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SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of Education Board

Date: Tuesday, 21st June, 2022

Place: Johnson oom - Tickfield

Present: J Ladner (Chair) – Southend HS for Girls
Dr R Bevan (Vice-Chair) - Southend HS for Boys
Mr L Thorne - YMCA
Mr J Johnson - Edwards Hall Primary School High School
Mr S Reynolds - Southchurch High School
Mr S Tollworthy - Shoeburyness High School
Mr D Woollard - Blenheim Primary School
Ms J Mullan - St Christophers (SEN Trust Southend)
Ms L Yelland - Essex Pre-School Learning Alliance

In Attendance: Councillor Burton
B Martin, P Grout and R Harris

Start/End Time: 8.15 am - 9.55 am

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from A McGarel, D Taylor, D Allen, J Jones, L Clark, B Williams and M Jordan.

2 Minutes of the meeting held on 18th January 2022

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18th January 2022 be confirmed as a correct record, subject to the correction to Shireen Ayub's name in the list of those present.

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 place over the summer period and a report would be presented to the next meeting of the Board.

Resolved:

That the current membership and vacancies be noted and that the Director of Education and the Principal Democratic Services Officer review the membership and report back to the Board in October 2022.

5 Dedicated Schools Grant 2021-2022 Final Outturn

The Board considered a report of the Senior Finance Business Partner providing an update on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) final outturn for the 2021/22 schools budget, high needs, early years and centrally retained.

The Board discussed the report and commented on areas of concern which included the cost of living rises, pressure on special schools to take children from outside the city, the capacity and demand for high needs provision, recruitment issues and inadequate funding given the potential pay rises for teachers, support staff, etc and the current high rate of inflation.

Resolved:

1. That the final Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2021/22 outturn, be noted.
2. That the subsequent DSG reserve balances shown for each individual funding block to be carried forward into 2022/23, be approved.

6 Access to Suitable Education

The Board considered a report of the Head of Access and Inclusion providing an update on the increased pressures and need for expanded provision of suitable education and oversight for children and young people of compulsory age electively home educated or unable to access education at school due to health needs or otherwise.

The Board discussed the report and commented that the true levels of need, financial implications and staffing at a quantitative level will need to be reviewed by the Resources Sub Group and oversight of the provision / access to suitable education undertaken by the Vulnerable learners Sub Group.

Resolved:

1. That the increased number of children electively home educated, be noted and that additional DSG High Need funding of £174,000 to increase staffing capacity to provide oversight of the quality of suitable education from September 2022, be approved.
2. That the increased volume of referrals for children unable to access education at school, be noted and that additional DSG High Need funding of £168,000 to increase staffing capacity to provide additional tutors and educational provision, oversight and support with schools from September 2022, be approved.

7 Inclusion - Implications from the Green Paper and Directors Briefing

The Board considered a report of the Director of Education and Early Years setting out proposals for a bid for funds to support better inclusion in the city.

The Board discussed the report and commented that it was important to identify what the individual needs of the child are and the wider areas of need and that in

real terms there has been significant reduction in resources resulting in fewer support staff.

Resolved:

1. That the proposals set out in the report regarding early implementation of the ambitions set out in the Green Paper, in particular, to support the intention to establish capacity in the city to enable schools to better meet the needs of all learners within a mainstream setting if at all possible, be approved.
2. That in principle the allocation of DSG High Needs funding, as set out in the High Needs Budget Allocation report 2022-23 (Agenda Item 11 below), namely the ringfencing of up to £1 million to provide additional capacity, services and support for schools and academies, at no cost to schools, to enable them to better meet the needs of all learners alongside their peers, be approved.
3. That a small task and finish group be established made up of members of the Education Board and Senior Officers to oversee and commission support, reporting back through the Resources Sub Group on a meeting by meeting basis.
4. That the task and finish group be required to propose a series of impact measures that will track the effectiveness of any new provision over time.

8 DSG High Needs Budget Allocation Report 2022-2023

The Board considered a report of the Senior Finance Business Partner presenting the High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Block detailed budget allocations for 2022/23.

Resolved:

1. That the revised special school flexible place fund allocation scheme be continued from September 2022.
2. That the in city high need Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) top up funding rates awarded to special schools, enhanced mainstream units and mainstream schools receive a 5.0% uplift applied to the current banded rates from September 2022.
3. That the compensation place funding scheme for the Enhanced Mainstream units be continued from September 2022, where that unit was not full at the point of the October 2021 school census.
4. That the Pupil Referral unit top up rates be uplifted by 5.0% from September 2022.
5. That the detailed High Need budget allocations for 2022/23, be adopted and approved.

9 Matters of the Moment

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

- The importance of the SEND Green and White Papers and its implications for schools, etc (i.e.
- Recognised the pressures on schools – i.e. Essex has 150 maintained schools;
- Council has appointed a new Leader – Cllr George;
- Number of Inspections taken place and the outcomes are in the public domain (Victory Park, Lancaster, Kingsdown, St Nicholas, Chase, Leigh North Street, West Leigh and Southchurch);
- Expectation that there will be a full inspection of children's services towards the end of the year;
- New director in post – Children's Social Work, Early Help and Youth Support.

10 Report back from Sub Groups

The Board received and noted the following Sub Group minutes:

- (a) Resources Sub Group held on 7th June 2022;
- (b) Vulnerable Learners Sub Group held on 28th April 2022; and
- (c) School Performance Sub Group held on 9th March 2022.

It was noted that there was a vacancy on both the VLSG and SPSG which would be filled by Lee Thorne.

11 Any other business

No other business was conducted at this meeting.

12 Date and time of future meetings

18th October 2022 at 8.15am
20th December 2022 at 8.15am
17th January 2023 at 8.15am
21st March 2023 at 8.15am