



Minutes

Name of meeting	SCHOOLS' FORUM
Date and time	Wednesday, 15 January 2020
Venue	Thompson House, Sandy Lane, Newport PO30 3NA
Present	Beverley Gilbert – Brading CE Primary (Chair) Noreen Ward – Christ the King College Mike Hayward – Isle of Wight Education Federation Gordon Kendall – Bembridge CE Primary School Duncan Mills – Cornerstone Federation Lisa Nicholson – Haylands Primary School Samantha Rooney – Isle of Wight College (substitute) Julie Stewart – Medina House School Jayne Hill – Niton and Brighstone Pre-Schools
Officers	Brian Pope – Assistant Director, Education and Inclusion Barry Downer - Senior Finance Business Partner Irina Rowan – Finance Business Partner Chris Jones – SEN Service Manager Cllr Paul Brading – Cabinet Member for Children’s Services Diane Hiscock – Clerk
Apologies	David Thornton – Carisbrooke and Newport CEPs Federation (Vice-Chair) Sue Bowen – Church of England Diocese Fidelma Washington – Isle of Wight College Caroline Sice – Lanesend Primary Academy Sarah Hussey – Northwood Primary Academy Jackie Boxx – Island Learning Centre Amanda Bitchenor – Chatterbox Day Nursery

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Members, officers and an observer were welcomed to the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were received.

3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A question had been received from the National Education Union (NEU) representative and was addressed prior to this meeting.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED :

That the minutes of the meeting held on [21 November 2019](#) and the extraordinary meeting held on [10 December 2019](#) be confirmed.

5. MATTERS ARISING from 21 November 2019

5.1 (Item 6.1) Update on Future IOW scheme – moved to 19 March 2020.

5.2 (Item 11.9) Report on Early Years' (EY) Service – moved to 19 March 2020.

5.3 It was also noted that following on from the meeting held on [17 January 2019](#) (Item 4.4) a report on the Virtual School would be moved to 19 March 2020.

NW entered the meeting.

6. SCHOOLS BUDGET 2020/21 [Paper B](#)

6.1 BD gave an overview of the report. The final Dedicated Schools Grant allocation was received by the LA on 19 December 2019, with an overall increase of £4.7m. This was due to a slight increase in EY hourly rates, additional national funding, additional high needs funding and a slight increase in pupil numbers. Final updates will be made following the January EY Census and high needs adjustments.

6.2 EARLY YEARS

The level of central funding to be retained was approved by Schools Forum on [21 November 2019](#) (item 11.9) and is compliant with the requirement to pass through 95% of funding to providers.

Funding for 2 year-olds is due to increase by 9 pence per hour.

6.3 Consultation on the options for distribution of the 3 and 4 year-old funding is imminent and will be reported at the next meeting on 19 March 2020. BD explained the proposals outlined in para 11 of [Paper B](#).

It was confirmed that the consultation will run for 4 weeks and further options may be identified as a result.

The data is taken from a Census snapshot and shows a slightly lower number of children than expected. This will be updated in July 2020, when full information from the January census is published.

RESOLVED :

THAT the proposed options for the early years funding rates, ahead of consultation with providers, be endorsed.

GK entered the meeting

6.4 SCHOOLS BLOCK

BS reported an increase in most funding factors. The growth factor was not included in previous budget forecasts, whilst awaiting final information from DfE. Due to a slight increase in pupil numbers in some areas of the Island, an additional £766,000 will be available for distribution. The purpose of the growth element is to provide protection against a reduction in pupil numbers and is formula-driven.

It was confirmed that the slight increase in pupil numbers was anticipated, but is predicted to be followed by a decrease over the longer term.

6.5 Per-pupil charges for de-delegated services have remained much the same, apart from Licenses and Subscriptions, which has increased slightly.

RESOLVED :

THAT de-delegated funding be agreed - Primary (4 – unanimous)

6.6 HIGH NEEDS BLOCK

Following the extra-ordinary meeting held on [10 December 2019](#) - in order to achieve some stability in the High Needs Block and initiate steps towards recovery of the overall DSG deficit - an application was made to DfE for permission to transfer 1.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. This would result in an additional transfer of £746,000 and an overall transfer of £1.118m for 2020/21. However, the additional £766,000 available in the Schools Block (noted in para 6.4) would offset this so that there is minimal change to the overall funding for distribution to schools.

6.7 DfE have not given a response yet and may not do so by 21st January 2020 – the deadline for the LA to submit the budget. Two scenarios covering a 0.5% transfer and a 1.5% transfer were given in [Paper C](#) Appendix A

6.8 If the request is rejected by DfE alternative options to achieve an in-year balanced budget had been identified and will form part of the overall recovery plan. These were noted in para 22 of the report –

a) SEN Cap reduced to a fixed funding level of £30,000 – expected saving £170,000

b) Review of discretionary spend against continued need – expected saving £30,000

c) Proposals for a centralised outreach service ceased (schools will have to buy in annually) – expected saving £150,000

d) Proposal for a new centrally funded SEMH outreach ceased – expected saving £100,000

Overall expected savings £450,000.

6.9 Members discussed the possible loss of funding promised from the Health Service against the SEMH proposal, which may be used to work directly with families, rather than for the provision of advice to schools.

Officers explained the reasoning for these options in that other areas within this block are non-discretionary and cannot be reduced. The implications of making these reductions were discussed.

6.10 It was confirmed that the DfE response cannot be predicted. Either way, the deficit must be addressed.

Members felt that headteachers should collectively understand that these options are non-negotiable and consider the anticipated effect. It would be useful to weigh up the proposed 1.5% transfer against the loss of services.

Action – Headteacher representatives to meet and discuss further, prior to reporting to primary and secondary headteacher forums (dates to be confirmed).

6.11 CENTRAL BLOCK

There is a reduced allocation in the Central Services Block, but this area will be balanced as agreed at the November meeting.

6.12 OVERALL SCHOOLS BUDGET

The total budget reported includes the recoupment of funding to be paid directly to academies. This will be £20.3m if a 1.5% transfer is agreed or £20.6m in the

case of a 0.5% transfer. The remainder to be managed by the local authority will be £77.9m or £77.7m respectively.

RESOLVED :

THAT the proposed budget allocations for 2020/21, dependent on the final decision from DfE, be noted.

7. SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA 2020/21 [Paper C](#)

7.1 The final Schools Block allocation excluding growth factor funding in the 2020/21 DSG has resulted in an increase of £627,289. This is due to the small increase in pupil numbers from October 2018 – October 2019.

The Isle of Wight growth fund was set at £92,000 and is top-sliced prior to distribution.

Also, as previously noted, the LA took the decision to apply to DfE to transfer 1.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. If not approved, the 0.5% transfer will be applied.

7.2 FINAL PROPOSED LOCAL FUNDING FORMULA

Appendix A showed the final values with a 1.5% transfer.

Appendix B showed the final values with a 0.5% transfer.

Both in comparison to the current year.

It was re-iterated that the £745,000 reduction incurred by a 1.5% transfer would be offset by the additional £766,000 received through the growth element.

7.3 The formula was derived through a range of factors –

- as close as possible to the National Funding Formula (NFF)
- estimated premises costs
- lowest level Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) (+0.5%)
- proportional balancing adjustments

Action – DfE decision to be conveyed to schools as soon as possible following receipt.

Budget shares to be sent to schools by 28 February 2020

RESOLVED :

THAT the Isle of Wight local school funding formula scenarios for 2020/21 be noted.

Officers noted particular thanks to BD for the time and work put into providing the 2 reports. Further appreciation was noted to all officers.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Thursday, 19 March 2020, at Westridge Community Learning Centre, Brading Road, Ryde PO33 1QS

DATES OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Friday 17 July 2020 – Thompson House, Sandy Lane Newport PO30 3NA

Thursday 12 November 2020 - Westridge CLC, Brading Road, Ryde PO33 1QS

Thursday 14 January 2021 - Westridge CLC, Brading Road, Ryde PO33 1QS

Thursday 1 April 2021 - Westridge CLC, Brading Road, Ryde PO33 1QS

All meetings start at 8.30am

The meeting closed at 9.25am