

A

Minutes of the Suffolk Schools' Forum held at 9.30 am on 2 October 2018 in the Conference Room, Landmark House, Ipswich

Present:

Non-School Members	Pat Chapman, PVI Amanda Havers, Early Years
Academy Members	Lynne Eldrett, Mainstream Dawn Carmen-Jones, Mainstream Mark Kemp, Special Steve Lovett, Mainstream Colin Turner, Mainstream Julia Upton, Mainstream
Maintained School Members	Graham Alcock, PRU Allison Coleman, Primary Governor (Chair) Dave Hutton, Secondary Head (Vice Chair) Gillian Mitchell, Primary Louise Spall, Primary

Observers and Local Authority

Observers	There were observers present
Local Authority	Cllr Gordon Jones Adrian Orr Michael Quinton Teresa Spilling

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1.	Welcome and Apologies	<p>Apologies for absence were received from Alison Bowman, Helen Wilson, Jo Stanley-Bell, Lil Newton and Maria Kemble.</p> <p>Apologies from Sue Cook and Sonya Harban (Local Authority).</p> <p>There were public observers present at this meeting.</p>
2.	Election of Chair and Vice Chair	<p>At the beginning of Autumn term a letter was sent to schools asking for nominations to elect a Chair and vice Chair. Two nominations were received and both chose to re-elect the same Chair (Allison Coleman as</p>

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		<p>Chair).</p> <p>David Hutton (Vice Chair) stated that AC chairs the meetings well and supports her fully in this role.</p> <p>After discussion it was agreed to extend the term of office for the Forum Chair to two years. Forum is now expected to be around for some years to come as the roll out of the National Funding Formula has been delayed.</p> <p>Forum members unanimously support AC to continue as Chair for the next two years.</p> <p>Dave Hutton leaves his Vice Chair role at Christmas. DH commented he found the opportunity to attend these meetings has been beneficial and the Vice Chair would need to be aware of the detail of the papers and chair the meeting in the absence of the Chair.</p> <p>Dave Hutton agreed to continue as Vice Chair until Christmas and will seek a volunteer during that time.</p>
3.	Minutes of the previous meeting & issues arising	<p>To note of a couple amendments from the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 July 2018:</p> <p>Pat Chapman and Colin Turner – to note their apologies from July meeting.</p> <p>Page 6 – High needs block, being brought back to November meeting.</p> <p>Page 8 – Decision 2 – to agree excluded pupil funding. Officers will set out the impact of different funding years and do some modelling of pupils moving in both directions (academy to maintained). This paper will be coming back in November. JM has followed up on debt schools and will bring back to November meeting.</p> <p>AC reminded the group that the minutes of the meeting are a flavour of the meeting, a record of actions and decisions and not a verbatim record.</p> <p>Accepted as reflection of last meeting.</p>
4.	2018-19 Early Years Underspend	SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS:

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	<p>Proposal to agree a one-off investment of £0.3m into the Early Years sector funded from the 2017-18 Early Years DSG block funding surplus to support quality improvement.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATIONS:</p> <p>The redesigned EYC service has a renewed focus on quality improvement. We are aiming to achieve a position where all providers delivering the funded entitlement are at least good. We are also working to support and challenge good providers to become outstanding. This one-off investment will be allocated as an additional supplement to all providers participating in the forthcoming 'aiming high' provider development sessions. This proposal comes following a recent meeting with a Senior HMI. The funding will be used to enable invited providers to participate by providing cover costs. Each participating setting will be required to produce an action plan at the end of the session and identify how they will use an improvement grant to improve outcomes for children and, hopefully, an improvement in Ofsted outcome. This can then be monitored, and effectiveness evidenced. This approach takes into consideration other pressures on DSG funded activity over all blocks, and the vulnerability of Early Years funding as the majority is dependent on the census day count of children registered, rather than actual spend.</p> <p>Alternative options</p> <p>Provide a different level of investment into the Early Years sector (either increased or decreased). This will impact on the levels of reserves available to offset potential underfunding of the Early Years block in 2018-19 comparatively to spend, as well as the increasing pressures against the High Needs Block.</p> <p>Who will be affected by this decision?</p> <p>Targeted Early Years settings will be provided with one-off additional funds. The impact of a reduced level of reserves would ultimately need to be agreed with all providers of education.</p> <p>ACTIONS/OUTCOMES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum was satisfied with the proposal to use 	

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		<p>funding to support this initiative. However, it was agreed that the level of funding to providers and reserves would be discussed with early years representatives outside the meeting.</p>
5.	2019-20 CSSB and De-delegation	<p>SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:</p> <p>Schools Forum is asked to approve separately the continuation of each of the services funded from the Central School Services Block (CSSB) for all schools and academies as detailed in Annexes a-k.</p> <p>Schools Forum is asked to approve that the reduction in budget allocated for the termination of employment costs is left uncommitted and moved to reserves as a contribution to the continuing pressures against the High Needs Block.</p> <p>It should be noted that central expenditure requires Schools Forum approval.</p> <p>Schools Forum is also asked to agree the de-delegation of funding back to the Local Authority for the continuation of each of the following services detailed in Annexes l-o: Intervention Fund) Behaviour Support Services, Support to under-performing ethnic groups including bilingual learners and Trade Unions, by phase for maintained primary and secondary schools.</p> <p>It should be noted that de-delegation for mainstream schools requires Schools Forum approval.</p> <p>Reason for recommendation</p> <p>The CSSB provides funding for LAs to carry out a wide variety of central functions including statutory duties that are provided for all pupils in state-funded schools and academies. It was introduced in 2018-19 to bring together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • funding previously allocated through the retained duties element of the Education Services Grant (ESG);

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • funding for ongoing central functions previously top-sliced from the Schools Block; • residual funding for historic commitments, previously top-sliced from the Schools Block. <p>Funding for de-delegated services is allocated through the funding formula but can be passed back i.e. de-delegated, for maintained mainstream primary and secondary schools.</p> <p>Schools Forum are required to approve each funding line separately each year for services funded from the central school services block (CSSB) and the de-delegated services.</p> <p>The DfE have indicated that they expect to reduce the CSSB from 2020-21 to reflect the anticipated reduction in costs of historical commitments. Other than the termination of employment costs, and a proposed small decrease on the Headteacher Association Support, there has not been a reduction in spend by the LA on those service areas that rely on an element of CSSB to maintain their current service levels. Given this level of uncertainty, it would be prudent to not reduce the CSSB total until more guidance has been received.</p> <p>The overall percentage of funding that is attributable to the services funded from the CSSB and de-delegation equates to only 2.5% of the total schools block allocation.</p> <p>Alternative options</p> <p>This paper and its annexes describe a range of functions and activity carried out by Suffolk County Council around its duties to children, families and standards in schools, as well as outcomes achieved over the last year. If funding for these areas of work was stopped or reduced there would be an immediate impact on service delivery and in a number of cases some of the burden of that work would fall on leaders and staff in schools.</p> <p>Suffolk County Council and the wider schools' community continue to work well in partnership to maximise the outcomes for the children of Suffolk. This joint work progressed even further in 2017-18</p>

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		<p>with developments such as the Suffolk Learning Improvement Network (SLIN) and the joint work with the headteacher associations. If the requests for retention of central funding are declined, the LA can appeal to the Secretary of State. An appeal would have to be made in this situation, because a refusal by Forum would place an unacceptable financial risk on the LA, with significant potential impact for some schools, since the services would still have to be performed. For these reasons, alternative options are not being proposed.</p> <p>Who will be affected by this decision?</p> <p>The children and young people of Suffolk who attend state funded educational institutions.</p> <p>All schools and academies will be affected by the decision regarding the services that will be funded from the central school support block (CSSB).</p> <p>The decision whether a service should be de-delegated by phase will apply to all maintained mainstream schools in that phase.</p> <p>De-delegation is not an option for academies, special schools, nurseries or PRUs.</p> <p>Where de-delegation has been agreed for maintained mainstream primary and secondary schools, it is the Department's presumption that the LA will offer the service to those schools and academies in their area which are not covered by the de-delegation. Academies will continue to receive a share of funding for these services in their delegated budget.</p> <p>The service providers will also be affected by the decision if Schools Forum decide to withdraw approval of the funding. If no DSG funding is made available for the services set out in the paper, they will cease to be provided.</p> <p>ACTIONS/OUTCOMES:</p> <p>Central Schools Services Block (All Forum Members able to vote):</p> <p><u>Regulatory and other statutory services – Annex A:</u> After voting unanimously in favour the Forum agreed</p>

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		<p>to an annual budget of £1,711,087.</p> <p><u>General landlord duties (all building owned by the LA)</u> – Annex B: It was agreed to bring Annex B back to the November meeting for further consideration.</p> <p>AO to invite representative from Property to attend for this item to give an overview of Landlord Duties and what funding is being delivered.</p> <p><u>Admissions</u> – Annex C: After voting unanimously in favour the Forum agreed to an annual budget of £137,560.</p> <p>Free School Meals database is managed by the admissions team but is not DSG funding. It's from County Council base budget. Access to eligibility data used to be free and now there is a substantial charge. Admissions Team to look into this.</p> <p>ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question raised: Why has a FSM handling application charge occurred to academies with no notice of this charge. AO Agreed to follow this up and report back to forum <p><u>Servicing of Schools Forum</u> – Annex D After voting unanimously in favour the Forum agreed to an annual budget of £2,550.</p> <p><u>Termination of employment costs</u> – Annex E After voting unanimously in favour the Forum agreed to an annual budget of £65,000.</p> <p>Comments: it was noted that the budget is reducing from 250,000 to £65,000.</p> <p><u>CAMHS</u> – Annex F It was agreed to bring Annex F back to the November meeting for further consideration.</p> <p><u>Education & Learning</u> – Annex G After voting unanimously in favour the Forum agreed annual budget of £1,780,039.</p> <p><u>Headteacher association support</u> – Annex H</p>

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		<p>After voting unanimously in favour the Forum agreed to an annual budget of £94,500.</p> <p><u>Early Help – Annex I</u> Following a vote of 12 in favour and 1 abstention the Forum agreed by majority to an annual budget of £2,460,416.</p> <p><u>Looked After Children education – Annex J</u> After voting unanimously in favour the Forum agreed to an annual budget of £374,722.</p> <p><u>Schools Support – Annex K</u> After voting unanimously in favour the Forum agreed to an annual budget of £698,875.</p> <p>The following items for delegation were voted on by maintained school members of Forum.</p> <p><u>Contingency (schools in financial difficulties) – Annex L</u> After voting unanimously in favour the 1 secondary maintained schools member agreed to a per pupil amount of £9.68.</p> <p>After voting unanimously in favour the 3 primary maintained schools members agreed to a per pupil amount of £11.00.</p> <p><u>Behaviour support services – Annex M</u> After voting unanimously in favour the 1 secondary maintained schools member agreed to a per pupil amount of £12.18.</p> <p>After voting unanimously in favour the 3 primary maintained schools members agreed to a per pupil amount of £12.18.</p> <p><u>Support to underperforming ethnic groups and bilingual learners – Annex N</u> After voting unanimously in favour the 1 secondary maintained schools member agreed to a per pupil amount of £1.91.</p> <p>After voting unanimously in favour the 3 primary maintained schools members agreed to a per pupil budget of £1.91.</p>

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		<p><u>Trade Unions – Annex O</u> After voting unanimously in favour the 1 secondary maintained schools member agreed to a per pupil amount of £1.50.</p> <p>After voting unanimously in favour the 3 primary maintained schools members agreed to a per pupil amount of £1.50.</p>
6.	2019-20 Budget Setting	<p>SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS:</p> <p>To agree that Officers continue to follow the precedent agreed last year with setting School Budgets in moving as expediently as possible to the National Funding Formula (NFF), using the lowest Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) allowable of -1.5%.</p> <p>Reason for recommendation The recommendation is in accordance with the conditions of the grant and reflects previous practice. It will ensure that the funding at school level starts to reflect the funding that will be received by individual schools when the national funding formula is. This will enable a smooth transition and avoid unnecessary turbulence to allow schools to plan with more certainty.</p> <p>Alternative options School Forum could agree a higher level of MFG to protect the budgets of those schools that will see a budget reduction under the NFF. This would be in direct contrast to the methodology Schools Forum were clear that they wanted to follow previously.</p> <p>Who will be affected by this decision? All school budgets Cabinet members and Director of Children's Services which will sign this off in January.</p> <p>ACTIONS/OUTCOMES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools Forum agreed recommendation to continue towards NFF using the lowest MFG of -1.5%.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools block detailed paper coming back to Forum in November. • Draft proforma in November (previous census figures)
7.	Schools Forum Membership	<p>Schools Forum were asked for their views on the academy representation on this group. AO has recently been approached by 3 separate academy CEOs asking how to get on Schools Forum and how was the representation arrived at.</p> <p>After reviewing the Schools Forum Guidance, the assumption is that representatives can be school leaders including Headteachers, Governors and Trust Board members. In Suffolk previously there was a balance of Headteacher and Governor representation.</p> <p>ACTIONS/OUTCOMES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum Academy representatives confirmed they would like the LA to run an election to seek both school leaders and governor reps from Academies. AO to arrange and share schedule. • AO to look at the proportion of maintained and academies members for January, to ensure the appropriate balance of representation is maintained.
8.	Forward Agenda	<p>The Forum agreed the forward agenda (Paper E):</p> <p>Items to add:</p> <p><u>November</u></p> <p>Annex B – Asset management – general landlord duties</p> <p>Annex F – Child and Adolescent Primary Mental Health Services</p> <p><u>January</u></p> <p>Early Years Proforma – January (MQ to discuss with CL)</p>
9.	Date of the next	The next meeting is confirmed as Thursday 29 November 2018 at Landmark House.

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	meeting	
		Meeting closed at 11am