



Minutes

Name of meeting	SCHOOLS' FORUM
Date and time	8.30AM – Thursday 21st November 2019
Venue	Community Learning Centre, Westridge, Ryde PO33 1QS
Present	Beverley Gilbert – Brading CE Primary (Chair) Noreen Ward – Christ the King College Mike Hayward – Isle of Wight Education Federation Samm Rooney – IOW College (substitute) David Thornton – Carisbrooke and Newport CEPs Federation (Vice-Chair) Gordon Kendall – Bembridge CE Primary School Duncan Mills – Cornerstone Federation Lisa Nicholson – Haylands Primary School Caroline Sice – Lanesend Primary Academy Sarah Hussey – Northwood Primary Academy Julie Stewart – Medina House School Jackie Boxx – Island Learning Centre Jayne Hill – Niton and Brighstone Pre-Schools
Officers	Brian Pope – Assistant Director, Education and Inclusion Barry Downer - Senior Finance Business Partner Irina Rowan – Finance Business Partner Chris Jones – SEN Service Manager Sarah Teague – Strategic Manager, Workforce and Organisational Management Diane Hiscock – Clerk
Apologies	Cllr Paul Brading – Cabinet Member for Children's Services Sue Bowen – Church of England Diocese Robert Dare – Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Fidelma Washington – Isle of Wight College

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Members and officers were welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were received.

3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No questions were received prior to the meeting

4. MEMBERSHIP UPDATE/REVIEW CONSTITUTION

There are no current vacancies on the Schools Forum. The constitution had been reviewed against pupil numbers from the 2019 summer census and meets the requirements of the [Schools Forum Operational Guidance](#)

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED :

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on [18 July 2019](#) be confirmed.

Action – Action list to be sent to all members for info

6. MATTERS ARISING

- 6.1 Item 6.1 – DT gave a brief account of the pilot scheme taking place at Bembridge CE Primary School with Future IOW, looking at renewable energy and fuel economy in schools.

There was a slight delay due to technical difficulties, which have now been resolved.

GK noted appreciation on behalf of the school for the support and co-operation.

Action – DT to bring a report to the meeting on 15 January 2020

- 6.2 (Item 6.2) A report ([Paper B](#)) on use of Trade Union Facilities time (in hours) had been submitted for information. There is a formula for the allocation of time per union, which is reviewed annually. It was noted that the return form may not be completed on a common basis by representatives and may require further work to achieve this.

It would be difficult to quantify the impact/outcomes of work undertaken to support union members, as much of this is around damage limitation and mediation.

7. HIGH NEEDS STRATEGY PROGRESS REPORT [Paper C](#)

- 7.1 CJ presented a report on the Specialist Outreach Service (SOS), (managed through Medina House School) and the proposal for Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) support for IOW schools. The report outlined the range of support offered to schools through the SOS. A review of the service was presented to Schools Forum at the meeting in [July 2019](#) where it was noted (item 8.2) that schools had agreed to restore £150,000 from the High Needs Block for this provision.

- 7.2 The proposal for a staffing structure to strengthen this support for schools is costed at £153,732.

LN left the meeting

- 7.3 Further information was given on the proposal for a Wellbeing offer to support SEMH needs on the Island. Initially, a pilot year would run through a partnership between the Hampshire Primary Behaviour Service (PBS), the Island Learning Centre (ILC) and IOW schools, in liaison with other professionals.

- 7.4 Consultation with schools will determine the themes for support and the partnership arrangement will focus on building capacity on the IOW through consultation, training and direct support.

- 7.5 The positive impact of this provision in Hampshire has been recognised and Health Service colleagues have agreed to contribute £50,000 year on year to the proposed service for the IOW.

- 7.6 The staffing model to implement this service is costed at £140,000.
- 7.7 Forum members discussed viability of the proposal, taking account of the deficit in the High Needs Budget. Concern was raised over the prudence of agreeing to additional expenditure. However, costings are included in the workings for the next year and are aimed at reducing pressure in that area.
- 7.8 There is an absolute need for a sustainable structure to support the needs of children and staff. The pilot will be reviewed after the first year.

RESOLVED :

THAT the revised structure developed in partnership with headteachers and Local Authority (LA) as outlined in the report, maintaining the current level of investment be agreed.

THAT the additional £100,000 required to fully implement the SEMH support for a pilot year in 2020/21 followed by a review be agreed.

8. PRESENTATION ON SEN PLACEMENT STRATEGY

- 8.1 CJ gave a further presentation on the proposed strategy for managing Special Educational Needs (SEN) placements. Stakeholders are being consulted to identify needs and forecast requirements for future placements. The aim is to build capacity and ensure efficient use of available resources.
- 8.2 The vision is to provide support in mainstream education, using local resources, to take account of the views of children and young people and work in partnership with parents. There will be a focus on outcomes, timely provision of support and embedding a positive culture.
- 8.3 The methodology for achieving this is through ongoing work with Parent Voice colleagues, meetings with parents of home educated children (EHE) and with St Georges School Council and addressing parents' questions.
- 8.4 There is a declining trend in child population on the Island, whilst the older population is growing. Conversely, the proportion of EHCPs has risen from 3.5% in 2015/16 to 4.3% in 2019/20 – in comparison to a rise from 2.9% - 3.1% nationally over the same timescale. Members were assured that there is a rigorous process for allocating EHCPs on the Island. EHCPs have continued to rise from 618 in 2016 and are forecast to reach 910 in 2024. It was confirmed that the continuing rise is similar to expectations in other areas.
- 8.5 The rise in SEMH need is linked to poverty and deprivation index factors. It would be useful to compare the IOW with Local Authorities with similar deprivation indices. Members discussed how some IOW parents' may not have high expectations for their children. There has been a drop in post-16 students going to university over the last year and a rise in college placements.
- 8.6 In conclusion, within 4 – 5 years, an additional 64 places are likely to be needed. Primary = 4 per year group and Secondary = 8 per year group. This strategy is aimed at reducing pressure and better meeting the needs of children and young people. Additional capacity will enable officer attendance at annual reviews and offer further options for developing support for children in the Early Years (EY) sector and for Post 16 and Post 18 students.
- 8.7 It is hoped to implement the strategy as soon as possible. Budget details are shown in the [Local Offer](#) and is factored into a [3 year plan](#).
- 8.9 Work is ongoing to review provision for EHE children whose needs may not be met. New guidance requires LAs to assess the suitability of education for every child on an annual basis. If parents refuse, education can be deemed unsuitable.

Action – A working party to be formed to discuss the High Needs Budget in depth before the January 2020 Schools Forum Meeting

BG to send an email of appreciation to Julie Greer

NW entered the meeting

9. BUDGET MONITORING [Paper D](#)

9.1 BD had produced a report showing the September 2019 position, forecast in year overspend of £1,147,000 In addition the Dedicated School Grant (DSG) deficit of £908,000 would bring the forecast overspend to £2,056,000. Members understood that the DfE would therefore require a recovery plan to be implemented.

9.2 EARLY YEARS

There is minor pressure in the EY block due to changes in the central team and a slight increase in the funding rate. Teacher pension rate is increased from 16.4% to 23.6%, but the LA is able to bid to the supplementary fund to reduce the effect of this by a possible £6,000.

9.3 SCHOOLS BLOCK

A notional £33,000 was set for the Growth Fund, but it is unlikely that any schools will be eligible for funding for an additional class. As such, there may be an underspend in this area.

9.4 HIGH NEEDS BLOCK

An overspend of £100,000 is expected in EY SEN funding, due to increasing identification of SEN in young children.

There are currently 58 active Educational Personal Budgets, which are expected to result in a £209,000 overspend. Whilst this area creates pressure, the good practice in place is in line with Ofsted requirements and offsets pressure in other areas.

Discretionary top up funding is difficult to predict, but an overspend of £197,000 is anticipated. Top up funding in mainstream schools is forecast to overspend against the original budget by £114,000. A proposal to reduce payments by moving to a fixed budget was discussed at the last Schools Forum meeting, but not agreed.

Post 16 top up funding is estimated to overspend by £285,000 but the IW College allocation is still under negotiation.

Whilst Independent Non-Maintained School (INMSS) placements have increased, there has been ongoing work to reduce overall costs. This is expected to result in an underspend of £92,000. Members noted the substantially higher cost of mainland placements.

The budget for SEN Central teams includes £25,000 for the commissioned work to reduce the overall cost of INMSS placements.

9.5 CENTRAL SERVICES BLOCK

Non-SEN independent placements are forecast to underspend by £15,000 but may change due to very small numbers of placements in this area.

9.6 OTHER GRANTS

Other DfE grants passported on to schools include teachers' pay and pension grants, pupil premium, universal infant free schools meals and sixth form funding.

RESOLVED :

THAT the September 2019 budget monitoring position on the 2019/20 schools budget be noted.

10. SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA 2020/21 [Paper E](#)

10.1 BD reported on the draft funding formula at October 2019, which will be updated in relation to pupil numbers and premises costs, once the results of the Autumn Census are received.

10.2 NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA

The formula for distribution continues through a local formula, but is close to the National Funding Formula (NFF) to ease the impact on school budgets, in anticipation of the hard formula being implemented. Additional funding announced by DfE is expected to be around £3,170,000.

10.3 A short period of consultation was carried out on the local funding formula, to which 24 (52.2%) of schools replied. [Appendix B](#) outlined the responses received. 95% of the respondents agreed to using the same principles for the 2020/21 funding formula as for 2019/20.

10.4 Forum members had previously requested a review of the difference between deprivation funding values for primary and secondary schools. DfE have confirmed that these are based on historic values and national consultation and there is no case for change to the ratio between primary and secondary, which is 1:1.28 as shown in Appendix A of [Paper E](#).

10.5 As the majority of respondents to the local consultation were in agreement with the proposed formula proportions it was agreed not to make changes at this stage. New IDACI data due for publication may result in national changes for next year.

10.6 It is proposed to apply the new approach to mobility funding used for the NFF.

10.7 All respondents agreed to the proposed increase in the lump sum from £115,000 to £116,020.

10.8 As the formula is based on October 2018 pupil numbers, it was agreed to adjust formula factors in equal proportion in order to balance the overall funding, based on results of the October Census.

10.9 MINIMUM FUNDING GUARANTEE (MFG)

New DfE guidance has changed the range for setting the MFG (previously set at -1.5%), which is now between +0.5% and +1.84%. This means that schools must gain a minimum of 0.5% on their budget. The estimated cost would range between £55,000 and £92,000. 73% of respondents to the consultation agreed with the proposal to set the MFG at 0.5% and spread the impact across all schools.

RESOLVED :

THAT the draft funding formula be approved (school and academy members).

THAT the principle that formula values (excluding the lump sum) be increased or decreased in equal proportion to balance the overall funding available for distribution be agreed (school and academy members).

THAT the principle that mobility factor values mirror the national funding formula values be agreed (indicative values £887 primary and £1,268 secondary) (school and academy members).

THAT the lump sum be increased to the new national funding formula level (indicative value (£116,020) (school and academy members).

THAT the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) of +0.5% in 2020/21 be funded by making proportionate minimal reductions in wider formula factors.

11. SCHOOLS BUDGET 2020/21 [Paper F](#)

11.1 BD presented a report on changes to the 2020/21 budget, for decision on de-delegation and for a transfer of funding from the Schools Block to contribute to pressure in the High Needs Block.

11.2 EARLY YEARS

Additional national funding of £66million will contribute to a slight increase in funding rates for two year olds and three/four year olds is expected to increase overall funding by around £120,000 - dependent on the results of the January 2020 census. This should bring a small increase to the hourly rates for providers.

11.3 There will be a full consultation with providers on options for changes to the EY funding formula and SEN inclusion fund. Members discussed the benefit of having children put forward for EHCPs through EY providers and the need for sufficient SEN support in this sector.

11.4 It was also noted that any decrease in child population will impact on the EY sector first.

11.5 A proposed increase of £41,000 in the EY Central Team was outlined in the report and discussed. The proposal includes conversion of a business officer post to allow for an additional EY teacher and for annual maintenance of a more efficient electronic system to manage funding data.

11.6 Members sought to ratify the 18% increase. The proposal was formed as a result of feedback from schools and to provide early intervention in support of the High Needs Strategy. It was agreed that the work is widely valued and has a positive impact. All EY provision on the IOW is either Good or Outstanding.

11.7 The IOW is proven to be more cost-effective than other LAs, in providing the Central EY Service at a cost of around 4% of the EY funding rather than the national threshold of 5%, which means that 96% is passed on to EY providers.

11.8 This is an annual decision and will be re-visited next year. Schools Forum responsibility is to agree the total value of 96% to be passed on to providers. The LA decides on how to use the remaining funding for the EY Central Service.

11.9 Members felt that it would be useful to have more information about the service.

Action – Agreed to invite Simon Francis to the EY Headteachers Briefing, Primary Headteachers Briefing and to the Schools Forum Meeting in January 2020 to explain the work of the early years team and how the 4% is spent.

RESOLVED :

THAT the proposed central early years budget of £273,000 be approved.

THAT the proposal to review the 2020/21 early years funding rates for two year old and three/four year old entitlements ahead of consultation with providers be endorsed.

11.10 CENTRAL SCHOOL SERVICES BLOCK

BD gave an overview of costings for provision of the central school services block.

RESOLVED :

THAT the central school services block budgets for 2020/21 be approved.

11.11 GROWTHFUND/FALLING ROLLS

Growth funding sits within the school's block and has not yet been confirmed for 2020/21. Schools are not expected to be eligible for this funding in the next year, but there have been a number of enquiries. Therefore, it is proposed to set a minimum budget of £92,000 to cover any unforeseen costs. The remainder of the budget (which was £682,000 for 2019/20) would be distributed to schools through the local formula. Members discussed the reasoning for increasing this budget from £33,000 in 2019/20.

RESOLVED :

THAT a growth fund budget for 2020/21 of £92,000 be agreed (5 for, 4 against).

11.12 DE-DELEGATION OF SERVICES

BD went through the de-delegated services provided by the LA, including details of the service for checking Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility. The cost of this service is £28,000 but the budget will be maintained at £17,000 until the impact of changes to benefits and deprivation data are known. Primary and secondary representatives must separately vote on these.

RESOLVED :

THAT the funding for services noted in the table in para 35 of the report continue to be de-delegated. Primary – Yes (3) Secondary – Yes (3)

11.13 EDUCATION FUNCTIONS FOR MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

It is proposed that the retention of funding from maintained schools for the cost of LA statutory duties remains at a rate of £57 per pupil (as for 2019/20).

RESOLVED :

THAT a contribution from maintained schools of £57 per pupil, to meet the cost of statutory services provided by the council for maintained schools, be agreed (maintained schools only).

11.14 HIGH NEEDS BLOCK

Historically the IOW has been better funded in this area, so will gain less from the new funding promised by the DfE. There will still be a budget gap of £730,000 despite the additional money, which is set to increase to £2,000,000 in 3 years. [Appendix B](#) shows a breakdown and an extended 3 year plan.

11.15 Para 40 of the report showed continuing pressure in this area. Costs of educational placements are stabilising, but health and social care placement contributions are slightly increased on last year.

11.16 Points to note are that the number of SEN personal budgets is increasing and that the SEN Cap policy will require further review in March 2020. The new banding system that is being developed may impact on top up funding, but it is necessary to meet the needs of children.

11.17 It was confirmed that Schools Forum can agree a transfer from the schools block to the high needs block of up to 0.5%. The LA can apply to DfE for a transfer of more than 0.5%. Schools Forum may support, but it would be a DfE decision actioned through a disapplication request. The decision on agreeing a 0.5% transfer, or supporting a request above this level is made annually

11.18 Previous transfers of 0.5% have not been sufficient to address the pressures on the high needs budget. A range of transfer options were given –

0.0% transfer would require a further £750,000 in year savings with no effect on the £2,056,000 deficit

0.5% - as previous years – would require a further £350,000 in year savings with no effect on the deficit

1.0% - would allow for a balanced in year budget forecast, but still no effect on the deficit

1.5% - would allow for a balance in year budget forecast and a contribution of an estimated £365,700 towards recouping the £2,056,000 deficit. This option could allow for the deficit to be cleared over a 6-year period.

- 11.19 The impact of the range of transfers on school budgets is shown at Appendix C of [Paper F](#) and responses to the consultation with schools are shown in Appendix D. The majority supported continuing with the existing transfer of 0.5%. Members discussed the rationale for increasing the transfer and felt that headteachers should have more detail of the options, in excess of the consultation exercise and following the publication of the November School Forum papers, to give an informed response to fully consider the other options.

RESOLVED :

THAT the update on high needs funding, including the budget plan for 2020/21 be noted.

That Schools Forum supports a 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

An additional meeting of the Schools Forum will take place on **Tuesday 10 December 2019 – 4.00pm at Westridge Community Learning Centre, Brading Road, Ryde PO33 1QS**

DATES OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Thursday 16 January 2020

Thursday 19 March 2020

8.30am start, all at

Westridge Community Learning Centre, Brading Road, Ryde PO33 1QS

The meeting closed at 11.20 am