

BCP SHADOW SCHOOLS FORUM

WEDNESDAY, 31ST OCTOBER, 2018

Present: Phil Keen (Corfe Hills School)– **Chairman**
Patrick Earnshaw (Highcliffe School)– **Vice-Chairman**

Russell Arnold, The Quay School
Mark Avoth, Bourne Academy
Andy Baker, Poole Grammar School
Karen Boynton, Highcliffe Primary School
Kate Carter, TEACH Trust
Jon Chapple, Twynham Primary School
Geoff Cherrill, Winchelsea Special School
Linda Duly, Cuddles Day Nursery
Phillip Gavin, Christchurch Learning Centre
Jason Holbrook, Avonbourne College
Sue Johnson, Jack in the Box Nursery
Bob Kennedy, St Michaels CE Primary School
Jacqui Kitcher, Bournemouth and Poole College
David Newman, Poole High School
Jeremy Payne, St James CE Primary School
Sean Preston, Hamwic Multi-Academy Trust
Dave Simpson, The Epiphany School
David Todd, St Peter's School

Also in Attendance: Councillor Nicola Greene, Bournemouth Borough Council
Councillor Michael White, Borough of Poole

Officers in attendance: Jack Cutler, Planning and Statistics (BBC)
Neil Goddard, Service Director - Community Learning & Commissioning (BBC)
Marilyn Scofield-Marlowe, Business Support Officer and Clerk to the Forum (BoP)
Vicky Wales, Head of Children, Young People and Learning (BoP)
Nicola Webb, Assistant Chief Financial Officer (BoP and BBC)

Apologies: Councillor Mrs Patricia Jamieson, Christchurch Bourough Council
Angela Malanczuk, Stanley Green Infant Academy
Michael Reid, Ambitions Academy Trust
Sue Ross, Bournemouth Borough Council
Jan Thurgood, Borough of Poole

1 Election of Chairman

RESOLVED that Phil Keen (Head Teacher – Corfe Hills School) be elected Chairman of the BCP Shadow Schools Forum.

2 Election of Vice-Chairman

RESOLVED that Patrick Earnshaw (Head Teacher – Highcliffe School) be elected Vice Chairman of the BCP Shadow Schools Forum.

3 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Jan Thurgood (Strategic Director, People Theme, Poole). Councillor Trish Jamieson (Christchurch Borough Council) attended the Induction but was unable to attend the meeting proper.

4 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

5 Terms of Reference

The Shadow School Forum noted that paragraph 1.2 of the Terms of Reference recognises the time limited remit of the Shadow Forum; the new Forum will come into effect after Council elections and no later than July 2019.

It was noted that membership contained no Governor representation, due to lack of volunteers but that, as a Shadow Forum, the DfE had agreed there could be some discretion regarding membership.

Paragraph 6.4 states that the Chair is expected to represent the Shadow Schools Forum at other events. It was confirmed that this is a legacy item within the Terms of Reference and rarely used.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The lack of any Governor Representatives was deemed acceptable for the Shadow Schools Forum; this will need to be re-visited when forming the Forum proper after Council elections and no later than July 2019.**
- (ii) The Terms of Reference be adopted by unanimous agreement.**

6 Budget Reference Group

The Shadow Forum noted that 9 members of the Shadow Forum were members of the Budget Reference Group.

RESOLVED that the Budget Reference Group ceases; the remit of the work being carried out by the Budget Reference Group to be transferred to the Shadow Schools Forum.

7 Draft Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Budget 2019/20

Nicola Webb presented an overview of the key points in respect of the Draft Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Budget 2019/20.

Key Points raised:

- Funding was estimated; this has always been the case at this point, but more so than usual due to the formation of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP).
- There is uncertainty over the Growth Fund; figures had not been released by the Government. Expectation was that BCP would be in the protected range.

- No confirmation from the Government in respect of mainstream funding formula rates for primary and secondary across BCP had been received. The exact figures for funding will also depend on the October 2018 school census.
- The Central Services Block figures were considered to be an accurate representation but will change slightly also from the census.
- High Needs figures were estimated at this stage. Adjustments will be made following the December settlement announcements and January 2019 census.
- Early Years funding rates are the same across the 3 Local Authority areas and will be the same for BCP. Adjustments to funding levels will be made following the census in January 2019 and January 2020.
- Despite the level of uncertainty, the budget needs to be progressed for completion in December 2018; there may be residual issues that need to be looked at after the December settlement as on occasions DfE have made late changes to the national arrangements.
- The Early Years paper had not been presented for this meeting but a lot of work had been completed at this stage and it will come to the meeting on 13 November 2018.
- The High Needs Block was confirmed to be a major issue; there is a £5.7 million shortfall in the annual budget as currently presented.
- There has been no guidance yet from Government regarding how the Local Authorities should deal with deficits (£4.5 million estimated for Bournemouth and Christchurch coming into BCP from 1 April). The DSG shortfall for 2019/20 needs to be addressed prior to the deficit being considered. The timescale for Government guidance was queried and it was confirmed that this was to be expected within 2 weeks.

Questions were invited from those present and responses were provided as follows:

- A transfer of 1% has been proposed from the Early Years block; it considered this was disproportionately high. The Early Years Sub-Group has requested that this transfer was reduced to 0.5% due to the lack of deficit in Poole. It was confirmed that the transfer was required to support 2019/20 in-year needs, not the deficit.
- Local Authorities can retain up to 5%. Even with a 1% transfer, the BCP planned overall retention is lower than this.
- The final decision is for the Shadow Council.
- It was confirmed that Christchurch Early Years providers had been included in the discussions.
- High needs pressures in 2018-19 were listed as £1.7 – 2 million, with little of it included within the estimated £4.5 million deficit by the end of the year. It was confirmed that the forecast deficit figure took into account potential savings from other budgets and the use of DSG reserves still available in Poole.

The Chair thanked all for their input.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

8 High Needs Budget Strategies

Vicky Wales presented the report provided, which looked at the detail and background to the work surrounding High Needs. This included the ISOS reviews for both Bournemouth and Poole, which were commissioned by both Local Authorities to look

at the pressures on the High Needs Block (HNB). ISOS have worked with Local Authorities nationally and are a key independent group working with the DfE.

It was noted that there are very similar pressures across both areas.

Key points raised:

- There has been growth in EHCPs across all ages, including Post 19.
- There are more SEND pupils in specialist provision across the area than is the case nationally.
- Local special schools are at capacity.
- There have been large rises in permanent exclusions, with pupils not returning to mainstream education.
- Spend on alternative provision and bespoke provision has increased.

Both Local Authorities set up targeted groups to look at High Need pressures, as recommended by ISOS;

- Bournemouth developed outreach services; Poole has reviewed existing outreach services.
- Systems of supporting SEND pupils to remain in mainstream have been explored with schools, such as a Mainstream Plus offer.
- Working with special schools to explore satellite special school provision.
- Post 16 provision, extending the collaboration between Winchelsea School and Bournemouth and Poole College.
- In Poole, the Positive Re-integration Protocol has been developed to encourage a return to mainstream education for excluded pupils; this has been shown to have had an impact.
- Both Local Authorities have introduced a graduated response toolkit.
- High cost placements have been reviewed.

The targeted group in Poole had met that morning and expressed an interest in combining the 2 groups.

All present discussed the report, the benefits of working together and initiatives to reduce high needs costs would need to be built into the budget. Key points were as follows:

- It was confirmed that figures provided included figures for the Christchurch area, as well as Bournemouth and Poole and used estimates based on current levels of provision and expected future trends. The remit of the combined group would be pragmatic, collaborative work to look at solutions together for schools and the Local Authority.
- It was confirmed that ultimately accountability remains with the Local Authorities and officers are held to account by Elected Members. The responsibility for finding solutions is a partnership between schools and the Local Authority, and a single HNB group would need to ensure a single financial strategy.
- Place numbers were queried as there were more places than outlined in the paper. It was confirmed that all special schools are currently over numbers and this has been built into budgets for next year alongside a reduction in the budget for independent schools. It was felt that a meeting between the Local

Authority and special schools would be beneficial, as all were keen to look at provision; the intention is to move more pupils into more affordable provision.

- It was raised that the approach to outreach varies between Bournemouth and Poole. Strategies need to be aligned, whilst addressing differences across the areas.
- 1. The new Delta Trust alternative provision school in Bovington and its impact on Bournemouth and Poole was raised; this was confirmed as opening on a small scale in September 2020.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) **The HNB Groups for Bournemouth and Poole combine into one group of approximately 12 members, which includes a Christchurch representative and works to a single action plan.**
- (ii) **The Terms of Reference for this new group to be brought to the next meeting of the Shadow Schools Forum on 13 November 2018.**
- (iii) **The Group would meet informally prior to the next meeting of the shadow schools forum on 13 November 2018**

9 Mainstream Schools Funding Formula

Jack Cutler presented in detail the reports provided in relation to the Mainstream Schools Funding Formula and alternative options for Shadow Forum to consider if a transfer to high needs is to be made. The report was based on 2018-2019 pupil characteristics, from the October 2017 census and looked at ways to release funding from the NFF should a transfer to high needs be agreed.

If all schools received the full NFF, there would be little funding available to transfer to the HNB.

The report provided a way to categorise the impact of options for the various formula positions of schools (e.g. on formula, capped, minimum per pupil funding level etc.).

The funding model adopted would be set across BCP.

It was noted that the models provided showed extreme ranges available, to give a full insight into the options available.

It was clarified that any of the models of transfers to the High Needs Block would not be applied to clear the deficit; this funding will be used by schools to support pupils in 2019-20.

It was discussed that the complexities of the options presented would need a working group to consider fully.

The Chair thanked Jack Cutler for presenting the detailed information.

RESOLVED that a working group be formed to look at funding options in detail to model impact to schools, consisting of:

- **David Newman**
- **Andy Baker**
- **David Todd**

- Patrick Earnshaw
- Dave Simpson
- Jeremy Payne

10 **Forward Plan**

The Chair confirmed that all were clear on the actions required ahead of the next meeting and that the hope would be that Nicola Webb would have received updated guidance from the DfE regarding to the deficit to feedback at that point.

The Chair requested that a number of the papers should be moved to a future meeting where possible, in order to keep the meeting focused on the key issues and within the timescale required of 2 hours for the meeting.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

11 **Dates of Future Meetings**

All were reminded by the Chair to reserve the date of the next meeting in their calendars. No revision to timing was suggested.

Tuesday 13 November 2018 at 12.30pm

Duration of the meeting: 4.30 - 6.50 pm

**Chairman at the meeting on
Wednesday, 31 October 2018**