

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF A MEETING of the Schools Forum held on Wednesday 23 October at 4:30pm in the Civic Officers, Portsmouth.

(NB These minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting which can be found at www.portsmouth.gov.uk).

Present

Clive Good, Governor - Primary
Steve Sheehan, Governor - Secondary
Mark Mitchell, Chair, Governor - Special

Carole Damper, Early Years Provider

Councillor Ken Ferrett, Labour
Councillor Neil Young, Conservative
Councillor David Fuller, Liberal Democrat.

Sue Wilson, Headteacher Northern Parade

Officers

Jane Di Dino, Local Democracy Officer
Steve McIntyre, Traded Services Manager
Mike Stoneman, Strategic Commissioning Manager
Richard Webb, Finance Manager
Julian Wooster, Strategic Director (arrived at item 5)

25 Apologies for absence (AI 1).

Alison Beane, Fiona Calderbank, Jackie Collins, Suzy Horton, David Jeapes, Bruce Marr, Jayne Pratt, Mike Smith, Karen Stocks and Justeen White sent their apologies.

26 Declarations of interests (AI 2).

No interests were declared.

27 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 September 2013 (AI 3).

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Schools Forum meeting held on 25 September 2013 be confirmed as a correct record.

Matters arising.

The update on the actions listed for the two-year old funding update will be provided to members.

28 School Funding Reform (AI 4).

Richard Webb, Finance Manager presented the report that had been circulated with the agenda and in response to questions, clarified the following points:

It is intended that a further report will be presented to Schools Forum in December which will (a) set out the specific criteria for the operation of the contingency fund, (b) agreement of the value of fund and the amount to be de-delegated from schools and (c) proposals to allocate, in respect of amalgamating schools, an amount equal to the balances of closing schools to the new school in future.

The closing balances of the two schools that merged to form Arundel Court Primary School had not been transferred.

Mark Mitchell commented that:

- It would be advisable to have a contingency fund.
- The provisional proforma return must be submitted to the Department for Education by 31 October and if this does not include the contingency fund, this cannot be added at a later date.
- The Government's national fair funding system is intended to be in place by 2015-16 and the proposals within this report are for 2014-15 only.

Carole Damper noted that each request for contingency funds should be determined on its own merit.

The Schools Forum:

a) Agreed that following confirmation of the 2014/15 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), officers will amend the unit values to minimise the impact of fluctuations in funding at the school level. In order to provide schools with some certainty, where possible any changes will be limited to the following formula factors:

- **Prior attainment**
- **Basic per pupil entitlement**
- **Lump sum**
- **The percentage of the financial cap.**

b) Agreed the proposed changes to the mainstream formula factors, together with the choices that the council has made in implementing these factors locally, as detailed in paragraph 4.7 of the report.

c) Approved the submission of the draft proforma to the DfE as the first stage of the 2014-15 school's funding formula process.

(Only school members voted. Approved unanimously).

29 Proposed Changes to Management of Schools Kitchens (AI 5).

Richard Webb explained that the author of the report that was circulated with the agenda John Bean, Head of Maintenance was not able to attend today but questions could be sent to him and answered at the next meeting if required.

Richard Webb explained that 16 schools had been contacted by John Bean and that they supported the proposed changes within the report.

A discussion took place with regard to the national issues affecting school

meals.

Sue Wilson noted that it was not yet known how the national proposed changes in respect of Free School Meals would be implemented and that some parents may continue to provide packed lunches for their children.

Di Mitchell, Head of Education informed members that some Headteachers had looked at the implications of the national proposed changes in terms of planning and budget. One school concluded that it would not be possible to feed all the pupils due to a lack of space.

Mark Mitchell commented that he would expect some consultation to be carried out and suggested that the same group that looked at school meal service be used.

Action

It was agreed that consultation would be carried out on the proposed changes to school kitchens, free school meals and the possible impact on pupil premiums. Mike Stoneman agreed to coordinate the establishment of the working group to look at these issues.

The Schools Forum noted that liaison will be taken with school Governing Bodies to amend the terms of the existing 2013/14 Service Level Agreement (SLA) such that:

- a) The responsibility for the management of kitchen/ server fabric (walls, floor and ceilings) and services (lighting, power, heating and ventilation) is transferred from schools to Housing and Property Services (HPS) and managed within the existing catering SLA budget from January 2014.**
- b) The responsibility for the repair and replacement of dining tables (hot meals) is transferred from the existing catering SLA budget managed by HPS to schools from January 2014.**

30 Traded Services (AI 6)

Mike Stoneman presented the report that had been circulated with the agenda and in response to questions, clarified the following points:

- The aim is to improve the offer to schools.
- In March 2014 an event will be held where schools will be able to meet the service managers to discuss the offer.

Carole Damper suggested that an account manager be appointed to enable schools to deal with one point of contact rather than each service manager with whom they have a SLA.

Mike Stoneman responded that there would be a huge resource implication to develop that role.

Steve McIntyre noted that there will be one sign-up sheet for all the SLAs and although schools will be asked to contact the service managers with their concerns, they could contact him if there is a problem.

The Schools Forum noted the report.

31 Date of Future Meetings

18 December 2013

15 January 2014

The meeting concluded at 5:10pm.