

SCHOOLS FORUM
Thursday 28th March 2019
Room 0012, Badminton Road Offices, Yate, BS37 5AF

PRESENT:

Dave Baker	CEO, Olympus Academy Trust
Jo Dent	Headteacher, Hambrook Primary School
Nicky Edwards	Natural Choice Nurseries
Mark Freeman	Headteacher, St Michael's Primary School
Kim Garland	Headteacher, Brimsham Green School
Keith Lawrence (Chair)	Governor, Enable Trust
Louise Leader	Headteacher, Pathways Learning Centre
Sarah Lovell	Finance Director, Cabot Learning Federation
Simon MacSorley	CSET
Pippa Osborne	Headteacher, Christ Church Junior School
Diane Owen	Chair, Kings Oak Academy
Will Roberts	CEO, CSET
Susie Weaver	Executive Principal, Cabot Learning Federation

Officers:

Mustafa Salih, Head of Financial Management and Business Support
Julie Cathcart, Interim Head of Education, Learning and Skills (arrived late due to previous commitment)
Duane Chappell, Strategic Lead 0-25
Caroline Warren, Finance Business Partner – CAH Children Management Accounts
Kate East, SEN Consultant

Attending for Item 6:

Carol Bowes, Headteacher, Tortworth Primary School
Sally Moreton, Chair of Governors, Tortworth Primary School
Alison Cooper, School Business Manager

Attending for Item 7

Amanda Luke, Headteacher, Olveston Primary School
David Prothero – Governor (Chair of finance committee)
Nicola Hemming – Business Manager

Attending for Item 8

Karen Cornick, Headteacher, Patchway Community School
Claire Banks, Executive Headteacher, Olympus Trust

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Attendees were welcomed by the Chair.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Julie Cathcart, Colleen Collett, Clare Haughton, Trevor Jones, Jim Lott, Lisa Parker, Toby Savage, Bernice Webber

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 17 JANUARY 2019

Minutes accepted as a true record.

6. Tortworth Primary School, Financial Support Request

Carol Bowes, Headteacher, Sally Moreton, Chair of Governors and Alison Cooper, School Business Manager attended for this item and presented a report summarising the details of their request for financial support of a one off sum of £132,000 which would clear their deficit for 2019/20 and then to look at clearing the ongoing in year deficit within the following 3 years. This request was made under the schools in financial difficulty criteria relating to pupil fluctuations and the financial impact that had on a small school. A request was also made for £25,000 for IT investment.

JC confirmed that the Council was working with small schools to review long term sustainability and this would be an ongoing area of review. Members of the Forum also expressed the need for further information on pupil number projections relating to the school. Although members of the Forum were supportive, it was decided not to approve this request at this stage. The Forum proposed that they would welcome the opportunity to receive a further paper detailing exactly what the funding would be spent on. Also, Will Roberts, CEO CSET offered to contact the school to discuss the school's position.

Action: More information is required from the school detailing exactly what the funding would be used for and information and planning in place around future pupil numbers and the Forum would welcome the school bringing a report back to Schools Forum in order for members to look at the school's request again. Will Roberts offered to contact the school to discuss the school's position.

7. Olveston Primary School, Financial Support Request

Amanda Luke, Headteacher, David Prothero, Governor (Chair of finance committee) and Nicola Hemming, Business Manager attended for this item and reported that due to a continuing fall in Reception intake, they would need to reduce the 7 classes to 5 by September 2021 as retention of 7 classes is not sustainable. Their request is for support to remain at 7 classes for one further academic year to give them time to prepare for the reduction in classes.

Julie Cathcart said that the LA is in the process of planning a strategy to explore the situation of small schools and this will eventually be referred to the Local Schools Standards Board.

Action: It was decided not to approve this request, primarily at the funding would just delay what seemed a necessary decision by one year. However, Will Roberts offered to contact the school to discuss their situation.

8. Patchway Community School – Financial Support Request

Karen Cornick, Headteacher and Claire Banks, Executive Headteacher, Olympus Trust attended for this item and reported that they are significantly under-subscribed with a PAN of 180 and pupil numbers in all year groups are significantly below this number. Only 98 allocated places in Year 7 for September 2019 have confirmed acceptance. The school is requesting financial support for the recruitment of additional teachers in Maths, English and Science which would reduce class sizes and improve student progress in all year groups. The cost of these additional posts, including on costs, would be £153,000.

Action: It was agreed to allocate the school £100,000 to support the recruitment of 3 (or) 2 teachers, preferably in Maths and English, with the expectation that this will be monitored and reported back to the Forum in the future.

9. SEND CLUSTER PILOT

Kate East attended for this item to update the Schools Forum on the progress with the SEND Cluster Pilot and to agree the next steps for the programme.

There are 20 schools out of 21 in Cluster 2 and 24 schools out of 33 in Cluster 3. Work on Cluster 4 will follow later once Clusters 2 and 3 are up and running.

The pilot will continue to be evaluated and an update report will be presented to Schools Forum on 18th July 2019 which will provide an evaluation of the pilot and further recommendations.

Following the Schools Forum meeting on 18th July, an Executive Member Decision report will be produced to approve the next steps in taking forward the Cluster model across all schools.

Continued regular reporting will be made to the Schools Forum with updates on progress and for Schools Forum to provide a steer on the next steps and to plan any financial implications for budget planning 2019/20.

The recommendation is that this pilot will roll out to other Clusters from September 2019.

Funding of £260,000 from the High Needs Funding Block has been made available to support the two pilot programmes. Funding has been passed on to the lead schools in each cluster on a monthly basis so that they have greater

day-to-day control and flexibility in managing the fund. Any unspent monies are to be returned to the LA.

Agreed: Members of the Forum agreed with the recommendations and the next steps.

10. MEMBERSHIP OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM

To be deferred to the next meeting.

11. FINAL SCHOOLS BUDGET UPDATE

Mustafa gave an update on the Schools Budget. He referred to the letter sent to all Schools regarding the 2019/20 School Budget Share Allocations, which was included in the Agenda and papers.

The DfE has commissioned a national audit to visit LAs where there are SEND pressures and they are coming to visit us. Members of the High Needs Working Group have been invited to join that meeting to set out the case where pressure is exacerbated by the system and putting together a set of papers. This will specifically be around SEND.

12. HIGH NEEDS WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

Susie Weaver was asked to cover this item.

It was suggested that the draft Terms of Reference requires amending with the proposal that there is a broader group covering High Needs. Work planning has started to make sure that schools across South Gloucestershire know what is happening. A letter will be made available to all Headteachers/SENCOs after the next HNWG meeting outlining the progress of the group to date.

Amendments to the TOR are needed and will be taken back to the next HNWG meeting on 24th April 2019.

Rachel Webb has been included as the representative from Early Years. Dave Baker will be the CEO representation from the South Glos MATs. Comment was made that there were no SENCO representation in the group; however SENCOs will be invited when their expertise is needed.

13. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND THE SCHOOLS FORUM WORK PROGRAMME 2019

Provisional dates for September 2019 to July 2020

2019	2020
20 th September	23 rd January
25 th October	26 th March
29 th November	7 th May
	16 th July

Meeting closed at 19.00 hours