

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM

Wednesday, 13 July 2016
Robertson House, Stevenage

ATTENDANCE:

Chair	Alan Gray (Chair)
School Members	Richard Haynes (Vice-Chair), Alisdair Skinner, Brian Frederick, Karen James, Paul Johnson, Rob Staples, Tracy Prickett, Don Leavy, Tony Fitzpatrick, Alison Saunders, Robert Fielden, Liz Hitch
Non- School Members	Helen Blay, Zoe Hancock
Substitutes	
Officers	Simon Newland, Catherine Tallis, Cheryl Faint, Jonathan Burberry, Debbie Orton, Trevor Mose
Apologies	Morris Bright, Samantha Jayasuriya, Jan Liversage, Sarah Lalis
Observing	Cllr David Williams, Cllr Judi Billing, Cllr Mark Watkin, John Grubb

1. Minutes of Last Meeting & Matters Arising

The Chair expressed a welcome to Tony Fitzpatrick, Robert Fielden, and David Shaylor as new members of the Schools Forum.

Minutes were agreed and taken as an accurate record.

2. Summer Consultation (oral)

Simon Newland informed Forum that we have not as yet received the DfE's planned consultation on funding and the national Funding Formula, and therefore there is nothing to report at present. However, the current delays to the issuing of this document suggest that DfE's timetable for implementation is at risk.

3. Report back from Sub-Committee on ESG Funding Withdrawal

Simon Newland reported to Forum that the first meeting of the Forum Sub-group established at Forum's last meeting has taken place.

The meeting considered the timescales/plan for decision-making on possible delegation of funding. This was broadly as follows:

September: Further report to Sub-group on specific items where delegation might be proposed

September: Report to Forum to seek agreement to consult schools on proposals
October-November: Consultation
December: Forum decision on de-delegation.

A major piece of work will be taking place for September on what services are currently provided by HfL, on behalf of HCC, to inform the September meeting.

Forum members reinforced the need for specific and detailed, costed proposals to be made available.

It was noted that schools representation on the FSW review group would be helpful, and that schools' input to future changes in the Music service would also be beneficial.

4. Out-turn Report 2016/17

Jonathan Burberry reported on the final outturn position for the Schools Budget for 2015/16 financial year at 31 March 2016. Forum noted underspending in a number of areas, in particular Independent Placements and Early Years Pupil premium.

We noted work in hand to improve EYPP take-up, and also that recruitment challenges had led to underspending in various HLN service areas.

Forum noted the history of underspending in Independent Placements, and requested some further information on historic changes.

It was also noted that the current year's budget also appeared to be on track to underspend, though there were areas of pressure, in particular the schools contingency (secondary). This would be covered in more detail in the next Budget Monitor.

5. Additional Growth Fund Allocations

Jonathan Burberry set out for Forum the additional allocations being made for the 2016/17 financial year from the Growth Fund.

Forum supported the allocations listed in the paper.

6. Apprenticeship Levy

Simon Newland updated the Forum on the proposed introduction of a levy on payroll costs for apprenticeship training, together with the introduction of targets for apprentice numbers.

HfL have been asked to provide some further information and support to schools on opportunities that might be available for accessing funding; however, the main impact on community schools and large academies will be, in effect, a pay-roll tax.

Report noted.

7. Repairs and Maintenance Update

Trevor Mose updated the Forum on changes to the planned schools repairs and maintenance programme for 2016/17.

It was noted that a number of new schemes that were in the programme for 2016/17 must now be deferred, since more rapid than expected progress on scheme development and delivery plus cost increases in boiler projects has put the programme at risk of overspending in the current year. Affected schools have been notified.

Forum thanked Trevor for all his hard work.

8. Annual Review of Schools Forum Membership

Simon updated Forum on the most recent position in relation to membership quotas. Rising numbers of pupils in Academies meant that it was necessary to increase the number of Academy Members by 1 and reduce the number of maintained secondary (and upper) school members by 1. Since there was currently a vacancy for a secondary governors' representative, it was agreed that this should not be filled. An election for an additional Academy member would take place in the autumn.

A comment was made as to why there was no primary academy representation. It was noted that the number of primary schools in academies is quite small at the moment, and that the rules for election of Academy Members does not differentiate by phase. However, it would be beneficial to see some primary academy representatives in the not too distant future.

Forum agreed the report.

9. Early Years Funding Consultation

Report not available as DfE have yet to issue the relevant consultation.

10. Review of HLN Activity- Autism

Debbie Orton provided the Forum with an update and progress report on the Autism Workstream and the associated work programme.

It was noted that we have had very good engagement from all who have committed to this work.

There will be a forward work programme produced which will be communicated to schools. Good progress has been made with the work so far with a focus on the

role of schools, a new role at DSPL level and developing the Autism Education Trust training approach for Hertfordshire. Some work is medium/longer term.

Forum asked whether the issue would be addressed where some children with autism are being placed in SEBD provisions. Debbie said that all schools/settings will have children with autism and so there is a need for all to develop their skills and confidence. We need to make sure that provision is adapted or developed to meet needs where there are gaps and needs not being met well currently. This is particularly where children may be quite able but anxious and/or with challenging behaviour. One strand of the work stream is analysing this and will be developing proposals for models of provision to meet these needs locally.

Forum asked if there is going to be a training programme within the Authority on level 1, 2 and 3. Debbie reported that the Autism Education Trust (AET) training referred to in the report is a tiered approach and is the government's preferred approach. Cambridge is the Eastern Region hub for AET training and Hertfordshire will be a sub-hub which means we can have our own trainers, as set out in the report, who must meet the AET standards.

It was noted that not much has been mentioned in the report on how Early Years settings will be supported.

Forum asked about KPIs for the work. The outcomes are set out in the SEN Strategy but an outcomes framework is being established as part of the autism work stream.

It was agreed that the Autism Strategy, including KPIs would be brought back to Forum in the Spring 2017.

It was also agreed that the workstreams on Behaviour and SpLD would be reported at the September Forum. The ENF workstream would be reported at the December Forum.

It was also agreed that the Outcome of SEND Area Inspection to be reported at September meeting.

11. SALT Re-Procurement Review

Forum considered a paper on Speech and Language Therapy provision, and noted the requirement formally to consult Forum on contracts in this area funded from DSG.

Forum noted the interrelationship between the SEND strategy work stream on SLCN and the future requirements for SALT support. Draft findings of the SEND strategy review would come to Forum in December, so as to inform future decisions on the current SALT contract. It was noted that there was a desire on the part of the CCGs jointly to commission services in this area. Forum felt that, in broad terms, this was to be welcomed, but on the basis that the services when procured needed

to support the broader pattern of and proposals for resource allocation and service delivery that would emerge from the SEND strategy review.

Primary representatives drew particular attention to the need for the provision of SALT to be responsive to the requirements of schools at ground level, and that whatever service delivery arrangements were proposed would need to securely deliver this.

Forum noted the report.

12. Forward Work Programme

The Forward Work Programme is now as follows.

2016		
21 September	Working Parents Child Care	Melany McQueen
	Early Years Funding Consultation	Simon Newland
	NFF Funding Consultation	Simon Newland
	Q1 Monitor 2016/17	Saira Muschamp
	Growth Fund Review	Kate Ma
	Proposals for consultation on de-delegation of funding for School Improvement etc.	Simon Newland
	Behaviour Workstream Interim Report	Martin Smith
	SpLD Workstream Interim Report	Anne Powell Davies
	Outcome of SEND Inspection	Simon Newland
	ESG Sub-Group Update	Simon Newland
7 December	Budget Strategy 2017/18	Simon Newland/ Jonathan Burberry
	Results of Consultation on School Improvement De-Delegation (possibly January)	Simon Newland
	Approval of other De-delegated items for 2017/18	Simon Newland
	Approval of Centrally-retained Items for 2017/18 – Central Services DSG Block	Catherine Tallis
	Allocation of Places in special Schools 2017/18	Debbie Orton
	ENF Workstream	Debbie Orton
	SLCN Workstream	Debbie Orton

2017		
16 January	Approval of Schools Funding Pro-Forma	
	Approval of Schools Budget	Simon Newland
	High Level Needs Budget	Debbie Orton
	Early Years Budget	Simon Newland
	Repairs and Maintenance Bi-annual Report	Trevor Mose
	School Meals Price Review	Catherine Tallis
22 February	Autism Strategy and KPIs including Behaviour	Debbie Orton
26 April		
28 June	Review of Membership Quotas	Simon Newland
	Out-turn Report 2016/17	Saira Muschamp
	Summer Consultation	Simon Newland

13. Any Other Business

Date of next meeting

The next meeting of Forum will be held on:

Date: Wednesday, 21 September 2016

Time: 1.00pm - 4.00pm

Venue: HDC, Robertson House, Stevenage