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SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of Education Board

Date: Tuesday, 13th December, 2022

Place: Johnson Room - Tickfield

- Present:** J Ladner (Chair) – Southend HS for Girls
Dr R Bevan (Vice-Chair) - Southend HS for Boys
Mr J Johnson - Edwards Hall Primary School
Mr S Reynolds - Southchurch High School
Ms L Clark - Hamstel Infant School and Nursery
Ms J Mullan - St Christophers (SEN Trust Southend)
Ms V Wright – Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years
- In Attendance:** M Marks, C Braun, P Grout, E Hammans, R Harris, S Greaves and M Ammon.
- Start/End Time:** 8.40 am - 10.30 am

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from S. Ayub, B Williams, D Taylor, L Thorne, D Allen, J Jones, S Tollworthy, D Woollard, M Jordan and Councillor L Burton.

2 Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, 18 October 2022

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 18 October 2022, be confirmed as a correct record.

3 Matters arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)

Item 5: DSG 2023/24 Indicative Budget Allocations (including 2023/24 Individual School Block Allocations)

The Board noted that the letter setting out the concerns of the Board regarding additional costs to schools without any funding increases was sent to the DfE, Secretary of State and the local MPs. There has been no response to date.

4 Education Board Membership and Vacancies

The Board considered a report of the Principal Democratic Services Officer presenting the findings of a review of the membership and composition of the Education Board (formerly referred to as The Schools Forum).

The Board noted the main changes to the membership and composition related to the 'schools' members (maintained, academy primary and secondary) which are set out in Appendix 2 to the report, namely:

- Maintained Primary Schools – 3 places (previously 4)
- Academy Secondary – 6 places (no change)
- Academy Primary – 5 places (previously 4).

Resolved:

1. That the current membership and vacancies set out at Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be noted.
2. That the proposed revised membership and composition set out at Appendix 2 to the report, be agreed and that the Principal Democratic Services Officer make the necessary arrangements to advertise/promote any vacancies arising from the new composition.

5 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2023/24 Budget Planning and 2022/23 Forecast Outturn

The Board considered a report of the Senior Finance Business Partner presenting the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget planning for 2023/24 and the forecast outturn for 2022/23.

Resolved:

1. That the continuation of the exceptional circumstance funding request through to the DfE, as set out in paragraph 4.4 of the report. be supported.
2. That the de-delegation of funding be centrally retained from the schools block for staff cover costs (public duties), as set out in paragraph 4.4 of the submitted report.
3. That the Early Years funding rates for 2023/24 be planned to be set as set out under the principles at paragraph 7.6 of the submitted report.
4. That a 5% uplift be applied to all Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) banded top up rates and the Pupil Referral Unit top up rates from the 1st April 2023, but it be noted that this may be increased further once the full modelling and annual planning for 2023/24 High Needs budget is undertaken at the June 2023 Education Board meeting, as set out in paragraph 8.5 and 8.6 of the submitted report.
5. 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 9.3 of the submitted report, be approved.
6. That the DSG High Need recommended minimum level of reserves balances be re-stated, as set out in paragraph 11.2 of the submitted report.
7. That on the basis of the decisions undertaken through both this and the previous October 2022 Education Board reports this December 2022 DSG report and the following January 2023 DSG report, be recommended to Council for final approval in February 2023.

6 Review of Inclusion across Southend-on-Sea Schools, Settings, and Services

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 Advisory Group and emerging themes for the recommended spend of the annual £1 million High Needs budget from 2022/23.

The Board discussed the report and commented on the role of early years in respect to early identification and the difficulties in getting support for early years children, particularly around SEMH needs.

The Board noted that a proportion of the £1 million funding could be allocated to early years inclusion but the initial focus (as agreed by the Education Board) was to initially focus on schools and disseminate across early years in the future.

The Board noted that further work would be carried out to develop the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), governance and monitoring arrangements and that a financial plan would be devised to map out actual spend and delivery timeline.

Resolved:

1. That the proposed allocation of spend of the annual £1m High Needs budget from 2022/23, and that all schools be required to commit/sign up to the inclusion plan/charter as a condition for the allocation of funding, be approved.

2. That the financial plan, key performance indicators and monitoring arrangements for delivery be developed further with the specific focus on pupil access to education covering pupil attendance, avoiding suspension and access to full time education. The Vulnerable Learners Sub-Group to be responsible for monitoring delivery. The Board requested that VLSG meet earlier (February 2023) than the next planned Board meeting meeting in March 2023 to focus purely on the progress of procuring the actions and agreeing the performance indicators.

3. As part of this work, co-produce an inclusion plan/charter with Southend settings for all provisions to commit to an agreed suite of inclusion expectations. The emphasis must be on collaboration between all settings and services to attend and engage in any area wide training offers which in turn influences the implementation and development of inclusive policies and practice.

7 Report back from Sub-Groups

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

The Board also noted that meetings of the School Performance Sub-Group and Vulnerable Learners Sub-Group had taken place and the minutes of these meetings would be circulated to the Board for information.

The Board discussed the need to align the Sub-Group meetings with the dates of the Education Board so they meet approximately 2-3 weeks before the date of the Board.

8 Any other business

(a) SEND Strategy

The Executive Director (Children and Public Health) informed the Board that the SEND Strategy was currently going through the Council's democratic processes and had been referred up to Council for consideration. The Board noted that the Strategy could be referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration on 12th January 2023.

(b) Appointment of Director for Education, Inclusion and Early Years

The Executive Director (Children and Public Health) informed the Board that the Council had appointed to the above-mentioned post and L. Hunt would start on 20th February 2023.

9 Date, time and venue of future meetings

17th January 2023 at 8.45am – Tickfield Centre

21st March 2023 at 8.45am – Tickfield Centre

20th June 2023 at 8.45am – Tickfield Centre

Chair: _____