

EAST SUSSEX SCHOOLS' FORUM

MINUTES of a meeting of the Schools' Forum held at Wellshurst Golf and Country Club on 22 November 2019

PRESENT

Richard Thomas (Pevensey & Westham Primary)
Jane Johnson (Newick CE Primary)
James Freeston (King Offa Primary Academy)
Hugh Hennebry - Chair (Uckfield College)
Sarah Pringle (Seahaven Academy)
Geoffry Lucas (Etchingham CE Primary School)
Vicky Richards (St Mark's CEP School)
Kate Owbridge (Ashdown Primary)
Lizzie Field (Park Mead Primary)
Frank Stanford (Sabden Multi Academy Trust)
Debbie Gilbert (Burwash CEP School)

Gavin Bailey (Swale Academy Trust)
Mandy Watson (Diocese of Chichester)
Richard Blakeley (Harlands Primary School)
Cllr Bob Standley (Lead Member for Education and Inclusion,
Special Educational Needs and Disability)
Mark Whiffin (Head of Finance)
Fiona Wright (Assistant Director Education & ISEND)
Edward Beale (Schools Funding Manager)
Sarah Rice (Finance Manager – Schools)
Kirsten Coe (Principal Finance Officer)
Matthew Powell (Programme Manager)
Emily Taylor (Project Delivery Manager)
Gary Langford (Place Planning Manager)

Lesley Leppard (Clerk)

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1.1 Hugh welcomed all and thanked everyone for their attendance. He confirmed the meeting was quorate, recognising the apologies (below).

1.2 Apologies received from:

- Andrew Ferguson (Rye Academy)
- Helen Key (Chailey School)
- Phil Matthews (Hailsham Community College Academy Trust)

- Richard Preece (Saxon Mount and Torfield)
- Joanna Sanchez (Diocese of Arundel and Brighton)
- Phil Clarke (Trade Union Representative)
- Monica Whitehead (Claverham Community College) Did not attend
- Stuart Gallimore (Director Children's Services)

2 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

2.1 Lesley informed the Forum members that they need to elect a Chair. Hugh has indicated that he is happy to continue as Chair. They were asked if there were any more nominations including self-nominations to stand as chair. As there were no indications of interest, apart from Hugh's to stand as Chair Hugh is elected by acclamation. There were cheers and load clapping.

2.2 Lesley informed the Forum members that they needed to elect a Vice-Chair. James has indicated that he is happy to continue as Vice-Chair. They were asked if there were any more nomination including self-nominations to stand as Vice-Chair. As there were no indications of interest, apart from James's to stand as Vice-Chair James is elected by acclamation. There were cheers and load clapping.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS – 20 September 2019

3.1 The Minutes for 20 September were signed off by the Chair as a true record.

4 MATTERS ARISING AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

4.1 There were no declarations of interest and there were no matters arising.

5 Growth Fund / Falling Rolls Fund (Approval)

5.1 Gary gave a brief overview of the paper and outlined the proposals.

5.2 In total, the Growth Fund requirement for 2020/21 is **£1,572,000**. This is partially offset by the carry forward of **£17,900** from 2019/20 as referred to in 2.3 above. The adjusted requirement is therefore **£1,554,100**.

5.3 Jane asked about the KS1 top up as she said it was confusing and she would like to understand it better. When pupils arrived during the year it would be good to know if they were a permitted exception. If they were counted in it might put you over the limit. She asked if Gary could point her in the right direction. Gary explained and advised that he would get Admissions to give a statement.

5.4 Hugh advised that the Schools' Forum is recommended to approve an allocation of **£1,554,100** for the 2020/21 Growth Fund. The vote is for all Forum members.

Number of YES	Number of NO
13	0

5.5 Hugh declared that the proposal was approved.

6 ESCC Funding Formula Consultation Update (Discussion)

6.1 Ed introduced the item and went through the key points of the proposal. He gave the outline for the timeline for final decision.

6.2 Geoffry advised that although he was happy with the next year he thought the principle was mistaken and the formula wrong. This would lead to the closure of small schools and an increase in transport costs getting the rural children to school. He said that he was worried about the year 3 budget and that they would be worse off.

6.3 Jane also raised concerns about the funding and that as primary numbers were dropping they were not getting enough funding.

6.4 Mark advised that he would have to look at the numbers but he didn't think dropping numbers were the reason.

6.5 Lizzie also raised concerns about how the lump sum is used. The percentage meant that smaller schools would lose out.

6.6 Jane was very surprised at the low voting numbers. She also said that it would be good to know if there was going to be the same 4% additional funding next year.

6.7 Hugh gave a recommendation that they would all engage with the new Government and continue to campaign for additional funding.

7 Building Maintenance Buyback (Information)

7.1 Matthew gave an update on the building maintenance buyback service that is being provided from April 2020.

7.2 The offer ends this year and a new service offer has been worked on over the last six months to better meet the needs of the schools and academies.

7.3 A Partnership working group has been formed which will work in partnership with the building maintenance team. The offer has gone back to the schools this week and a handbook has been made to make everything more transparent.

7.4 The Maintenance team encourages all East Sussex schools to continue to support the new Building Maintenance offer. This allows the continuity of a highly valued service to schools and the future reassurance that the structural integrity of all schools is maintained to a high standard.

7.5 The Partnership working group will become an integral part of the schools Building Maintenance process. This ensures that the school maintenance community develops, ensuring transparency on projects, spend and need across the East Sussex family of schools.

7.6 The Building Maintenance team will have further people joining the team after Christmas and hope to alleviate the frustrations of not knowing who you are dealing with by working closely with the schools.

7.7 The schools want to know where the money was going so an annual report will be produced to send out.

8 Place Commissioning (Discussion)

8.1 Emily gave a summary of the pupil occupancy of special schools and facilities and explained what changes have been implemented since the last report.

8.2 Improvements have been put in place and they are building on the positive position. There have been a number of additional places and they are ensuring that the right children are in the right places.

8.3 There is a framework being put in place and SENCO's were being supported in identifying the correct needs. This would be done not only by information but by meeting with them.

8.4 Emily said that the outcome of setting ambition and celebrating children's achievements would lead children to live more independently.

8.5 James raised that there was a problem with the block but Emily advised there was group who would meet to discuss the block.

8.6 Hugh thanked Emily and said that it was a really good report which was well achieved.

9 Any Other Business

9.1 There was no other business.

9.2 Draft items for next meeting:

- DSG 2020/21 Budget
- Apprenticeship Levy
- Services to Schools Update

Meeting concluded at 9.01am

Next meeting - Friday, 17 January 2020, at 0830 hours at Wellshurst Golf Club