

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of Education Board

Date: Tuesday, 18th October, 2022

Place: Tickfield Centre - Evolution Room

Present: J Ladner (Chair) – Southend HS for Girls
Dr R Bevan (Vice-Chair) – Southend HS for Boys
J Mullan – St Christophers (SEN Trust Southend)
D Wollard – Blenheim Primary School (Learning in Harmony Trust)
L Thorne – YMCA
A McGarel – South Essex College
L Yelland – Early Years Alliance
V Wright – Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years
J Jones – Barons Court
S Reynolds – Southchurch High School
L Clark – Hamstel Infant School and Nursery
J Johnson – Edwards Hall Primary School
S Ayub – Trade Union
B Williams – Southend CEO

In Attendance: M Marks, G Bloom, C Braun, P Grout, E Hammans and R Harris
Also in attendance: N Kelly (SEC), S Greaves (Head of Virtual School),

Start/End Time: 8.15 am - 10.10 am

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from D Taylor, M Jordan and Cllr Burton.

2 Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 21 June 2022

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21st June 2022 be confirmed as a correct record, subject to the addition of V Wright in the list of apologies.

3 Matters arising (not covered elsewhere on the Agenda)

There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

4 Education Board Membership and Vacancies

The Board received a verbal update from the Principal Democratic Services Officer covering the current membership and vacancies. The Board was informed that a review of the membership would take and a report would be presented to the next meeting of the Board.

Resolved:

That the current membership and vacancies be noted and that a report be presented to the Board in December 2022.

5 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2023/24 Indicative Budget Allocations (including 2023/24 Individual School Block (ISB) Allocations)

The Board considered a report of the Senior Finance Business Partner providing an update on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget planning for 2023/24, following the Department for Education (DfE) July 2022 school funding announcements.

The Board discussed the report and commented on the significant financial and other pressures facing all schools which are additional costs without any funding increases. These included inadequate funding given the potential pay rises for teachers, support staff, etc, the current high rate of inflation and the statutory provision of 32 and a half hours education for 4-year-olds from September 2023. The Board emphasised that these concerns need to be escalated with local MPs and the DfE.

Resolved:

1. That, with regard to individual school's budget (ISB) planning for 2023/24, to continue the trajectory of adopting the principles of the National Funding Formulae (NFF) and therefore:

(a) Any mainstream school that attracts their core NFF pupil led funding factors (i.e. with no need for Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) funding floor protections to be applied), to receive the full NFF applied rates as set out in the report.

(b) All remaining mainstream schools whose per 2023/24 per pupil led funding rates are either above the revised NFF mandatory 2023/24 minimum funding amounts per pupil or core NFF funding rate per pupil, as referenced in resolution 1(a) above, will receive the same maximum NFF built in allowance of 0.5% uplift per pupil.

2. That it be raised at national level that a maximum 2023/24 0.5% uplift per pupil for those schools not attracting their core underlying NFF allocations is a very low uplift from 2022/23, with particular consideration to the significant inflationary pressures for all schools.

3. That the remaining considerations set out in the report at this stage of planning the DSG for 2023/24, be noted.

4. That the concerns of the Board concerning additional costs to schools without any funding increases be escalated with the DfE, Secretary of State and local MPs, setting out that the decisions around funding will be detrimental to the life chances/opportunities of pupils/young people.

6 SEND Strategy

The SEND strategy will be presented to the Council's Cabinet on 8th November 2022 for formal approval.

On consideration of the report the Board suggested a number of additions / changes to the strategy:

- To add the Education Board to Section 10 (Measuring impact and progress) of the strategy for scrutiny and challenge;
- To provide some clarity to Section 7 (Agreeing the priorities) in terms of the age group the priorities apply to (i.e. 0-5 age range);
- Clarity on the number of places commissioned;
- To look at the scope to add early years as a specific section in the Strategy;

Resolved:

1. That the content and format, subject to the inclusion of the above additions, of the Southend SEND Strategy 2022-25, be endorsed.

2. That the strategy be produced in an accessible document, which can be shared in a variety of formats in order to engage a range of audiences.

7 Update from Inclusion Task and Finish Group

The Board considered a joint report of the Head of Access and Inclusion and Head of the Virtual School presenting an update on the work of the Southend Education Inclusion Task and Finish Group and the emerging themes for the recommended spend of the annual £1m High Needs budget from 2022/23. The report also presented an overview of the findings of the commissioned Rapid Review of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP).

The Board discussed the report and commented on the high number of Southend pupils moving from mainstream to alternative provision due to permanent exclusion or reaching the point of permanent exclusion (APEX).

Resolved:

That the Alternative Provision Base Pilot, as set out in the submitted report, be agreed.

8 Appointment of Director of Education, Inclusion and Early Years

The Executive Director (Children and Public Health) provided an update on the recruitment progress for the appointment of the Director of Education, Inclusion and Early Years. The Executive Director also informed the Board that the Council's new Chief Executive, Rob Polkinghorne, would be starting in the post from next week.

9 Report back from Sub Groups

The Board received and noted the Resources Sub-Group minutes held on 4th October 2022.

The Board noted that there continued to be several vacancies on the School Performance Sub-Group to be filled.

10 Any other business

Departure of A. McGarel

The Board was informed that this was the last meeting for Anthony McGarel. The Board placed on record its thanks and appreciation for his dedication and significant contributions to the Board and the young people of the City and wished him all the best for the future.

11 Date, time and venue of future meetings

13th December 2022 at 8.30am (date brought forward from 20th December)

17th January 2023 at 8.30am

21st March 2023 at 8.30am

Chair: _____