

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING HELD ON 16 JUNE 2016 AT THE KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Mr N Baker (Chairman), Mr M Watson, Mr J Hamp, Ms J Hatherell, Mr J Hawkins, Mr J Proctor, Mr N Roper, Mrs C Shahrokni, Mrs C Williamson and Mr S White

Also Present:

Cllr Richard Gamble, Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager), Elizabeth Williams (Head of Finance), Susan Tanner (Head of Commissioning and Joint Planning) and Kieran Elliott (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

25 Apologies and Changes of Membership

Apologies were received from Cllr Mayes, Tracy Cornelius, Rosemary Collard, Aileen Bates, Sue Jiggins, Amanda Burnside, Michelle Chilcott, David Whewell and Ingrid Sidmouth.

26 Minutes of the previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2016 were considered.

Resolved:

That subject to correcting the listing of Simon White and Jon Hamp, to approve and sign as a true and correct record.

27 Declaration of Interests

For the item proposed for consideration under 'urgent items', Mr Roper declared that Stonehenge School also had the possibility of becoming a split site school within the next 3 years. This was deemed to be an issue in light of the nature of the item being discussed.

28 Chairman's Announcements

It was announced that it was to be the last meeting for Ms Jan Hatherell. On behalf of the Forum, the Chairman expressed thanks to Ms Hatherell for her many years of excellent service.

29 **Children and Young People's Trust Board Update**

A verbal update on the Children's Trust Commissioning Executive was received from Susan Tanner, Head of Commissioning and Joint Planning. In particular, it was noted that the CTCE had had discussions about the White Paper, Educational Excellence Everywhere, and it had been agreed that a Transition Board would be established, with PHF and WASSH representation.

30 **Reports from Working Groups**

Minutes and updates on working groups of the Forum were provided; including the School Funding Working Group (SFWG) and Early Years Reference Group (EYRG). The minutes of both working groups were noted.

The forum discussed the recent work of the groups, in particular a discussion was had around the delegation of budgets that were currently de-delegated. Details were sought on the timeline for 100% delegation of schools block budgets, and who would need to be involved in further meetings to discuss relevant issues.

Having been put to the meeting, it was

Resolved:

- 1. That Schools Forum notes the minutes of the School Funding Working Group meeting.**
- 2. That Schools Forum agree the proposals relating to the management of the high needs budget as follows:**
 - a) That the recoument of unfilled places should continue in 2016-17 academic year through the current methodology;**
 - b) That proposals should be developed for consideration by Primary Heads Forum (PHF) and Wiltshire Association for Secondary and Special Heads (WASSH) in relation to a revised and consistent process for considering requests for re-banding and for the moderation of banding decisions;**
 - c) That further work should be carried out to consider options for the operation of the exceptional numbers of statements formula factor funded from the high needs block.**
- 3. That Schools Forum note the recommendation of the Schools Funding Working Group when considering the paper on procurement of schools management information system licences.**

4. That Schools Forum agrees not to hold a consultation in September 2016 on the de-delegation of central budgets for the next financial year.

5. That Schools Funding Working Group is asked to work with Officers to develop a plan for the delegation of budgets to meet the required timescale of 100% delegation of schools block budgets by April 2019 and to report back to Schools Forum at the October meeting.

31 **Outturn Report 2015/16**

The final outturn report form 2015/16 was presented with a written report from Liz Williams, Head of Finance.

It was noted that the dedicated schools grant was overspent by £0.899m, although this was an improvement on the position as reported in January 2016. A number of reasons for the improved position were discussed with the overall impact being that the DSG reserve held a positive balance at the year end of £0.591m.

Further details were also provided of the £1.855m overspend in the High Needs Budget, which was in line with expectations. Further work was requested for October 2016, including more detail on ISS placements and the types of needs being met through these placements.

In response to a question from John Proctor, it was confirmed that the Early Years Inclusion Funding for pupils with high needs in early years settings was funded through the high needs block. Any potential impact on that budget, arising from the increase in free entitlement from 15 to 30 hours, would be discussed in the first instance at the Early Years Reference Group and brought back to Schools Forum at a future meeting.

Having been put to the meeting, it was

Resolved:

To note the outturn position for the Dedicated Schools Budget in 2015-16.

32 **Update on Government Proposals for National Funding Formula and High Needs Funding Reform**

It was explained that due to purdah restrictions it was not possible to provide an update at the current time.

33 **Confirmation of dates for future meetings**

The next meeting was scheduled for 6 October 2016. It was noted a special meeting might be necessary depending on proposals for a national funding formula.

34 **Urgent Items**

The Forum considered a breakdown of the amounts set for pupil led funding factors within the formula for the last 3 years and the associated quantum. As discussed at the previous meeting, quantum had been maintained and this had led to changes in the per pupil rates. The Forum discussed the need for greater understanding of the impact of changes in pupil numbers on the associated rates when setting the budget. It was agreed that for future years detailed information on funding rates for each formula factor would be presented earlier in the budget setting process.

The Forum considered a request from Exeter House School, Salisbury for a split site allowance. As members had not had sufficient time to consider the request in detail the matter was referred to the Schools Funding Working Group meeting on 5 July 2016 for further consideration and decision.

35 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Resolved:

To agree that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting for the business specified in minute numbers 35-36 because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

36 **Procurement of Licences for the School's Management Information System 2017-18**

Grant Davis, Strategic Financial Support Manager, presented a confidential report on the procurement of licences for the School's Information Management System.

After discussion of all of the options outlined in the report, it was:

Resolved

That the budget for licences for Schools Management Information Systems be delegated to maintained schools from April 2017.

(Duration of meeting: 1.30 - 3.00 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Kieran Elliott, of Democratic & Members' Services, direct line 01225 718504, e-mail kieran.elliott@wiltshire.gov.uk

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