

Schools' Forum



City of
Stoke-on-Trent

Date: Tuesday 19th June 2018
Time: 8:30 to 11:00am
Venue: Watermill Special School
Chair:
Minutes: Tanya Greppellini

Attendees:

Jonathon May (**Chair for Schools' Forum**)
 Emma Gater (**Vice Chair for School's Forum**)
 Rob Faulkner (*Representing Lisa Hughes*) (**Special Schools Representatives**)
 Lisa Sarikaya (**Nursery Representatives**)
 Sarah Thursfield (**Primary Maintained Representatives**)
 Jonathan Baddeley, Ian Beardmore (**Primary Academy Representatives**)
 Nick Lowry, Mark Rayner, Gareth Jones (**Secondary Academy Representatives**)
 Mark Kent (**16-19 Partnership Representative**)
 Harold Gurden (**Union Representatives**)
 Jon Lovatt (**Primary Governor**)
 Keith Howkins (**Education & Skills Funding Agency**)
 Stephanie Moran (**Primary Academy Representative**)
 Rob Johnstone, Jen Lomas, Andrew Brindley (**Local Authority Representatives**)
 Councillor Janine Bridges – Cabinet Member for Education and Economy (**Cabinet Member**)
 Tanya Greppellini (**LA officer – minutes**)

Apologies:

Louise Rees (**Local Authority Representative**)
 Lisa Hughes (**Special Schools Representative**)
 Rosina Lee (**Primary Maintained Representative**)

MINUTES			
	Item	Lead	When
1	<p>Welcome and Apologies Welcome and apologies noted.</p> <p>Apologies received from Louise Rees, Lisa Hughes and Rosina Lee. Rob Faulkner attended on behalf of Lisa Hughes.</p> <p>David Alston (Primary Academy Representative) resigned from Schools' Forum.</p> <p>Lisa Sarikaya will no longer be able to be the Nursery representative</p>		

	<p>after August. Juliet Levingstone from Bentilee Nursery School to be asked to attend as representative.</p> <p>SASCAL and SHAPE to consider reps for the following and report back to the next Forum meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Maintained Central Governor, • Primary Academy South • Secondary Academy North. 	<p>SASCAL</p> <p>SHAPE</p>	
2	<p>Election of Chair and Vice Chair</p> <p>Jonathan May elected to continue as Chair of the Schools' Forum. Emma Gater elected to continue as Vice Chair.</p>		
3	<p>Minutes from last meeting</p> <p>Item 2, point 1 – Schools' Forum Constitution - A Brindley/R Johnstone to progress and present at next meeting.</p> <p>Item 2, point 2 – Post 16 Pathway action plan – working group ongoing. Settings to look at additional funding for job coaches and internships. M Kent to identify Sixth Form representative. Previous minutes to be amended to reflect 'post 16 pathway'.</p> <p>Item 3, final point – student number projections – N Lowry shared concerns re increasing population for secondary. J Lomas said the numbers of EHC plans have increased however we have not seen the same rise as 2015/16. New graduated responses documents in place and waiting to see if there is any impact. J Lomas to share documentation re SEN transport and projection of EHC plans. N Lowry requested paper on assumptions, figures, and changes of population growth, J Lomas to provide at next meeting.</p> <p>N Lowry made reference to and shared narrative from an email send to Louise Rees re school budget assurance/clarification on transfer between DSG blocks in future years. Response from L Rees did not give any assurance. R Johnstone to clarify position with L Rees and report back at the next Schools' Forum meeting.</p> <p>Cllr. Bridges said Partners have not been contributing to financially support EHC plans. The Health and Wellbeing Board is being restructured to hold partners to account, ensuring contributions are made to EHC's. J Lomas added work has taken place to ensure EHC plans are fit for purpose now and in the future. Cllr. Bridges gave assurance that work is ongoing to ensure partners take responsibility and that she will continue to work on this to reduce pressures on the school budget.</p> <p>Item 4 – Application to transfer 0.5% from schools block vote - K Howkins advised that the Education & Skills Funding Agency are reviewing the schools block and the LA can write to them to raise any issues/challenges. Schools' Forum still have the option to vote on the transfer of schools block funding to the high needs block. Cllr. Bridges and R Johnstone to speak to L Rees.</p> <p>Cllr. Bridges added budget setting is taking place July 2018 and the</p>	<p>AB/RJ</p> <p>MK</p> <p>TGrep</p> <p>JL</p> <p>RJ</p> <p>JB/RJ</p>	

	<p>Director is minded to request at least 0.5% from the schools block next year.</p> <p>Forum said they agreed 1 year and thought this was a one off and are surprised that a transfer may be required again.</p> <p>R Johnstone said Forum would need to consider where cuts can be made on spend to make savings and offered the opportunity to discuss pressures/spend with colleagues.</p> <p>J Lomas added there is some under funding from Health due to residential placements which is being reviewed, however this won't affect the schools budget. The areas being reviewed in Learning Services are central services, matrix / funding on per pupil basis and Emotional SEN contribution and as part of the High Level Cabinet Plans.</p> <p>I Beardmore shared that L Rees stated at the previous meeting that Schools' Forum would not be approached again for the 0.5%; this causes trust issues between the Forum and LA. Feedback from schools is that support for schools is not available so this is leading to an increasing number of EHC plans. J Lomas that the budget for EHC plans is over committed, therefore consultation is taking place re high needs to look if reform is fit for purpose. R Johnstone added that West Midland colleagues are forecasting the same issues as Stoke in the future, with huge DSG overspends likely across the region.</p> <p>N Lowry asked for the previous minutes to be amended to include agreement of one year only and to reflect L Rees assurance re not transferring 0.5% again.</p> <p>Chair advised Forum to send a letter to the City Director to raise concerns. Cllr. Bridges to share views at meeting with the City Director.</p> <p>Item 5 – Early Years – update provided at Headteachers Briefing.</p> <p>Item 7 – SEN Matrix– event took place at the Bridge Centre for Headteachers and Business Managers to review draft Matrix.</p> <p>Item 8 – Moderation charges – R Johnstone assured I Beardmore that moderation charges will be paid and invoices should be sent directly to R Johnstone.</p> <p>Cllr. Bridges shared the following due to leaving the meeting at 9.30am – PFI has repository of money called Maintenance Reserve Allowance (MRA). The LA can now check if schools are accessing this money and what it is being spent on. Underlying issues is that schools are not asking for the work to be done under PFI, any jobs going forward please contact relevant premises officers / Mike Sproston. Victorian schools will be re-roofed using MRA. Cllr. Bridges to request if finance document can be shared with Schools' Forum. Item to be discussed at next meeting.</p>	<p>TGrep</p> <p>Schools Forum / JB</p> <p>RJ/IB</p> <p>JB</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p>Scheme for Financing Schools</p> <p>A Brindley provided an overview of the report. Report seeks consideration and approval from Schools' Forum for the Scheme for</p>		

	<p>Financing Schools.</p> <p>This is the finance agreement between LA and maintained schools.</p> <p>The document went out for consultation alongside budget packs in February 2018 and a further consultation on 19 April 2018. As of today the LA has only received one reply which approved the changes within the scheme.</p> <p>Main changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement regulations at the LA; • Change of values; • Changes to EU thresholds; • Management and school name changes <p>Additional item to be included re loans, this will be send to schools for approval.</p> <p>A vote was held for maintained school representatives only. All 6 reps accepted the Scheme for Financing Schools 2018/19.</p>	AB	
5	<p>School Budget – Budget update and outturn 2017-18</p> <p>A Brindley provided and overview of the report. Reports seeks Schools’ Forum to note the changes to the Schools’ Budget 2018-19 and the final outturn position for the Schools’ Budget in 2017-18. Please see supporting report for detailed information.</p> <p>There was approx. £1m underspend in Early Years funding. Chair requested Early Years Working Group review the budgets and A Brindley to attend and report issues back to Schools’ Forum. Cllr. Bridges shared 1500 out of 1800 eligible 2 year olds take up funding. Work is ongoing in the communities to promote the take up for the 2 and 3 year old offer.</p> <p>School Readiness – Business case to be developed to identify alternative proposals. Cllr. Bridges to be invited to Early years Forum working group.</p> <p>Top up funding maintained providers – allocation in High Needs DSG for specials school places. Top ups have to be paid via top up line. Budgets to be realigned when schools convert to academies.</p> <p>Schools’ Forum noted the report.</p>	AB	
6	<p>Funding formula working groups discussion</p> <p>Early Years Group to be reconvened.</p> <p><u>High Needs</u></p>		

	<p>Higher Needs Group and Board in place for provision mapping. Task and Finish Group currently reviewing ASD pathways and Matrix will be reviewed September/October 2018.</p> <p>High Needs Agency Group looking at commissioning agency with CAMHS and working with social care.</p> <p>Group in place to look at SEMH provision. All groups are well attended.</p> <p>High Needs Review taking place in September, event being held in Stoke Town Hall with attendance from Senior Officers and Cllr. Bridges.</p> <p>Two free school applications are likely to be sought via LA in the City (Cognition and SENH).</p> <p>The proposed expansion of Portland Special School forms part of the High Needs DSG plan as do both the development of the ASD Satellite Provision at Weston Coyney, the development of the twenty place Specialist Early Years Nursery at Westfield Nursery site and the development of EAL provision at Thistley Hough.</p> <p>National Funding Formula didn't consider pupil values, however this will be considered as part of future formula decisions. Schools' Forum agreed working group to be reconvened early September to consider the future funding formula for schools.</p> <p>H Gurden requested an update on the expansion of Portland and the provision changes at REACH. J Lomas to follow up on questions H Gurden previously asked via email.</p> <p>Application submitted by REACH for academy order with the Alpha Trust. Alpha Trust currently has a building available for use and financial plan with a sustainable budget is in place with Alpha. As a result this will release the current REACH building, allowing Portland to expand onto two sites. Discussions ongoing with finance and L Rees re numbers and the current REACH deficit.</p> <p>J Lomas confirmed that a full Risk Assessment had taken place relating to the proposed new site for REACH with Alpha and both the LA and DfE have agreed that the proposed buildings are appropriate for use.</p>	<p>JL</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Primary school places discussion</p> <p>R Johnstone provided an update on the need for a fundamental review of place planning for Primary and Secondary provision in the City.</p> <p>Discussions related to short term and long term place planning are currently taking place.</p> <p>No patterns identified thus far however 'hot spots' are Shelton, Joiners</p>	

	<p>Square, Hanley and North of City.</p> <p>RJ to arrange a meeting in the Autumn Term via SSIG, including reps from Property, Housing and Planning services, Stoke School Improvement Group and Schools' Forum to develop Strategy. E Gater, N Lowry, S Moran and S Thursfield agreed to attend from Schools' Forum. Group to report back in Spring Term 2019.</p> <p>R Faulkner asked how long is projected before the population stabilises? R Johnstone responded unable to predict, however not looking to be immediate.</p>	RJ	
8	<p>DSG bid evaluation (schools and high needs) discussion</p> <p>R Johnstone provided an update on the DSG bid evaluation. 2-3 years ago money went out to schools through Schools Block via various bids. Discussion regarding the evaluation took place at Stoke School Improvement Group. It was agreed to carry out the final review in the Autumn term via self-review. An evaluation report will be presented firstly to SSIG and then the report will be presented to the Schools' Forum in January 2019.</p> <p>J Lomas added High Needs final review was also being completed in the Autumn term of 2018. Discussion required re the use of the word 'sustainable' in original offer. J Lomas to reconvene High Needs Working Group in Autumn to focus on review of appropriate spend and sustainability of projects.</p> <p>Following this Schools' Forum to agree actions re unspent money.</p> <p>RJ to seek legal advice regarding unspent funding.</p>	RJ JL RJ	
9	<p>AOB</p> <p>Chair asked K Howkins for comments. K Howkins said meeting was conducted well and recognised some tensions re block transfers. KH had difficulty accessing Schools' Forum documents online. A Brindley to follow up and report back at next meeting.</p>	AB	
	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Date: Friday 21st September 2018 Time: 08.30 – 11.00am Venue: Watermill Special School Chair: Jonathan May</p>		