

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Schools Forum held on Wednesday, 11 July 2018 at 4.30pm at the Civic Offices, Portsmouth

Present

Jackie Collins	Head Teacher	Primary Phase
Dave Jones	Head Teacher	Primary Phase
David Jeapes	Head Teacher	Secondary Phase
Ian Hunkin	Head Teacher	Special Phase
Alison Beane	Academy	Primary
Karen Stocks	Academy	Primary
Nys Hardingham	Academy	Secondary
Steve Labeledz	Academy	Secondary
Stewart Vaughan	Academy	Secondary
Lynne Stagg	Councillor	Liberal Democrats
Judith Smyth	Councillor	Labour
Claire Udy	Councillor	Independent
Kara Jewell	Representative	Early Years

25. Apologies

Apologies were received from Jason Crouch and Mike Gaston.

26. Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

27. Membership Changes.

Beverley Pennekett, Finance Manager gave an update on membership:

- David Jeapes was re-elected as a secondary maintained school Head Teacher representative.
- Ian Hunkin's tenure as a special school representative expires in October.
- Fiona Calderbank will join the forum at the next meeting as a secondary academy representative.
- Councillor Judith Smyth is the Labour Party's representative.
- Councillor Lynne Stagg is the Liberal Democrat Party's representative.
- Councillor Claire Udy is an Independent council representative.

There is a vacancy for a Conservative Party representative and two for secondary academy representatives.

The link to the Schools Forum constitution and the introduction packs will be sent to new members for the October meeting.

28. Minutes and Matters Arising From the Previous Meeting Held on 23 May 2018.

DECISION

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2018 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Matters Arising.

Page 4

Information on tracking schools' balances is covered later in the agenda.

29. 2017-18 Dedicated Schools Grant Outturn Report and Revised Budget 2018 -19

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

Alison Egerton explained that the numbers and costs related to mainstream Education, Health and Care Plan places are in report.

Julia Katherine, Head of Inclusion explained that the High Needs Funding Task and Finish Group had conducted an in-depth discussion about the different options available to manage the increasing pressures in the High Needs Budget and would report to the forum in October.

Alison Beane asked that the wording in sections 4.7 and 4.19 be changed to remove any inference of fault for the late receipt of the class lists.

Action

It was agreed that some alternative wording would be added.

Post Meeting Note: here is the amended wording:

DSG Devolved - Individual School Budgets

4.7 The Special School ISB overspend relates to additional pupils placed at Mary Rose from November 2017 to the end of the financial year. The original budget allowed for an additional eight pupils in the summer term decreasing to six pupils from September 2017. The actual number of pupils during the autumn and spring terms was ten, leading to an increase in place funding of £16,700. Unfortunately the timing of the receipt of the agreed class-lists to the finance team meant that this increased cost was not identified and included in the quarter 3 monitoring.

Special Schools

4.19 In the budget monitoring report for the third quarter, the authority highlighted that they were unable to provide a robust forecast on the Element 3 Top-up rates at Special Schools, Inclusion Centres and Alternative Provision units as several of the class lists for the period up to the end of October 2017 had not been received and/or approved by the School and the SEND Team by the end of December 2017. Therefore the forecast was based on a mixture of October class lists and budgeted costs. At year-end the authority had received all the approved class lists, with the exception of one special school.

Alison Beane explained that there is very small provision at the Mary Rose School and currently four pupils attend. This safety net is essential as attendance could fluctuate very quickly.

Mike Stoneman Deputy Director of Children, Families and Education added that the building is not in great shape and an alternative location for the school might be required.

DECISIONS

The Schools Forum:

- **Noted the year-end outturn budget position for the Dedicated Schools Grant as at the end of March 2018 and the variance explanations contained within this report.**
- **Endorsed the revised DSG budget for 2018-19 as set out in appendix 1 of the report.**
(Unanimously agreed).

30. Maintained School Balances as at 31 March 2018.

Alison Egerton introduced the report.

The Chair thanked the team for setting up the meetings with Head Teachers to discuss the schools' plans to identify where additional support is required.

The forum was pleased that the report contained detailed reasons for the schools' balances. However, it was noted that it is important that schools save some money as the level of future funding was uncertain.

Alison Egerton assured the forum that the finance team would continue to meet schools to discuss their balances and provide advice and support as required.

In response to questions, Beverley Pennekett explained that the changes in special school funding in 2013-14 had been very complicated and the Harbour School's financial problems might not have been as visible. The forum used to have the ability to claw back from schools that held surplus balances in the past. However, this mechanism was disbanded because there were no such restrictions on academies.

DECISION

The School Forum noted the level of maintained schools' revenue balances and capital balances as at 31 March 2018 as shown in appendices 2 & 3 and the monitoring action taken by the council.

31. Future School Funding Arrangements 2019-20.

Beverley Pennekett introduced the report and in response to a question added that the finance team would engage with the Early Years providers shortly to explore the options available.

During the discussion, the following points were clarified:

- The Forum had written to the government in the past when it feels strongly about an issue.
- Its role is to assist schools in getting to where they need to be and to lessen the shock of any changes in funding. Some schools benefitted from the change to the National Funding Formula.
- The forum is most concerned about the High Needs sector.
- Most reception pupils are admitted to schools in September and are included in the October census. Additional pupils reported in the January census is due to movement between schools rather than a new cohort entering the city.

DECISIONS

The Schools Forum:

- a. Noted the progress being made towards the 2019 to 2020 local funding formula including the issue of the consultation to mainstream schools as set out in Appendix A.**
- b. Noted the outcomes of the consultation issued to mainstream primary schools and agreed the proposals set out in section 6. (*Agreed unanimously*).**
- c. Noted that the Department for Education (DfE) is reviewing the methods of funding the local authority for Growth and the High Needs Block and a further update will be provided following the publication of information from the DfE.**
- d. Noted the progress being made towards the strategic review of the High Needs budgets in light of the 2018-19 pressures.**
- e. Noted the progress being made towards the review of early years funding for 2019-20 as set out in section 8.**

The meeting concluded at 5:30pm.

David Jeapes
Chair