

SCHOOLS FORUM
14 JULY 2021

<u>In attendance</u>	
<u>Chair and Vice Chair</u>	
John Draper (Chair)	Headteacher, Swaythling Primary School
Harry Kutty (Vice-Chair)	Headteacher – Cantell Secondary School
<u>Primary Schools</u>	
Peter Howard	Headteacher, Fairisle Junior School
Mike Adams	Headteacher – Bitterne Manor Primary school
Amanda Talbot-Jones	Headteacher - St Deny's Primary
<u>Secondary Schools</u>	
James Henderson	Woodlands Community College
<u>Special Schools</u>	
Maria Smith	Headteacher, Vermont School
<u>Nursery</u>	
Anna Wright	PVI for Early Years
<u>Observers</u>	
Sue Thompson	Early Years/Sure Start
Roger Peplow	Governor, St George's Catholic School (observer)
<u>SCC officers</u>	
Clodagh Freeston	Service Manager - Education Strategy, Planning & Improvement
Derek Wiles	Head of Education and Learning
Virginia Newso	Finance
Keith Petty	

Apologies

Sean Preston	Chief Financial Officer, Hamwic Trust
Councillor James Baillie	Cabinet Member for Education
Debbie McKenzie	Compass School
Colin Grant	Governor Cedar School

1. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting 24 March 2021 be agreed.

2. **FINANCIAL REPORTS REQUESTED BY THE FORUM**

The Forum considered and noted the papers received detailing financial matters raised at previous meetings. In addition officers outlined the ongoing recruitment process within the financial team.

UPDATE ON DFE/ESFA FUNDING

The Forum was informed that the ESFA have recently issued a consultation on the National Funding Formula. Responses are due by 30 September. Schools Forum with the Local Authority will be working on a reply and further discussion will be held at the Schools Forum on 15 September. It was noted that in order for the Council on the current National Funding Formula consultation officers would be contacting schools to establish their considerations.

SCHOOLS OUTTURN STATEMENT FOR 2020-21

A school outturn statement for 2020-21 was circulated detailing schools' revenue accounts. It was noted was for the maintained schools only.

From the tables provided the overall movement in balances was noted an increase of £2,743k from the previous year was shown.

The Forum noted that the papers detailed the movement in Secondary, Primary and special schools and noted the reasons for the increases.

It was noted that many refurbishment projects had been delayed to 2021-22 which resulted in some schools with an excess surplus. It was noted that these schools were preparing plans to show how they intend to use their excess surplus in accordance with the surplus policy.

It was noted that in general schools with deficits had managed to reduce their deficits and are following deficit recovery plans and that three schools have successfully returned to a balanced budget. However, it was noted that two schools had been issued with a Notice of Concern.

DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT OVERSPEND UPDATE

The Forum were informed that the cumulative DSG overspend is £8.9m. It was noted that this includes a brought forward deficit of £7.4m of which £6.4m was from the High Needs budget.

The table below shows the key variances contributing to the overspend within the DSG in 2020-21.

It was explained that the DSG variance was 6.2% (of the total SCC DSG grant of £143m) and that a recovery plan over 3 years is required. The Forum were informed that some of the recovery had been helped with the 17% increase in the High Needs allocation for 2020/21 which amounted to £4.2m, and the deficit would be further helped by the transfer of the schools block surplus of £228k agreed in March 2021 Schools Forum. It was noted that local capacity is increasing by around 150 special school places from Sept 2020 to Sept 2021 and that this would start to reduce the need for expensive out of city placements.

The Forum were informed that the variance on the Early Years budget had arisen due to the known ongoing pressures on Government funded hours and a loss of income resulting from closures relating to Covid-19.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME SUMMARY AS AT APRIL 2021.

The Forum discussed the information set out in the papers noting that many of the costs associated with capital programmes had risen because of the pandemic

The Forum discussed the potential for a mechanism to identify long term costs within schools and allocate budget to ongoing capital projects. It was understood that there was limited capacity within the Capital Assets team at present and that this reduced the ability to undertake this task.

The Members questioned the process of applying for and the allocation of funding for Capital funding and were informed it was distributed on the basis of need.

3. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Forum noted the verbal update provided on the Council's general budget position and noted that papers detailing Capital and Revenue outturns were published as part of the Cabinets agenda

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 15 September 2021 at 3:45pm for a 4:00pm start.