

SCHOOLS FORUM

FRIDAY, 17TH JANUARY, 2020

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

Russell Arnold, The Quay School
Mark Avoth, Bourne Academy
Andy Baker, Poole Grammar School
Kate Carter, TEACH Trust
Jon Chapple, Twynham Primary School
Lauren Dean, Kings Park Academy
Ben Doyle, St Peters School
Linda Duly, Cuddles Day Nursery
Phillip Gavin, Christchurch Learning Centre
Tracey Griffin, Bournemouth and Poole College
Brigid Hincks, St Joseph's Primary School
Sue Johnson, Jack in the Box Nursery
Shirley Levy, Winchelsea School
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

Also in Attendance: Councillor David Brown, BCP Council
Councillor Sandra Moore, BCP Council
Gemma Donnelly, Department for Education

Officers in attendance: Jack Cutler, Planning and Statistics
Neil Goddard, Service Director - Quality and Commissioning
Julian Radcliffe, Director Children and Young People
Nicola Webb, Assistant Chief Financial Officer

36 Introduction

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

37 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Geoff Cherrill and Michael Reid.

Forum Members also noted that Jason Holbrook had now left Avonbourne Academy and therefore a replacement was needed for the Schools Forum.

38 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

39 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 November 2019, having been previously circulated, be taken as read, signed and confirmed by the Chairman as a correct record.

It was noted that all other matters arising would be covered in the agenda.

40 Introduction from DfE representative

Gemma Donnelly from the DfE advised that part of her role is to attend Schools Forums meetings, scrutinise minutes and ensure that voting is carried out according to regulations. Attendees were invited to either ask questions or send them to her via email. GD added that she is not here because of any historic issues with the Forum. The issue of High Needs was raised and GD said it is a national issue and most LAs are struggling with their budgets. GD was asked how many other LAs are using Early Years funding. Accurate details could not be provided but GD said that it is not unusual if budgets have money left over and further information will be available in Section 251 data. The issue of no additional funding being provided now age range has increased from 0-19 to 0-25 was mentioned and GD said all LAs have raised this.

41 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Budget Monitoring 2019-20

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

The following points were noted:

- There have been no changes to the forecast DSG income since September report.
- Early Years funding is still estimated and will be finalised after the January 2020 census.
- An overspend of £2.7m is expected in the High Needs Block despite action being taken. Savings in other areas reduces the in-year deficit to £1.9m. The overall deficit is expected to increase from £3.6m to £5.5m by end March 2020.
- In the EYs Block, the increasing cost of SEND is expected to use any surplus generated by lower deprivation allocations and this is reflected in budget estimates for 2020-21.

RESOLVED that the report was noted.

42 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Settlement and Budget 2020-21

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

The following points were noted:

- The initial DSG Settlement was received on 19 December 2019.
- There are no changes for Early Years.
- Schools Block funding rates were announced in October 2019. Only the pupil numbers have changed. Numbers in primaries have mostly stabilised and increased in Secondaries.
- High Needs Block – there is a slight increase in the December Settlement but it is difficult to forecast how this will be updated in the summer. It was confirmed that in the scale of the overall high needs DSG this adjustment should be small.
- An annual funding gap of £8m is expected – this is without a transfer of funding from Early Years or Schools or further cuts to high needs services.
- Increase %s in Table 1 (Page 20) is monetary value and not per pupil value.

RESOLVED that the report was noted.

43 Statement from Parent Carer Forum

Representatives from the Parent Carers Together Forum attended and read the statement that had been provided to the Schools Forum.

The following points were noted:

- Concerns about lack of funding;
- Accountability is needed for how funding is spent;

Need for early intervention and support.

44 High Needs Block Financial Strategy Group

Julian Radcliffe, Service Director Inclusion and Family Services BCP Council, presented the report. The following points were noted:

- BCP Health & Well Being Board reports on developments;
- Board has initiated a review of SEND. A 4 day Peer Review of services etc across BCP is starting on 28 January;
- Need to look at early intervention and support
- Joint Commissioning (SEND) Strategy and arrangements with Health/CCG;
- A SEND Transformation & Development Board has been formed and 2 meetings have now been held.
- SEND Sufficiency Strategy is being completed and this will inform us where needs are. All BCP schools are invited to a meeting on January 21;
- SEND restructure has now been completed. There will be additional capacity to identify where issues are and posts will be created where needed;
- High cost decisions will need to be made and better scrutiny is being introduced

Children in Care

- Virtual School Strategic Board has been set up;
- Virtual School Peer Review is taking place in February 2020.

Family and community facing

- Early Help, Family Support & Young People's Strategy (2020-2023) will lead to a full restructure of services;
- Early Help Partnership & CE Partnership Boards to be established;

A list of projected and immediate savings was provided. These are estimated at £2.5m and are considered to be robust by the service with actions already underway.

45 Schools and Early Years Formula Consultation outcomes and Transfer to High Needs Block

Jack Cutler, Quality and Commissioning, BCP Council, presented the report followed by the outcomes of the 2 Consultations.

The following points were noted:

- Projected funding gap on High Needs budget 2020-21 is £9.5m Any funding transfers in previous years were for one year only with the gap increasing over time.
- LA put £2.4m in last year but will not be able to do so this year; Schools transferred £2.2m and early years £0.2m with fresh decisions needed this year.
- Primary and Secondary units of funding are based on last years' school data. This amount is multiplied by new pupil numbers for October 2019 and will give us £1.8m surplus when

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applying October 2019 census data to the 2020-21 NFF funding rates and formula mechanisms. If we transfer the £1.8m to high needs we could still fund schools at full NFF formula rates.

- The wording of questions in the Schools Consultation was very difficult and it was asked if language could be simplified in future. It was suggested that a group of headteachers should read them in advance next time.
- The outcomes of the consultations were covered in considerable detail, with the level of support considered for each question asked in the consultation and a summary of responses provided. It was also indicated where responses to questions may be of benefit to Forum members when considering their position on the proposals to be voted on.
- EY representatives expressed concern that due to Christmas holidays there was insufficient time to complete the EY consultation.
- Requests for data on how much HN funding is going to EYs providers have been made but it was felt that no information had been received. NW advised that information was included in the paper she presented earlier and a breakdown had also been provided last year. Forum representatives were referred to Appendix 6 of the School Funding consultation and also the appendices of earlier meeting papers.
- Sue Johnson and Linda Duly presented a paper on Early Years Funding proposing that there is no deduction from the EY block to help offset the HNB overspend.

Schools Forum members were asked to vote on the following proposals:

PROPOSAL: Does Schools Forum agree to support the proposals recommended by Julian Radcliffe totalling £2.5m?

20 votes for and 0 against

PROPOSAL: Does Schools Forum support LA recommendation for £0.2m transfer from Early Years to High Needs Block?

18 voted against, 1 for and 1 abstention.

PROPOSAL: Does Forum support £1.8m transfer to High Needs Block from surplus NFF funding?

18 voted for and 2 against

PROPOSAL: Are Schools Forum in favour of an additional 0.5% transfer from Schools Block to High Needs Block?

14 votes against, 4 for and 2 abstentions

PROPOSAL: Does Schools Forum support an additional 1.1% transfer from National Funding Formula?

15 votes against. 3 voted for, and 2 abstentions

PROPOSAL: Does Schools Forum support an enhanced £0.2m from PEX enhanced adjustment?

20 votes for.

PROPOSAL: Does Schools Forum support reduction to Outreach Services?

19 against and 1 abstention.

PROPOSAL: Does Forum support reduction to SALT services?

19 against and 1 abstention.

PROPOSAL: Does Forum support reduction to the Central Hearing and Vision Support Service?

18 against and 2 abstentions

PROPOSAL: Does Forum support a reduction in top up payments by 30%?

20 voted against

PROPOSAL: Schools Formula to indicate if they support LA in setting formula by starting on NFF and scaling back?

19 voted for and 1 abstention

PROPOSAL: Does Forum support growth proposal through Option 1?

20 votes for

PROPOSAL: Does Forum support growth that does not materialise at 30% of full growth?

13 voted for, 4 against and 3 abstentions

PROPOSAL: Does Forum agree the budget for the extrinsic growth fund (£499.670)?

12 abstentions and 8 voted for

PROPOSAL: Early Years contribution to central services supporting the free entitlements as set out in the report

19 voted for and 1 abstention

PROPOSAL: Central School Services Block budgets

20 votes for and 0 against

PROPOSAL: Maintained schools central retention rates and budgets

2 voted for and 2 voted against

46 Forward Plan

To consider and note the Forward Plan.

Feedback is needed from the Schools Forum at the next meeting as the full transfer is not being supported and alternative action is required. Julian Radcliffe and Neil Goddard were invited to attend the Secondary Headteachers meeting on 3 February.

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47 Dates of Future Meetings

- Tuesday 3 March 2020
- Friday 19 June 2020

48 Any Other Business

No other business was raised.

**Chairman at the meeting on
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