



## **Minutes of the Schools Forum**

**9 February 2012**

**-: Present :-**

Sue Foot, Russell Green, Roger Hughes, Councillor Chris Lewis, Mike Lock and Debbie Main, Daneian Rees and Sharon Wallwork

(Also in attendance: Lisa Finn, Councillor Chris Lewis and Matt Redwood)

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### **480. Apologies/Changes to Membership**

Apologies were received from Nicola Bridgewater, Iris Butler, Gill Battye, Anne Henderson, Cathy Gilfillan (who was represented by Daneian Rees), Nicholas Smith (who was represented by Sharon Wallwork), Roy Pike (who was represented by Lindsay King) and Lisa Redfern. The Chairman also welcomed Debbie Main to the Forum.

### **481. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Schools' Forum held on 10 November 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **482. 2012/13 Dedicated Schools Grant**

The Forum were advised that the 2012/13 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) was calculated using the Guaranteed Unit of Funding (GUF) multiplied by the number of pupils in the January 2012 census. The GUF for 2012/13 was a like for like cash allocation compared with 2011/12 without an inflationary increase.

The Head of School Commissioning explained that the predicted pupil numbers meant Torbay should not need the 2% safety net set out by the Secretary of State. The setting of the MFG at -1.5% provided a safety net for all schools who may be affected by changes to year on year in circumstances such as different levels of transience.

The Forum noted that significant amounts of funding was being distributed via free school meals (FSM) and with a forecast increase in FSM pupil numbers a budget pressure of £415,000 would occur if the unit values in the 2011/12 formula were maintained for 2012/13, a pressure which was unaffordable in a 'cash flat' budget allocation. Therefore in 2012/13 the budget lines distributed by FSM numbers will remain the same, so the same amounts of funding will be allocated to schools but they will be divided by a greater number of FSM pupil numbers so the actual amount per pupil would be lower.

**483. Pupil Premium 2012/13**

The Forum noted that the pupil premium was introduced in 2011/12 as an allocation of funding based upon FSM registered eligible pupils. In 2011/12 the FSM pupil premium was £488 per pupil and this had been increased to £600 per pupil for 2012/13.

A Forum Member highlighted allocations for special schools were not included as they were either a maintained special school or PRU, with the premium being held by the Local Authority which resulted in some uncertainty for these establishments.

**484. Special School Funding Formula Consultation 2012/13**

The Head of Schools Commissioning advised the Forum that he had distributed a consultation document which proposed changes to the funding formula for special schools.

He explained that at present the majority of special schools receive their funding via pupil place led funding which was structured to accommodate different levels of moderate learning needs (MLD) and recognised that children within this category can have very significant differences in SEN and levels of funding were needed to reflect this. There is also a behaviour, emotional and social difficulties (BESD) pupil place led category which during discussions with special school headteachers, it has come to light that this did not adequately reflect the wide range of needs for pupils with BESD in special schools. The consultation proposed to create a further category of BESD 2 for pupils with significant BESD SEN needs.

The Head of Schools Commissioning advised that the BESD 2 places would be for a small number of the most challenging SEN pupils in Torbay School and were pupils who in the past would have most likely been placed at expensive independent special provision.

The Forum were supportive of the proposals and welcomed the opportunity for staff to develop their skills.

**485. Extended Services Dedicated Schools Grant Contribution 2012/13**

The Head of School Commissioning advised the Forum that the Extended Services Working Party had met and produced the report that the Forum were considering. The report illustrated some of the services which were being delivered as a result of funding for extended services and that these services were Torbay wide.

The Forum were of the view that extended services should continue to be funded.

**486. Projected Dedicated Schools Grant 2011/12 Outturn**

The Forum were advised that the DSG was expected to break even this year, however the government had been very clear that should the DSG be overspent it would affect the forthcoming year allocation. The Head of School Commissioning

advised that some services were placing a pressure on the DSG but these were currently being offset by underspend in other services.

**487. Future Use of Chestnut Primary School Site**

The Forum was informed that on 1 February 2012 the Council had agreed to the Chestnut School site becoming a base for a Primary Behaviour Hub, Music Service Base and possibly a base for the South Devon Gym Club.

The Head of School Commissioning explained that there would be an implication for the DSG in that the Primary Behaviour Hub would require premises costs and the intention was to use the same formula as all primary schools. The Head of School Commissioning explained that these costs would not be an additional call upon the DSG as this was part of the 2011/12 budget planning.

**488. Future Meeting Dates**

The Forum agreed the following future meeting dates:

Thursday 28 June 2012  
Thursday 8 November 2012  
Thursday 7 February 2013  
Thursday 21 March 2013