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| People & Communities Department | | **2** | |
|  | Civic Centre, Keynsham, Bristol  Tel: 01225 394195 | |

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| **Meeting title** | **SCHOOLS FORUM** |  |
| **Date** | Tuesday 7th July 2015 –W1.1 Civic Centre, Keynsham. | |
| **Forum Members Present** | Mark Mallett (Chair), Annie Smart, Jim Crouch, Anne Hewett, Susan Robbins, Kevin Burnett, Julie Dyer, Tim Withers, Claire Hudson, Ed Harker (Vice Chair), Roz Lambert, Andrea Arlidge. | |
| **Forum Members Not Present** | Lianne McCarthy, Ruth Haines, Mark Everett, | |
| **Officers Present** | Ashley Ayre, Richard Morgan, Margaret Simmons-Bird, Sara Willis, Jeanette Viera, Cllr. Emma Dixon, Richard Vanstone, Cllr. Michael Evans | |
| **Officers Not Present** | Caroline Howarth, Richard Baldwin, Sally Churchyard, Philip Frankland Mike Bowden. | |
| **Distribution** | As above; Theresa Gale; Colleen Collett; Cllr Charles Gerrish; Cllr. Lisa Brett; Cllr. Tim Warren, Cllr. Emma Dixon, Tim Richens; Jeff Wring; Wendy Jefferies, All Headteachers | |
| **Next meeting** | **Tuesday 22nd September 2015,  3-5pm , 1st Floor Conference Room West 1:1, Civic Centre, Keynsham** | |

**ACTION**

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| **1.** | **Apologies Received** |  |
|  | Mike Bowden, Richard Baldwin, Mark Everett. |  |
| **2.** | **Minutes of Last Meeting – 12th May 2015** |  |
|  | Agreed. |  |
| **3.** | **Matters Arising** |  |
|  | None – all on agenda. |  |
| **4.** | **South West Schools Forum Meeting Feedback** |  |
|  | Ed Harker and Richard Morgan attended the first meeting of this group and felt it was a very useful forum. EH noted to the SF the following points;   * Other SF were differently run from BANES i.e.some had an independent Chair * The size of BANES meant that it was not facing the same problems as other larger LAs * EH felt the structural ties built in between the LA and NHS in BANES has put BANES in a very good position. This was not the same in other areas. * Having the head of finance for schools as an integral part of SF in BANES was also very useful and important * Good practice in BANES re Early Help/Intervention Services and Behaviour and Attendance Panels were shared with the meeting   RM added that the next meeting was being arranged by Glos. and reform of funding was going to be discussed. The new national funding formula could affect LA’s very differently. |  |
| **5.** | **DSG Outturn** |  |
|  | RM presented the paper updating the SF on the financial position of the DSG for 2014/15. SF was asked to note the underspend (£5.924m) and to consider how the resources may be utilised on other priorities in 2016/17. RM summarised how the underspend had occurred and noted that it was considerably more than predicted. RM anticipated that in future budget predictions would become more accurate allowing funds to be allocated earlier. SF was asked to consider how best to use these funds before January when it can be looked at alongside budget pressures.  MM asked whether there would be any additional ‘one off’ release of funds carried forward similar to the 880k released previously. RM confirmed that approx. £1.5m may be released and invited SF to think about how this money might be utilised. EH suggested that it could be used again to subsidise inflationary pressures across the board. AArlidge commented that as much money as possible should go into school budgets. RM said that SF should decide how to allocate this money once all pressures are clear and prioritised accordingly. |  |
| **6.** | **Budget Planning** |  |
|  | RM presented the 5 year planning predictions document which is a ‘work in progress’. The table showed figures trying to predict the increase in DSG through pupil number growth. With no inflationary increase in DSG there was a predicted shortfall in 2016/17 of approx. £1.8m.  RM had sent a Schools Balances questionnaire to all academy schools but had received very few responses. Those received were built in to the total school projections which show a potential deficit of £1.2m in 2016/17. RM noted that schools had budgeted very conservatively in the past and if you looked at what had happened in the past this would be a surplus of £1m. MM informed SF that this issue had been discussed at BASCL and all agreed that schools are planning much more accurately. SF noted that schools had already made savings in previous years and opportunities for savings were now hard to find. Capital funding was also becoming an issue and TW noted that if constant investment was not made then systems start to fall down. KB expressed concerns about schools ‘falling through the cracks’ and some schools were already in serious staffing situations now – not 2 years’ time. RM appreciated that different schools were in different positions but the LA has to look at allocating funds to priorities and cannot allocate to individual schools. SF felt it would be useful to obtain a more accurate picture of school budget predictions.  **ACTION: Academies were requested to respond to the questionnaire**  **ACTION: RM to resend questionnaire to HT and finance managers** | ***RM***  ***Academy HT***  ***RM*** |
| **7.** | **Exclusion Funding** |  |
|  | Andrea Arlidge declared an interest for this item.  RM presented the paper proposing a significant change to the existing situation re school budgets in respect of pupils that are permanently excluded (24 this year). SF discussed the proposal and agreed that it was good and fair and a further step towards equitability. Money should follow the pupil. SF felt that the proposal should be enhanced to include the pupil premium and RM agreed to make the amendment and bring the paper back to the September meeting.  **ACTION; RM to amend the paper to include the pupil premium and bring back to SF September meeting.** | ***RM*** |
| **8.** | **Children in Need and Child Protection Plans** |  |
|  | Ashley Ayre presented a proposal asking SF to support some short and focused research to map the ChiN/CPP population and the additional workload implications for schools. This proposal had come about as a result of AA’s visits to primary schools and concerns expressed by a number of HT about the additional work associated with children with CP Plans which often falls to the HT or Deputy HT. AA wants to try and understand the pressures – particularly in smaller schools. SF is asked to support this research in order to recognise schools under additional pressures and to perhaps offer some assistance over 1-2 years initially.   * AH commented that this issue is being brought up by a number of schools at NAHT meetings * JD – Secondary school now employs a full-time support worker – this would not be possible for a primary school * RL said that a total of 38 meetings had been attended by her staff in relation to this issue * MSB added that this is an additional pressure particularly for schools in RI and if anything can be done to alleviate pressures it would be helpful   SF asked AA to carry out the research and looked forward toseeing the results in the autumn.  **ACTION; AA to instigate research and bring back to SF when results are available** | ***AA*** |
| **9.** | **School Balances (Maintained Schools only)** |  |
|  | RM presented the paper informing SF of the revenue balances held by maintained schools and requesting SF to ratify the recommendation in Appendix B re retention of excessive balances. RM added that compared to other LAs BANES had very slightly higher balances. RM planned to bring information for the whole of the South West to a future meeting.  **VOTE – recommendation agreed unanimously** | ***RM*** |
| **10.** | **AOB** |  |
|  | 1. **I.** MM introduced Cllr. Michael Evans (Cabinet Member for Children’s Services) and Cabinet Assistant Cllr. Emma Dixon.   Cllr. Evans thanked SF for the invitation to the meeting and gave a brief résumé of his career and experience. Cllr. Evans expressed the hope that he would be able to make a helpful contribution during his period of office particularly in the management of limited resources and childhood obesity. MM enquired whether the council had any capital investment plans. AAyre responded that the council had a huge capital investment plan and that a capital review was going on. Any capital expenditure would be made on a business case proposal.  AArlidge added that as an academy they were keen to maintain a good relationship with the LA. Cllr. Evans was pleased that this was the case.   1. JD asked for clarity about the current contract with Bristol for the Sensory Impaired Service. JD was concerned whether the service was meeting needs effectively. AAyre said he would look at this issue with Chris Wilford (Head of vulnerable learning) and SF agreed to add this to the agenda for discussion at the next meeting.   **ACTION: AA to discuss with Chris Wilford.**  **ACTION RM to add to next agenda for discussion**   1. EH asked about school meal prices. RM said there would be a new contract in place from July 2016 and agreed to add this for discussion to the September agenda.   **ACTION: RM to add Schools Meal Prices to September Agenda.**   1. AArlidge requested clarification regarding what schools can expect as part of the SLA/protocol for facilities time. RM agreed to follow this up with Hester Edmund.   **ACTION; RM to clarify with Hester Edmund**  **V**. TW informed SF that he was no longer available to attend on a Tuesday afternoon due to other commitments and would therefore stand down next year. MM thanked him for his contribution. | ***AA***  ***RM***  ***RM***  ***RM*** |
| **11.** | **Date of next meeting** |  |
|  | 22nd September 2015, Civic Centre West 1.1 |  |