

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of Education Board

Date: Tuesday, 12th December, 2023

Place: Darwin Room - Tickfield

Present: J Ladner (Chair)
N Kelly, S Clements, B Stickley, E Matthews, Dr R Bevan (Vice-Chair), L Thorne, J Johnson, D Woollard and J Mullan

In Attendance: Councillor Boyd
M Marks, R Harris, P Grout

Start/End Time: 8.45 am - 10.30 am

18 Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

The Board discussed the appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board, noting the potential governance changes (see Minute 21 below).

Resolved:

1. That Jane Ladner continues in the role as the Chair of the Education Board until June 2024.
2. That Robin Bevan continues in the role as Vice-Chair of the Education Board until June 2024.

19 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from J Jones, S Ayub and J Hartley.

20 Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 9 October 2023

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 9 October 2023, be confirmed as a correct record.

21 Review of Education Board and proposal to establish School Forum and Education Strategy Group

The Board considered a report of the Director of Education, Early Years and Inclusion seeking a decision, in principle, the establishment of Southend School Forum, to continue the work of the Education Board, and the establishment of the Education Strategy Group.

The Board discussed the proposal to establish a Schools Forum and highlighted concerns regarding the limited business of the Schools Forum and potential attendance issues, given that Schools Forums have less and less flexibility around the schools funding formula and would have limited business.

Resolved:

1. That, in principle, the establishment of a Southend Schools Forum and Education Strategy Group be supported and that a further report detailing the governance and partnership arrangements be presented to the Education Board at its meeting in January 2024 for final approval/adoption. Subject to the decision at the Board January 2023 meeting the Education Board will continue to the end of the academic year 2023/24 and then transfer to the School Forum, following elections held in the summer 2024.

2. That an information workshop for all heads/principals/managers of education settings be arranged in the Spring term to ensure that providers understand the roles and responsibilities of sector representatives on the school forum/Education Board so that nominations and potential representatives are fully informed of their roles and responsibilities.

3. That it be noted that the SENDAP and Early Years Forum, subject to resolution 1 above, will be established in the spring term to ensure full contribution to the new arrangements in September 2024.

22 Dedicated Schools Grant 2024/25 Budget Planning and 2023/24 Forecast Outturn

The Board considered a report from the Senior Finance Business Partner seeking a decision in principle concerning the setting of the 2024/25 Individual School Block funding allocations per pupil, in view of the very restrictive revisions of any such changes to the formulae as now administered through the National Funding Formulae (NFF). The report also sought a decision on the final indicative 2024/25 DSG budget allocations for de-delegated maintained school block allocations and central block funded services to schools and updated on the Dedicated School Grant forecast spend balances for 2023/24.

On consideration of the report the Board requested that the historic commitments and legacy issues be revisited at the Autumn term meeting.

Resolved:

1. That, with regard to individual school's budget (ISB) planning for 2024/25, to continue on the trajectory of adopting the principles of the National Funding Formulae (NFF), as set out in paragraphs 5.1 to 5.6 of the submitted report, and therefore:

(i) 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 paragraph 5.4.2. of the report.

(ii) All remaining mainstream schools whose per 2024/25 per pupil led funding rates are either above the revised NFF mandatory 2024/25 minimum funding amounts per pupil or core NFF funding rate per pupil, as set out in paragraph

5.4.3. of the report, to receive the same maximum NFF built in allowance of a 0.5% uplift per pupil.

2. That the de-delegation of funding be centrally retained from the Schools block for Staff cover costs (Public Duties).

3. That the amounts and services that will continue to be funded centrally from the Central Block, where the local authority holds a statutory responsibility for all schools, as set out in paragraph 10.3 of the report, be approved.

4. That, on the basis of the decisions undertaken through both the December 2023 DSG paper and the following January 2024 DSG report (which is for noting only, with the exception of the Early Years 2024/25 funding rates), will be recommended to Council for final approval in February 2024.

5. That it be noted that, in line with the principle decisions of both the March 2019 and the December 2020 Education Board DSG papers, the growth fund to support schools will continue to be held centrally within the School's block and distributed to provide the extra required planned places within the authority, as set out in paragraph 6.1 of the report.

23 Sub Group Minutes

The Board noted the minutes of the Resources Sub Group held on 27th November 2023 and the minutes of the Vulnerable Learners Sub Group held on 30th November 2023.

The Board also received a verbal update on the work and activity of the Performance Sub Group and noted that a summary report would be presented to a future meeting of the Board.

24 Date and time of next meeting

Tuesday 23rd January 2024 at 8.45am – Tickfield Centre/MS Teams to be confirmed.

Chair: _____