

AGENDA



SCHOOLS FORUM

Date : Thursday 11th May 2017

Time : 4.30pm

Place : Badminton Road Offices, Ground Floor, Room 0012

Distribution

Members of the Committee

Rhona Allgood
Dave Baker
Mark Dee
Mark Freeman
Kim Garland
Elizabeth Gibbons
John Goff
Geoff Howell
Liz Jardine
Emma Jarman

Keith Lawrence (Chair)
Louise Leader
Jim Lott
Sarah Lovell
Lisa Parker
Ann Reed (sub)
Max Reed
Peter Smart
Susie Weaver
Bernice Webber
Adrian Vye

Appropriate Officers

Peter Murphy
Mustafa Salih
Helean Hughes

Councillors

Jon Hunt
Trevor Jones

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AGENDA

1	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS	5 mins
2	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	5 mins
3	EVACUATION PROCESS	5 mins
4	ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIR DECIDES ARE URGENT	5 mins
5	MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2 MARCH 2017	5 mins
6	UPDATE ON HIGH NEEDS WORKING GROUP	20 mins
7	DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND THE SCHOOLS FORUM WORK PROGRAMME 2017	5 mins
8	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	5 mins

SCHOOLS FORUM
Thursday 2nd March 2017
Badminton Road Offices

PRESENT:

Dave Baker	Executive Headteacher, Olympus/Ridings Academy Trust
Mark Dee	Executive Headteacher, The Park and Parkwall Primary Federation
Mark Freeman	Headteacher, St Michael's CE VC Primary, Stoke Gifford
Kim Garland	Headteacher, Brimsham Green School
Elizabeth Gibbons	Diocese of Bristol
John Goff	Governor, New Horizons Learning Centre
Clare Haughton	Manager, Page Park Pre-School
Stuart Hill	Governor, CSET (rep. Rhona Allgood)
Liz Jardine	Early Years (Private Sector)
Trevor Jones	Councillor
Keith Lawrence (Chair)	Governor, Culverhill School
Louise Leader	Headteacher, Pathways Learning Centre
Jim Lott	Governor, The Tynings Primary School
Lisa Parker	Headteacher, Warmley Park School
Will Roberts	CEO, CSET (rep. Paul Smart)
Paul Tanner	Chair of Finance and Resources Committee, Olympus Academy Trust
Adrian Vye	Headteacher, St Michael's Primary, Winterbourne
Bernice Webber	Headteacher, Old Sodbury CE Primary
Jon Wilmshurst	Finance Manager, Cabot Learning Federation

Chair: Keith Lawrence

Officers:

Mustafa Salih – Interim Head of Financial Management and Business Support

Helean Hughes – Acting Head of Education, Learning & Skills & Virtual Headteacher

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Attendees were welcomed by the Chair.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Geoff Howell, Jon Hunt, Sarah Lovell, Rupert Maule, Sonya Miller, Ann Reed, Max Reed, Peter Smart

3. EVACUATION PROCESS

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure

4. ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIR DECIDES ARE URGENT

None.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2017

All agreed they were accurate.

Dave Baker asked the question about £300,000; is this available to Academies?

6. SPEECH AND LANGUAGE – PRESENTATION BY BRISTOL COMMUNITY HEALTH

- Slides attached.
- Cluster meetings or locality meetings were suggested as a vehicle to share information.
- Email details to Helean Hughes. Helean will email the details to Chris Thomas.
- Core provision will come in April/May 2017.
- Each school will know their SLT in April; drop-in sessions will be provided in Y5.
- Emails for the service will be sent out.
- EY Services is also available.

7. EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

- Will Roberts explained how the budget was allocated over the last 3 years. The period of funding will end in April 2017.
- The Education Partnership will be moving on to a sustainable footing.
- Schools and MATs – special meeting in December with Ofsted and RSC. All secondary schools were represented.
- Leadership conference took place on Saturday with all SLT members, RSC and Ofsted.
- Education Partnership is now focusing on Pupil Premium – concerning issues for South Glos.
- Exclusion rates have improved.
- HT conference at the end of March 2017.
- Will shared his optimism that the schools will continue to work together to address the deep seated issues.
- Will to report at the next meeting, the financial picture and outcomes of the Education Partnership.
- Chair expressed congratulations of the Education Partnership.

- Will recognised the successes and the challenges ahead.

8. STAGE 2 CONSULTATION – NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA

- Mustafa presented the paper.
- The consultation closes on 22.3.17.
- Dave Baker asked how the NFF would support/allow the SEN recovery plan for the next 3 years. Mustafa explained that the response did not favour the hard formula.
- OAT has modelled the figures and has arrived at figures different to the DfE figures. Dave is awaiting a response from the EFA. Mustafa shared the proposed response.
- **Paul Tanner:** The Leader of the Council's letter last year illustrates that we are still well below what we feel is fairer funding (the letter referenced £15m).
- **Mark Freeman:** First 2 paragraphs do not reflect the strength and feeling across schools in South Glos.
- **Mark Freeman:** Number of FSM are reducing; this will lead to further reduction in budgets.
- **Mark Dee:** Compared with Swindon Schools, they are funded at a much higher rate. A school similar to one in South Glos is due to receive an additional £880K.
- Mustafa suggested that Schools Forum sends a response to the NFF. Chair suggested a group meet to agree this. Small schools are working together to respond to the NFF. Will Roberts explained that small secondary schools are looking at rationalising senior leaders across more than one school.

Action:

Email suggestions for the joint letter to the Chair. Chair to draft a response.

Chair: Each individual school needs to make a response.

9. SCHOOLS FORUM CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP

- MS shared the paper. Some technical issues were highlighted for attention.
- Constitution was agreed by the Forum.
- Vacancies were discussed.
- Dave Baker to share vacancies with Academy governors.
- Maxine Winter to include vacancies in Thursday governors' bulletin.
- RC vacancy needs to be filled by Diocese of Clifton.

10.WORK PROGRAMME

- One further Education Partnership meeting in July only.

11.ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

UPDATE ON HIGH NEEDS WORKING GROUP

SCHOOLS FORUM

11 MAY 2017

UPDATE ON THE DSG DEFICIT RECOVERY PLAN AND THE ONGOING WORK OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM HIGH NEEDS WORKING GROUP

Purpose of Report

1. To update the Schools Forum on the work of the Schools Forum High Needs Working Group and on the progress of the DSG Deficit Recovery Plan.

Policy

2. Local Authorities must distribute funding to their maintained schools using a formula which accords with the regulations made by the Secretary of State, and enables the calculation of a budget share for each maintained school. The financial controls within which delegation works are set out in the Scheme for the Financing of Schools.
3. The Schools Forum has a key responsibility to act as a consultative body with the local Authority on the strategic financial management of the Schools Budget and the DSG. A key priority in this area is to take decisions that ensure sound financial management of the Schools Budget.

Background

4. This report sets out the proposed actions to resolve the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget deficit that has increased over the last 2 years.

DSG Overspend and Deficit Recovery Plan

5. In 2015/16 the Schools Budget, which is 100% funded by the ring-fenced DSG overspent by £1.2m and during the development of the DSG Deficit Recovery Plan the cumulative overspend was forecast to reach £7.7m by the end of March 2016/17.
6. To bring the DSG back into balance a consultation with all Schools and the Schools Forum resulted in the following DSG Deficit Recovery Plan being approved by the Schools Forum and the Council:

Table 4

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
DSG Budget	188,077	189,359	190,650	191,949	193,258	194,575
In-Year DSG Expenditure	189,581	195,878	195,878	193,878	191,878	189,878
Reduction in Expenditure - Target			-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,814
Net Expenditure	189,581	195,878	193,878	191,878	189,878	187,064
In-Year Over(+)/Under(-) spend	1,504	6,519	3,228	-71	-3,380	-7,511
Opening DSG Reserve Over(+)/Under(-) spend	-289	1,215	7,734	10,962	10,891	7,511
Closing DSG Reserve Over(+)/Under(-) spend	1,215	7,734	10,962	10,891	7,511	0

7. At the time of agreeing the Deficit Recovery Plan the forecast outturn for 2016/17 financial year was an overspend of £7.7m. Although the final outturn is still to be completely finalised and reported, the indications are that the position will be around £1m better than had been forecast. This welcome position puts the Council and Schools £1m ahead of the Plan and shows that a number of measures put in place by the Council are starting to have a positive impact. Nevertheless, the deficit remains very large and all actions possible will continue to be a priority to ensure the deficit recovery plan is adhered to. The exact outturn will be reported to the next Schools Forum together with a reassessment of the Deficit Recovery Plan.
8. The main areas of High Needs overspend continue to be:

EHCP/Statemented Support	£1,356,000
Post 16 Placements	£1,216,000
Independent Placements	£1,140,000
Special Schools/Resource Bases	£1,145,000
Pathways Learning Centre (PLC)	£ 136,000

Campaigning for Fairer Funding

9. South Gloucestershire's DSG funding is currently the sixth lowest in England and is of major concern to the Council and no doubt to Schools. This relatively low level of funding has increased the pressure on the DSG and the Council is taking every action it

can to raise this matter with central government. The Council is an active member of the F40 campaign group that represents the 40 lowest DSG funded local authorities. This group has been active in making the case for extra funding for LAs like South Gloucestershire.

10. The Leader of the Council has also written to the Secretary of State for Education and/or the Minister of State for School Standards on 3 separate occasions (copies attached as Appendix A) which has included asking for an urgent meeting to discuss the matter.
11. The responses to the leader's letter continue to offer little prospect of additional funding to help resolve the historic underfunding
12. The Council will also be working with the Schools Forum to take a more robust position on Schools with large balances as it would not be right for some Schools to be faced with more severe reductions while other Schools are potentially sitting on excessive balances.

High Needs Working Group

13. The High Needs Working Group consisting of officers and Schools Forum representatives has been meeting on a monthly basis and has been reviewing and working on a wide range of actions to further reduce High Needs expenditure to ensure the next phases of the DSG Deficit Recovery Plan continue to be met.
14. An action Plan has been developed and is attached as Appendix B. Any proposals flowing out of this group's work would be the subject of further consultations with the Schools Forum and all schools.
15. Two areas that the Working Group has reviewed in detail are the current arrangements for mainstream top-up funding and mainstream high incidence funding. The current arrangements for these 2 funding factors have significant flaws and given that funding reductions have to be identified to reduce the deficit then putting these 2 factors onto a sounder footing have been identified as preferred options. The options that have been reviewed are as follows:

Mainstream Top-Up Funding: School funding regulations specifically set £6000 as being the threshold for determining if additional funding support is provided to Schools to support SEN pupils. The first £6k of any SEN support should be funded by schools from their mainstream budget share allocation and for support above £6k additional funding is expected from the local authority. The current position in South Gloucestershire is that once additional top-up is triggered then the allocation received by schools includes an element of funding to cover the first £6k of SEN support; this is clearly double funding and is not compliant with the School funding regulations. Proposals have therefore been developed to clearly distinguish between the funding streams for this threshold of £6k.

High Incidence Funding: When the new funding mechanisms for High Needs Support were introduced by the Government a provision was included in the regulations for local authorities to provide additional support for a small number of their schools where their mainstream budget share allocation was deemed insufficient to allow them to fund the first £6k of support for all their pupils. This might be expected to occur if their number of SEN pupils was significantly above what would be the average expected numbers. The national average for SEN pupils in mainstream schools is 2.8% (i.e. the number of pupils with SEN as a percentage of the total numbers on roll). In South Gloucestershire the trigger point for schools to be awarded additional funding under this mechanism is set well below that average at 1.3% which means that the vast majority of Schools receive funding for this measure. This is not in line with the principles of why this provision had been allowed for within the new funding arrangements and therefore proposals have been developed to move the threshold in a tapered manner to the national average of 2.8%.

16. Models based on the 2 proposals above have been developed and reviewed with the High Needs Working Group and are attached to this report as appendix C. It should be noted that the figures presented in Appendix C are for modelling purposes only and do not reflect actual amounts that would impact Schools should the proposals be adopted. Actual Figures are always affected by a large number of other variables and data changes.

Financial Implications

17. The School Finance Regulations set out the arrangements which Local Authorities must follow when allocating the DSG funding to schools.

18. As the support for schools and other pupil related services expenditure is funded by the dedicated schools budget there is no charge to the Council Budget. Hence there is no charge to the Council Tax payer.

19. The DSG is forecast to overspend in 2016/17 and 2017/18. Any overspend will need to be recovered from future year DSG funding.

Legal Implications

20. There is a legal requirement for the local authority to:

- submit the final school pro-formas and underlying data to the Education Funding Agency by the 20 January 2018.
- confirm with schools their budget allocations for 2018/2019 by 28 February 2018.

21. The Chief Financial Officer, after the end of the financial year, must confirm to the DfE that the grant conditions have been met.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Schools Forum is asked to note this report and is being formally consulted on the proposals set out in paragraph 15 and 16 and Appendix C and is therefore asked for its formal view on those proposals

Author

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11th May 2017 Room 0012 Ground Floor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on High Needs Working Group

13th July 2017 Room 0012 Ground Floor	14th September 2017 Room 0012 Ground Floor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing for 2018/19 (if known) • Provisional Outturn 2016/17 (including school balances) • Education Partnership • Schools Forum Membership • Date of future meetings and the Work Programme 2017/18 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DfE Consultation on School Funding 2018/19 • Allocation of Schools Block Growth Funding • 1st Budget Monitor 2017/18 • Education Commission Update • Traded Services Update

Provisional Dates:

Thursdays at 4.30pm in Room 0012, Badminton Road Offices

7th December 2017

18th January 2018

1st March 2018

10th May 2018

12th July 2018

ANY OTHER BUSINESS