

**Unconfirmed minutes of the Suffolk Schools' Forum held at Ipswich in the Elisabeth Room, Endeavour House, Ipswich at 9:00 am on Tuesday, 17 January 2017**

**Present:**

<b>Non Schools Members</b>	Moira Kemble, Catholic Pat Chapman PVI Amanda Havers PVI Helen Wilson, Post 16
<b>Academy Members</b>	Nigel Burgoyne, Mainstream Jo Stanley-Bell, Mainstream Andrew Bloom, Mainstream Richard Thomas, Mainstream Mark Kemp, Special Dave Siddall, PRU Colin Turner, Mainstream Steve Lovett, Mainstream
<b>Maintained School Members</b>	Odran Doran, Special Graham Alcock, PRU Gill Mitchell, Primary Head Allison Coleman, Primary Governor Dave Hutton, Secondary Head (Vice Chair) Andrew Blit, Others Alison Bowman, Others (Chair)

**Observers and Local Authority**

<b>Observers</b>	There were observers present
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gavin Bultitude, Assistant Director, Resources and Support Sue Cook, Corporate Director for Children and Adults Fiona Heath, Schools Funding Policy Manager Councillor Gordon Jones, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills Sonya Harban, Finance Business Partner Alison Manning, Strategic Lead- Early Years and Childcare Service  Linda Pattle, Democratic Services Officer (Clerk)

**1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

The Chair welcomed the Forum and observers to the meeting. The Forum was advised that apologies for absence had been received from

the following Forum Members: James Leese, Lil Newton and Julia Upton (substituted by Andrew Bloom).

Apologies were also received from Sue Cook, Director for Children and Adults and Adrian Orr, Assistant Director, Education and Learning

**2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2016 (Paper A) were approved and signed by the Chair.

**3. School Funding Proforma 2017/18**

The Forum considered Paper B Schools Funding Proforma 2017-18. The report requested the Forum to approve and sign off the schools funding proforma which is used to calculate individual schools budgets.

**Decision:** The Forum agreed unanimously to sign off the funding proforma for the schools block as set out in Paper B.

**4. Schools and High Needs Funding Reform**

The Forum Considered the Update on Schools and High Needs Funding Reform (Paper C).

Schools Block

In response to Forum Members' questions officers advised that some schools' funding would be decreased because of the new single national funding formula and therein, the relative weighting used to set the funding levels for individual schools. Funding would now be ringfenced to the schools and the LA would not be able to transfer funding between schools. About 50 schools would see a reduction in funding, some schools however would gain significantly.

Forum Members noted that if the DfE were to reduce the 3% floor which protected higher funded authorities there would be the potential for more money to come into Suffolk.

High Needs Block

Officers explained that the proposals for High Needs funding differed from those of the Schools Block as there was no direct funding. The LA would be funded on a formula basis rather than the historic allocations previously used.

The Forum was advised that the LA gave the proposals a 'cautious' welcome and that Suffolk would benefit, with funding increasing by approximately 11%. The LA however had concerns on how the way the formula was constructed and the slow pace of change.

In response to Forum Member's query regarding the High Needs Working Group, Officers advised that it had met once with members from both mainstream and specialist providers generating ideas on setting top up bandings for the future. The Working Group was due to meet again on 2 February 2017.

Officers confirmed that the £298,000 high needs strategic planning grant from the DfE to help the LA implement changes in SEND and High Needs provision had been unexpected and the LA had not yet decided how to use it.

The Forum was advised that the LA would be responding to the consultation outlining its concerns. In recognising that the proposals affected individual schools differently however, Officers strongly encouraged the Forum to have their schools respond to the consultation directly as it is felt that the DfE took more notice of schools than they did the LA. The Forum was also asked to disseminate information about the consultation process through their networks, professional associations, partnerships and as many other channels as possible and encourage these bodies to respond directly to the consultation too.

## **5. Update on Early Years Funding**

The Forum considered an Update on Early Years Funding (Paper D). Alison Manning, Strategic Lead - Early Years and Childcare Service was in attendance to present the report.

The Forum was advised that various formula options had been modelled and discussed with the Early Years Consultative Forum, and it had confirmed that Early Years providers would experience financial loss across the board and some smaller providers will struggle to survive. In the short term it would cause incredible financial pressures and in the long term it would affect the quality of education provided to younger children which, in turn, would have a detrimental impact on their future education. Further formula options are being developed for presentation to the Early Years and Childcare Consultative Forum to try and meet the aspirations of all providers. The Chairman and Vice Chair agreed, subject to availability, to attend future consultation meetings.

**Decision:** As there is no Schools Forum meeting scheduled between the 17 January 2017 and the DfE submission date of 28 February 2017, the Forum were asked whether an additional meeting should be held for this matter alone, but this was not felt to be necessary.

The Forum agreed to delegate the decision making on the Early Years proforma to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Schools Forum.

## **6. Forward Agenda**

The Panel considered the Forward Agenda (Paper E) and noted that, due to the decision taken at Paper D of the Agenda, there would not now be an additional single agenda item meeting required in February 2017.

Officers also pointed out that the election of Chairman and Vice Chairman had been omitted from the items to be considered at the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 10.08 am