

Slough Schools Forum- Meeting held on Thursday, 13th October, 2016

Present: Maggie Waller, (Chair) John Constable (Vice-Chair) Gillian Coffey, Helen Huntley, Paul McAteer, Navroop Mehat, Eddie Neighbour, Jon Reekie, Jo Rockall, Nicky Willis, Jo Matthews, Carol Pearce, Debbie Richards, Sally Eaton and Phillip Gregory

Observers: Kathleen Higgins, Jacqueline Laver

Officers: Robert Hardy and Johnny Kyriacou

PART I

508. Apologies

George Grant, Angela Mellish, Richard Kirkham, Rachel Cartwright, Councillor Hussain

509. Declarations of Interest

None

510. Matters arising - non-agenda updates from last meeting 14th June 2016

An information paper on clarification of the PFI factor and SBC contribution to the affordability gap has been deferred until the December meeting.

Item 499. Any funding decisions on use of centrally retained DSG will be honoured for this financial year. Each year the council will review how it wishes to use the centrally retained budget for the following year and this table will come to the Schools Forum in December 2016.

511. Membership

The update report regarding the current position on membership following the analysis of the latest census and responses from schools and academy proprietors to proposals was noted.

Beechwood School has been converted to academy status, Kathleen Higgins attending as an observer pending the review of membership arrangements after the October census. Maggie Waller to check constitution to see how membership is updated, for example at set time throughout the year or on ongoing basis as schools convert to Academies. Maggie to feed back at the next Schools Forum meeting.

512. Update on National Fair Funding

At present the schools' national fair funding formula has been deferred to 2019-20. There is no information yet from the Department of Education (DFE) other than that the Phase 2 consultation will be in the autumn.

The DFE conducted an exercise in the summer to rebase the 2017-18 Schools Block to match the spending patterns; however, the current position has not changed except for the centrally retained items, where the DFE has instructed Local Authorities that if the Local Authority does not have any ongoing commitment from 2012-13 or current contractual commitment on certain items, this funding needs to go back into the Schools Block.

The ESG will be moved into the Schools Block budget from 2017-18, this is for statutory duties that the council must provide. A breakdown of the service and costs will be available at the December Schools Forum.

The Authority Pro forma tool (APT) from the DFE is now available to the Local Authority to model the impact. Some modelling of the impact has been presented at a Task Group in October. Other Task Group meetings are scheduled in November and January.

Coral Miller stated that the National Fair Funding Conference has been cancelled a number of times this year and has now been scheduled for 13th December 2016. Coral assumes that the final data and final APT form should be available around that date which will be slightly earlier than previous years. Coral expects the modelling of the impact using current information on the Schools Block budget to be completed for November 2016.

For further information please see the link.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-funding-arrangements-2017-to-2018>

513. Early Years Block update

Coral presented a report on the proposed new Early Years formula to be implemented from September 2017. She emphasised the LA's concern about the fact that the protection means that the LA can lose up to 10% of their funding and has made that comment in the consultation.

It was noted that the consultation response was a joint Schools Forum / LA response.

It is not known when the consultation results will be published and what changes will be made. Coral Miller also highlighted concerns about all providers being given the same base rate. It was noted that overheads for nurseries and large PVI's for example are high.

It was noted that the DFE has recognised this in the transitional period which is until September 2019 (2 years) by providing a lump sum amount for Nursery provision only.

Phillip Gregory from Baylis Nursery asked a question about the Local Authority's plans for after the 2 year period. It was noted that this is difficult to assess until the consultation has been completed and the DFE confirms what the final changes will be.

It was noted that the LA will review various models to establish the proposed formula for Slough's Early Years provision in November.

It was agreed that the Early Years Task Group would be convened once initial work had been done. It was noted that the Council does have a little more time to produce the Early Years formula and that Schools Block will take priority.

It was noted that Pupil Premium will continue, but it has seen a reduction in Slough.

For further information please see the link:

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/early-years-funding/eynff>

514. High Needs Block and SEN update: financial issues and implications including commissioning of SEN places and financial forecast for year end 2016/17

Robert Hardy presented a report setting out the financial concerns affecting the 2016/17 High Needs Block (HNB) and suggesting a range of approaches needing to be considered so that action can be taken in the short, medium and longer term. It was noted that there is significant projected overspend in 2016-17, possibly around £800k. An LA working group is looking at the pressures and possible options.

Members of Schools Forum welcomed the openness of the paper.

It was agreed that the HNB Task Group be convened to support the process and recovery plan. Jacqueline Laver to be included in the group.

Paul McAteer asked if there may be additional resources available as Slough is the only Trust to include SEND. It was suggested that a case had not yet been made but this could be an option.

Helen Huntley mentioned that many out borough placements are driven by social care needs as the education needs can be met in Slough. It was noted that a lack of foster cares in Slough is part of the problem.

Helen also referred to the need to look at policy issues such as transition. It was noted that any High Needs review needs to be within the context of review of overall policy for SEND support.

Debbie Richards referred to the pressures on special schools currently taking children with no additional funding.

The Resource Base Review was raised. Robert Hardy indicated that work is ongoing and the next stages of the review will be completed by December. Any re-designation will be done in conjunction with Headteachers. A report will come to the January meeting of the Schools Forum.

It was noted that, following the resource base capacity review, while capital investment may be available to support increased SEND capacity, there may be difficulties with revenue funding for places.

It was noted that the recent Gatekeeper item re SEND mentioned a new appointment and it was agreed that contact details would be circulated. An up to date list of who does what was requested.

It was noted that whilst the pressures on the HNB are fully understood, there is pressure nationally not to be sympathetic to requests to move money to the HNB from the Schools Block.

Johnny Kyriacou stressed the importance of being solution focussed and agreed that going to the DfE for additional financial support as the only Trust with SEND was a good idea and should be pursued.

515. Centrally retained out-turn reports 2015-16 (High Needs, Early Years and Schools Block)

Coral Miller presented an information paper on the 2015-16 out-turn position. It was noted that there has been a significant underspend in the Early Years Block.

It was noted that the High Needs Block underspent by £195k. It was noted that the HNB included £190k moved from the Schools Block and this amount had already been included in the budget build for 2016-17 budget.

The Growth Fund underspend of £187k had already been agreed to be carried forward into the 2016/17 provision at the previous Schools Forum.

The DfE has stated that the CERA budget no longer has any contractual commitment from 2013 therefore the budget should be returned to the Schools Block. The CERA budget has underspent in 2015-16 and this will be returned to the 2017-18 Schools Block budget. A clarification of the £100k referred to in CERA was requested.

It was noted that the reference to the Virtual Head should refer to 'Virtual School'.

516. Update from Task Groups: 5-16, HNB and Early Years (verbal)

517. Cambridge Education update (verbal)

The education services previously provided by Cambridge Education services have been transferred back to the Council in stages. Some services including attendance and admissions transferred from 1st October 2016, the SBC, Children's Centres are due to come back to the LA on 1st November and all the remaining services by the 1st December 2016. Some internal restructuring may need to take place within SBC to manage the services.

It was agreed that the regular Cambridge Education update item should be removed from the Schools Forum forward agenda plan.

518. Academies update (verbal)

It was noted that Beechwood school has converted to an academy from 1st October. St Joseph's, St Ethelbert's and St Anthony's are all set to convert on 1st December 2016.

519. 2016-17 Forward Agenda Plan and Key Decisions Log

The Forward Agenda Plan and Key Decisions Log were noted.

Next meeting: Tuesday 6th December 2016, 8.00am for 8.15 am at Beechwood.

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday 6 th December 2016	8am	Beechwood conference centre
Tuesday 10 th January 2017	8am	Beechwood conference centre
Tuesday 7 th March 2017	8am	Beechwood conference centre
Thursday 18 th May 2017	8am	Beechwood conference centre
Thursday 6 th July 2017	8am	Beechwood conference centre

(Note: The Meeting opened at 8.00 am and closed at Time Not Specified)