

SCHOOLS FORUM
PLEASE NOTE TIME OF MEETING

Wednesday 26th June 2019
at 4.00 pm – 6.00 pm

Cantell School
Violet Rd, Southampton, SO16 3GJ

This meeting is open to the public

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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
Mark Sheehan	Head Teacher	Mansbridge Primary School
Peter Howard	Head Teacher	Fairisle Junior School



Primary Governor		
Richard Harris	Governor	Moorlands Primary School
Ross Williams	Governor	Mason Moor Primary School
Secondary School Representatives		
Nick Giles	Head Teacher	Chamberlayne College for the Arts
Jim Henderson	Head Teacher	Woodlands Community College
Special Schools Representatives		
Maria Smyth	Head Teacher	Vermont School
Colin Grant	Governor	Cedar School
Academy Representatives		
Sean Preston	Chief Financial Officer	Hamwic Trust
Lyn Bourne	Head Teacher	St Anne's
Pupil Referral Unit Representative		
Katherine Smith <i>(Representing Alison Parsons)</i>	N/A	Compass School
PVI Early Years Provider		
Anna Wright	Paint Pots Nursery	
Non Schools Representative		
<i>Not represented</i>		
Observers		
Virginia Newsom	Finance Analyst, SCC	
Kiranveer Kaur	Finance Analyst, SCC	
SCC Officers		
Derek Wiles	Service Lead, Education	
Clodagh Freeston	Service Manager - Education Strategy, Planning & Improvement, Children & Families	
Jo Knight	Service Lead - Finance Business Partnering, Strategic Finance & Commercialisation	
Nick Persson	Finance Business Partner for Education	
Amjid Raza	Project Manager – Education Capital Programme	
Dyfan Rowlands	Meeting Support (minutes)	
Kyran Goverd	Meeting Support (minutes)	

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

HK welcomed delegates to the meeting and thanked attendees for attending. HK stated that Schools Forum have been supported by Local Authority Officers to create papers, on time, within timeframes that often are very tight from DfE. Thanks offered also to those who attend pre-meets also and ensure that agendas and previous minutes brought to forum are accurate.

2 APOLOGIES AND CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY)

Susanne Ottens has resigned from the Schools Forum.

KS represented AP at Schools Forum as substitute representative

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 27th March 2019

The minutes were reviewed and deemed to be an accurate and faithful representation of the previous meeting.

Action arising:

- **JH's apologies to be noted within previous minutes**

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest signed and completed by delegates. No further update to be provided.

5 STANDING ITEM: LA UPDATE ON DFE/EFA FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENTS

NP drew attention to the teacher's pension scheme which is going to rise to 23.68% in September. This will be fully funded for 2019-20 but funding for future years has not yet been confirmed by the DFE. HLK queried the process whereby schools must engage with to acquire that funding. NP will manage per school funding allocation in October which will be broken

down and passed onto schools. SP clarified that basic funding is based on per pupil amount and based on up to 0.5% of budget sharing for October.

6 SCHOOLS FORUM CONSTITUTION

JD specified that there is procedural side which should be reviewed annually. The procedural side is the actual make up of most of the membership groups which sit on this panel. SP queried point 2.2 of membership where state schools guidance suggests that schools must maintain reasonable numbers so that the numbers of heads and governors is not unbalanced. Governor reps do not have to be of equal stature as there is a challenge in getting them to attend School Forum meetings. It is something for the maintained schools to explore. JD stated that there is space for a designated governor representative. SP added that this is for statutory perspectives. A representative for academies is probably unneeded. JD feels that at least one Governor representative is needed for the primary schools and secondary schools groups. RH pointed out that there are already two primary representatives. MaSm asked if Andy Evans could represent the special schools academy. JD explained that it would depend on how attendees felt about secondary school governors. JH, HK and NG all agreed with this.

RH explained that the on the Governors forum there is no LEA portion which is technically still existent. The procedure for electing people for this and scrutiny forum is supposed to be through parent representatives but this no longer happens. The current process does still coincide with the local authority agenda but there may be benefit in highlighting this for a future meeting. This will provide time to pick out people to put forward. JD responded that on 2.4 it explains that the procedure has moved on a lot since it was written for the academy sector and we can no longer stipulate how academies allocate and stipulate their representatives. The Local Authorities remit is recommend that academies are broadly represented on a sensible ratio for the city. Previously, most academies in Southampton were secondaries. JD is unsure if academy colleagues are content with this representation. LB agrees with this. SP indicated that the guidance suggests that there can be no more than 1 representative from one single entity. JD agrees to a review of the constitution. JD added there would be benefit in having non-school members which there are none of currently. Perhaps a more open approach is required but appointments can often last for up to 4 years which may/may not be appropriate. SP suggested doing a re-election every 4 years. JH queried if this accounts for cooperative trusts as well as map representation. JD stated that it would not because they are single entities. SP questions where the cooperative trust should operate on a state which may be more appropriate. JD explained that the chair and vice-chair had a whole rewrite of this previously and asked if members would like to retain this. SP

believes that this should happen in September. JD pointed out that on 3.7 there was 40% representation between primary, secondary and SEN. JD indicated that the table at the bottom of his paper demonstrates a percentage of where all children in Southampton schools are under and specifies which heading they are. There is representation in Schools Forum which should be broadly representative of changing factors such as primary schools losing one representative and maintaining another. Secondary schools will lose one rep and academies will gain two to have a total of five representatives at the table. PRU will remain as it is along with special academy. Nurseries will still be maintained on the forum and we are seeking representation from 16 -19, private education and voluntary. AW confirms that she is representing voluntary. JD explained that in regards to special academy reps, it is being proposed that there should be 2 special maintained schools representatives and two special academy representatives and queried whether 3 would be disproportionate to the actual number of special schools in the city.

MS believed that 3 representatives may be too many. JD does not feel there is a choice as it is difficult to arrive at a sensible balance. It could be argued that academies, as maintained primary settings are of identical make up. The trouble is separating the layers needed to look at this now. MS asked if there has been a split in pupils between primary and academy education. JD clarified that it is 38.6 and 38.7 respectively. SP asked whether primaries need to discuss who will be dropping off and if the representatives are able to provide him with a list of every academy in the city then he can take this further by contacting them and feeding back at a future meeting (September). HK agrees with this. LB asked if catholic and CofE schools would be contacted. An observer stated that he was the CofE diocese and was dealing with St Marks School. MS stated that any schools in the city that are not CofE or Catholic are not represented such as Muslim and Islamic schools. JD is unsure of this. SP confirmed that the representative's first meeting will be in September.

JD confirmed in a vote that attendees were happy to adopt the advised constitution.

For – 13
Against – 0
Abstentions – 0

Result - Agreement

7 SCHOOL'S GROWTH FUNDING POLICY FOR APPROVAL

NP noted School Growth Fund Policy was last reviewed in 2015 and requires updating. Secondary schools are facing growth at present, and the policy needs to reflect the financial management of these increases. Options therefore provided by NP as to how this can be progressed. NP

advised that growth funding constitutes top slice from the DSG Schools Block, applicable to U16 and schools growing above their Planned Admission Number (PAN). NP briefed that the paper provided to delegates contained both primary and secondary policies, with a proposal that the existing policy for Primary schools should be continued with. SP queried whether there would be expected primary growth also. NP responded that there is currently no future Primary Growth.

MaSh informed, however, that a further proposition has been offered by himself, PH and ATJ of the Schools Forum primary school representatives contingency, and that this should be considered as Option 3 moving forward.

Option 1

NP explained that Option 1 constitutes banded funding, with growth funding to eligible secondary schools being banded by applying rates for primary school growth funding, based on one class size of 30 pupils. Should this class size be halved, then a comparable 50% of funding would be offered, with the same logic applying for class sizes $\frac{1}{4}$ of this figure. Academies would receive the full year's worth of funding, with this funding beginning in September for the period to the following August NP informed that academy funding is recouped back from the DfE for the additional 5 months between April and August. Within Option1, it is also proposed that for an intake of 1-7 pupils, no funding shall be applied as it would be considered too small an entry to warrant this. NP noted that this is an open proposal for the schools forum to express opinions on this subject.

Option 2

NP outlined that Option 2 would constitute growth of schools funding on a per-pupil basis. As per option 1, growth funding would be applied for increases of 8 pupils and above and shall be funded at the relevant key stage AWPU. Funding is therefore calculated on the basis of AWPU multiplied by the number of months, with results differing depending on what approach is used when compared to option 1.

Discussion

NP stated that the option proposed by a number of primary schools representatives, Option 3, would appear similar to Option 1: the banded funding proposal. MaSh queried, however, that in the case of a school having a full class size, whether this school also be provided with an MC teacher and a LSA. MaSh raised doubts as to whether this would indeed be the case.

JD clarified that the banded funding option, unlike the Primary Growth Fund, would factor in the proportion of the class. SP continued further in explaining that with Option 3 being to band primaries, it would appear that Option 3 mirrors Option 1 however without being applied on the basis of a class size of 30 pupils. MaSh confirmed that this is correct. NP noted,

however, that secondary school funding is recognised as being a more expensive option than primary school funding. MaSh disputed this, noting that 4-5 years ago primary schools were only allocated M1 funding, the lowest amount, and was only raised to M6 through contestation of this. MaSh added that pressures on primary schools at present have raised significantly, with expectation now that primaries adopt curriculum subjects and apply curriculum leaders under historic banding. PH agreed with this affirmation, noting that his school at present operates at barely M2 funding, with no additional costs.

SP continued that Option 2 would appear grossly unfair based on the primary growth experienced for the last 7 years and would ultimately be unjust on those primaries that have grown. SP noted, however, that it must be considered that secondary schools would bear additional costs for staffing and that there is principally more capacity in secondary schools to cope with relatively small growth. SP raised that banded does make sense, however affirmed that a case-by-case assessment should take place.

RW noted further that with regard to growth for primaries, this has occurred due to statutory regulation that class sizes could not reach 31 children per class. Funding would however be the same, as the same resource is being applied. In secondaries, however, 30 children would rarely be in the same room at the same time, with tutor groups also being key aspects of secondary schools. RW affirmed, therefore, that a basic formula cannot logically be applied and therefore declare that a school taking additional pupils could accommodate this influx. Many of these schools will be insufficiently staffed to cope with such numbers and may have children thrust open them for lack of alternative placement. Thus, RW recommended that this must be perceived from a case-by-case basis of cost incurred.

SP raised that growth within PAN is pressure, with the example that if a school has decreased in pupil numbers, they would have been overfunded every year that the school has been given too much money in the past. Furthermore, should a school grow by 10 pupils, funding shall be applied for this the following year. Thus, if a school is overfunded for a period of reduction, an argument may be that a school should have taken necessary measures to save money to cope with this.

JD requested clarification on what the growth fund can be used for, with the presumption that this can only be used to fund basic need. NP confirmed this. JD queried if this excluded the provision of growth funds to school that are growing within PAN. NP confirmed that growth funding is for schools that have grown over the PAN threshold, and schools operating under PAN would need to discuss their case with the LA. DW confirmed that conversations have already taken place with schools, and agreement for way to progress this further shall be decided upon.

PH reported that in his current situation as head teacher, previous pupil numbers stood at 263 some years ago and has since augmented to 370. PH noted, however, that it is only a recent phenomenon that funding has now been allocated to cope with this pressure, adding that for every year student numbers grew by 15, no funding was released until growth funding reached over PAN. PH noted further that there would appear to be a great discrepancy in funding between Year 6 primary students and secondary students, and questioned whether the difference between these years warrants such a chasm in funding.

HK noted that with regard to the point raised about increases within PAN, it must be considered that what is occurring to two schools within the city is extraordinary and called on transparency in any processes moving forward. MaSh affirmed that funding is built on historic factors, with values being taken and placed within the pot, however called on analysis of what these costs actually entail. MaSh highlighted also the figure that the pupil/teacher ratio within primary schools standards at 1-27, compared to 1-21 in secondaries. DW responded that it is unambiguous that secondary schools require to employ more teachers to accommodate such growth in pupil numbers, with the LA therefore agreeing in exceptional circumstances to extend deficit recovery plans over a 5 year period rather than a 3 year period. In response to this, however, NG reported that each year £360,000 will be underfunded to schools, with this totalling over £1m deficit over the next 3 years, which is a great concern.

JD suggested that a formal agenda item be placed on the September meeting agenda with regard to growth within PAN and assessment of proper figures concerning this should take place.

SP noted further that growth has been evident in secondaries this year, however no money was earmarked for growth in the Schools Block: thus funding is required for 2 years' worth of growth in the Schools Block for 2021. Any additional funding, whether within/outside of PAN, will come from within Schools Block and thus would constitute school money and not new investment. MaSh queried why a decision was not made to have sufficient money within the growth fund, and why Schools Forum did not agree to ensure that this was in place. NP responded that earlier in the year, a decision by the schools forum was made to transfer surplus growth funding back into the School Block. The LA has now received a further 160 admission requests which had not been planned and Growth funding will now be required to support schools taking on these additional pupils. NP stated that shortfalls or surpluses relating to Growth funding identified at year end can be carried forward to the following year and a revised Growth funding forecast be calculated.-NP confirmed that the agreed policy will then be used to calculate Growth funding forecasts and these will be presented in future schools forums.

LB queried as to the rationale behind applying no funding for pupil growth between 1-7. NP responded that this is due to a general understanding that there is minimal extra cost rises within this range. LB disagreed with this notion, stating that a 1-7 pupil increase supersedes the funding

provided and added that it is unjust not to fund each of the bands. NP responded that funding for 1-7 therefore could be built in to fulfil the table of the schools forum accept this amendment and reiterated that the proposal is being presented for discussion and changes arising from discussions and agreement can be made to the policy.

SP elaborated on the point of secondary school capacity, raising that there is no way that secondaries are not able to take on a small number of pupils without incurring substantial extra funding, noting that this would constitute approximately a 0.5% increase. LB responded that her school has grown by 150 in recent years, and a decision has been made to place an additional 31 within her school, incurring cost which can barely be spared for an additional science station. RH raised that a core sum should be decided upon, and any exceptional circumstances should be reported back to the body and discussed for review. RH noted further that it would appear that Option 2 is not preferable for any representative, being far too costly and therefore not being appropriate for consideration. JD noted that at the point primary growth funding was being decided upon, the caveat of this decision was that, upon receipt of capital funding, schools would not receive sundries element of growth fund. SP queried whether schools are receiving one rate if they are not in receipt of capital funding. NP responded that the proposal document outlines that the primary school breakdown is £31,000, which includes additional funding for sundries for schools that did not receive capital. Option 1, therefore, would take the base figure (£31,000) as primary funding.

SP posed to DW whether any secondary schools are taking numbers over PAN, and whether they are in receipt of additional funding to receive these numbers. DW confirmed that this is the case. SP queried therefore what the differentiated rate would compose of and asked where capital funding went to, if not to schools. AR responded that capital funding has been provided to schools where a long term plan has been arranged, and where this plan is being sought to increase. AR confirmed that a longer term strategy is currently being looked at by the LA. AR noted further that this would pertain not only to seconders, but also primaries.

JD highlighted that there are indeed instances wherein secondaries are financially worse off in certain scenarios. Given that the proposal under Option 1 is banded, secondaries have to have at least 16 additional pupils before this is funded to a comparable level to primaries. SP noted however that if a 40% uplift were to be applied, this may offset banding.

RW questioned further as to when calculation shall be applied. For example, if a school has been asked to take in an additional 20 pupils, with only 18 actually attending, at what point will calculation of this discrepancy take place. SP raised that funding should not be released until confirmation of numbers is provided. NP added that this is calculated on basis of actual extra numbers. CF continued that historic tactical approach had been to ask oversubscribed schools to take in additional pupils, which in turn led to more schools being asked who are already in a vulnerable state and whom have been taken over PAN. RW raised that

with regard to children who have won a place at schools on appeal historically these children have not been funded. He added that it may be the case that appeal panels see that a school is only 7 above capacity and may choose to allow 2 additional pupils to receive higher funding. RW affirmed that there should be differentiation between successful appellants and those whom have been offered a space previously at a particular school.

HK posed to fellow secondary school representatives what their opinion would be on 0.48 uplift. SP responded that a business case may be needed for those schools who would class themselves as exceptional cases, then this may be subject to review by Schools Forum itself. SP concluded that he feels that the 0.48 uplift is a reasonable suggestion by the LA. JH recommended, however, that perhaps a compromise could be achieved, given that 0.48 is a historic figure, suggesting that a figure between 0.48 and 1.29, for example, could be achieved. JD suggested that a way forward could be for the 1-7 band, the same methodology could be used as other bands, with a figure insertion of 25%, using 1.29 uplift instead of 1.4. SP noted however that there may be schools who receive funding who do not incur additional cost. CF noted also that there are schools within the city who have always admitted over number anyway, and therefore posed whether they shall be funded also or whether these schools would need to enhance their PAN. RW affirmed that the LA's finance need to be aware of which schools they are in order that they are not overfunded.

JD suggested therefore a vote on Option 1: banded funding with revised uplift element of 1.0.29% rather than using the historical basis of 0.49%:

For – 8

Against – 0

Abstentions – 5

Result – Vote Carried

SP raised that it is unlikely that a definite answer will be provided at this forum on whether schools have been given extra funding for capital. DW noted that there is a particular issue in disaggregated growth from capital investment, and whether this pertains specifically for this year as opposed to capital investment for schools to grow. SP raised that he disagreed with this notion. AR added further that it would appear that the LA have not providing any capital funding to any schools for this year's intake. AR also raised also that at any point a school is operating above capacity, the LA will assess this, however affirmed that as yet it has not come to this stage.

RW noted further that those schools with more space than pupils should not justly be provided with money for capital, when this money can be used for those schools who are struggling. Schools who haven't been given funding to go above their PAN, however have been given funding to cope with additional numbers.

NP proposed an amendment to Option 1 banding to include capital and non-capital banded figure, using the same philosophy as primary. NP confirmed that this would constitute £2,400 sundries multiplied by 1.29. HK also requested clarification on whether this would be proportional to the amount of capital funding schools shall receive, affirming that criteria is required for big investments. MaSh also affirmed that he would like the LA's assurance that due consideration would be given towards primary schools, with the compromising of Option 1, as a result of primary school representatives proposing Option 3. NP confirmed that this would be done.

JD posed a further vote on the agreement of Option 1 including capital and non-capital version implementation, a definition of significant capital investment to be outlined and reports to be sent to the LA on how this money is spent:

For – 12
Against – 0
Abstentions – 1

Result - Agreement

JD proposed a third vote on agreement of 25% value for 1-7 pupil increase band

For – 3
Against – 6
Abstention - 4

Result – Rejection

SP added that as allocation for funding for the next year's growth has not yet taken place, funding therefore has not been agreed to go to schools from the Schools Block. SP recommended that this be agreed before funding is taken for the following year and also recommended that impact on growth be revisited next year. Reassessment will take place and additional funding will be required if the banding issue of no funding for growth between 1-7 pupils provides a significant number of problems. Funding therefore would not currently be given with the lowest banding (1-7 pupils), however this would be revisited in November, at which point the issue of funding at the lowest level will be looked at.

NP posed further clarification that schools taking on students in September would be funded under the terms of this policy-1-7 band would remain at £0, with the prospect of revisiting this later on in the year when the true impact of this has been assessed.

Actions Agreed:

- Growth within PAN to form September Schools Forum agenda item

8 SCHOOLS BALANCES

NP noted for the record that the LA are required to declare in the event of a breach of the 1% DSG overspend, with a DSG recovery plan to be sent to the DfE if this has occurred. With reference to the spreadsheet provided to delegates on DSG balances at the end of 2018/19 the actual DSG overspend was 0.2% and therefore a deficit recovery plan is not required.

RH raised that it is a concern that a lot of those schools in deficit the year before will have increased their deficit this year, during which time the LA was working with these schools to seek to reduce this. RH requested that the LA comment on this. NP responded that a small team is commissioned with the LA, composed of an ex-specialist teacher and a finance worker to devise a robust recovery plan. 6 schools are currently being worked with at present with regard to this, with the remainder to be approved later on in this year. NP confirmed that the LA are well aware of which schools are in deficit.

9 SCHOOLS DEFICITS

- **Nick Persson to provide update and present data on schools deficits**

Update provided prior within Growth Funding Policy discussion

- **Nick Persson to review new deficit policy**

NP noted that a decision paper has been drafted regarding proposal for changes in surplus and deficit policies, and has been drafted with assistance from MaSh, PH and DW inclusively. Options are outlined within this paper regarding how best to deal with deficits and it shall be Schools Forum's remit to agree changes proposed in the paper.

NP raised that the current deficit policy is that primary schools and secondary schools are entitled to keep 8% and 5% respectively of surplus, with anything over this threshold requiring a plan in place, agreed with the LA to retain the excess. Otherwise, this would be eligible for clawback from the LA. NP posed to delegates whether they were content with the current thresholds or whether alternative options should be explored. SP raised that a fundamental flaw of the application of a clawback percentage is that

schools will likely spend this before the LA has the opportunity to claw this back, thereby encouraging unscrupulous behaviour. DW responded, however, that this will not occur if the school has come to the LA outlining how they intend to spend any surpluses. DW noted further that 1 or 2 schools within the city currently are retaining large surpluses, which is immoral. DW confirmed further that, conversely, those schools with large deficits shall also be analysed in the same fashion.

JD drew attention to the fact that this would concern both the Revenue and Capital budget and the Community budget. JD noted, however, that the revenue budget alone should be looked into, as capital funding should not be accessed for the day to day running of schools. MaSh added further that schools within the city have set aside capital budget for windows to the value of thousands of pounds, however the LA had promised such schools that this would be covered and yet this has not been resolved. JD responded that finances to cover this is currently held within the revenue budget, and has been noted already. LB raised further that business advisors have advised that 10% should be retained as a surplus, with 5% constituting too small a figure. LB noted that with a new science block to be built at her own school, resources are required and thus 2 years would be too short a time period to ring-fence.

JD proposed a vote for all in those in favour of adopting policy with Option B, applying an increase to 10% primary and special schools clawback and to 8% secondary schools clawback:

For – 11
Against – 1
Abstentions - 0

Result - Agreement

10 LA BUDGET PRESSURES

JK has experienced a delay in presenting to cabinet with significant changes to memberships in finance. The Local Authority budget pressures have not been presented in council in their outturn for general funding and within the DSG where there has been heavy overspend. It has generally been funded wisely and transport has been managed from the reserves but even they are dwindling now. A balanced budget has been set for this year and the first quarter is about to be completed which is why there is heavy monitoring at present. The concerns are very similar to last year. There is a forecasting problem of about £1.1m but the Local Authority is hopeful of this being pulled back on track. There was a comprehensive spending review last year and 2020/21 is difficult to predict at present. There is still a lot of waiting on the government to make a decision

JK clarified that the local authority are not seeking £1.1m in savings but are looking at how customers can be supported and how pupils can be

supported. Activities have been grouped into five key areas which should help manage funds in the right way. JK is happy to be contacted to discuss the Local Authority budget pressures further. JK clarified to MS that the percentage for the £1.1m was approximately 3.5%. JD thanked JK for the update.

11 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

AR is working on the Capital Programme and explained that it is a rapidly changing project. At present, contract of works are being signed off for the summer holidays which is one of the reasons why governors assurance being in place is important. Bitterne ARB, Springwell, City Farm, Fairisle and Great Oaks are all undergoing expansions. A decision on Springwell is awaiting approval. The Cantell project is also a priority. The flagship project is St Mark's which is proving to be quite challenging. There is lot of working happening behind the scenes to keep the works being delivered on time.

AR has been working closely with St George's School in supporting them with their science expansions. There are hurdles that are being overcome to this. There will be mobile accommodation provided in September if these works overrun and this is our priority. Ms queried the criteria of getting the school on the list. AR explained that he has inherited this and is happy to share for transparency. There is close work being carried out with the head of service for SEND, Tammy Marks and she will consulting in September and October.

Action Agreed:

- **AR to share appropriate documents with MaSh and the Schools Forum**

12 DSG RECOVERY PLAN

NP further updated that all the Local Authority's with a DSG overspend above 1.0% needs to submit a deficit recovery plan to DfE to describe how to bring the deficit back into balance. The DSG overspend in Southampton is a deficit of £364k which amounts to 0.2% of the LA's DSG funding of £180m.

13 HIGH NEEDS FUNDING PRESSURE 2020/21

NP stated that the agenda item should be labelled as 2018/19 the end of last year instead of 2020/21 this year to reflect what is being worked on.

The Local Authority DSG in 2018/19 out-turned with a High Needs pressure of £4M. The High Needs over spends were offset by a contribution from the Local Authority with additional funding from the DfE of £530k. There is also a 0.5% schools Block transfer to the High Needs Block equating to £0.79M. This demonstrates the significant pressure within the High Needs provision due to the significant increases in demand being experienced. There are mitigating actions ongoing, for example, expanding the number of places for High Needs children being made available in Southampton to avoid more expensive out-of-city placements.

MaSm asked for transparency from the Local Authority so everyone is aware of how the High Needs funding money is spent and this does not just apply to special schools. There was previously a useful spreadsheet that was provided at these meetings which would detail this.

SP suggested that the funding pressure could be down to interpretation and it has been inherited from the high needs block. The deficit is inherited and is not going anywhere. It is unlikely that the Local Authority will fund another contribution to cover the deficit. The scenario is that it could quite likely be the same again. HK explained that this is why plans for 2020/21 are moving forward. SP would like a detailed list of what is being spent to accept the limited factors for 2021 to make substantive discussions as early as possible. MS stated that he has a meeting with a cabinet member coming up and would be grateful if School Forum members could send over any concerns, specifically any strategic planning elements rather than anecdotal evidence. A few line statements would be sufficient to present to him. SP added that Damien Hines has made a call for evidence and how to support schools through the high needs block.

Actions Agreed:

- **A link to Damien Hines's call for evidence to be provided with the minutes**
- **A meeting to be organised with Local Authority for a detailed breakdown of the High Needs Block spend**
- **NP to provide High Needs spending spreadsheet at the next Schools Forum meeting**

14 CLOSING REMARKS AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 25th September 2019

3:30pm for 4:00pm start

Venue: Cantell School