

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Schools Forum held on Wednesday, 28 February 2018 at 4:30pm at the Civic Offices, Portsmouth

Present

Jackie Collins	Head Teacher	Primary
Dave Jones	Head Teacher	Primary
David Jeapes, Chair	Head Teacher	Secondary
Ian Hunkin	Head Teacher	Special
Jason Crouch	Governor	Secondary
Clive Good	Governor	Primary
Joy Waeland	Academy	Primary
Nys Hardingham	Academy	Secondary
Steve Labeledz	Academy	Secondary
Alison Beane	Academy	Special
Suzy Horton	Councillor	Liberal Democrats
Kara Jewell	Representative	Early Years

7. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Councillor Colin Galloway, Councillor Neill Young, Stella Mbubaegbu and Stewart Vaughan.

8. Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

Four declarations of Interests forms were outstanding and the people concerned have been contacted.

9. Election of Vice Chair.

Gareth Hughes had been nominated in advance of the meeting, but he will no longer be eligible to be a Schools Forum member following the conversion of his school to academy status on 1 March.

The Chair nominated David Jones and Jackie Collins seconded this nomination.

DECISION

David Jones was appointed Vice Chair.

10. Membership Changes.

Beverley Pennekett, Finance Manager gave an update on membership:

- Alison Beane's tenure will expire on 1 March. Since there are currently no other special academy chains in the city, she was asked if she would be prepared to stay on the forum. Alison agreed and her tenure was extended for a further two years.

- Gareth Hughes will no longer be eligible to be a Schools Forum member from 1 March when his school becomes an academy.
- David Jeapes' tenure expires in June.
- Stella Mbubaegbu's tenure expires in May.

11. Minutes and matters arising from the previous meeting held on 17 January 2018.

Matters Arising.

- The update on the SEND Strategic Review is on this meeting's agenda.
- A bulletin was sent to the Early Years' Providers on 26 February advising providers that a review of the early education formula will take place later in the year, with a view to making any possible changes from April 2019.
- The report on the Harbour School's financial position will be considered at a future meeting.

DECISION

An extra meeting was provisionally arranged for 23 May at 4:30pm.

12. SEND Strategic Review.

Liz Robinson, Service Manager Education Service and Pippa Cook, SEND Strategic Review Manager introduced the report and explained that it contained some minor typing errors in it and a corrected version would be sent to the forum after this meeting.

In response to questions, they clarified the following points:

The aim is to ensure that there is adequate provision so that fewer pupils in the future have to go outside the city for their education.

The average cost for out of city education placements is currently £60,000 per pupil, per year. This does not include transport or social care costs.

The title of section 6 should read: Meeting the needs of children and young people with autism.

The Review has highlighted the difficulties in predicting future demand for special school places, and has developed a methodology for forecasting need in order to inform the place planning process and ensure that an appropriate educational provision is available.

It is important to effectively promote the educational provision that is available within the city and to ensure that parents and professionals are informed about this 'local offer' of support.

The review identified that Inclusion Centres are very popular with parents. Different models of delivering Inclusion Centre support have been compared. In addition the Review has considered the support that can be provided by a peripatetic service.

The remodelling of Redwood Park will not create additional spaces but will preserve the spaces already there.

Julia Katherine gave a brief outline of the timeline for this Review. Information has been gathered from all stakeholder groups. The final report will be submitted by the end of March. Recommendations will be presented to the SEND 0-25 Joint Commissioning Steering Group and to the SEND Board.

Alison Jeffery added that this report will also be available to the Schools Forum.

The Chair noted that:

There is a significant projected overspend on the high needs block. It will be important to identify which of the recommendations arising from the Review will give us the quickest return and have a significant financial impact to address this.

The forum needs to consider how to incentivise schools to be more inclusive.

A significant amount of money is spent on educational placements out of the city. Mainstream schools could probably adapt and provide schooling for some of these children for less.

Actions

1. Julia Katherine to look into arranging briefings for primary and secondary Head Teachers on tribunals and the role of school representatives if required to attend tribunal hearings. They would then be asked to cascade information to governors and other leads.
2. An update will come to a future meeting.

DECISION

The Schools Forum noted the emerging themes and findings of the SEND Strategic Review and provide feedback to inform the final report and recommendations, prior to a report coming back to Schools Forum to consider the recommendations.

13. Redwood Park School.

Julia Katherine introduced the report.

In response to questions the following points were clarified:

Alison Jeffery, Director of Children's Services explained that:

If the re-modelling of Redwood Park did not go ahead, many pupils would have to be placed outside of the city at an even higher cost.

The council would be anxious if the programme was not delivered.

The council was originally asked to contribute £3m.

Remodelling Redwood School would increase capacity locally for children with complex needs and autism and would reduce the need for out of city placements in the future which would in turn reduce costs and build resilience.

Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director of Children, Families and Education explained that work on Redwood School was due to be completed by 2012. The works have been reviewed and could possibly be reduced by £300,000.

Alison Beane, Head at the Mary Rose Academy expressed concern about possibly changing the plans to save £300,000.

The forum expressed concern that this allocation would wipe out the reserves and there could be two years of potential pressure. They were also concerned about the lack of plans for dealing with the high needs deficit.

The Chair noted that:

Allocating £1m from DSG balances would exhaust the reserves and traditionally the forum maintains a reserve to deal with any unforeseen costs that might arise. However, flexibility is required and this is an opportunity to open up extra funding: £2m from the council.

The Forum recently wrote to Chairs of Governors for schools that are carrying a significant deficit. At the moment there are no schools in special measures.

DECISION

The Schools Forum agreed to the request to allocate £1m from DSG balances to contribute to the re-modelling work at Redwood Park Academy in order that the full scheme can be completed. This would supplement an allocation of £2m from Portsmouth City Council.

14. Dedicated schools grant budget monitoring report for the third quarter 2017/18.

Alison Egerton, Group Accountant introduced the report and in response to a question, explained that current estimated costs include some for which we have not yet received invoices. These will be reviewed by the SEND team at the year end and if they are still expecting to be charged, the creditors will be carried forward to 2018/19.

In response to questions, Julia Katherine explained that:

- There are currently an average of 54 pupils placed outside of the city.
- The costs of CAMHS tier 4 city placements were included in this report.
- The reported costs are for education and are chargeable to the DSG. Other costs, such as transport costs come out of a different budget.

DECISION

The Schools Forum noted:

- 1. The forecast year-end budget position for the Dedicated Schools grant as at the end 31 December 2017, together with the associated explanations contained within this report.**

2. The potential pressures for 2018-19 and impact on the brought forward balances.

15. Any Other Business.

The next meeting would be arranged for 23 May.

The meeting concluded at 5:45pm.

David Jeapes
Chair