



Minutes

Name of meeting	SCHOOLS FORUM
Date and time	8.30AM – WEDNESDAY 17TH October 2018
Venue	WIGHT INNOVATION CENTRE, St Cross Business Park, Newport PO30 5WB
Present	Beverley Gilbert (Chair) – Brading CE Primary David Thornton – Federation of Carisbrooke and Newport CEPs Matthew Parr-Burman – Island Innovation Federation Mike Hayward – Island Innovation Federation Kay Wood – Summerfields Primary Duncan Mills – Cornerstone Federation Fidelma Washington – Isle of Wight College Gordon Kendall – Bembridge CE Primary Julie Stewart – Medina House School
Elected Member	Cllr Paul Brading – Cabinet Member for Children’s Services
Officers	Brian Pope – Assistant Director, Education and Inclusion Barry Downer - Senior Finance Business Partner Brendan Hodson – Finance Business Partner Anna Scovell – Accountancy Assistant Tracey Sanders – Head of Services for Young Children Andrew Briggs – Post 16 Commissioning and Funding Manager Diane Hiscock – Clerk
Apologies	Jackie Boxx – Island Learning Centre Caroline Sice – Lanesend Primary Academy Robert Dare – Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Jayne Hill – Niton and Brighstone Pre-Schools Sue Bowen – Church of England Diocese

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Members, officers and observers were welcomed to the meeting. An issue arose following the last meeting, as a recording was made without the knowledge of those present. Clarification was given that anyone wishing to record any part of the meeting should notify the clerk/chair.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

BG was nominated to continue as chair and agreed to stand for a further year. All were in favour and a unanimous vote was given.

Action – BG Elected as chair

DT was nominated to continue as vice-chair. All were in favour and a unanimous vote was given.

Action – DT Elected as chair

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were received.

4. MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Gordon Kendall had been nominated and elected to the Primary Governor Representative post.

Sue Bowen had been nominated by the CE Diocese to replace Jeff Williams.

Matthew Parr-Burman had taken over the Secondary Headteacher Representative post from Karen Begley, for the remainder of the 4-year term.

Eric Hemming had vacated the Academy Representative post, being no longer eligible to serve in this capacity.

The membership document has been updated and published on the schools forum webpage. A note of thanks was sent to EH and JW for the support they had given to the schools forum.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that questions raised at schools forum meetings must be pertinent to items on the agenda and in accordance with the [powers and responsibilities](#) of the schools forum. Any question raised that is considered outside the remit of the schools forum will be passed to the appropriate officer/s as a Freedom of Information request.

6. ANNUAL WORKPLAN

The updated workplan had been circulated prior to the meeting. This will continue to be updated with actions following meetings.

7. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference for the schools forum had been reviewed and updated in accordance with the revised [Operational and Good Practice Guide](#) . The update included

- paragraph 2.9 brief information on elections and appointments
- paragraph 3.2 clarity on public questions
- paragraph 3.6 requirement for officers to submit a report when speaking at meetings

RESOLVED :

THAT the terms of reference be adopted and published on the schools forum webpage.

8. MINUTES

RESOLVED :

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on [19 July 2018](#) be confirmed.

9. ACTION POINTS FROM LAST MEETING

- 9.1 (Item 6.2) A reply had been sent to the Secretary of State to reiterate concerns regarding high needs funding, but no further correspondence had been received.

A 3-year budget forecast is included at Appendix C in [Paper E](#)

- 9.2 (Item 6.3) It was agreed that the appropriate time to send a letter regarding completion of EY census forms will be in December, prior to the forms being sent out.

Action – BH to send out letter on behalf of schools forum

- 9.3 (Item 8.5) AB had sent an e-mail to secondary schools regarding the lack of responses received regarding provision for Post 16 high needs SEN students. However, no further information had been received.

- 9.4 (Item 8.12) Report on high needs provision is included in the agenda for this meeting – see item 10.

- 9.5 (Item 10) DT is to meet with Jade Kennet for discussion on utility costs.

Action – DT to feedback at the next meeting

- 9.6 (Item 12.4) Minutes of schools forum meetings will be sent to the secretary of each of the headteacher groups for circulation, as soon as possible after each meeting.

10. INCLUSION AND HIGH NEEDS BUDGET REVIEW [Paper C](#)

- 10.1 BP gave a presentation on the review of high needs funding. He noted that access to high quality educational provision is within the human rights of every child. It is necessary for the LA to meet the needs of all children through strong pathways and an inclusive system.

- 10.2 The number of EHCPs has increased greatly due to a range of factors –

- multiple vulnerabilities
- increasing complexity
- legislative changes (post 16 and early years (EY))
- societal change
- strain on families (eg financial)
- accountability measures
- reduced resources (pressure on budget)
- need for further professional development of school staff

Spending in the high needs block is demand-led and as a result any statutory assessment must result in funding following the child.

- 10.3 Nationally, the assessment system has changed from a 3-tier system (School Action/School Action+/Statement) to a 2-tier system (School Action+/EHCP). It was noted that 4% of children have EHCPs on the IOW, compared to 3.1% nationally. However, panels are reviewing thresholds to ensure they match national benchmarks.

- 10.4 Members agreed that

- schools should have an overview of the criteria that would constitute the allocation of an EHCP
- the EHCP review process needs to be robust so that the provision evolves to suit the developmental needs of the child
- gaps in knowledge of some SEN staff should be addressed

OPTIONS

- 10.5 Reduce expenditure on the Independent Non-Maintained School sector – better procurement of placements, including block placements and joint IOW/Hampshire placements. Some savings have already been made in this area.
- 10.6 Review reliance on out-of-county placements - Some Post-16 students may benefit from moving back into their local community with a support package to suit their transition to adult life. Resources provision on the IOW may be increased and the provision of a new (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) SEMH school to serve Hampshire and the IOW may be a consideration.
- 10.7 Reduction of commissioned places at the Island Learning Centre, with a robust integration programme and outreach support for pupils to return to mainstream education. Members agreed that this would require further exploration, including considering digital platforms for virtual learning and a review of the vocational offer for students.
- 10.8 Moving to a banded system for EHCPs – already in place in special schools, where provision is tailored to the expectations and outcomes for the child rather than by an allocation of LSA hours. It was felt that a more effective moderation process is required.
- 10.9 Consideration of how to access the Apprenticeship Levy to create routes to employment for SEN students, in liaison with Adult Services.
- 10.10 As special school provision is developed there should be a reduction in the need for discretionary budgets, which provide for additional support for a limited time.
- 10.11 A saving of £122,000 has already been made through the review of the structure of central SEN teams. A paper will be brought to schools forum in relation to a further review.
- 10.12 A reduction in top up funding for special schools and resourced funding. This was not a preferred option, but could be managed if necessary.
- 10.13 Consideration to be given to investment into the Specialist Outreach Service, providing prevention and early intervention – reducing the need for some EHCPs
- 10.16 Amend the SEN Cap so that a fixed budget is distributed to schools, according to the number of SEN pupils. A further paper will be brought to schools forum in due course.
- 10.17 Schools were consulted on a proposal to move 0.5% of the schools block into the high needs block and for a view on the level of Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) to be set for the 2019/20 budget, but only 13 responses were received. Therefore, members were asked to approve a meeting with all headteachers to discuss the following options for savings within the high needs block.

RESOLVED :

1. THAT the principles set out in the report to guide future work on the IOW be adopted.
2. THAT the Assistant Director, Education and Inclusion be requested to set up a discussion forum involving all headteachers on the IOW, to consider the options set out in the report and provide feedback on the merits and

demerits of each proposal to guide schools forum and the IW Council in its decision making.

PB and AB left the meeting at 10.00am

11. 2018/19 SCHOOLS BUDGET MONITORING [Paper E](#)

- 11.1 BH gave an overview of the report, which at end of August 2018 showed a forecast overspend of £421,000. The report included a breakdown of budget headings, a 3-year budget forecast and a progress report on savings within the high needs block.
- 11.2 With the deficit brought forward last year, the overall deficit is forecast to be £1,125,000.
- 11.3 The budget for non-SEN placements is expected to underspend by £50,000.
- 11.4 There have been adjustments to some budget areas to account for the closure of Sandown Bay Academy and the expansion of The Bay CE Primary into an all through school.
- 11.5 It is expected that £112,000 will be allocated through the SEN Cap.
- 11.6 The Island Learning Centre estimated occupancy has increased from 53FTE to full capacity at 60FTE.
- 11.7 EY top up funding has incurred a significant increase and is forecast to overspend by £19,000.
- 11.8 Independent and Non-maintained placements have decreased but the costs have increased. An overspend of £202,000 is expected although it is hoped to bring this down through options for savings in Paper C.
- 11.9 The Studio School is due to close at the end of the 2018/19 academic year. BH explained how funding will be returned to the LA and can be allocated to the Growth Fund with the approval of schools forum. This is likely to result in an underspend in the schools block to reduce the overall deficit. Schools forum will receive further information at the December or January meeting, following confirmation of the funding adjustment.
- 11.10 Confirmation was given that the level of overspend that would trigger DfE intervention has been 1.5% in previous years. However, consultation is due on a likely reduction to 1%. The IOW could fall within this criteria for intervention.

RESOLVED :

THAT the August position on the 2018/19 schools budget be noted.

12. SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA 2019/20 [Paper F](#)

- 12.1 Schools had been consulted on continuing with the same principles for the funding formula as those used for 2018/19. There was a low response rate (12 schools) but all were in agreement with this proposal. The majority of responses supported the proportions of funding passed through each factor in the draft formula. A draft was presented at Appendix A and the final formula will be based on the October 2018 pupil census.
- 12.2 It was proposed that the lump sum remain the same and final allocations be adjusted to balance against the overall allocation and members were asked for agreement.

RESOLVED :

- 1. THAT the draft funding formula be approved – school and academy members only – unanimous decision.

2. THAT the formula values (excluding the lump sum) be increased or decreased in equal proportion to balance the overall funding available for distribution.

- 12.3 BH gave an overview of the impact of using the new optional funding floor protection which is based on October 2016 census data and would provide an increase in funding for schools who already receive MFG protection. Of the 12 responses to this part of the consultation received, 11 schools agreed with the proposal not to use the funding floor factor.

RESOLVED :

THAT the funding floor protection is not used – school and academy members only – unanimous decision.

- 12.4 MFG protection is agreed on an annual basis and is paid per-pupil. It does not provide protection against changes in pupil numbers. In the consultation of the 11 responses to this section, 10 schools (91%) agreed to continue with -1.5% MFG and 1 school suggested 0.15%.
- 12.5 Members discussed the reason for the allocations of MFG on the island, which has predominantly been allocated to three schools. It is a result of changes in per-pupil between the 2011/12 and 2012/13 financial years, but evidence of the specific change within the formula is not available. Due to the historic nature of these allocations, and that they relate to a previous formula methodology, the DfE would be highly unlikely to support any application to disapply the MFG for the affected schools for a sharp reduction in funding in one year. The MFG will work out of the system over time, both due to annual reductions in funding where a negative MFG has been set, and because MFG funded schools will not benefit from future increases in funding until their MFG protection expires. It was agreed that no further action can be taken.
- 12.6 Members were also asked to agree that the MFG be allocated by scaling gains, so that those schools receiving the largest gains would continue to do so. 80% of respondents to the consultation agreed with this proposal.

RESOLVED :

THAT the MFG of -1.5% in 2018/19 be agreed and funded by scaling the gains of schools receiving a per-pupil increase – school and academy members only – unanimous agreement.

13. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Schools Forum has been arranged to take place **Wednesday 21 November 2018 – 8.30am** at Thompson House, Sandy Lane, Newport PO30 3NA

DATES OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS – All at Westridge Community Learning Centre

Thursday 20 December 2018

Thursday 17 January 2019

Thursday 21 March 2019

8.30am start, all at

Westridge Community Learning Centre, Brading Road, Ryde PO33 1QS

The meeting closed at 10.50am

CHAIR