

AGENDA



SCHOOLS FORUM

Date: Thursday 2nd March 2023
Time: 4.30pm
Place: Microsoft Teams

Distribution

Members of the Committee

Pippa Osborne (Chair)	Dave Baker (Vice Chair)
Julia Anwar	Ross Newman
Jo Dent	Diane Owen
Stuart Evans	Lisa Parker
Kim Garland	Will Roberts
Clare Haughton	Fr. Malcolm Strange
Aaron Jefferies	Andy Watson
David Jenkins	Susie Weaver
Nicola Jones	Bernice Webber
Louise Leader	David Williams
Kirby Littlewood	Louisa Wilson
Steve Moir	

Appropriate Officers attending:

Mustafa Salih
Hilary Smith
Caroline Warren

Councillors attending:

Erica Williams
Trevor Jones

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AGENDA

- 1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS
- 2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Pippa Osborne)
- 3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Pippa Osborne)
- 4 SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP (Mustafa Salih)
- 5 ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIR DECIDES ARE URGENT (Pippa Osborne)
- 6 MINUTES FROM 19 JANUARY 2022 MEETING (Pippa Osborne)
- 7 VERBAL UPDATE ON SCHOOLS BUDGET FOR 2023/24 (Mustafa Salih)
- 8 CONSULTATION DE-DELEGATION ON THE SCHOOLS IMPROVEMENT GRANT (Hilary Smith)
- 9 STANDARD UPDATE ON THE HIGH NEEDS WORKING GROUP (Susie Weaver)
- 10 INTEGRA UPDATE – VERBAL (Hilary Smith/Forum Members)
- 11 SCHOOLS FORUM FORWARD PLAN
- 12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

**South Gloucestershire Schools Forum
Minutes of Meeting held on
Thursday 19 January 2023
Microsoft Teams**

PRESENT:

Pippa Osborne (Chair)	Headteacher Christ Church Junior School
Dave Baker (Vice Chair)	CEO, Olympus Academy Trust
Kathryn Absalom	Executive Headteacher, Park and Parkwall Primary Federation
Julia Anwar	Head of Business Operations, Olympus Academy Trust
Tania Craig	Headteacher, New Horizons Learning Centre
Stuart Evans	South Gloucestershire and Stroud College
Kim Garland	Headteacher, Brimsham Green School
Aaron Jefferies	Primary Governor, Coniston Primary School
David Jenkins	Governor, Crossways Schools
Nicola Jones	Representative Special Academies
Louise Leader	Headteacher, Pathways Learning Centre
Steve Moir	Headteacher – Bradley Stoke School
Ross Newman	Early Years Schools Forum Representative
Diane Owen	Chair to Academy Council at King's Oak Academy
Will Roberts	CEO, Castle School Education Trust (CSET)
Fr Malcolm Strange	Diocese of Bristol
Andrew Watson	Governor, Hanham Primary Federation
Susie Weaver	Executive Principal, Cabot Learning Federation
Bernice Webber	Headteacher, Old Sodbury CE Primary School
David Williams	Diocese of Gloucester
Louisa Wilson	Headteacher, St. Stephens C of E Junior School
Philip Winterburn	(representing Kirby Littlewood, Headteacher, Stanbridge Primary School)

Executive Members:

Erica Williams, Cabinet Member - Schools, Skills & Employment

Officers:

Mustafa Salih, Service Director, Resources and Business
Hilary Smith, Service Director, Learning and Skills
Alison Ford, Planning and Participations Officer SEND
Deb Luter, Schools Finance Team Leader
Caroline Warren, Finance Business Partner
Patrick Grant, Education, Skills & Funding Agency (ESFA), (Observer)

Others:

Tamsin Moreton, Director of Finance & Operations, Enable Trust (Observer)

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Attendees were welcomed by the Chair.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Trevor Jones, Chris Sivers, Jo Dent, Nicola Jones, Ross Newman, Lisa Parker, Stuart Evans, Claire Hill, Kirby Littlewood, Clare Haughton

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – None

4. SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP – Mustafa Salih

Full membership other than one Secondary Academy rep for which Dave has matters in hand to fill that vacancy.

5. ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIR DECIDES ARE URGENT (Pippa Osborne)

Susie to give a short verbal update on the High Needs Working Group.

Quite a lot of schools considering their designation and the potential of moving over to becoming multi academy trusts there will therefore be a need to look at the Forum constitution and ensure membership matches any such changes. **Mustafa**: probably best to review this position in the run up to September 2023 when there is more clarity on the numbers of schools converting.

6. MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING – 1st December 2022

Minutes recorded as accurate.

7. Setting the Schools Budget (Mustafa Salih)

The report aims to consult the Forum on the make up of mainstream budget shares and ask the Forum to consider the transfer of £2.2m from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block to support pupils with SEND.

In November the government announced an additional £2bn nationally, this has resulted in funding for direct school budget shares to increase by £15.2m in 2023/24 and so a transfer of £2.2m to invest in SEND would leave £13m extra funding to boost school budget shares. This paper does not cover Special Schools as their funding regulations are different and their funding position is still being worked on at the moment.

We are continuing to see significant SEND pressures and top up expenditure is quite high so the investments funded by the £2.2m transfer continue to be a critical element of our plans to control expenditure and stay on track with the Safety Valve agreement.

Summary of the planned use of the £2.2m in 2023/24 is shown in the report.

Moving the Cluster Boards from a pilot stage to a permanent stage is now important to ensure the Cluster Bords can start investing over a longer term and therefore the Forum

is being asked to approve their establishment on a permanent basis with an agreement to commit to a transfer of at least £1m on an ongoing basis for the next few years.

We have also put in £200k investment into Early Years to allow funding without EHCP in the early years sector and support earlier and thereby give more time to have an impact on a child's development. We are starting to see reduced numbers in EHCPs in early years, which is an important positive sign.

£300k to invest in Early Help and investment in capacity to support new banding framework. A key part of our plan is the new EHCP banding system and we need to support schools to guide them through that EHCP process.

Governance of the £2.2m – we have got good joined up working through the HNWG, a subgroup of the Schools Forum, that will continue and we will provide updates on the work of the cluster funds and other investment to the HNWG and the Forum.

The Schools Forum is requested to approve:

1. Option 1: A £2.2m transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, which continues the same level of transfer that had been secured for 2022/23 and allows the investments in Cluster Funding Early Help, Early Years, and EHCP processes to support the DSG Recovery Plan to continue.

Agreed: The Schools Forum unanimously approved the £2.2m block transfer.

2. Moving the Cluster Funds and Boards from pilot status to permanent status with an approval to commit to a £1m transfer on an ongoing basis until the Safety Valve Programme allows for this investment to be funded from the High Needs Block (currently planned for 2026/27), with ongoing governance in partnership with the High Needs Working Group.

Agreed. Majority vote to move Cluster Boards from pilot status to permanency and continue to have an oversight through the HNWG and Schools Forum.

8. Growth Funding Policy Criteria 2023-24 (Caroline Warren)

The Growth Funding Policy Criteria 2023-24 has been issued in line with the government guidance on how we fund schools. The criteria has not changed and is the same proposal as last year but we have made it a bit clearer. Schools Forum are asked to agree the criteria.

The Schools Forum is asked to approve the criteria used for the Policy and the allocation of growth funding in 2023-24.

Approved: Majority support for the Growth Funding Policy in 2023-24.

9. Dedicated Schools Grant 2022-23 Quarter 2 (Caroline Warren)

To update Schools Forum on the Dedicated Schools Grant and Safety Valve position as at Quarter 2 2022/23.

Summary:

The Schools Block is forecasting a small underspend of £10k, an improvement of £10k since Quarter 1.

The Central Schools Services Block is forecasting an underspend of £160k, an improvement of £160k since Quarter 1.

High Needs Block is forecasting a £8,337k overspend at Quarter 2, an increase of £228k since Quarter 1. The overspend position is before applying the £3,000k forecast DSG safety valve payment and £334k council contribution.

South Gloucestershire Special Schools and Placements made to Pathways Learning Centre (PLC) are showing a reduced pressure of £225k since Quarter 1.

Post 16 (Further Education College, Independent and Alternative Provision) is showing an additional pressure of £132k.

Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools are showing an additional pressure of £164k due to a forecast increase in demand of 4 placements compared to Quarter 1 and a slight reduction in price.

Other Alternative Provision is forecasting an additional pressure of £108k since Quarter 1.

The Early Years Block is forecasting an overspend of £58k, an increase of £58k since Quarter 1.

10. Early Years Funding Arrangements 2023-24

MS – This is a standard paper we bring every year following consultation with the sector on our planned single funding formula rates which determines how we fund our nursery numbers. A consultation was held with all the sector and the biggest support was for Option 3 as follows:

- Two-year-old funding rate is set at £5.80
- 3–4-year-old base rate is set at £4.51
- Deprivation fund is set at 0.9%
- Inclusion fund is set at 2%

Approved. Majority response was in favour of Option 3 so approved by the Forum.

11. Schools Forum Forward Plan

Mar 2023	2nd			
			Verbal update on Schools Budget for 2023/24	Mustafa Salih
			Consultation de-delegation on the schools improvement grant (Consultation sent to schools and to be returned by 2 nd February 2023) (Report)	Mustafa Salih/ Hilary Smith
			Standard update on the High Needs Working Group	Susie Weaver
			Integra Update (verbal)	Hilary/Forum Members
May 2023	11th			
July 2023	6th			
			Schools in Financial Difficulty Update (Report)	Mustafa Salih
			Membership of the Forum	Michelle Trigg
Proposed dates for 2023/24 Academic Year:				

12. Any Other Business

High Needs Working Group Update (Susie Weaver)

Governance – at the HNWG: today we discussed the transfer proposals and particularly the ongoing investment in the Cluster Funds project. It was agreed that careful evaluation of the impact was needed by the HNWG to make sure the cluster funds deliver value for money in terms of children with SEND and that should be fed through the governance structure to the Forum.

Voting (Pippa)

If a member is not able to attend the meeting, they can be substituted and if they are substituted that vote will count; however, if someone is unable to attend and no substitute is available, they are welcome to send their views in for the Forum to note but they won't be counted in any voting that takes place.

Meeting closed.

South Gloucestershire Council

SCHOOLS FORUM

2 March 2023

Verbal Update on Schools Budget 2023-24 (Mustafa Salih)

South Gloucestershire Council

SCHOOLS FORUM

2 March 2023

CONSULTATION DE-DELEGATION ON THE SCHOOLS IMPROVEMENT GRANT (Hilary Smith)

Attached as a separate document.

South Gloucestershire Council

SCHOOLS FORUM

2 March 2023

**STANDARD UPDATE ON THE HIGH NEEDS WORKING GROUP
(Susie Weaver)**

South Gloucestershire Council

SCHOOLS FORUM

2 March 2023

INTEGRA UPDATE (VERBAL) – Hilary Smith/Forum Members

SCHOOLS FORUM FORWARD PLAN

May 2023	11th			

July 2023	6th			
			Schools in Financial Difficulty Update (Report)	Mustafa Salih
			Membership of the Forum	Michelle Trigg

Proposed dates for 2023/24 Academic Year:				
Sept 2023	21st or 28th			
Nov 2023	2nd			
Nov/Dec 2023	30th Nov or 7th Dec			
Jan 2024	18th			
March 2024	7th			
May 2024	9th			
July 2024	4th			

ANY OTHER BUSINESS