



Minutes

Name of meeting	SCHOOLS FORUM
Date and time	9.00AM – THURSDAY 19 October 2017
Venue	COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRE, WESTRIDGE, BRADING ROAD, RYDE PO33 1QS
Present	Beverley Gilbert (Chair) – Brading CE Primary David Thornton – Federation of Carisbrooke and Newport CEPs (Vice-Chair) Kay Wood – Summerfields Primary Karen Begley – Island Innovation Federation Fidelma Washington – Isle of Wight College Julie Stewart – Medina House School Jackie Boxx – Island Learning Centre Amanda Bitchenor – Chatterbox Day Nursery Eric Hemming – St Blasius CE Primary Academy and St Francis Catholic and CE Primary Academy
Observers	Peter Shreeve – ATL Mark Chiverton - UNISON
Officers	Brian Pope – Assistant Director, Education & Inclusion Brendan Hodson – Senior Accountant Anthony Thorn – Strategic Manager, Human Resources Jo Carley – HR Adviser Anwen Foy – Headteacher, Virtual School Diane Hiscock - Clerk
Apologies	John Bailey – Haylands Primary Mike Hayward – Island Innovation Federation (Gov Rep) Barry Downer - Senior Finance Business Partner

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were received.

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

BG welcomed all and introductions were made for the benefit of visiting officers and Karen Begley (KB) the new Secondary HT Representative.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

A nomination was received for Bev Gilbert (BG) to be elected as Chair for the academic year ending August 2018.

Action – BG duly elected as Chair

A nomination was received for David Thornton (DT) to be elected as Vice Chair for the academic year ending August 2018.

Action – DT duly elected as Vice-Chair

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No public questions were received.

5. SCHOOLS MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUTION

The following appointments have been made to the forum, from the date of this meeting

Karen Begley – Island Innovation Federation – Secondary Headteacher Rep

Rob Maddox – Substitute for KB

David Mumford – Substitute for KB

Mike Hayward – Island Innovation Federation – Governor Rep

There are two ongoing vacancies as follows

- 1 x Early Years PVI Rep
- 1 x Academy Rep

6. REVIEW OF TRADE UNION FUNDING IN SCHOOLS [Paper B](#)

Anthony Thorn (AT) presented a report on the use of trade union facilities time in schools. It was not possible to provide a full analysis, as not all unions had submitted returns for the period January – June 2017. Therefore, a limited overview of the range of activity was given. A further report will be presented for consideration of de-delegation proposals at the meeting of the Schools Forum to be held on 21 December 2017.

A letter had been received from ASCL regarding requirements to access funding and it is hoped that they will engage in due course.

Forum members were asked agree action to be taken to encourage the submission of future returns from union representatives. Payments are made each term.

It was confirmed that the de-delegated funding for some unions goes to the employer of the union representative, to fund time taken out to support members. For others, it goes direct to the union.

RESOLVED : That payments for trade union facilities time be withheld in respect of each trade union, until quarterly returns are received.

- 6.1 It was noted that the Free School is the only school that does not contribute to the funding of trade union facilities time. The response following enquiries was that cover is supplied internally for school representatives and meetings to support school staff are arranged outside school hours, so there would be no need to draw down from another school.

Action – BH and AT to discuss further with Judy Mason (Senior Lawyer)

MINUTES

RESOLVED :

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on [20 July 2017](#) be confirmed

7. ACTION POINTS FROM LAST MEETING

- 7.1 (Item 6.2) Feedback on response from Free School re contributing to trade union facilities time – covered in item 6.1 above.
- 7.2 (Item 9.1) Report on Elective Home Education (EHE) – covered in para 17, [Paper D](#).
- 7.3 (Item 11) An electronic Induction Pack has been compiled and has been sent to recently appointed members.

Action – Clerk to circulate to all members for information and arrange for pack to be uploaded to the Schools Forum webpage.

It was noted that it is difficult to locate the Schools Forum webpages. DH explained that a new webpage had to be set up within the school funding section and work is ongoing with the IT department to provide a clear access route to the information. The webpage can be accessed [here](#)

Action – Clerk to send link to Schools Forum webpage to all members.

8. SCHOOL BUDGETS MONITORING REPORT [Paper D](#)

BH presented the Schools Budget Monitoring report which shows a forecast overspend of £901,000. This comprises an underspend of £39,000 in the Early Years Block, an underspend of £50,000 in the Schools Block and an overspend of £991,000 in the High Needs Block.

A deficit of £336,000 was brought forward from the previous year, but a review of the balance sheet has identified £288,000 which can be set against the brought forward deficit. Overall, at this stage, the year-end deficit is expected to be £949,000.

Members agreed that the addition of a monthly variance column in the spreadsheet and the summary of budget headings have proven useful.

8.1 SCHOOLS BLOCK

The Growth Fund shows an underspend of £46,000 and no schools are expected to qualify for the remainder of the year. An update on Growth Fund and Falling Rolls will be included in the report to the Schools Forum at the meeting in December 2017.

8.2 EARLY YEARS BLOCK

The January 2017 census has enabled an uplift in two year old funding leading to an expected underspend of £44,000. However, this may be subject to change depending on the next January census.

8.3 HIGH NEEDS BLOCK

An underspend of £52,000 is expected due to low occupancy in resourced provision at Sandown Bay and Carisbrooke College.

There are more Post-16 pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) attending HTP, leading to an expected overspend in this area of £54,000. The final position will depend on the agreed top-up funding for IW College.

Top up funding for special schools has a current overspend of £208,000 as a result of over-occupancy, with 77 pupils now on roll at Medina House and 172 at St Georges. It was noted that St Georges had exceeded their Agreed Place Numbers (APN) of 155 by more than 10%. The actual APN for St Georges was confirmed to be higher than 155, which meant that the increase was within 10%.

Top-up funding for pupils in mainstream with EHCPs has an overspend of £334,000 due to an ongoing rise of EHCPs being issued and this may further increase.

Central Special Educational Needs (SEN) services show an underspend of £62,000 due to savings made through changes to the staffing structure.

Early Years SEN has a forecast overspend of £47,000. This is not expected to rise, but could do so if the uptake of additional early education entitlement increases.

An overspend of £11,000 for the Workshop Initiative for Support in Education (WISE) relates to low take up of places, as schools' budgets are squeezed. The situation is similar at the Island Learning Centre.

Placements in independent and non-maintained special schools are increasing and the budget is expected to overspend by a further £317,000 for 2017/18.

Personal budgets for SEN children have increased to an expected overspend of £130,000 for two reasons

1 – Where the LA suggests a personal budget as an alternative to the provision of a mainland place.

2 – Increased demand by parents.

This budget line is for the education contribution towards personal budgets and not for the social care element.

It was noted that the IOW is not alone with regard to demands on the High Needs budget. Every application for an EHCP must be processed and every one that meets the threshold must attract payment.

Options to address pressures are shown in [Paper E](#). However, we cannot predict future movement and The High Needs budget is the only one that is able to be varied.

It was agreed that planning for the future is important. The National Funding Formula (NFF) will apply until 2020, but there is no indication of the outlook for school funding thereafter.

Action – A forecast to 2020 for the overall schools budget to be included in the next Budget Monitoring Report.

- 8.4 Para 17 of the report covered the request by Forum members for an update on Elective Home Education (EHE). At the end of July 2016 there were 316 home educated children. It was confirmed that this is constantly fluctuating as children reach school-leaving age and as more children become home-educated throughout the year. Overall EHE figures are increasing year on year.

72% of families received a visit and 90% of families engage with the LA. It was noted that this is high in comparison to other LAs. Members reflected on safeguarding and other implications. This is a regular item on the agenda at meeting of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) meetings and the IW Council Scrutiny Committee.

School governors should receive information on how many children have left the school to be home educated and consider the reasons that parents give for making this choice.

Action – BP to arrange for a 3-year overview to be sent to the clerk for circulation to Forum members.

RESOLVED :

THAT the September position on the 2017/18 Schools Budget be noted.

9. HIGH NEEDS FUNDING Paper E

BH presented a report following the allocation of an additional £27,000 for high needs funding for the IOW. He also noted that a minimum funding level has been included so that LAs will receive a minimum increase of 0.5% per head of population for 2018/19 and a further 0.5% for 2019/20. This would result in an anticipated overall increase of 0.18% in 2018/19 and 0.5% in 2019/20.

An adjustment is made where LAs export more pupils to provision in other LAs than they import from other LAs. This would result in an expected reduction of £174,000 as the IOW exports a higher number of pupils. A final report will be available in May 2018.

Increases in High Needs demand have led to an expected overspend of £991,000 in 2017/18 although this could increase according to ongoing demand. A 3-year forecast in Appendix A shows a possible £1.56m budget gap in 2018/19 and a £1.75m gap in 2019/20.

As 85% of the funding must be used for place top-up and placements, it is necessary to identify where savings can be made. Proposals for possible savings are outlined in this paper and listed in Appendix B. These are initial proposals that need further work and any additional ideas would be welcomed. Final proposals will go out to consultation with schools and a decision on the Schools Budget will be made at the Schools Forum meeting held in December.

Members discussed possible ideas for making savings, including further training for teachers that would help with managing high levels of SEN. This is a whole system issue and work is ongoing to review High Needs provision overall.

9.1 Proposals

9.1.1 A reduction in secondary places for ASD provision from 24 to 16, as data shows a surplus in places and a current underspend. This would save £80,000 on place funding and £35,000 on top-up funding.

9.1.2 A reduction in places at the Island Learning Centre from 67 to 60 would cover ongoing demand and save £70,000. It was noted that although Full Time Equivalent (FTE) places are not always filled, many attend part-time. The attendance issues and complexity of needs means that top-up funding does not always meet the overall number and needs of pupils.

It is hoped that the creation of provision for 8 primary Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) resourced provision places will alleviate the need for long-term placements on the mainland in the longer term.

9.1.3 The SEN Inclusion Fund for Early Years to be provided from the Early Years Block instead of the High Needs Block. This would slightly reduce the funding to providers, although it is hoped that an increase in uptake of the 30 hours

entitlement would help to maintain the overall hourly rate. This would make a saving of £50,000.

It was confirmed that this and any wider change to Early Years funding would have to go through consultation. A request was made that the EY Central Budget should be reviewed and that use of this funding is beneficial to EY providers.

- 9.1.4 The SEN Cap Policy allows for schools with high numbers of EHCPs to receive funding if they use more than 3% of their budget over the initial £6,000 within their responsibility, to support high needs SEN. It is proposed to increase this to 5%, with an estimated saving of £240,000.

Members were concerned at the effect this may have on school budgets. Some schools have a disproportionate amount of SEN pupils as they have a good record of support and may prove to be victims of their own success. It was confirmed that schools would not receive protection for this under the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG). Schools will have to decide whether to provide additional support or apply for an EHCP. An SEN audit is to be undertaken after the half term break.

- 9.1.5 A reduction in additional support in EHCPs, from £10.26 to £10 per hour for 40 weeks, would save £79,000 and a similar reduction in post-16 provision would save approximately £32,000.

- 9.1.6 A reduction in funding for SEN outreach support by resourced provisions and special schools by possibly moving to a sold service or 'on-demand' provision would save £70,000 in 2018/19 and lead to further savings in 2019/20. Concerns were raised as SEN needs are becoming more complex and there is increased pressure on the provision. Outreach work has improved practice in schools, but reductions in funding will lead to possible redundancies and the loss of expertise. Schools may not have the budget to buy into an SLA.

- 9.1.7 The Central SEN Budget will be reviewed with a view to ceasing or charging for non-statutory support, with a saving of 29% against the 2017/18 budget. Further concerns were raised, as schools need a dedicated team for intervention work. As with other LAs, it is hoped that ongoing discussions will facilitate better deals through 'block-booking' rather than 'spot purchasing'.

- 9.1.8 A reduction of £4,000 (5%) in the EHE budget, which allows for additional visits.

- 9.1.9 A re-design of the WISE service would allow for a saving of £15,000.

Overall, the above proposals would bring a saving of £974,000, which means a further £577,000 is still to be found.

It was agreed that a strategic approach is necessary and more information will be needed on trends and the impact to schools. It is important to get it right for SEN and for all pupils.

Members wished to note concern, but are aware of the difficult position in relation to budgets. It was agreed to hold a meeting of a sub-group to further discuss potential savings.

CJ highlighted further ongoing work that is needed to review the High Needs Block. A decision is required for the December meeting (or January at latest). Input from headteacher representatives would be welcome.

Action – BG, JS, KW and KB to meet with BP, CJ and BH early in November to look at alternatives to support all children on the IOW.

RESOLVED:

THAT the Schools Forum note the update on high needs funding, including the identified savings.

9.2 Transfer of Funding Between Blocks

In order to reduce the further £577,000 savings to be found from the High Needs Block, the LA propose a transfer of 0.5% funding from the Schools Block. This would bring an estimated £349,000 depending on the outcome of the October census. This will mean a reduction in funding, but schools are protected by the MFG.

Agreement is required from Schools Forum and the DfE must be notified by the end of November.

It was agreed to hold an additional meeting to discuss the proposal to transfer 0.5% from the Schools Block and follow up from the sub-group meeting re the High Needs Block.

RESOLVED:

THAT an additional meeting of the Schools Forum be held on 30 November 2017.

Anwen Foy (AF) joined the meeting and DT Left the meeting at 10.25am

10. PUPIL PREMIUM FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN [Paper C](#)

AF presented a report on provision for looked after children (LAC). LAs are required to track and monitor LAC progress and outcomes as if they were a single school (i.e. the Virtual School). AF is the acting Virtual Headteacher whilst JB is on secondment as headteacher at the Island Learning Centre.

This is a strategic role and the remit is expanding. The Virtual Headteacher is responsible for the use of Pupil Premium Plus (the Pupil Premium funding for LAC), to improve outcomes and close the attainment gap.

There has been some success with raising attendance and this needs to continue. More work is also required on fixed-term exclusions and on progress and attainment, particularly at Key Stage 4.

AF informed members on how the Pupil Premium Plus (£1,900 per pupil) is allocated on the IOW. £1,600 is paid in termly amounts of £600, £500 and £500 to schools. £300 is top-sliced to provide a small range of services and interventions, such as the Educational Psychologist Service. This arrangement is continuing for 2017/18.

In comparison, Portsmouth retains the Pupil Premium Plus and schools apply to a panel for funding. Southampton retains £1,000 and Hampshire retains £500.

Currently, there is also an LAC element of £304 per pupil in the DSG, but this will be removed from 2018/19 and the Pupil Premium Plus will rise to £2300 per child. The Virtual School will continue to pay £1,600 directly to schools and the £700 remaining will be held to fund central services for the benefit and education of the LAC. The arrangement for allocating Pupil Premium Plus should be reviewed annually.

An overview of key activities, benefits and how impact will be measured were included in the report.

RESOLVED:

THAT the report on Pupil Premium for Looked After Children be noted.

AF left the meeting at 10.45am

11. SCHOOLS FUNDING 2018/19 [Paper F](#)

BH presented a paper on schools funding in relation to the National Funding Formula (NFF) and asked members for a view on the general principles for allocating funding locally.

A proposed formula was discussed at the July 2017 meeting of the Schools Forum and suggested changes include

- a minimum per-pupil funding level of £3,300 for primary and £4,600 for secondary in 2018/19
- an increase in the basic per-pupil (AWPU) funding for all phases
- a minimum increase of 0.5% per pupil in 2018/19 compared to the 2017/18 baseline.

For 2018/19 funding will be passed to the LA for distribution under a local funding formula following consultation with the Schools Forum.

Appendix A shows a comparison between the 2017/18 local funding formula and the NFF. Overall the trend is for a small decrease in basic per-pupil funding and an increase in additional needs funding.

As noted in the Pupil Premium Plus report, LAC funding has been removed but Pupil Premium Plus has been increased.

BH explained that the local formula will not be able to replicate the NFF because

- funding to LAs will be based on pupil characteristics from the October 2016 census, uplifted for 2017 pupil numbers. The local formula will be based on 2017 pupil characteristics.
- the NFF includes a minimum per pupil increase of 0.5% but the LA cannot meet this to ensure all schools receive an increase.
- The NFF will allocate premises factors (i.e. rates and split sites) and mobility according to 2017/18 spending, but LAs will allocate on anticipated 2018/19 costs.

The Schools Block will be ring-fenced except for the 0.5% allowance to transfer across blocks as proposed in item 9.2.

It was noted that the shift to more funding for additional needs requires a move towards the NFF as soon as possible.

11.1 IMPACT OF THE NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA

The impact of the notional allocations would be that

- 19 primary schools receive the minimum 0.5% increase
- 14 primary schools have an increase between 0.5% and 3% (maximum)
- 7 primary and 7 secondary schools receive the maximum 3% increase. Of these, 2 primary schools are expected to receive the full NFF funding by 2019/20
- The Island Free School is still growing and not included in these figures.

The LA will make the final decision, following consultation with the Schools Forum and with local schools. This will be either to follow the NFF as closely as possible or to remain with the current local formula and uplift values using the additional funding. The NFF provides a definite shift towards funding for deprivation factors, low prior attainment and additional needs, whereas the local formula provides initial stability.

RESOLVED:

THAT the NFF to be followed as closely as possible, following consultation with schools.

The LA are able to set the MFG between -1.5% and 0% to protect schools and members discussed how schools would be affected in either case as outlined in paras 21 – 23 of [Paper F](#).

It was agreed that a model showing both options should be brought to the next meeting and schools should be given the opportunity to comment on them.

RESOLVED:

THAT a model showing both options for the level of MFG at -1.5% and 0% be presented at the next meeting.

11.2 LA STATUTORY DUTIES (FORMALLY EDUCATION SERVICES GRANT)

[Paper F](#) Appendix B shows a breakdown of costings for LA Statutory Duties, which includes an increase in premature retirement and redundancy costs. Members were asked to consider a proposed rate of £58 per pupil to be retained for these services, depending on confirmation of the 2018/19 pupil numbers.

RESOLVED:

THAT the update on LA Statutory Duties and the proposal for retained funding be noted.

11.3 SPLIT SITES POLICY

An updated Split Sites Policy was proposed for review with regard to DfE requirements for clear criteria and ongoing discussions around educational provision in the Sandown Bay area.

RESOLVED:

THAT the updated Split Sites Policy be adopted.

12. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

An additional meeting of the Schools Forum has been arranged to take place **Thursday 30 November 2017 – 1.30pm** at Westridge CLC.

13. DATES OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Thursday 21 December 2017

Tuesday 16 January 2018

Thursday 22 March 2018

Thursday 10 May 2018

Thursday 19 July 2018

All at 9.00am

Westridge Community Learning Centre, Brading Road, Ryde PO33 1QS

CHAIR