## Minutes of a meeting of the Medway Schools’ Forum

**Held on 10 January 2018**

**4.00pm to 6.00pm**

**Strood Academy, Strood, Rochester, Kent, ME1 2UR**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Members present:** |  |  |
| Chair |  | Peter Martin (PVM) |
| Primary (Academy) (Vice-Chair) | Principal | Karen White (KW) |
| Secondary LA Maintained | Governor | Clive Mailing (CM) |
| Teacher Associations |  | Julie Harris (JH) |
| Primary | Headteacher | Steve Geary (SG) |
| Roman Catholic Diocese |  | Kathy Sexton (KS) |
| Primary Headteacher |  | Karen Norman (KN) |
| Special Maintained | Headteacher | Karen Joy (KJ) |

**In Attendance:**  Maria Beaney (Finance Business Partner – Education Finance) (MB), Martin Daniels (Management Accountant) Helen McCulloch (Note Taker)

1. **Apologies received from** Ian Sutherland; Councillor Potter; Clive Mailing; Karen White
2. **Minutes of last meetings.**
3. **High Needs Strategy**

Wendy Vincent gave an overview of her role.

As an authority we need to decide how to divide the money up. It then goes back in November to government education department.

Strategy in place which will cover up to 2020 but will potentially be reviewed. WV would like the schools more involved when it needs to be rewritten.

Medway has much less SEN children in mainstream compared to our neighbours.

Adapting buildings to keep children in mainstream schools.

Staff training also needed so staff are confident in teaching SEN children.

SEN code of practise default says that SEN children should be attending mainstream schools.

What is being done about it

Good provision for primary children with hearing impaired but not many for secondary. With the planned provision it is hoped to keep secondary children within the area rather than send them out of area.

Second provision for young children with mental health issues should be closer to home. These young people have been placed in residential schools which can cost up to £112k

Introduced a top up funding for preschool children. Which has meant more SEN children have been able to attend nursery. This has made mainstream nurseries more including.

Post 16 provision – in the past it has been handed over to specialist colleges which potentially costs up to £110.

There is the hope that there will be a much better provision for children in order to place them in the correct place.

The final initiative is once that MB will discuss later but not particularly transparent how the top is worked out.

PM asked that there is no mentions of changes to the audit level, as this determines how much funding the child gets.

There are two ways to look at it. One is that it stays as it is and the second is that there are bandings.

PM concerned about the emphasis on mainstream and also who decides which child goes into mainstream or SEN school.

Karen advised that it’s down to parental choice. But mainstream schools need better training and more teachers.

The budget won’t be increased but the it needs to be used in the right way.

PM advised that special schools need capital support.

Paul advised there will be a consultation on the capital grant Feb/March. The consultation will be opened to all schools, not just special schools.

PM last point –post 16, grave doubts about MKC as Ofsted rating isn’t good. College isn’t the right place for all post 16s.

Paul (Next to Kim) – shouldn’t be our goal to be matching neighbours it should be about doing what is best for the children. WV advised that it is a good tool to use. But it maybe that our area may need to work to what suits us.

Karen Joy – never seemed to have been a strategic plan on how main stream schools are supported. To be successful it needs to be look at differently. Doesn’t agree with the figures for parents asking for special school places.

Chris Hutton SJ Trust jointed the meeting.

KJ is challenging the new transport policy. There are no children aged 4 who hasn’t got transport. WV doesn’t feel the change in the transport policy hasn’t made any different.

KJ – post 16, pleased that WV advised not the solution for everyone. But what is happening to those children until the MKC is resolved.

Kim – support for schools. Reports are gone through line by line to ensure she can’t take them. In depth discussions place with SENCO. But she often gets told tough you have to taken them but there is no top up funding. And no route for appeal. She doesn’t see the support from and knowledge. Lack of understanding of combination of needs.

PM advised that to take from the presentation that there is a strategy going to be put in place but there is a problem with the here and now.

Kim – KS2 to KS3, is there a plan in place for those students. What is going to happen to those children who are moving to KS3.

PM feels there should be a timeline and it’s a question that should be answered as everyone is asking the question and have been for a long time. WV advised there should be a clearer in 6 months time.

Peter Martin asked about the consultation. MB gave the forum an overview of the consultations.

Want to reform the top up funding system. Consult with the principles that it is fair, transparent and clear.

It is a MC consultation but it will be done with the schools rather than the3 schools being told this is happening.

MB wants the schools to give feedback and their views.

It is a 3 stage consultation. The first stage will only be with principals.

PM asked how the schools were doing access the consultation. MB told the group

1. **Year 11 Fair access**

Kim and Paul presented the item in Karen’s fair access. Karen’s paper explains in detail. One of the PRU’s would volunteer to take the Year 11. But they would app. Stats have been included in the report.

The figures are based on the 16/17 academic year.

The children come to the fair access panel because they have been out of education or their behaviour is challenging.

PM asked what the next steps are. Young people concerned have done better. The reason for the reports is that it was only funding until 2018/19 and the question has been raised if there is funding available in 2019/20. 17/18 academic £30k funding. The money stays with schools where the children are on the roll but the children go to mainstream school. If the children are not on a school roll there is no funding for them.

Cannot be funding through the funding formula but could be funded via a contingency.

If schools forum has a balance to cater for it and could it be used.

As discussion took place as to whether to fund the Year 11 Fair Access but it needs to be done before July. KW would need to know by mid-march. There are two options it can be proposed at the meeting or there can be an electronic vote.

PM asked if it needs to be electronically proposed or

Paul (head)proposed to fully fund 18/19, KJ seconded the proposal.

£68k to cover the costs of KW employing staff. And MB will put the wheels in motion to be in place for end of March

Agreed – by all votes

1. **Pupil Variance Numbers**

MB explained to the group about the funding. Table 1 is the same as last time. 32.5 pupil’s equivalent. Table 2 is slightly difference. 4 new classes as Rainham Mark, Holcombe Sir Joseph and Halling. they are one class per year. £6k per new class for year one but Halling will get £55k as it’s the on-going school.

Ongoing £55k till 2021. New one off £6k except Halling who will get £55k.

Still one unidentified class which will be needed but not sure where yet. £130k will be needed.

£300k for falling rolls. Three schools

Must meet the criteria.

2 Can’t reduce down numbers

MB recommend schools

£1.4m for growth fund

Revised dedicated schools grant

Although it is mandatory the funding can be funded from elsewhere if they don’t meet the criteria.

The school that is under discussion is unable to reduce their PAN.

KJ asked what happens to those schools who are oversubscribed as they aren’t getting funding until the censor.

MB advised that the school will not be financially sustainable. BF asked if there was a reason why parents weren’t choosing the school.

PM feels that it is very one sided in that there is the support for falling rolls but not for schools that are oversubscribed.

MB advised they can’t cut the numbers because the classes are half full.

Paul (head) asked how many years for funding, MB advised that it will be for 3 years and the hope is that in Year 4 it will have corrected itself due to the future building of homes.

If there is a decision not to have the falling rolls, the schools can then request extra funding. It will be a contingency.

It was agreed that there wouldn’t be a falling rolls policy and that each school can apply and it will then be decided if it meets the criteria.

Recommend – Paul (head)

Every one agreed £300k to got to the three schools. And the schools will be judged on their own merits.

It was agreed that there will be a criteria that needs to be met but this will be a contingency.

1. **Dedicated Schools Grants**

**Members vote: 6 members agreed and KW abstained because the policy directly affected her school.**

To prevent something similar from happening again, MB recommend that the June school forum meeting should review all school funding policies in the future.

1. **Update Pupil Variation Numbers**

MB gave an overview of the new school places required from September 2018 as per the report which was circulated with the agenda.

Members discussed the new class requirements for September 2018 and reflected on the new growth fund policy agreed in agenda item 6.

**Members voted and agreed;**

1. **The 15 ongoing new classes to be opened form September 2018 and approved the adjustment of their pupil census numbers up to a maximum of 365 places in total**
2. **The 3 newly identified new classes to be opened form September 2018 and voted to agree to adjust their pupil census numbers up to a maximum of 76.7 places.**
3. **To hold funding within the growth funding for 4 potential new classes not yet identified and agreed to adjust their pupil census numbers up to a maximum of 120 places when the classes are identified. The schools forum however must be informed of where these new classes will be located.**
4. **Members agreed an initial 2018-19 growth fund budget of £1,046m.**
5. **Provisional schools and academies funding formula 2018-19.**

MB gave on overview of the provisional schools and academies funding formula which was tabled for this meeting.

The Government has offered a minimum funding guarantee that:

• All schools will receive a 0.5% increase on their 17/18 baseline per pupil amount?

• Schools can gain up to 3%.

• Primary schools will receive at least £3,300 per pupil and secondary schools will receive £4,600 per pupil.

**Members discussed these pledges and agreed to reflect them in our proposed 2018-19 funding formula.**

After much discussion on the differences between using the national funding formula or setting a local funding formula, the Schools Forum members voted and agreed to use a local funding formula based on the unit costs as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Funding Factors** | **Description** | **Primary per pupil** | **Secondary per pupil** |
| Basic Entitlement | Primary (Years R-6) | 2,847.59 | - |
| Secondary KS3 (Years 7 - 9) | - | 4,150.36 |
| Secondary - KS4 (Years 10 - 11) | - | 4,150.36 |
| Deprivation | FSM | 650.00 | 0 |
| FSM6 | 350.00 | 500.00 |
| IDACI Band F | 200.00 | 290.00 |
| IDACI Band E | 240.00 | 390.00 |
| IDACI Band D | 360.00 | 515.00 |
| IDACI Band C | 540.00 | 610.00 |
| IDACI Band B | 570.00 | 650.00 |
| IDACI Band A | 775.00 | 860.00 |
| English as an Additional Language (EAL) | EAL 3 | 515.00 | 1,385.00 |
| Mobility | Pupils starting school outside of normal entry dates | 90.00 | 90.00 |
| Prior attainment | Low Attainment % new EFSP - 38.4% | 1,050.00 | - |
| Secondary low attainment  (year 7) - 58.5% | - | 1,550.00 |
| Secondary low attainment  (year 8) - 48.2% | - | 1,550.00 |
| Secondary low attainment  (years 9 to 11) | - | 1,550.00 |
| Lump Sum | Lump Sum | 109,263 | 109,263 |
| Sparsity | Sparsity | 100,000.00 | 100,000.00 |

Members approved:

1. The methodology of adjusting the final funding formula lump sum factor until the formula becomes affordable.
2. To keep the same notional SEN calculation as 100% of prior attainment and 50% of deprivation.
3. To remove the reception uplift from the final funding formula.

**Members vote: Option 3 5 member’s agreed and 2 members abstained.**

Member then discussed what services should be de-delegated for 2018-19. Only maintained school members voted and only CM was eligible for secondary schools.

**Trade unions - Primary: 3 approved and no objections.**

**- Secondary: 1 approved.**

**Free schools – Primary: 3 approved and no objections.**

**\_ Secondary: 1 approved.**

**Ethnic minority – Primary: 2 approved and 1 objection.**

**\_ Secondary:1 objection.**

**Central services – Primary: 3 approved and no objections.**

**\_ Secondary 1 approved.**

1. **The Forward Plan**

Report circulated with the agenda and reports agreed for the next meeting.

1. **AOB**

CM and BF requested paper copies of the agenda to be posted in the future.

MB to add a report on in year rates adjustments to the agenda of the next meeting.

1. **Date of next meeting**

16 May 2018 to be held at Strood Academy