

Unconfirmed minutes of the Suffolk Schools' Forum held at Kesgrave Community Centre at 1.30 pm on 18 July 2017

Present:

Non Schools Members	Pat Chapman, PVI Amanda Havers, PV Moira Kemble, Catholic James Leese, Anglican
Academy Members	Dawn Carmen-Jones, Trustees and Members Consortium Multi-Academy Trust Lynn Eldrett, Mainstream Mark Kemp, Special Steve Lovett, Mainstream Dave Siddall, PRU Julia Upton, Mainstream
Maintained School Members	Graham Alcock, PRU Andrew Blit, Others Alison Bowman, Others Allison Coleman, Primary Governor (Chair) Odran Doran, Special Dave Hutton, Secondary Head (Vice-Chair) Gill Mitchell, Primary Head Lil Newton, Nursery

Observers and Local Authority

Observers	There were observers present.
Local Authority	Fiona Heath, Schools Funding Policy Manager Alison Manning, Strategic Lead, Early Years and Childcare Judith Mobbs, Assistant Director - Skills Adrian Orr, Deputy Assistant Director, Education and Learning Linda Pattle, Democratic Services Officer (Clerk)

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gordon Jones, Jo Stanley-Bell and Helen Wilson.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting and issues arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2017 (Paper A) were approved and signed by the Chair, subject to an amendment showing

that the meeting was clerked by Susan Cassedy, Democratic Services Officer.

3. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Allison Coleman was elected as Chair for 2017/18. She took the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

Dave Hutton was re-elected as Vice-Chair for 2017/18.

It was noted that Stephen Carr had resigned. He had been a governor and a maintained school representative. This created a vacancy to be filled by the academies (so that membership was broadly in line with pupil numbers). There was discussion about opportunities to maintain governor representation on the Forum, although this was not a formal requirement and the decision on the appointment rested with the academies.

4. DSG Outturn 2016-17

The Forum considered Paper B Dedicated Schools Grant Outturn 2016-17. The report requested the Forum to note the overspend on the DSG revenue budget for 2016-17 and the level of reserves at 31 March 2017; after taking account of the planned movements and earmarked commitments, the DSG reserves would be £0.806m at the end of 2017-18. The Forum was asked to agree that the clawback of the overspend would be a first call on the 2018-19 Schools Budget.

Decision: The Forum agreed to defer to its next meeting a decision on possible clawback of overspend, and to request a further report on the matter, providing greater clarity on: the implications of a recent announcement by the Education Secretary about an allocation of £1.3bn in funding for schools in England; the consequences of the reserve going into deficit, and other options available to the Forum, such as partial clawback.

5. High Needs block funding allocation and cost management

The Forum considered Paper C, providing information about the current allocation of the high needs block budget for 2017/18, including the proposed use of an additional £3 million of DSG allocated from the Schools Forum from the current financial year forwards. The paper was presented by Judith Mobbs, Assistant Director, who had recently taken on responsibility for Inclusion Services.

Judith provided an overview of work to realign budgets in order to achieve a better understanding of cost pressures and to ensure budgets were allocated effectively to meet need. Short, medium and long term measures were being implemented to manage demand within the available budget.

The 2017-20 SEND Strategy policy review included the development of a universal banding system covering all 0-25 year old children and young people irrespective of setting. A consultation on these proposals was planned for the autumn.

The paper was for information only. The Forum noted the contents of the report.

6. **Early Years national funding formula – response to stage 2 of the implementation**

The Forum considered Paper D, which requested it to: note the contents of the report; agree the outline budget plans for managing centrally retained Early Years DSG in year two of the transition period; and provide feedback on ideas for managing the centrally retained budget reductions with an emphasis on the Early Learning Together service. The paper was presented by Alison Manning, Strategic Lead, Early Years and Childcare.

The Forum recognised the particular pressures that the current year budget reductions had placed on early years settings and the impact that a reduction in services provided from the centrally retained budget would have on settings and families.

The Forum noted the contents of the report.

7. **Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board**

The Forum considered Paper E, the June 2017 edition of the Local Safeguarding Children Board newsletter.

It was suggested that the Board should give further consideration to the possibility of producing a model Safeguarding Policy.

Action: Adrian Orr to explore the option to produce a model Safeguarding Policy.

8. **The Schools Forum Association**

Alison Bowman reported that the Forum had been invited to join the Schools Forum Association. It was agreed to defer a decision on this until further information about membership of the Association had been obtained.

9. **Forward Agenda**

The Forum considered the Forward Agenda (Paper F) and agreed that consideration would be given to adding an item on Exclusion Charges.

The Forum noted that this was James Leese's last Forum meeting. Members thanked him for his contribution and gave him a round of applause.

The Forum also thanked Alison Bowman for her able chairmanship.

The meeting closed at 3:00 pm.

Chairman