

Minutes of the Schools Forum

19 January 2017

-: Present :-

Roger Hughes (Chairman, Primary Maintained Head), **Mike Lock** (Vice Chair, Special Academy Head), **Maurice Codd** (Primary Maintained Gov), **Jim Piper** (Primary Academy Head), **Dan Hallam** (Post 16), **Adam Morris** (Primary Maintained Head), **Debbie Main** (Primary Academy Head), **Daneian Rees** (Secondary Maintained Head), **Lindsey Kings** (Secondary Academy Head), **Clive Star** (Secondary Academy Gov), **Jan Chopping** (Secondary Academy Gov) and **Tim Stephens** (Early Years & 14-19 partnership)

Andy Dempsey (Director of Childrens Services), **Rachael Williams** (Head of Education, Learning & Skills), **Rob Parr** (Principal Accountant) & **Michael Freeman** (Clerk)

1. Apologies/Changes to Membership

Apologies were received from Simon Niles and Julie Shears. The Forum welcomed Alison Eden, principal accountant, to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes from the 1st December 2016 meeting were agreed, with minor amendments to the following items:

- Matters arising (Item 3)
- Verbal Update on Challenging Behaviour project (Item 5.4)

3. Matters arising

High Cost Placements – Working Party has been set up and has had initial meeting.

4. Standing Items

4.1 Verbal update on Autism

The second wave of Autism Champions began in December 2016. Initial feedback to this has been very positive, Dorothy Hadleigh is currently preparing an impact report on their effectiveness, which will be shared with the Forum in March.

4.2 Verbal update on Challenging Behaviour

From Adam Morris – The Chestnut Centre has now taken on two more Family Social Workers, initial feedback has been very positive. A FSWs steering group is currently being set up, which will include Health, education, early help, and Early

Years staff, with the aim of improving inter-agency communication. Council Officers will be required to attend all meetings of the group, as part of their statutory duties.

5. Analysis of Steering Group for Improving Outcomes for Vulnerable Pupils - unallocated funds

Rachael Williams shared with the Forum analysis of unallocated funds managed by the Steering Group for Improving Outcomes for Vulnerable Pupils. There are currently funds of £459k unallocated, and a proposal was brought to the group to reserve a sum of £100k from these funds to create a contingency for the higher needs block for the year 17/18. It was recognised that unallocated funds should be placed where they can have the most impact. The Forum agreed that there is a need to see the impact of driving costs down, whilst trying to deal with the growth in demand.

Vote – to reserve £100k of unallocated funds for the year 17/18:

- 12 in favour (unanimous)

6. Early Years funding update

Rachael Williams presented a paper written by Emma Kerridge, Senior Early Years Advisory Teacher, detailing the new Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF), which will be introduced in April 2017. From the £4.30 per hour allocated to the Local Authority for every three and 4 year old child, from April schools will now receive £3.82 p/h, down from the £4.08 p/h they currently receive. 5% will be retained in order to deliver the scheme, and cover services provided by the council. A one year transitional period of funding, calculated at £153,900, was put to vote to support moving toward the new EYNFF.

Vote: to allocate a one year transitional top up payment to all PVI providers:

- 10 in favour
- 1 against
- 1 Abstaining

The paper also highlighted changes to the current ALFEY (Activity Led Funding for Early Years) inclusion fund, with an increase in free childcare entitlement from 15 hours a week to 30. With a substantial reduction in the base rate provided to settings anticipated, in order to cover the costs of providing additional hours, a recommendation to allocate £100k from the higher needs block to minimise the impact on settings was put to vote.

Vote – To allocate funds from higher needs block to inclusion fund (ALFEY):

- 9 in favour
- 0 against
- 3 abstaining

Action – Rachael Williams and Rob Parr to report back to the Forum's June meeting with analysis of current ALFEY spend.

7. 16/17 DSG out turn, statements and projected under/overspend

The DSG (Dedicated Schools Grant) is forecast to overspend by £329k. Main areas of overspend are Statementing/EHCP, Special Schools Contingency, and Early Years SEN inclusion. Whilst there is a strategic review of the SEN team currently in place, it is recognised that SEN costs are fairly level when compared with other Local Authorities, there is just a higher level of EHCP children in Torbay. A proposal was put to the Forum to manage overspend using the DSG reserve, whilst recognising that this is not a sustainable solution for future years.

Vote – to use DSG reserve to manage current overspend:

- 12 in favour (Unanimous)

8. 17/18 DSG

A comparison of initial DSG funding between 16/17 and 17/18 was shared with the group.

Analysis from both the Local Authority and the SGIOVP has highlighted the size of investment in vulnerable pupils placed both in and out of the authority, and the pressure these placements put upon the DSG and Higher Needs Block. In order to meet demands placed upon the LA and to better meet the needs of vulnerable pupils, a vote was held on the creation of a new post within the LA, a Head of Vulnerable Pupils. This will be a growth item from the 17/18 budget onwards.

Vote – to appoint a Head of Vulnerable Pupils

- 12 in favour (unanimous)

9. Fair Funding consultation

Rob Parr, principal accountant, shared findings from stage 2 of the National Fair Funding Formula consultation, which was launched on 14th December 2016. To formulate a response to this consultation, the Forum recommended a working party be set up, which will consist of Rachael Williams, Rob Parr, Lindsey Kings, Jan Chopping and Maurice Codd. The working party will meet before the March Schools Forum, on 21st February.

10. Education Support Grant (ESG)

The Education Services Grant has been transferred to the Local Authorities DSG (Dedicated Schools Grant) from 2017/18. A breakdown of funding responsibilities being transferred was shared with the group, and a decision on how to manage the transfer of funds (£286,000) was put to vote.

Vote – to retain the funding to provide the retained duties set out in the proposal:

- 12 in favour (unanimous)

A further breakdown of responsibilities the LA holds for Maintained Schools was also discussed, along with the option to de-delegate funds of £24,200 in 2017/18.

Vote – to leave the funds as they are, being used for Statutory and Regulatory Duties:

- 3 in favour (unanimous, votes only from maintained school representatives)

11. Items for next meeting

Report from Working Party on response to National Fair Funding Formula Consultation.

Report from Dorothy Hadleigh on impact of Autism Champions

Written Report on CAMHS

Written report on TESS

12. Future meeting dates

Thursday 9th March, 09:00 Mezz 3, Tor Hill House

Thursday 29th June, 09:00 Mezz 3 Tor Hill House

Thursday 12th October, 09:00 Mezz 3 Tor Hill House

Thursday 30th November, 09:00 Mezz 3 Tor Hill House

Thursday 18th January, TBA

Thursday 8th March, TBA