

SCHOOLS FORUM

TUESDAY, 14TH SEPTEMBER, 2021

Present: Geoff Cherrill (Winchelsea Special School) – **Chairman**
Patrick Earnshaw (Highliffe School) – **Vice-Chairman**

Russell Arnold, The Quay School
Mark Avoth, Bourne Academy
Lauren Dean, Kings Park Academy
Kate Carter, TEACH Trust
Jon Chapple, Twynham Primary School
Ben Doyle, St Peters School
Phillip Gavin, Christchurch Learning Centre
Nadine Lapskas, LeAF Studio
Angela Malanczuk, Stanley Green Infant Academy
David Newman, Poole High School
Jeremy Payne, St James CE Primary School
Sean Preston, Hamwic Multi-Academy Trust
Dave Simpson, The Epiphany School
Sian Thomas, Ambitions Academies Trust

Also in Councillor Nicola Greene
Attendance: Councillor Mike White

Officers in Nicola Webb, Assistant Chief Financial Officer
attendance: Steve Ellis, Accountant - Education
Andrew Hind, Pupil Place Planning, Admissions & School Funding
Sarah Rempel, Director of Education
Rina Mistry, Early Help Performance Manager
Terry Reynolds, Interim Education Consultant, Community Learning & Commissioning

1 Introduction

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

2 Apologies for Absence

Jacqueline Page – Principal, Bournemouth and Poole College
Brigid Hincks – St Joseph's Primary School
Dorian Lewis – Headteacher, Bournemouth School
Linda Duly – Cuddles Day Nursery
Sue Johnson – Jack in the Box, Bournemouth

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 June 2021, having been previously circulated, be taken as read, signed and confirmed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the corrections below.

Apologies noted should include Sean Preston.

Action to move to termly collection of data for EHCPs has been implemented.

All other matters arising are covered in the agenda.

5 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - Budget Monitoring 2021-22

Nicola Webb, Assistant Chief Finance Officer, BCP Council, presented the report.

This item was presented as a usual budget monitoring report.

Detail as contained in the report.

Sean Preston queried where any new evolving pressures might be.

The following were noted:

- Growth in EHCPs and where young people are placed. The aim is to reduce reliance on independent placements. This is built into the budget but is not yet being realised due to availability of places.
- Sufficiency is a concern and is an issue across the board. How pupils can be supported in mainstream is being looked at to avoid looking to independents.

RESOLVED that the report was noted.

6 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - Announcements in July to 2022-23

Nicola Webb, Assistant Chief Finance Officer, BCP Council, presented the report.

An increase of 5.4 M (2.4%) was noted in the Schools Block.

Funding for Central Schools Services continues to drop.

The % increase for HNB is in line with previous years and is allowed for in the MTFP – however this will not solve the HNB problem.

Early Years funding is not yet known but historically the sector has not received good increases.

There have been some tweaks to Schools Block NFF, as detailed in Para. 6 of the report.

DSG deficit management – BCP has an issue which needs a conversation with the DfE. The DfE has made some deals with some LAs. More LAs now have the same problem.

There is currently a live consultation from the DfE re future years about moving to a hard NFF. BCP has adopted this for the last couple of years and there is no indication we would not adopt again unless affordability is an issue. The consultation is open for others to make responses about a range of issues. Schools in receipt of split-site funding and multi-use may want to feed in as DfE are looking to find a national formula approach for these – but no details of how in the consultation.

Growth funding – no announcement yet. This will include moving to National methodology for this after next year. Schools can expect that BCP will be likely to stick with NFF.

Geoff Cherrill noted that one of the issues for schools is around the delayed Special Needs review. In order for BCP schools to respond the Director of Children's Services is keen to have bandings looked at to address support to mainstream schools – it is felt that this piece of work needs to be done rapidly.

Rina Mistry has been asked to provide the necessary data and resources to complete the banding review work. Contact Rina for any further information or to discuss anything around the review.

ACTION: anyone wanting to participate in the banding review work contact Rina Mistry directly.

Sian Thomas requested there be some analysis around Resource Base models and Schools Plus models to look at EHCPs and the impact of those models for particular schools. It would also help to look at any discrepancies around funding.

Terry Reynolds noted that the LA has been requested to respond to the recent SEND Inspection by presenting a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) which will require an in depth look at the SEND Strategy and also at provision within all schools and the pattern of that provision. We would not want to tackle the issues in a piecemeal way as the right balance will be needed across the whole of BCP to ensure the right provision for all children and young people in the system. A map of provision needs to be agreed with schools, parents and families.

Simon McKenzie noted that the primary focus is to have our children and young people educated in BCP schools. There is a need to look at schools who currently have additional funding for a School Plus model and look at the impact of this.

Dave Simpson queried if there were any thoughts on how the HN Subgroup will be involved in the work. It was noted that this discussion has now escalated as there is now a HNB Recovery Board chaired by Graham Farrant and we would need to look at how it fits in with that. There are overlaps in terms of overall LA budgets and for the HNB Recovery Board it would be how the subgroup feed into to that.

It was agreed to get the subgroup back up and running and to get the data and discussion underway as soon as possible then it can feed into the Schools Forum at the 12 November meeting.

ACTION: Date to be set for HN subgroup to meet.

It was requested that due to the number of issues to be discussed at 12 November meeting could consideration be given to it being face to face rather than virtual.

ACTION: LA to look into facilitating face to face meeting for 12 November Schools Forum.

7 Extension of Terms of Office for Schools Forum Members

It was proposed by the Chair to extend the terms of office of existing members to the end of the current academic year.

This was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED: Terms of Office for Existing Schools Forum Members be extended to the end of the current academic year.

8 Forward Plan

Feedback from banding review work

Feedback from HN Subgroup

9 **Dates of Future Meetings**

- Friday 12th November 21
- Thursday 13th January 22

10 **Any Other Business**

The Chair noted potential flag of concern around areas of 2022/23 lack of sufficiency – BCP are aware of this and planning is underway with discussions to start in January

David Newman queried under Item 5 the maintained schools retention figure. He noted that nothing in the central retention change would benefit schools or vulnerable children and queried if Forum could request that the 'topslice' be reviewed. Particularly as some schools cannot access some services i.e. asbestos management. It was suggested that this be a conversation outside of this Forum to give an opportunity to discuss in more detail and look at what actions are possible.

Nicola Webb explained that the central retention covered support activity that was not 'paid for' services.

ACTION: Nicola/David to discuss and inform the Chair of the outcome and whether this needs to come back to Forum and if so when.

Duration of the meeting: 9.00 - 9.45 am

**Chairman at the meeting on
Tuesday, 14 September 2021**