

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Schools Forum held on Wednesday, 10 July 2019 at 4.30pm at the Guildhall.

Present

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|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| David Jeapes (Chair) | Head Teacher | Secondary Phase |
| Jackie Collins | Head Teacher | Primary Phase |
| Dave Jones | Head Teacher | Primary Phase |
| Kate Keller | Academies | Primary Phase |
| Sue Wilson | Academies | Primary Phase |
| Nys Hardingham | Academies | Secondary Phase |
| Share D'All | Governor | Primary Phase |
| Jason Crouch | Governor | Secondary Phase |
| Steven Labedz | Academies | Secondary Phase |
| Stewart Vaughan | Academies | Secondary Phase |
| Nathan Waites | Academies | Secondary Phase |
| Simon Barrable | Representative | 16-19 Education |

20. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Alison Beane, Kara Jewell, Natalie Sheppard, Judith Smyth, Councillor Lynne Stagg and Councillor Claire Udy.

21. Declarations of Interests

No interests were declared.

There are some declarations of interest forms outstanding.

22. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

DECISION: the minutes for the previous meeting held on 22 May 2019 were confirmed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

Nathan Waites is an academy Director not a Head Teacher.

23. Membership Changes

Alison Egerton, Group Accountant gave the following update on membership:

- There is a vacancy for one academy primary representative.
- Share D'All is a new primary governor representative.
- Dave Jones has been reappointed as a primary Head Teacher representative.

David Jeapes proposed Dave Jones as Vice Chair and this was seconded by Jackie Collins. This was agreed unanimously.

DECISION: Dave Jones was appointed Vice Chair.

24. Maintained School Balances as at 31 March 2019

Alison Egerton introduced the report and in response to questions, explained that:

- Her team will talk to Fernhurst School to find out the reasons for its £312,000 balance surplus.
- Budgeting is forecast for three years for maintained schools.
- The Department of Education said that it would not remove the pensions grant and pay grants.

DECISION

The schools forum noted the level of maintained schools' revenue balances and capital balances as at 31 March 2019 as shown in appendices 2 & 3 and the monitoring action taken by the council.

25. Update on Early Years SEND Funding Review

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

- The new outreach offer will be available to schools from September 2019.
- In addition to the Outreach Co-ordinator, specialist input will be available from the city's special schools plus seconded mainstream SENCOs will be able to provide support.
- A complex needs fund is required for pre-school children with SEND, in addition to the support available for those with low and emerging needs.
- The council is trying to be as flexible as possible in order to be able to provide support in a timely manner so that more pupils can stay in mainstream education.
- An update will be brought to the Schools Forum in a year's time detailing the impact of the first year of operation of the new outreach offer.

DECISION

The Schools Forum:

- 1. Noted the progress made to date with the agreed changes.**
- 2. Endorsed the proposals to refocus the existing allocation of funding to support outreach that currently goes through The Harbour School/MABSS and PSENSP. A new SEND outreach officer will be managed through the Early Years Inclusion team, with a direct link to the Portage Plus Programme.**

26. 2018-19 Dedicated Schools Grant Out turn Report and Revised Budget 2019-20

Alison Egerton introduced the report. In response to questions, Julia Katherine explained that although the number of pupils in out of city placements, the average cost has increased slightly. This due to providers' increased costs in response to the rise in the minimum living wage. She assured the forum that the contracts are being managed very carefully.

DECISION

The Schools Forum

- 1. Noted the year-end outturn budget position for the Dedicated Schools Grant as at the end of March 2019 and the variance explanations contained within this report.**

2. Endorsed the revised DSG budget for 2019-20 as set out in Appendix 1 and section 5.

27. Future School Funding Arrangements 2020-21

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

The forum's responses will inform the work that will be undertaken over summer in preparation for the next consultation in the Autumn.

The Department for Education has not published any guidance for 2020-21, but has advised that authorities should assume no change to current guidance.

The authority is funded at the National Fair Funding rates (NFF) plus 1% on the 2017-18 baseline. This funding was used to fund schools in 2019-20. The proposal to set a neutral Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) of 0% would ensure that all schools would receive the same per pupil funding in 2020-21 that they received in 2019-20.

Officers will be reviewing the high needs expenditure following the receipt of the summer term class lists, using this data to forecast the future high needs funding requirements. Further financial modelling of the mainstream formula including setting a negative MFG or adjusting the formula funding factors will provide schools with a number of options regarding a potential transfer of 0.5% of the schools block to support the high needs block, this will form part of the autumn consultation

A report will be brought to the Schools Forum to explain the options, the outcomes of the consultation and proposals for the 2020-21 funding formula for discussion and endorsement.

There is no central contingency fund.

Recent analysis has shown that whilst the growth in mainstream pupil numbers have remained relatively stable (approx. average 2% growth per year), the increase in pupils with an EHCP has grown by an average of 27% per year. Funding for pupils with an EHCP in mainstream schools is included within the High Needs blocks not just special schools.

The Chair was pleased to note that the forum was being given a meaningful choice.

DECISION

The Schools Forum:

- a. Noted the progress being made towards the 2020 to 2021 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 endorse the proposals set out in section 6.**

c. Noted the progress being made towards the review of the High Needs funding methodologies.

28. SEND Call for Evidence

Julia Katherine introduced this report and circulated the appendix listing the online survey questions.

The forum discussed the questions and in particular the notional SEN budget that schools receive.

The Chair asked members to consult with their phase or academies and send any further feedback directly to Julia Katherine by the end of July.

DECISION

The Schools Forum endorsed the proposed responses to the Department for Education call for evidence.

29. Any Other Business.

There was no other business to discuss.

The meeting concluded at 5:45pm

David Jeapes
Chair