

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM**

**Wednesday, 20 April 2016**  
**Robertson House, Stevenage**

### **ATTENDANCE:**

<b>Chair</b>	Alan Gray (Chair)
<b>School Members</b>	Richard Haynes (Vice-Chair), Alisdair Skinner, Brian Frederick, Jan Liversage, Karen James, Paul Johnson, Rob Staples, Tracy Prickett, Don Leavy, Sarah Lalis, Liz Hitch, Nick Daymond, Carole Connelly, Samantha Jayasuriya,
<b>Non- School Members</b>	Helen Blay, Zoe Hancock
<b>Substitutes</b>	
<b>Officers</b>	Catherine Tallis, Cheryl Faint, Jonathan Burberry, Simon Newland, Trevor Mose, Jan Paine, Marcus Cooper, Debbie Orton
<b>Apologies</b>	Ian Morris, Alison Saunders, Morris Bright
<b>Observing</b>	David Williams (NUT), Cllr David Williams, John Grubb,

### **1. Minutes of Last Meeting & Matters Arising**

Apologies were received as above. The Chair welcomed Samantha Jayasuriya to the meeting as replacement member for Christine Hall who has stepped down.

Minutes were agreed and taken as an accurate record.

### **2. National Funding Formula**

Jonathan Burberry introduced this paper, which updated Forum on the recent DfE consultations about introducing national funding formulae for schools and High Needs. There was a discussion about various aspects of the proposals.

It was noted that the financial impact of the proposals would only become clear when stage 2 of the consultation is published, probably in the summer. Forum requested that any information on the timing of stage 2 be circulated as soon as it is available. This would help schools planning to respond to the consultation.

Given the uncertainty on the timing of stage 2 of the consultation and the possibility that this will not be available until July, it was recommended by the Chair to provisionally hold a meeting of the Forum on 13 July, instead of 22 June. Both dates are to be held in the diary.

### **3. Educational Excellence Everywhere**

Simon Newland set out to the Forum some of the main features and impacts of the White Paper Education Excellence Everywhere

It was noted that there are some profound changes proposed in the Education system which are causing much debate in the public arena and in government. It is likely that there will be some changes made to the proposals in the White Paper, but nonetheless, we need now to prepare for implementation to a short timescale.

The Council's main concerns are to manage the transition to the new system with minimal negative impact on the quality of education for local children; to seek to maintain the collaborative approach between schools and HCC – the "Hertfordshire Family of Schools" – which has done much to contribute to high standards in the past; and to manage the processes and consequences of HCC withdrawal for various existing areas of activity.

Substantial work would be put in train round how to help and facilitate schools move to Academy status. A series of conferences/seminars on this have been arranged for schools and chairs of GBs in May/June.

It was requested that Maintained Nursery schools are to be invited to attend these events.

There will be a difficult interim period due to the unexpected speed with which Government is withdrawing funding from HCC (and indeed from Academies), which will precede the point at which many schools have moved to Academy/MAT status

In the White paper and funding consultation there is a reference to School Forums having the power to de-delegated funding from maintained schools to enable the future provision of services for which ESG is to be withdrawn from September 2017. HCC would wish to look carefully at the possibility of taking advantage of this, in close conjunction with maintained schools.

It was therefore proposed that a sub-committee of Forum be set up to look at what maintained schools might wish to see provided on a continuing basis and funded through hand back. Following discussion, Forum noted the report and agreed the establishment of a sub-committee comprising maintained schools representatives on Forum, to hold its first meeting during this term and to report back to Forum.

It was also agreed that an update on this area would come back to the next meeting.

#### **4. Repairs and Maintenance Bi-annual Report**

Trevor Mose attended to provide Forum with an overview of the County Council's planned future schools capital repairs and maintenance programme.

With regards to this year's funding, Consultants have already been appointed for three batches, accounting for half the budget, and work on the design is well progressed with schools.

It was made clear that HCC permission is still required as landlord when community or VC schools wish to make changes to their buildings. A reminder will be sent out via the Schools' Bulletin.

The recent Scrutiny investigation had made a number of recommendations relating to clarity and transparency of the programme. Forum endorsed the steps taken by officers to implement these.

It was noted that the White Paper currently proposed the transfer of the freehold of the school estate to the Government as part of compulsory academisation. The R&M programme will come to an end if this takes place as proposed.

Forum noted all recommendations.

## **5. Budget Monitor Q3**

Jonathan Burberry presented this paper, which informed Forum of the quarter 3 (December 2015) position for the Schools Budget for 2015-16.

Forum noted the quarter 3 monitor position.

## **6. Growth Fund and Falling Rolls Fund Allocations 2016-17**

Jonathan Burberry consulted Forum on the Growth Fund and Falling Rolls fund allocations for 2016-17.

It was clarified that the infant class size allocations for 1.5 fe schools varied between schools depending on the number of reception pupils on roll.

Forum noted the report and supported the allocations.

Vote

For: 14 Against: nil

## **7. School Meals Price to Parents**

Catherine Tallis sought agreement in the context of a National Funding Formula for 2017/18 to cease setting a recommended price for a Junior Meal from September 2016.

It was agreed that schools would like to keep the process for one more year. Accordingly , Forum agreed to recommend a price of £2.35 per pupil. Schools are to be advised via the schools bulletin.

## **8. Update on High Needs Funding and SEND Strategy**

Debbie Orton attended to update the Forum on the elements of the High Needs budget and the challenges and opportunities facing the budget as the SEND Strategy and workstreams develop, including proposals for the use of the SEND Development Fund.

It was noted that with regard to Annex 3 (Executive Summary of The Exceptional Needs Funding Review) specific proposals for additional funding have not been made yet. However the review suggests that consideration should be given to whether the ENF budget should be increased. Following feedback sessions for stakeholders in May a working group will be established to consider the recommendations of the review.

Forum requested a focus on one of the workstreams at the next meeting.

Forum supported the proposals for the use of the SEND Development Fund outlined in section 7 of the paper.

Vote: 12 Against: nil

## **9. HfL Recruitment Support Out-Turn**

Jan Paine attended to report back to Forum to account for the funding allocated through de-delegation and voluntary contributions in 2015/16 financial year to address teacher recruitment issues in Hertfordshire.

It was agreed to keep Herts recruitment website.

Forum noted the work that has taken place over the past year and comments on the proposed plans going forward.

## **10. Standards and Quality (presentation)**

Marcus Cooper attended to present on the results of Standards and Quality in Hertfordshire Schools.

The presentation is to be sent out with draft minutes.

## 11. Local Government Pension Scheme Triennial Valuation

Simon Newland provided Forum with an update on the work to review the Schools and Academies Pooling Arrangement for the Local Government Pension Scheme (“LGPS”) as part of the 2016 Triennial Valuation of the Hertfordshire Pension Fund.

Forum noted the report, and in particular that the LGPS contribution rate for the schools pool would be remaining as now.

## 12. Forward Work Programme

Items to be included on next agenda for next meeting:

- Update on High Needs Funding and SEND Strategy
- Update on a specific workstream in greater detail
- Report back from sub-Committee on ESG funding withdrawal
- Further update report on White Paper

We agreed to hold in diaries the date of 13 July, in case there was merit in putting back our next planned (June) meeting, depending on when the next stage of the funding consultation was issued.

**The Forward Work Programme is now as follows.**

2016		
22 June	Summer Consultation	Simon Newland
	Review of Membership Quotas	Simon Newland
	Review of an area of HLN activity	Debbie Orton
	Working Parents Child Care	Melany McQueen
	Growth Fund Review	Kate Ma
	National Funding Formula Consultation – Stage Two	Jonathan Burberry
	Update on High Needs Funding and SEND Strategy	Debbie Orton
	Report back from sub-Committee on ESG funding withdrawal	Simon Newland
13 July - Hold	National Funding Formula Consultation – Stage Two	Jonathan Burberry

<b>2016</b>		
	Final Out-Turn 2015/16	Jolyon Adam
	Early Years Funding Consultation (if issued)	Simon Newland

### **Any Other Business**

No other business was raised.

### **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of Forum will be held on:

Date: Wednesday, 22 June 2016 (*13 July held if Consultation is published*)

Time: 1.00pm - 4.00pm

Venue: HDC, Robertson House, Stevenage