

## SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Schools Forum held on Tuesday, 24 May 2022 at 4.30 pm at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

### Present

Dave Jones	Head Teacher	Primary Phase
Jackie Collins	Head Teacher	Primary Phase
Sean Preston	Academies	Primary Phase
Laura Flitton	Academies	Primary Phase
Nathan Waites	Academies	Secondary Phase
Sharon Burt	Academies	Special Schools
Simon Graham	Head Teacher	Secondary Phase
Russell Simpson	Councillor	Portsmouth City Council

Carl McCarthy, Flying Bull Academy was also in attendance.

### 12. Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from:

Nys Hardingham, academies representative, secondary phase.  
Share D'All, Governor, Bramble Infant & Nursery - primary phase.  
Caroline Corcoran, academies representative, secondary phase.

### 13. Declarations of Interest

Alison Egerton, Group Accountant explained that she is awaiting completed declarations of interests from:

- Chris Purnell
- Anne Hibberd
- Victoria Page

### 14. Membership- Endorsement of Chair and Vice Chair of Schools Forum

Members were informed that Councillor Claire Udy, Portsmouth Progressive People Party and Councillor Lynne Stagg, Liberal Democrat Party had left the forum. Members asked that thanks for their input and support be noted.

Caroline Corcoran is retiring at the end of the Summer term and therefore will no longer be a member of the Schools Forum.

Councillor Russell Simpson, representing the Portsmouth Independents Party and Simon Graham, head teacher, maintained schools, secondary phase representative were welcomed.

Sharon Burt, special academies' tenure is due to come to an end at the end of September. Sharon and Matthew McLaughlin-Parker from Delta Trust. Have confirmed she will be able to continue her tenure and that Matthew will be her substitute with immediate effect.

These are the current vacancies:

- A representative from the Liberal Democrat Party
- Two representatives from the academy secondary phase.

David Jones was nominated Chair and Nathan Waites the Vice Chair of the Schools Forum. However, as the meeting was not quorate with them waiting outside the meeting, the appointments could not be made.

David Jones as Vice Chair could continue to chair this meeting.

#### **15. Minutes of the Previous Meeting.**

##### **DECISION**

**The minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

#### **16. Element 3 Top-up funding 2022-23**

Angela Mann, Finance Manager introduced the report and in response to questions from members explained that:

This is not setting a precedent for all schools to request additional funding in an ad hoc basis. The Flying Bull Academy proposal is due to an expansion of places there.

Special schools and the inclusion centres in the city have different bandings for the various needs of the pupils. There is one single band for pupils in alternative provision centres.

It was confirmed that the increases in the rates was not a one off and would be reviewed annually as part of the budget setting process.

The council's review has been underway for many months to ensure that the staffing structure meets the pupils' needs and delivers the outcomes that everyone wants for these pupils. The finances in the business case have been checked.

If a similar inclusion centre was required in the future, the funding rates would be broadly the same with the staffing structure, resources, ratios and seniorities. Staffing represents a significant part of schools' budgets. There would have to be a good rationale for why it would be different.

It was confirmed that the business case included an estimate of both the costs for an estimated number of pupils with Pupil Premium, and also the income from Pupil Premium. The Pupil Premium is needed for the school to deliver the outcomes for those pupils. If Pupil Premium was not passed to Flying Bull Academy, then the Element 3 would have to increase.

During the discussion that followed, members noted that:

The Pupil Premium is very difficult to follow depending on when the child moves; it could be that the school has already spent the money and it will be in the budget.

It is important to consider the wider cost of supporting pupils at this level of need. To ensure there are places, the centre must be able to cater for them appropriately.

## **DECISIONS**

**The Schools Forum endorsed:**

- 1. The corrected Redwood Park Academy Element 3 Top-up values as set out in Appendix C.**

**Due to quoracy Schools Forum were unable to endorse.**

- 2. The proposal to increase the Element 3 top-up value at The Flying Bull Academy Inclusion Centre from 1 January 2023 as set out in section 4.**

### **17. Schools Forum Constitution 2022-23**

Angela Mann introduced the report.

**RESOLVED that the Schools Forum retain the current constitution attached at Appendix A which took effect from 25 May 2021.**

### **18. Dedicated Schools Grant 2021-22 Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring**

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

The budgets were set assuming a certain level of growth over the year. The numbers did increase but not as much as budgeted.

It is expected that the EHC plans, and requests will increase and there could have been some delays due to Covid-19.

Analysis has shown the largest area of underspend particularly for specialist places was in the summer term because not as many pupils took up the places as expected.

Autumn term figures show that schools are just about full and this has remained the case over Spring term.

**RESOLVED that the Schools Forum:**

- 1. Noted the forecast budget position for the Dedicated Schools Grant as at 31 December 2021, together with the associated explanations contained within this report.**
- 2. Endorsed the budget adjustment to the Post-16 Element 3 Top-up by £12,000.**

**19. Verbal update regarding the Government's response to the National Fair Funding consultation.**

Alison Egerton gave a verbal update which included the following points:

As members will be aware, the government carried out a consultation from July to September 2021 regarding reforms to the National Fair Funding Formula (NFFF). A number of Schools Forum members supported officers with the response.

The government's response, published in March 2022 stated that in 2023-2024 legislation will be updated to require

**1. All Local Authorities to only use NFF Factors in their local formula.**

Portsmouth uses all the factors except the sparsity factor, as all schools are in close proximity.

**2. If a Local Authority is not using any of the NFFF Factors, it must move at least 10% closer to using them all.**

This is not a particular issue for Portsmouth.

There may be a small concern regarding the lump sum because in recent years there were surplus funds within schools block due to adjustments on the NNDR rates when schools have become academies and to the disapplication requests which had been submitted for the minimum funding guarantee. If we needed to pass surplus funds to schools using the lump sum, the DfE would consider a disapplication request.

**3. If Local Authorities do not use the definition English as a second language as set out in the factor, then they should start doing that. Any pupils with English as a second language who joined a school in the last three years should be included in the factor.**

Portsmouth already uses this definition.

The DfE has said will carry out further consultations this year concerning:

- The Private Financing Initiative Factor.
- Growth funding
- Falling rolls funding
- Split funding
- Exceptional circumstances

The first two are key to Portsmouth and members are invited to contact Alison should they wish to assist with the response to the consultation.

**20. Dates of Future Meetings.**

**RESOLVED that the following meeting dates be agreed:**

**13 July 2022**

**5 October 2022**

**7 December 2022**

**11 January 2023**

**9 February 2023**

### Any Other Business

In response to a question, Liz Robinson, Head of Inclusion explained that the admissions team has received notification of 14 primary aged Ukrainian refugees and 7 of secondary age. The team is monitoring this and supporting schools to ensure places are available. No funding details have been released yet.

Angela Mann explained that the government released the amount for different phases under Homes for Ukraine Scheme but not the guidance. This may cover free school meal entitlements and high needs support. The education elements are in addition to the funding that Local Authorities receive to support families.

Initial information suggests that this funding is not available for the Family Visa Scheme.

The Chair asked that members who do not attend on a regular basis be contacted to ensure that future meetings are quorate.

The meeting concluded at 5:40pm