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SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of Education Board

Date: Tuesday, 18th December, 2018

Place: Darwin Room - Tickfield

- Present:** Mr M Sweeting (Chair)
Dr R Bevan (Vice-Chair), Mrs N Banister, Mrs L Yelland,
Mrs Julia Jones, Ms M Palles-Clark, Mr J Glazier, Dr P Hayman,
Mr J Johnson, Ms J Mullan, Mr L Pryor, Mr S Reynolds and
Ms V Wright
- In Attendance:** Councillor H Boyd
Ms C Hickey, P Grout, E Hammans, R Harris and B Martin, G Bloom
and C Braun.
- Start/End Time:** 8.15 - 9.50 am

1 Apologies, Substitutions and Introductions

Apologies for absence were received from Mr D. Woollard, Ms L. Clark, Mr N. Houchen, Mr T. Barrett, Mr A. McGarel, Mr M. Jordan, Ms K. Willis, Ms S Baldwin and Mr S Leftley.

2 Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 30th October 2018

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 30th October 2018, subject to a minor amendment to Item 4, bullet point 4 to remove the words 'as they currently do', were agreed.

Matters arising: The Task and Finish Group to review operational and good practice would be set-up in the New Year.

3 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Budget Planning 2019/20 and Forecast Outturn 2018/19 Update

The Board considered a report from the Senior Finance Officer presenting the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), covering the following areas:

- Proposed funding methodology for distribution of the 2019/20 Individual School Block (ISB) allocations;
- 2019/20 draft budget; and
- Updated forecast outturn for 2018/19.

In addition to the report the Board was also informed of the recent announcement from the Department of Education (DoE) of an additional £409,000 for 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years. It was suggested that the additional resource should immediately be allocated to the DSG reserves.

The Board discussed the report in detail and commended the officers and all those involved in preparing the budget reports which provide a clear picture of the funding and resources.

The Board reiterated its concerns regarding the DfE cap on funding gains and that this was a real terms reduction in schools funding. It must be clear that schools was being disadvantaged by Government which was not conducive to their wellbeing. It also did not help that cannot plan resources beyond 2020/21 due to the uncertainty around the Governments spending review.

The Chair stressed the good position but it was still a real terms reduction in funding which has been debated a number of times by the Board and has taken a number of difficult decisions recognising the work to get into the current position.

In respect to the recent announcement from the DoE the Board agreed that it made sense to allocate the additional resource to the DSG reserves. However, this resource needs to be looked at as a two-year package, allowing for the fact that the per pupil income is not likely to rise. The allocation of this resource also needs sensible and evidence based planning – the funds need to be focused on getting maximum benefit. The Resources Sub Group would consider and make recommendations to the Board in March 2019.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the 2019/20 individual School Block allocations are distributed in accordance with the principles of the National Funding Formulae in full (as reference in paragraph 3.7, and Appendix 1 of the report).
2. That it be noted that the final DSG individual school budgets for mainstream schools will be set in January 2019, based on the decisions and principles made in this report and updated according to the Numbers on Roll as at the October 2018 census.
3. That for Maintained Schools only the de-delegation of funding to be centrally retained from the schools block for the following services (as reference in paragraph 3.17 of the report), be agreed:
 - Governor subscriptions;
 - Staff Costs (Trade union duties)
4. That it be agreed that the growth fund to support schools be held centrally within the Schools block and distributed to provide the extra required places within the authority (as reference in 3.20 of the report) and it be noted, as per the last DSG report, the revised funding methodology for award of growth fund will be presented back to the Education Board in March 2019.
5. That the indicative 2019/20 early years budget, as referenced in 3.23 of the report, be agreed.
6. That the commitments held with the central school blocks remain the same, as reference in 3.37 of the report, be agreed.

The Board received a verbal update on the position regarding the provision of secondary school places across the Borough for 2018/19 and 2019/20. The Board was also informed that a letter had been sent to all secondary Headteachers advising that an expression of interest has been submitted to the DoE for a new free school. The need for a free school is not likely required until 2024 onwards and a dialogue with the DoE and Headteachers would take place.

5 SEND Inspection

The Board considered a tabled paper setting out a brief overview and summary of the findings from the recent SEN Inspection Inspectors' report.

The full report was available from the Ofsted website at the following link: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/80559>.

The Board discussed the report and asked a number of questions which the officers responded to. The Board noted that work had started on addressing those areas identified for improvement, ahead of March 2019, when the joint Written Statement of Action (WSOA) needs to be submitted.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

6 Schools Update

The Board received a verbal update on a number of schools matters, covering recent Ofsted inspections which were in the public domain.

The Board was also informed that the formal handover of Cecil Jones to the new Trust would take place on 1st March 2019. New senior leaders and Headteacher will be in place from January 2019.

The Board expressed concerns regarding the apparent lack of urgency and the slowness of the process for the new Trust and governance, etc being put in place at Cecil Jones. The Board sought details of evidence to show if pupils have benefited from three different forms of oversight/governance and felt that two generations of pupils have been failed due to the slow pace of change.

Officers advised that the Regional Schools Commissioner has been written to on a number of occasions and in the New Year a collective package of support for the three vulnerable schools will be put in place.

The Board also referred to the damaged reputation/perception of the school and the impact this has on falling roll numbers at the school.

Resolved:

That the update on matters relating to schools be noted.

7 Violence and Vulnerability Progress Update

The Board received a report presenting a six month progress report on how the Council and partners are organising and resourcing local services to tackle serious violence and exploitation in the Borough.

The Board asked a number of questions which were responded to by officers in relation to homelessness and the education and awareness campaigns in schools.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

8 Southend 2050

The Board received a verbal update covering the Southend 2050 Ambition, Themes and Outcomes and Five Year Road Map to 2023 document, which had been approved at Full Council on 13th December 2018, with particular reference to the Ready for School; Ready for Work initiative.

Resolved:

That the update be noted.

9 Feedback from Sub Group Chairs

The Board received the minutes of the Sub Groups relating to Resources, Vulnerable Learners and School Performance. The Board noted that a Skills Sub Group had been established and the minutes of this meeting will be included in future feedback.

The Board discussed the minutes in general and asked for more detail to be included in the minutes of the School Performance Sub Group, subject to the restrictions concerning confidentiality.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the various Sub Groups, be noted.

10 Any Other Business

School Files: Joint LSCB Letter

The Board was thanked for their response to the joint LSCB letter relating to the transfer of school files. The purpose of the letter was to ensure that all school files relating to pupils were transferred and to check filing systems to ensure there were no residual files left.

The Board noted that it was essential that the process around the transfer of files were robustly adhered to. There were several schools to finalise their information.

Resolved:

That the information be noted.

11 Date and time of future meetings

22nd January 2019 at 08.15am – Tickfield Centre

26th March 2019 at 08.15am – Tickfield Centre

Chairman: _____

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