

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of Education Board

Date: Tuesday, 18th January, 2022

Place: MS Teams

Present: Jane Ladner (Chair) – Southend High School for Girls (Governor)
Robin Bevan (Vice-Chair) - Southend High School for Boys (Headteacher)
Stuart Reynolds - Southchurch High School (Headteacher)
Darren Woollard - Blenheim Primary School (Headteacher)
Anthony McGarel - South Essex College
Jackie Mullan - St Christophers (SEN Trust)
Vicky Wright - Professional Association for Childcare & Early Years
Mark Jordan – Victory Park Academy (PRU)
Stephen Tollworthy - Shoeburyness High School (Governor)
Shireeb Harub – Trade Unions
Bev Williams – CEO MAT Group representative (non-voting)

In Attendance: M Marks, B Martin, C Braun, P Grout, E Hammans and R Harris

Start/End Time: 8.15 am - 9.10 am

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from D Allen, J Jones, L Clarke, L Yelland, L Thorne, J Johnson, J Leadbetter and Councillor Burton.

2 Dedicated Schools Grant Budget 2022/23

The Board considered a report from the Senior Finance Business Partner presenting the 2022/23 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget, including the DSG Individual School budgets and the Early Years funding rates for 2022/23.

The Board discussed the report and commented on the overall funding position of all schools (including Early Years and the PVI sectors) and the significant pressures faced by schools and the impact on learners and staff. It was emphasised that pupils are experiencing the lowest levels of funding since the 1970's and the rate at which pupil needs are increasing are far greater than the rate at which funding is increasing.

The Board also expressed concerns regarding the impact on schools budgets and the workforce concerning the settlement for support staff and teacher pay, given that there was no settlement in April 2021/22 or for April 2022/23 and there was a freeze on teachers pay. In real terms an 8% increase in teachers pay levels would be needed.

The Board extended its thanks and appreciation to the senior finance business partner and the Resources Sub Group for their due diligence on preparing the 2022/23 DSG budget.

Resolved:

1. That the Early Years funding rates for 2022/23, as set out in paragraphs 8.3 to 8.5 of the submitted report, be agreed.

2. That the approach set out in paragraphs 9.2 and 9.3 of the report be agreed, for consideration to uplifted banded top up rates for Special Schools and Alternative Provision from April 2022, in view of the recent 16th December 2021 additionally DfE announced high need DSG supplementary grant funding to support the health and social care national insurance levy and wider cost pressures.

2.3 That the remainder of the 2022/23 Dedicated Schools Grant Budget report, including the DSG individual school budget allocations for 2022/23, (as agreed in accordance with the approved funding principles of both the 15th December 2021 and 18th November 2021 DSG Education Board finance reports), be noted.

3 Early Years DSG Reserve

The Board considered a report from the Head of Early Years setting out proposals on the use of the funding resources available through the Early Years DSG reserve.

Resolved:

1. That the use of the one-off funding resource of £334k over a period of two years, 2022/23 and 2023/24, be agreed and the funds be used to support Early Years delivery in the following areas:

- Maintaining the development officers outreach activities to reach parents/carers of eligible children who are not accessing their entitlement;
- To ensure marketing and communication are fully developed using all platforms developed with the Communication Team;
- To provide a dedicated fund so that vulnerable 2-year-olds can access an early years place;
 - To pilot expanding the inclusion fund to include 2-year-olds with the aim of supporting early intervention;
 - To support Early Years resource within the Operational, Performance and Intelligence team (OPI); and
 - To deliver specific Level three training on supporting children with SEND. In line with Southend 2050 outcomes, involve childcare providers active participation in design and roll out of training programmes. 2.3 And update the Education Board over the course of the 2 years, as to the effectiveness of these funds.

4 Matters of the moment

The Director of Education provided a verbal update on the following matters:

The Director of Education and Early Years provided a verbal update on the following matters:

- Current position regarding the pandemic and schools, including the staffing pressures, particularly in the smaller schools;
- The Central Block consultation had concluded; A report will be provided to the Education Board in March 2022 concerning the totality of school improvement funding;
- The Council is undertaking recruitment to the post of Director of Children Social Work, Early Help and Youth Support;
- Ofsted inspections – one school had deferred their inspection due to staffing pressures; three early years settings have recently been inspected and were found inadequate for a number of reasons – currently seeking legal advice on withholding 2 year old funding which would be a last resort; working with early years providers to ensure none fall into this category;
- There will be a parliamentary by-election on 3rd February for Southend West constituency;
- Extended thanks and appreciation to the Legra Multi Academy Trust for supporting the education of a number of Afghanistan refugees.

Chair: _____