

AGENDA



SCHOOLS FORUM

Date: Thursday 25 October 2018
Time: 4.30pm
Place: Room 0012, Badminton Road Offices, Yate,
BS37 5AF

Distribution

Members of the Committee

Rhona Allgood	Keith Lawrence (Chair)
Dave Baker	Louise Leader
Penny Chislett	Jim Lott
Mark Dee	Sarah Lovell
Jo Dent	Diane Owen
Mark Freeman	Lisa Parker
Kim Garland	Ann Reed (sub)
Elizabeth Gibbons	Max Reed
Clare Haughton	Peter Smart
Emma Jarman	Susie Weaver
	Bernice Webber

Appropriate Officers

Mustafa Salih
Julie Cathcart

Councillors

Toby Savage
Trevor Jones

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AGENDA

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|---|---|---------|
| 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 20 SEPTEMBER
2018 | 5 mins |
| 6 | SCHOOL FUNDING 2019/20 AND FUTURE YEARS –
PRESENTATION | 30 mins |
| 7 | DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND THE SCHOOLS
FORUM WORK PROGRAMME 2018 | 5 mins |
| 8 | ANY OTHER BUSINESS | 5 mins |

SCHOOLS FORUM
Thursday 20th September 2018
Room 0012, Badminton Road Offices, Yate, BS37 5AF

PRESENT:

Dave Baker	Executive Headteacher, Olympus Academy Trust
Mark Dee	Executive Headteacher, The Park and Parkwall Primaries
Jo Dent	Headteacher, Hambrook Primary School
Nicky Edwards	Natural Choice Nurseries
Mark Freeman	Headteacher, St Michael's Primary, Stoke Gifford
Trevor Jones	Councillor, South Gloucestershire Council
Keith Lawrence (Chair)	Governor, Culverhill, School
Louise Leader	Headteacher, Pathways Learning Centre
Jim Lott	Governor, The Tynings Primary and Raysfield Federation
Sarah Lovell	Finance Director, Cabot Learning Federation
Diane Owen	Chair, Kings Oak Academy
Lisa Parker	Headteacher, Warmley Park School
Will Roberts	CEO, CSET
Toby Savage	Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Schools, Skills and Employment

Officers:

Mustafa Salih – Head of Financial Management and Business Support
Chris Sivers – Director for Children, Adults and Health
Duane Chappell – Strategic Lead 0-25
Stuart Thomas – SEND Financial Planning Lead
Sue Morgan – Integra
Caroline Warren - Finance

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Attendees were welcomed by the Chair.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Ann and Max Reed, Susie Weaver

3. EVACUATION PROCESS

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure

4. ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIR DECIDES ARE URGENT

Dave Baker raised the question of funding for excluded students. There is no mechanism in place for funding to follow the excluded student(s). He mentioned 14-19 students who had joined BTEA but they did not receive any funding.

Duane Chappell said she would find out who these students are.

ACTION: It was decided to bring an update on this matter to the next meeting.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 JULY 2018

Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true record

6. SCHOOLS BUDGET 2019/20 – OPTIONS FOR CONSULTATION

Mustafa Salih gave some background information on the Schools Budget 2019/20 – Options for Consultation paper.

The aim of the consultation is to consider how to move through to a members decision on setting the Schools Budget. No substantive decision is required at this time, it is just for Schools Forum to consider and take part in the consultation and to see if the Schools Forum is minded to give a view on what option they would prefer.

Paragraphs 6, 7, 8 and 9

There are problems with the current funding mechanism. Blocks of funding make up funding allocations from Government. Originally LAs had flexibility and would receive a single amount and determine those blocks. More recently there has been a reduction in flexibility to allocate funding to where the pressures are.

The DSG has been under growing pressure and its first overspend of £1.2m occurred during 2016/17. That overspend has increased during 2017/18 to a cumulative overspend of £9.4m by the end of 2017/18.

A consultation with all schools and the Schools Forum resulted in an agreed DSG Deficit Recovery Plan being approved by the Schools Forum and the Council to recover this over a longer period of time by reducing spend in mainstream budget shares or SEND spending by £2-3m pa.

The forecast is a £12.5m cumulative overspend by the end of 2018/19, this shows a predicted in-year overspend of £3m to the High Needs budget.

Table 12 shows the SEND pressures over recent years.

Table 13 shows spending has increased across all areas of SEND expenditure. The increase is due to many factors including more diagnosis of SEND needs and an increase in responsibility placed on LAs for students up to 25 years of age.

Paragraph 14 explains the funding the Council receives, highlighting £15.9m growth over that period through additional funding. Historically, South Gloucestershire is one of the lowest funded LA. From 2018/19 a new schools National Funding Formula (NFF) was introduced by the Government which resulted in further growth to South Gloucestershire's Schools Block allocation.

High Needs Block

We have transferred £6.1m from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. That amounts to £9.8m net growth for the mainstream schools budget.

Table 15 show the DSG Deficit Recovery Plan position. By the end of 2020/21 we had planned for a zero cumulative overspend. In 2016/17 and 2017/18 we were ahead of the Recovery Plan, progress has not been sufficient to impact on the large increases and therefore the original target for the Recovery Plan is at risk for 2020/21. Just to cover the overspend for 2018/19 would require an increase of just over £3m to the High needs Budget or a reduction in spend in schools mainstream budgets or a reduction in SEND spending.

We have also tried to look at how school finances are currently looking within South Gloucestershire. Paragraph 17 shows the aggregate picture showing school balances amounting to £4.8m. There has been a lot of work done in supporting schools in financial difficulty. The number of maintained schools working with the Council regarding potentially submitting a deficit budget for 2018/19 is eight, which is a reduction from the 9 schools in 2017/18 with a deficit budget. Although school balances vary from school to school, this represents a generally healthy level of balances.

A consultation was carried out last year with the DfE and schools to consult on the transfer of £2.9m from the Schools Block to the High needs Block to cover the pressures that we are experiencing.

Broadly £1.8m would be to try and deal with the overspend in mainstream top-up funding. £0.7m of the 2.9m would have been to cover the funding for growing needs within Special schools and £400K for post-16 pressures.

Options for Consultation regarding the Schools Budget 2019/20

The Council will be launching a Schools and Public Consultation based on the following 3 options:

- A. Transfer £3m from the 2019/20 Schools Block increase of £3.7m to the High Needs Block and reduce Special Schools, resource bases and PRU funding by a proportionate amount.
- B. A reduction of £3m across the board for High Needs Top-Up Funding on a proportionate basis across the mainstream, special, resources base and PRU sectors.

C. A 50:50 combination of A and B above to achieve an equivalent £3m saving to the High Needs Budget and mainstream school budgets.

Option A would mean that another £3m would come from the main Schools Block to the High Needs Block. During 2019/20 there would be a small increase of £700K which would be shared across all SG schools through the National Funding Formula. SEND funding would not be impacted at all from this option.

Option B – would leave the £3.7m increase in the Schools Block.

Option C – is a combination of A and B which proposes to transfer £1.5m from the Schools Block and reduce SEND funding but to a lesser extent than Option B.

These 3 Options are necessary for an immediate solution to continue making progress towards a balanced Schools Budget.

Alongside this short term measure, there is a requirement for longer term measures to ensure sustainability for the DSG in the medium to longer term.

Para 21 lists the longer term measures that is planned to consult with Schools and the Public.

We are looking towards a Ready Reckoner to allocate top-up funding to schools, which should deliver the right amount of funding allocated to schools based on assessed need.

Working with schools to implement Early Intervention Cluster funding which would mean more funding going to schools for early intervention and support for SEND pupils with less complex needs and hopefully reduce spending in the longer term.

Review our Special Schools, Resources Bases and PRU to move towards a comprehensive banding approach and develop more local provision for SEND pupils to give value for money.

Para 26 sets out the timeline for the Schools Budget 2019/20 consultation as below:

Date	Description
20 September 2018	Schools Forum consulted on Schools and public consultation
21 September – 19 October 2018	Schools Consultation including Governor briefing events
1 October 2018 to 25 November 2018	Public Consultation Including events am/pm
25 October 2018	Schools Forum Statutory Consultation –

	outcome of schools' consultation and applications to Secretary of State (SOS)
25 November 2018	Public Consultation concludes
30 November 2018	Potential Submission to SOS requesting transfer
December 2018/ January 2019	SOS Decision
4 February 2019	Cabinet – Final Report with Recommendations
13 February 2019	Full Council – FINAL DECISION

Comments received from members of the Forum:

Dave Baker said he felt let down on behalf of the schools. He said we need to go back to the Secretary of State to say that schools have less money to run them and that he could not agree to any of the Options.

Mark Dee commented that 75% of primary schools have already made staff reductions and that 9 schools are in deficit.

Mustafa Salih said that during 2018/19 the LA is currently working with 8 schools and not 9.

Other members commented that money should not be taken from the Schools budget to the High Needs Block.

Mark Freeman asked where did the £3m come from.

Mustafa Salih replied that the £3m is to solve the problem of the current in-year annual overspend. Para 15 shows the forecast for 2018/19 current in-year overspend of £3m. Table 12 shows what areas of spend are going up. The whole area of SEND is going up.

Duane Chappell said referrals from schools have increased and they are not going down. The age range is now 5-19, with a growth area in Post-16. When our schools can't take them we have to place pupils in high cost provision due to parents preference.

Will Roberts made the comment that there is significant impact on schools. There are no reserves on 7 of his schools. This year £1.8m was saved to balance the budget but we are not allowed to overspend. £1.3m is forecast for next year and the position is that there is nothing left that we can save money on. Question mark over whether schools will open 5 days week. The Council needs to go back and provide our statutory requirement rather than taking out of the Schools Block. He could not recommend any of the 3 options.

Mustafa Salih said the Council has opened a new provision called The Chase, which has now taken 4 young adults.

Toby Savage said he will meet with Chris Sivers and Mustafa after the meeting.

Louise Leader commented that we are in a difficult position regarding post-16 as the age range now extends to 25 years age. Schools cannot do anymore and asked what are the comparisons of post-16 funding with other local authorities and do they get additional funding.

Appendix B provides some useful benchmarking information to show how South Gloucestershire's SEND allocations to schools and EHCP numbers compare with other LAs.

Diane Owen questioned the role of the Schools Forum re fair distribution of funding. She would also be interested to know how other authorities are managing that growth and whether they have any solutions.

Keith Lawrence declared that as no recommendation was required at the meeting, he drew the discussion to a close.

Mustafa Salih said we would come back to this in the October meeting.

In setting the Schools Budget for 2018/19 the Forum was closely involved in the work to permanently transfer £2.9m from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. The Forum and all schools were consulted on this permanent transfer with a clear majority of Schools and the Forum approving this permanent transfer. The Council was also successful in obtaining the Secretary of State's approval. This Report seeks that confirmation from the Schools Forum.

Louise Leader said the same issue of recovery is ongoing every year and this needs clarification.

Mark Freeman asked how is the LA undertaking the recovery.

It was decided that Mustafa and Mark would meet to discuss the questions asked and to put that into the Consultation document.

Meeting closed at 18.06

SCHOOL FUNDING 2019/20 AND FUTURE YEARS – PRESENTATION

Attached as a separate document.

SCHOOLS FORUM FORWARD PLAN

25th October 2018 @ 4.30pm Room 0012 Ground Floor	29th November 2018 @ 4.30pm Room 0012 Ground Floor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Funding 2019/20 and Future Years Presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
17 January 2019 @ 4.30pm Room 0012, Ground Floor	28th March 2019 @ 4.30pm Room 0012, Ground Floor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
9th May 2019 @ 4.30pm Room 0012, Ground Floor	18th July 2019 @ 4.30pm Room 0012, Ground Floor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

ANY OTHER BUSINESS