

SCHOOLS FORUM

PLEASE NOTE TIME OF MEETING

Wednesday 19 September 2018
at 4.00 pm – 6.00 pm

Fairisle Junior School

Fairisle Road, Lordshill, Southampton, SO16 8BY

This meeting is open to the public

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Present:

Chair and Vice Chair		
John Draper	Head Teacher	Swaythling Primary School
Harry Kutty	Head Teacher	Cantell School
Primary School Representatives		
Julie Swanston	Head Teacher	Woolston Infant School
Amanda Talbot-Jones	Head Teacher	St Denys Primary School
Mark Sheehan	Head Teacher	Mansbridge Primary School

Peter Howard	Head Teacher	Fairisle Junior School
Primary Governor		
Richard Harris	Governor	Moorlands Primary School
Secondary School Representatives		
Jim Henderson	Head Teacher	Woodlands Community College
Special Schools Representatives		
Andy Evans	Head Teacher	Great Oaks School
Colin Grant	Governor	Cedar School
Academy Representatives		
Sean Preston	Chief Financial Officer	Hamwic Trust
Lyn Bourne	Head Teacher	St Anne's Catholic School
Pupil Referral Unit Representative		
<i>Not represented</i>		
PVI Early Years Provider		
Anna Wright	Paint Pots Nursery	
Non Schools Representative		
<i>Not represented</i>		
Observers		
Gary Wooldridge	Schools Forum Advisor	
Jedd Hayward	NASUWT / Teacher's Liaison Panel	
Gemma Carr	Hamwic Education Trust	
Rachel Adams	Daily Echo	
SCC Officers		
Derek Wiles	Service Lead, Education	
Paul Atkins	Schools Capital Programme Manager	
Nick Persson	Finance Business Partner for Education	
Anne Downie	Team Manager, Early Years	
Katie Cope	HR Advisor	
Dyfan Rowlands	Meeting Support (minutes)	
Stephanie Wickenkamp	Meeting Support (minutes)	

MINUTES

1 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Chair John Draper welcomed members to the meeting and thanked PH for kindly hosting the meeting.

Members agreed Chair and Vice Chair are to remain the same for 2018/19.

AGREED: By all members.

There were no objections or abstentions.

2 APOLOGIES AND CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY)

JD welcomed GW to the meeting and stated all members will appreciate his input going forward.

Apologies:

Martin Brown	Head Teacher	The Sholing Technology College
Alison Parsons	Head Teacher	Compass School
Councillor Darren Paffey	Cabinet Member, Aspiration, Schools and Lifelong Learning	
Councillor Sarah Taggart	Millbrook Ward	
Hilary Brooks	Service Director, Children and Families Service	

Changes in membership:

There was discussion regarding Martin Brown's representation within Schools Forum as to whether he was now an Academy representative as opposed to Secondary school representative.

JD announced the next LA meeting for Governors is 6 November. Discussion followed regarding GW's capacity in becoming a Primary Governor representative. PA noted the potential for conflict of interests if agreeing to a dual role however, this could be managed when it came to voting. RH stated GW must put himself forward for consideration for election by Southampton Governors if he wishes to become a Primary Governor representative. RH agreed he would raise this issue at the meeting.

ACTION: RH to feedback on vacancy from 6 November Governors meeting.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 27 JUNE 2018

JD reviewed the minutes of the meeting held on 27 June for accuracy and matters arising.

Matters Arising:

Page 9: Item 6c Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG)

PA confirmed he would circulate the presentations from the previous meeting to Schools Forum members.

ACTION: PA to circulate MFG PowerPoint to Schools Forum members, to enable feedback to other school colleagues.

ACTION: PA to circulate “Analysis around Primary Schools Bulge” email to Schools Forum members.

The minutes of the meeting were agreed.

(Item 6a) Primary Schools bulge and expansion

PA stated members generally accepted the presentation from the previous meeting and confirmed the remaining action would be distribution, as mentioned above.

(Item 6b) Funding of Previous amalgamation – Junior/Infant School

PA suggested returning to the October Schools Forum after background work has been completed. It is critical to understand previous reports and the context of decisions made; this issue goes back as far as 2012/13. PA clarified not all junior schools were amalgamated. RH stated prior to 2012/13, Primary schools which had the potential for closure received funding if capacity within a group of schools were 25% or over. PA thanked RH, however reasoning behind future decisions still requires unpicking.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

5 REGISTER OF INTERESTS

JD requested members complete the Register of Interests document, which was circulated during the meeting.

6 SOUTHAMPTON SCHOOLS FORUM CONSTITUTION/TERMS OF REFERENCE

PA stated no amendments had been made to the Constitution following last year and confirmed this would be recirculated to members. Any comments received by members would be reviewed and discussed at Schools Forum.

ACTION: PA to circulate the Southampton Schools Forum Constitution / Terms of Reference to members.

7 STANDING ITEM: LA UPDATE ON DFE/EFA FUNDING ACCOUNCEMENTS

- a) LA to provide an update if applicable regarding national announcements

The transition to the NFF will occur in 3 years' time, however a decision needs to be made in how best to transition from the local formula to the NFF. JD explained to members the request for the LA to provide financial context around the current local formula, the hard NFF and any potential transitional options which could be worked towards.

NP presented data which was informed by the DfE's financial update from July 2018. This included a breakdown of funding for all Southampton schools, benchmarking against other LAs and comparisons between the current local formula and NFF. NP confirmed rates had been applied through the APT which included a variety of factors, such as deprivation.

NP explained the variance between pre de-delegation and post de-delegation was small; figures in red were noted to receive less than the NFF.

Key discussion points:

- SP raised the issue of Free School Meals being based on current FSM rates as opposed to FSM Ever 6 rates.

- SP stated it was critical to note that last year a 1.77% cap was applied as opposed to the full 3%; the figures within NP's data were confirmed to reflect the 3% cap. SP commented an accumulative 6.5% cap is anticipated for 2019/2020 via National Funding Formula.
- NP noted the Forum's decision to transfer 0.5% to the HNB would also alter figures slightly, as this is not incorporated within the DfE figures. There was discussion regarding the current £1.2M HNB pressure and how it is forecast to increase to almost £2M by March 2019.
- GW and PA confirmed any changes made by the LA to the NFF would need to go through a full consultation with all Southampton schools, prior to a decision from the Cabinet Member. SP stated Southampton schools were not previously consulted regarding changes to the rates, which PA acknowledged and reiterated the LA's commitments to ensuring processes would be followed correctly.
- MS queried the process of the LA receiving feedback from all Southampton schools. NP responded, each school would receive options to vote on, with details on how to feedback. AT-J raised this decision would be made by Governors as opposed to Head Teachers, in most cases.

JD emphasised the need for a 2 stage consultation: an initial consultation on formula changes (considering the decision on whether to consult on principles), followed by consultation on the outcomes. PH and MS raised concerns on schools voting based on gains, without considering losses.

NP shared further data which compared Primary and Secondary rates variation between the local formula and NFF.

Key discussion points:

- SP raised the issue of Free Schools Meals being based on current FSM rates as opposed to FSM Ever 6 rates.
- JS highlighted the NFF funds IDACI differently; highly deprived areas will receive less, however more schools across the city will benefit. MS raised some deprived schools are not included within IDACI (A).
- SP stated Southampton are one of the few LAs who have not transitioned to the hard NFF.

- SP identified the MFG Cap as a critical factor in demonstrating gains and losses, due to the 3% national cap. NFF capping and scaling will be a fundamental decision.
- JS commented several of the Primary schools set to gain from the hard NFF were the previously amalgamated Primary/Infant schools.
- GW stated when transitioning from the local formula to the NFF, MFG would be implemented which would result in schools expecting losses to not be too disadvantaged. It was noted this would be over the course of several years.
- In response to MS' uncertainty around transitioning to the NFF, PA reassured the funding received from the Government for 2018/19 and 2019/20 is in line with the NFF.
- SP suggested the transition option should reflect the thought process of, "What can be afforded if the NFF is not affordable?"

JD confirmed for members, should the transition be made to the hard NFF, the MFG would effectively provide a 'built in' transition. GW commented this would exclude some elements.

There was discussion relating to the number of schools who would gain and lose. MS queried whether there were any trends or factors which affected this. NP responded there are no specific drivers, however it is largely dependent on the makeup of children.

SP noted caution in the figures presented as they include a 1% increase in funded government. PH queried whether schools who received 1% or less during this year would be considered "losing". NP responded the numbers are indicative, however it is anticipated for an additional £1M within the hard NFF.

GW highlighted a disparity on the spreadsheets total funding due to missing schools.

NP requested Schools Forum's help on modelling the options going forward. Members agreed for SP and GW to assist NP.

All members thanked NP for providing the data discussed. JD added members want to be better informed about these decisions and agreed the need to address the 3 options.

JD concluded the October Schools Forum meeting would be a good opportunity to discuss the 3 options further. HK agreed and reminded members the decision would need to be made by January 2019. PA clarified the final settlement in December would differ slightly compared to the data presented at this meeting.

ACTION: NP to rectify total funding disparity, incorporate those schools missing and recirculate to Schools Forum Members.

ACTION: NP, SP and GW to prepare 3 DSG Modelling options; local formula option, transition option and hard NFF option.

b) Updates on School National Funding Formula (NFF) 2019/20 – on the basis of Stage 2 response and DfE final proposals

This item was discussed in 7a.

8 **LOCAL AUTHORITY UPDATES**

a) Education Services Review (ESR)

PA explained the ESR was in response to pressures around central finances and it now requires a timely reshape. PA agreed schools had not been fully engaged with to ascertain which services were most valued by them. PA added delivery of services was also unclear. DW stated the LA require clarity on what schools need and what they are prepared to pay for.

PA highlighted the nationally published table of figures for the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB); this is part of the settlement which comes to the authority to deliver schools services. PA emphasised a significant pressure which will result in the LA receiving less funding to provide services.

PA confirmed the initial step will be to address the entire scope for all statutory and non-statutory Education Services, with consideration towards who can provide them. MS queried whether the LA could charge for non-statutory services. DW clarified the LA cannot charge for statutory services.

PA confirmed he would prefer to maintain the approach of nominating a working group, however the emphasis needs to be realigned. JS queried the SLA agreements deadline for January. PA responded all mechanisms need to be reviewed for agreed SLAs. MS asked how this would be decided. PA responded understanding of this was being worked towards.

b) Private Funding Initiative (PFI)

NP is researching how PFI schools are faring within the MFG; the growth of the schools is insufficient to cap. SP noted this as a historic issue when capping was set between 0% and 0.9%, resulting in the query of PFI “clawback”.

GW explained this issue stemmed from rate changes a couple of years ago; PFI has always been an element within the current formula and MFG should not have had a significant impact. However, as the PFI rate was increased a couple of years ago, the Per Pupil factor appear to increase which automatically disabled MFG implementation.

HK emphasised the unfairness this puts on PFI schools and requires addressing. JD requested GW clarify the legislation regarding PFI inside and outside Schools budgets.

PA stated PFI is a discretionary factor which the LA apply. GW stated the Council can request factors to be unapplied, however if sought would only protect schools if PFI increased. HK commented PFI had almost doubled in the past 2 years. GW stated if pursued, the deadline would be November 2018.

ACTION: GW, HK and JH to look into PFI and provide an update at October’s Schools Forum meeting.

c) Agresso Update

NP highlighted the following significant changes next year:

Agresso Name Change

The Agresso financial system is now called “Business World” and the use of the term Agresso will be phased out.

User Acceptance Testing (UAT)

In October 2018, the LA will be provided with a new test environment to work on proposed changes prior to going live next April 2019. There is a need to get schools representation to assist with the testing and some volunteers have already come forward. Example of areas being tested are: Purchase to Pay, Debtors invoices and banking income.

End of SBS (Schools Budgeting System)

The new version of Agresso being implemented in April 2019 will not be able to accept uploads from SBS. Therefore this is going to be made redundant at the end of this financial year. The updated Agresso system is being developed to provide the same functionality so will be used to replace

the SBS system. A questionnaire has been sent to schools to obtain information about replacing SBS and the LA have received a good response so far. The responses and feedback from the questionnaire will be used to help design the new budgeting system for schools. NP confirmed help and support will be provided for this transition.

New Coding and Other

From April 2019 the Agresso coding will change for both cost centres and detail codes. Other areas still under review include Approval Limits, Automated Approval, Sub Cost Centres (will continue under a different function) and Cost Centre Hierarchy.

There was discussion relating to an updated School IT Equipment policy; work is progressing to address approval and safety of IT hardware which links to the LA's system. GW stated schools are free to procure equipment, so long as it adheres to the LA's contracted procedure rules. JD requested more information and clarity around this policy.

ACTION: NP to provide further information about the IT policy at the October Schools Forum meeting.

d) Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

This item was discussed in 7a.

e) Update on Secondary School expansion

PA stated in July 2018, Cabinet and Council approved funding of £48M for Secondary school expansions across the city in order to achieve the additional 1500 places by September 2022. £31M has been secured for the new Secondary school which will be built on the Civil Service Playing Fields site. PA continued an informal consultation will commence after October half term. This is proposed to engage local residents, parents, teachers and governors, local businesses and the wider Southampton schools community.

Cabinet and Council have also approved funding of £8M for the refurbishment of the main teaching building at Chamberlayne College for the Arts. PA confirmed this was part of the same programme as the Secondary school expansion. SP queried whether the Government will have addressed the funding if processed through the free school route. PA explained Southampton were not selected for free schools this year due to the focus being on areas of bad performance.

SP queried the impact of the centralised 900 places, in relation to what affect this would have on gaps across the city. PA responded, the demand

is primarily within the centre of the city as a consequence of housing development over the last 15 years. PA explained the outflow of Year 7 children into Hampshire schools will return to Southampton, however it is difficult to predict timescales. The SEND Strategic Review is being incorporated into this process; PA commented this is an ideal opportunity to make a difference and confirmed Cabinet and Council's involvement within the programme later in the year.

HK queried the rationale behind having expansion discussions with only 2 schools. PA clarified there are 3 schools within the central region of the city and none are being excluded from discussions. PA clarified Cabinet had confirmed funding for £10M to create an additional 450 places at these existing schools, however proposals are yet to be decided. HK requested reiteration of PA's promise to ensure no school would be disadvantaged by this expansion. PA responded positively.

Work is ongoing to consider expansion across the entirety of the city; there is consideration towards expansion in the west.

f) Excess Surplus Savings Policies

NP stated further work needs addressing, prior to discussion at Schools Forum. NP requested the item be renamed to, "Surplus and Deficits".

PH requested an update on Schools in Financial Difficulties. This was in relation to the one-off, successful bids for £20K, with particular emphasis on how this has been managed going forward.

ACTION: NP to feedback on item at October's Schools Forum meeting.

ACTION: Meeting Support to retitle agenda item to, "Surplus and Deficits".

ACTION: NP/PA to feedback on Schools in Financial Difficulties fund.

g) Teachers Pay Policy

JD announced the policy wording remained the same, apart from financial amendments which reflected government figures.

KC outlined to the forum that an announcement had gone through parliament; a 3.5% raise was agreed for unqualified teachers, 2% raise for the upper pay range and a 1.5% maximum had been agreed upon. KC sought agreement from members at Schools Forum today, prior to seeking approval from Teaching Unions.

Key discussion points:

- PH queried the asterisks on figures displayed in **Appendix Four** and whether these would remain. PH added last year, his understanding was those on top of the scale would not receive a rise as this would have been a “one-off”. KH clarified this would remain as part of national standards.
- PH requested confirmation that schools could not choose these pay ranges, unless they were maintained. KC responded, if a teacher was at the top of the scale there would be flexibility with direction of pay for schools; 25% of the lower amount would be able to be paid.
- MS queried whether figures could be shown to display which schools have lost and gained as a result and emphasised disadvantages. JD highlighted per pupil distributions would have been a contributing factor; it would cost schools less who are at full capacity. PH raised concerns over the disparity in capacity between group 3 and 4 Primary schools. However, it was noted that very few Primary schools had capacity over 500.
- KC reiterated there are some teachers that have been at the top of the pay scale for a prolonged time; 25% would be very useful for schools as a result and would offer flexibility.

The Teacher’s Pay Grant will be offered in October. There was uncertainty as to whether this would be received via the LA initially. HK highlighted timescales would require monitoring.

JD asked members to vote on whether they were happy to accept the figures discussed.

AGREED: By all Maintained School members.

There were no objections or abstentions.

h) Schools Trade Union facilities Fund and Agreement

Work is ongoing to unpick the amount schools are paying for Trade Union facilities, with reviews intended to ensure funds are fairly allocated. KC clarified Primary Schools’ de-delegated budgets were agreed by Schools Forum. However, Secondary and Special schools have individually, agreed SLAs. KC stated there are over 1000 Unison members among schools who are not contributing to this fund. Subsequently, there is expectation for a representative to be available during school hours, as opposed to external hours. Ongoing discussions are being progressed with Teaching Unions.

Primary School de-delegated budgets form the majority of the funding (£46K). The remaining budget is made up of Secondary and Specialist schools. KC stated it is the schools decision on how best to utilise this funding and posed the question of how best to encourage those schools not paying in, to see the benefits of having access to local reps.

There was a discussion regarding whether schools who do not pay into the fund, should receive representation. KC stated if a school who did not contribute, union representation would still be sought if available. KC confirmed one particular school has a contracted rep. Regional representation was noted as possible with the caveat of delays.

LB stated Secondary schools have union representatives within schools for staff and do not require a second tier. KC agreed. MS added most Primary schools have representatives also, however KC noted the potential for a conflict of interest.

JD requested clarity on equitable access for all unions (including NAHT) and added the target of achieving a transparent offer with an SLA which everyone can support. KC confirmed she had a list of schools paying into the fund, and offered to attend a future Schools Forum to provide an update. KC in response to PH's query, confirmed the potential accumulation would be £100K if all schools contributed.

ACTION: KC to provide an update at a future Schools Forum meeting.

i) Schools HR Service

KC raised work has been ongoing over 18 months to develop a HR service which can be offered out to Southampton schools. KC confirmed recruitment is in progress with anticipation for the service to launch 1st April 2019. There was discussion on clarity around the service provider for this new service.

JD thanked KC for her updates.

9 CLOSING REMARKS AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

JD thanked officers for the papers presented at today's meeting and concluded discussions today constituted technical information which may take some time to process and develop. Informed decision about schools funding can be made ahead of time, and 'transparency' was highlighted as the key word in moving forward.

Wednesday 17 October 2018

Time: 4:00pm – 6:00pm

Venue: Swaythling Primary School