

Minutes of a meeting of the Medway Schools' Forum
Held on 13 September 2017
4pm – 6pm
Training Room Cedar Children's Academy,
Cedar Road, Strood, Rochester

Members present:

Chair		Peter Martin (PVM)
Primary (Academy) (Vice-Chair)	Principal	Karen White (KW)
Secondary Academy	Principal	Kim Gunn (KG)
Teacher Associations		Julie Harris (JH)
Primary	Headteacher	Steve Geary (SG)
Roman Catholic Diocese		Kathy Sexton (KS)
Governor		Barbara Fincham (BF)
Primary Headteacher		Karen Norman (KN)

In Attendance: Anne Domeney (Assistant Director) (PM), Maria Beaney (Finance Business Partner – Education Finance) (MB), Azhar Mobin (AZ); Sarah Hall (SH); Nicola Smith (HR Representative) (NS); Helen McCulloch (Note Taker)

1. **Apologies** received from Clive Mailing; Karen Joy, Ian Sutherland, Councillor Potter and Martin Daniels.
2. **Minutes of meeting held on the 10 July 2017 and matters arising.**

The record of the meeting held on 10 July was not ready for distribution and would be carried forward to the next meeting.

3. Trade Union

NS gave an overview of the trade union support budget and explained why the service must break even, outlined some of the remaining inconsistencies and which facility agreements still needed to be clarified.

A meeting between Medway HR and the Trade Unions was scheduled for 12 September but unfortunately due to a power cut at Gun Wharf this meeting was postponed.

A discussion took place about the lack of buy-in from schools and the reasons behind this reduced buy-in. NS advised that there would be meeting arranged for teaching reps and a CCC meeting to discuss a new facilities agreement.

PM asked if all governors, Primary and secondary heads could be sent the new facilities agreement. JH advised that she was happy for it to go to both secondary and primary heads for discussion.

PM queried the financial statements and if the charges for joint unions have been taken into account? He also queried the proposed charge to academies of £1.25 compared to the charge of £1.20 to maintained schools. MB explained that the cost for maintained schools is based on the same unit cost for the 17-18 and 18-19 academic years but averaged into the 18-19 financial year. NS will be writing to the Trade Unions.

All members noted the proposed trade union charges.

4. KS2 School Improvement Update

AM gave an overview of the report circulated with the agenda and an update on school improvement.

In 2013, the Schools' Forum allocated £200,000 for school leadership, £30,000 for Recruitment and Retention and £32,000 for action research.

Key Stage 2 2016-17

25 schools have engaged with the Securing Outcomes Universal (SOU) and/or Targeted (SOT) Programmes.

- 7 of these schools opted to join the SOU programme, 1 of which was a Special school.
- The remaining 18 schools were specifically invited by the LA based on their 2016 results which were below national on combined or were Ofsted rated as a double RI school. 20 of those schools have seen an uplift on the combined measure in 2017.
- 16 schools (2 of whom self-elected to join the course) engaged with the SOT programme. All but 3 achieved uplift in the combined measure in 2017.

Key Stage 1 2016-17

21 schools have engaged with Securing Outcomes Universal (SOU) and/or Targeted (SOT) Programmes.

- 10 of these schools opted to join the SOU programme.
- The remaining 11 schools were specifically invited by the LA based on 2016 results which were below national in more than reading, writing and maths or were Ofsted rated as a double RI school.
- 14 of those schools secured an uplift in the combined outcome for reading, writing and maths at KS1 in 2017.
- 7 schools (1 of whom self-elected to join the course) engaged with the SOT programme. All but 2 achieved an uplift in the combined outcome for reading, writing and maths at KS1 in 2017

Key stage 4 and 5 results are OK but more improvement is required.

AM explained that he is working on an education strategy to continue to improve standards in Primary schools across Medway.

KS advised that primary heads had worked hard to try and improve standards and 5 out of 7 schools have been rated by Ofsted as good or outstanding.

KW advised there is already lots of good practice in Medway and wanted to know how the new strategy would be designed and pulled together. AM agreed with KW that there needed to be a leading strategy and that everyone should be working together.

PM asked when the school improvement bids to the EFSA needed to be in by. AM advised that bids needed to be in by the end of October and December but funds would not be available until the next school year.

KW believes there is a lack of parental understanding of maths and asked if there would be support for parental engagement. AM believes that parental engagement is pivotal and this would be in the strategy.

BF advised that children don't grasp basics and that AM needs to work with schools to meet the pedagogy of Medway children. AM advised that all schools had to have a high expectation – some schools are already aspirational but not all and he feels every school should be.

AM advised that heads will be involved in the new strategy and led by them but also including pupils, teachers and parents as well.

The Beanstalk booklet had not been included in the papers but it was asked if it could be sent out electronically.

ACTION: MB advised that she would send out Report 4 and Beanstalk.

5. 2017-2018 DSG Budget Allocation Update

MB gave an overview of the 2017-2018 dedicated schools grant allocation and explained how the more concerning loss of funding relates to early years, 3 year old funding. The loss of funding due to acadmisation is offset by a saving on funding paid to maintained schools.

KW asked why there are fewer pupils taking up the 3 year old offer and what encouragement is there to increase the take up? She asked for a report for the next meeting.

ACTION: Early years report on pupil reductions for the next meeting.

The Schools Forum noted the contents and reduction of funding.

6. DSG Reserves Update

MB gave an overview of the dedicated schools grant and how the £2.7m Schools Forum reserves were spent.

The schools forum allocated £2m to help create additional high needs places in Medway as £7m was being spent on out of area placements. Top up funding banding in special schools is unfair and Medway will begin consultation with special schools in November to make it fairer. It is anticipated the new banding structure will go live in September 2018.

KG queried the plan for the key stage 3 and 4 provision for the pupils who attend Abbey Court as mainstream schools won't be able to cope with them, when they need to move on from primary.

KG asked if the LA had thought of opening another free school for special needs pupils.

ACTION: The Schools Forum look forward to receiving the high needs report at a future meeting.

KG explained how the secondary schools were part funding the year 11 will Adams fair access programme in 2018-19 as the Schools Forum could only contribute £25,000 this year. She also explained how this was benefiting her students and members requested a report on the programme.

ACTION: The Schools Forum has requested an update on the progress of the Will Adams year 11 fair access programme.

MB outlined how the underspend on the 2016-17 schools block had arisen asked members to vote if the funding should be held back by the Schools Forum for targeted education projects or added to the 2018-19 funding pot?

Members discussed that there should be a clear steer on how the funding can be spent to benefit the education sector and what benefits they would receive for the funding.

All members voted to retain the funding for targeted education projects.

7. 2017-2018 Round 1 Monitoring SB Centrally Retained Services

MB gave an overview of the round 1 monitoring position on the centrally retained budgets for 2017. She explained how the round 1 monitoring forecast anticipates an underspend of £55,000 relating to the non-payment of Halling new class lump sum. The new class will now be opened in September 2018.

The Schools Forum noted the forecast underspend.

8. School and Academy Funding Formula 2018-2019

MB gave an overview of the National Funding Formula (NFF) and the proposed funding consultation with schools.

The full timetable has not yet been released by the ESFA and so MB has built the proposed timetable based on last year's timetable.

All members voted to approve the proposed timetable.

MB asked members to reconfirm in principal, the centrally retained statutory budgets for 2018-19 as outlined below.

- A) Co-ordinated Statutory Pupil Admission - £365,685
- B) School Forum Administration - £5,000

All members voted to approve in principal Co-ordinated Statutory Pupil Admission budget of £365,685 and a School Forum Administration budget of £5,000 for 2018-19.

MB explained how funding for de-delegated services is allocated via the funding formula for maintained mainstream schools with the Schools' Forum approval and the 2017-18 de-delegate services relate only to 2017.

The LA proposes to consult with schools on the proposed 2018-19 de-delegated services and charges as follows:

- A) Central Services - £66.00 per pupil
- B) Trade Union Support - £1.20
- C) Supporting Ethnic Minority Pupils - £4.50 per pupil
- D) Free Schools Meals Support - £0.55 per pupil

All members voted to approve in principal the proposed de-delegated services but more in depth data needs to be provided on supporting ethnic minority pupils.

MB explained how a report will be presented to the Schools' Forum in October requesting the PAN increases required for 2018-19m but as part of the funding consultation Medway propose to use the same PAN increases as last year.

All members voted to approve in principal to support the Council's request to consult with schools/academies using the same PAN increases 2017-18.

MB explained how the LA has to consult with its schools and academies before it can introduce changes to its local funding formula and that for 2018-19 Medway propose to consult with schools and academies on three module funding formula's:

- A) The Local Funding Formula – same as last year.
- B) NFF – using the unit costs from the stage 2 consultations.
- C) A mixture of the LFF and NFF.

The maximum Sparsity funding a school can be awarded is £100,000. In September 2014, the Schools' Forum approved the use of the tapering method up to a maximum of £100,000. This approach was ratified in the September 2016 for 2017-18 and the Schools' Forum were asked to decide what approach and value they wanted to attach to the Sparsity funding for 2018-19?

A maximum lump sum of £175,000 can be allocated to each school/academy as part of the formula and Medway propose to use an initial allocation of £112,000, however the lump sum changes under each of the three scenarios depending on affordability. The lump sum is also subject to change, if the final funding formula is unaffordable after the October 2017 school census is published. The Schools Forum was asked if they wanted this process to continue?

All members voted to approve in principal to consultation with schools and academies on the three funding formulas proposed, to keep the Sparsity funding approach and value the same and to set an initial lump sum allocation of £112,000 – subject to change under each scenario.

ACTION: MB will begin consultation with schools and academies.

9. The Forward Plan

It was agreed the following dates for the future meetings

Date	Time	Venue
4 October 2017	4pm – 6pm	Strood Academy
10 January 2018	4pm – 6pm	Cedar Children's Centre
4 July 2018	4pm – 6pm	Strood Academy
11 September 2018	4pm – 6pm	Cedar Children's Centre

10. AOB

SG asked for an update on maternity as it ended on 31 August?