be brought to a future meeting.

The meeting concluded at 6.15pm.

Chair