

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Schools Forum held on Wednesday, 21 October 2015 at 4.30pm at the Civic Offices, Portsmouth.

Present

David Jeapes, Head Teacher	Secondary (Chair)
Gareth Hughes, Head Teacher	Secondary
Jackie Collins, Head Teacher	Primary
Karen Stocks, Head Teacher	Primary
Krishna Purbhoo, Head Teacher	Special Schools
Sarah Sadler, Head Teacher	Primary
Sue Wilson, Head Teacher	Primary
Steven Labeledz	Academy - Secondary
Lee Miller	Academy - Secondary
Alison Beane	Academy - Special
Steve Sheehan, governor	Primary
Clive Good, governor	Primary
Steve Frampton	16-19 Representative
Carole Damper	Early Years Providers
Councillor Colin Galloway	UKIP
Councillor Lynne Stagg	Liberal Democrats

27. Apologies

Bruce Marr and Di Smith sent their apologies.

28. Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

Richard Webb noted that he was still waiting for declarations of interests forms from two members.

29. Membership Changes.

Richard Webb reported that:

- Krishna Purbhoo had replaced Margaret Dunford as the Special Schools' Head Teacher representative.
- Councillor Ken Ferrett is no longer a Labour member and a new Labour spokesperson had not yet been identified.
- Fiona Calderbank will shortly replace James Humphries as the secondary academy representative.
- Clive Good's tenure has come to an end, but the Governors Forum has proposed his re-appointment which will be endorsed at the Governors Forum meeting on 4 November 2015.

Representatives will be sought for the following vacancies:

- One governor for the nursery
- One special school governor
- One Labour Party representative.

The following members are coming towards the end of their tenure, Richard Webb has requested that they speak to their Phase colleagues regarding future representation:

- Jackie Collins 17 January 2016
- Sarah Sadler 17 January 2016
- Bruce Marr 10 March 2016
- Alison Beane 26 February 2016
- Margaret Beel 26 February 2016
- Steve Frampton 30 January 2016

30. Proposed Future Meeting Dates.

DECISION

The 2016 meeting dates were agreed:

20 January
24 February
13 July
19 October

31. Minutes and Matters Arising From the Previous Meeting - 15 July 2015.

DECISION

The Schools Forum agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2015.

Matters Arising.

Section 21

Richard Webb had contacted members who have been absent from three consecutive meetings seeking an explanation. He had received responses from all but one.

Section 22

The Chair will contact Carole Damper regarding the new initiative for 3-4 year olds.

32. School Revenue Funding Arrangements 2016-17.

Alison Egerton, Group Accountant introduced the report and along with Richard Webb, Finance Manager explained that

- Approval was sought to allocate funding from the 2014-15 DSG underspend to schools but not to create an ongoing commitment.
- The DfE has approved the four disapplication requests detailed on page 9 of the reports pack; the authority is awaiting a response regarding the request to charge Special Education Needs Transport costs to the DSG.

- The lump sum has been perceived as a barrier to amalgamation since one lump sum will effectively be lost after schools amalgamate. The continued reduction of the Lump Sum will need to be balanced with the need to minimise volatility in funding for schools.
- Following an exercise that it carried out last year, the Department for Education (DfE) identified "minimum funding levels" for formula factors, in advance of introducing a national funding formula and some authorities received additional funding as a result. Portsmouth received nothing as it is already funded at a rate sufficient to reach the minimum funding levels.

The forum noted that it was important that more be done to encourage a better response rate to consultations to increase the legitimacy of decisions.

Action

Members will ask their phases for their views on the further reduction of the lump sum in future years.

Members pass on the forum's thanks for responding to the consultation.

The Schools Forum:

- Endorsed the principles proposed by the Working Groups in Appendices 1 and 2 to guide and inform the funding arrangements for 2016-17.**
- Endorsed, that following confirmation of the 2016-17 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), officers will amend the unit values to minimise the impact of fluctuations in funding at the school level and to maintain overall affordability. In order to provide schools with some certainty, where possible any changes will be limited to the following formula factors:**
 - **Basic Per Pupil Entitlement**
 - **Prior attainment**
 - **Lump Sum**
 - **The percentage of the financial cap**
- Endorsed the proposed changes to the mainstream funding formula factors, together with the choices that the Council has made in implementing these factors locally, as detailed at paragraph 4.6.**
- Endorsed the submission of the draft proforma to the DfE as the first stage of the 2016-17 school revenue funding formula process.**
- Agreed by phase, (maintained primary and secondary schools) to the de-delegation in principle of the following budgets for central administration in 2016-17.**

	De-Delegation Proposed	
Expenditure Item	Primary	Secondary
Administration of free school	Yes	Yes

meals eligibility		
Licences	Yes	Yes
Special Staff Costs: Union Duties Only	Yes	Yes
Schools Contingency Fund	Yes	Yes
Behaviour Support	Yes	No
Museum & Library Services	Yes	No

- f) Endorsed the proposed Growth Fund criteria for 2016-17 as set out in Section 5 of the attached consultation document.
- g) Noted that subject to the guidance awaited from the DfE and the results of the work being undertaken by the Inclusion Commissioning Manager the authority is not proposing to make changes to High Needs place numbers or Element 3 Top-up funding for Special Schools, Resource Units and Alternative Provision settings for 2016-17.
- h) Endorsed the MFG exemptions submitted to the DfE by the required deadline of 30 September 2015 as set out in paragraph 5.3.

Note: all the above were approved unanimously.

33. Scheme for Financing Schools.

Alison Egerton, Group Accountant introduced the report and explained proposed changes to Portsmouth's Scheme, following publication of two directed revisions by the DFE.

Beverley Pennekett, Finance Manager for Children Families & Learning, explained that academies have mirroring requirements in their handbooks. If this scheme were to be adopted, governors would be required to publish their business interests on the website. The revised scheme also clarified that and schools are not permitted to borrow money, with the exception of Salix loans. Members were also advised that some companies were misrepresenting their loans as Salix.

Richard Webb, Finance Manager recommended that schools considering taking up these loans contact Alan Barber.

The Schools Forum approved the revised scheme for financing schools.

34. Childcare Sufficiency.

The Chair reminded the forum that this item had been brought to the previous meeting but as it was not quorate, members were not able to vote on the recommendations.

Richard Webb informed members that on 15 October the Cabinet Member for Children & Education agreed the allocation of £51,000 from the Dedicated Schools Grant 2014-15 carry forward to be used to continue the expansion of the two year old provision in the city.

Catherine Kickham, Early Support Commissioning Manager introduced the report and in response to questions, clarified the following points:

- She is confident that the provision is located in the appropriate areas.
- Provision in schools is generally good quality. Two schools offer childcare for two year olds.
- This would continue to be a free core offer as long as it is viable.

The Schools Forum

- 1. Noted the progress in expanding the sufficiency of 2 year old places.**
- 2. Endorsed the allocation of £51,000 from the Dedicated Schools Grant 2014-15 carry forward to be used to continue the expansion of the 2 year old provision in the city.**

35. Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring report for the First Quarter 2015 - 2016.

Richard Webb, Finance Manager introduced the report and added that there will be clarity regarding pupil numbers in the third quarter.

The Schools Forum noted the forecast year-end budget position as at the end of quarter 1, for the Dedicated Schools Grant, together with the associated explanations, as detailed in section 4 of the report.

36. School Term Dates

Mike Stoneman, Strategic Commissioning Manager introduced the report.

DECISION

The Schools Forum noted the report.

37. Any Other Business.

School Places.

Members discussed the proposed development of at least 860 houses in Baffins and Milton wards and the availability of school places for the residents. The local authority commissioned a piece of work to look into the lack of secondary places and a number of schools had expressed an interest in growing.

Action

Mike Stoneman, Strategic Commissioning Manager will present an update to a future Schools Forum meeting.

Governors Forum meeting

All governors are welcome to attend this meeting on 4 November at Portsmouth Academy for Girls at 5.30pm.

Action

Head Teachers will remind governors to attend.

Changes to Tax Credits and Benefits Caps.

- Members expressed concern regarding the impact of these changes and discussed what schools are doing to assist parents.
- Mayfield extended the school day by providing free extracurricular activities after school to assist working parents. Some other schools provide breakfast clubs.
- It is important that parents who are the most affected can access quality information in the format they require.
- A high number of mostly working parents will be affected.
- All schools will be affected.

Richard Webb, Finance Manager noted that this issue should be discussed at the Health & Wellbeing Board.

Action

Members will highlight the points raised with their phases and report back to the next Schools Forum meeting.

The meeting concluded at 5.45pm.

David Jeapes
Chair