

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 March 2024

<u>In attendance</u>	
<u>Chair and Vice Chair</u>	
John Draper	Headteacher – Swaythling Primary
Harry Kutty	Headteacher – Cantell
<u>Primary Schools</u>	
Amanda Talbot-Jones	Headteacher – St Denys Primary
Mike Adams	Headteacher – Bitterne Manor Primary School
Peter Howard	Headteacher – Fairisle Junior
PK Macbride	Primary Governor – Bannister
<u>Secondary Schools</u>	
Jim Henderson	Headteacher Woodlands Community College
Roger Peplow	Governor St Georges
<u>Academy</u>	
<u>Special Schools</u>	
Debbie McKenzie	Headteacher – Compass School
<u>Nursery</u>	
<u>Non-Schools</u>	
Rob Sanders	Diocese of Winchester
<u>Observers</u>	
<u>SCC officers</u>	
Darrin Hunter	Early Years Manager
Derek Wiles	Head of Education and Learning– Education
Steve Wade	Finance Business Partner

Apologies

Clodagh Freeston	Service Manager - Education Strategy, Planning and Improvement
Councillor A Winning	
Matthew McLoughlin-Parker	Headteacher – Vermont School
Sean Preston	Hamwic Trust
Tammy Marks	Service Manager - Special Educational Needs and Disability

22. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 24th January 2024 be noted and approved as a correct record.

23. **STANDING ITEM: LA UPDATE ON DFE/ESFA FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Forum considered the briefing paper of the Finance Business Partner, giving an update on DFE/ESFA funding announcements.

The Forum noted that the Department for Education had approved the APT submissions and that schools had received notification of their budget shares as agreed by the Forum at the previous meeting.

The Teachers' Pay Award Grant (TPAG) would cover the whole financial year and, as schools had already received 7 months' worth from September 2023, it was confirmed that schools would therefore receive 12/7s. In addition, academies would receive an additional allocation because they followed a different funding cycle.

24. **GROWTH FUNDING**

Since the previous meeting of the Forum it had come to light that there were more options available for allocating funding to alternative blocks rather than just for growth funding. The Council would advise Heads of the options and seek their views before the matter was brought back to the Forum at a later meeting for further consideration.

The Forum noted the experience of some schools within the City of an increase in the number of new pupils from overseas after funding had been allocated and that many of these pupils required focused additional support due to language barriers. It was advised that the Council would conduct an investigation into the scale of the problem caused by such turbulence and consider reviewing the Growth Policy and report to the Forum at a later meeting.

25. **HIGH NEEDS BLOCK**

As no officer was available to provide a report to the Forum at the time that this item on the agenda was discussed it was requested that a written update be provided.

26. **RELEASE OF FUNDS FROM THE CENTRAL SCHOOL SERVICES BLOCK**

As the Council was still in the process of consultation about the proposed restructure no request was made to the Forum to release the first tranche of funds to the Central Schools Services Block and the Forum noted that the matter would be considered again at the next meeting.

27. **FINANCING SCHOOLS**

The Forum noted that schools had been requested to refrain from holding large surpluses of funds which could otherwise be utilised to improve the experience of pupils, unless such surpluses were held in readiness for planned larger projects.

The Forum noted that schools were strongly discouraged from having deficits unless there were unusual circumstances and a recovery plan had been agreed with the Council.

The Council was under severe financial pressure and reminders would be sent to each school as they were moving into year end.

28. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS AND CLOSING REMARKS AND DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 10th July 2024 at 4pm.