

**Minutes of the Suffolk Schools' Forum held at 9.30 am on 18 November 2019 in the Conference Room, Landmark House, Ipswich**

**Present:**

<b>Non-School Members</b>	Helen Wilson, 16-19 Provider (Vice Chair) Maria Kemble, Diocesan (Catholic) Sharon Waldron, Diocesan (Anglican)
<b>Academy Members</b>	Lisa Jones, Mainstream (substitute for Dawn Carman-Jones) Mark Kemp, Special Steve Lovett, Mainstream Colin Turner, Mainstream Angela Ransby, AP Provision Darren Woodward, Mainstream Jenny Milsom, Mainstream
<b>Maintained School Members</b>	Allison Coleman, Primary (Chair) Alison Bowman, Primary Darron Jackson, Primary Karen Mills, Primary Gillian Mitchell, Primary

**Observers and Local Authority**

<b>Observers</b>	There were observers present at the meeting
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cllr Mary Evans Allan Cadzow Adrian Orr Gemma Morgan Sonya Harban Michael Quinton Teresa Spilling

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1.	Welcome and Apologies	<p>The Chair welcomed members of Schools Forum to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Dawn Carman-Jones and Amanda Havers.</p> <p>Lisa Jones, CFO Consortium in attendance on behalf of Dawn Carman-Jones.</p>
2.	Minutes of the previous meeting & issues arising	<p><u>Matters arising:</u></p> <p>Page 1: Academy Representation and forum vacancy – The LA offered to support the election process. Communication with DCJ (forums nominated rep for communication about the election) about the methodology for the election process raised some issues about methodology.</p> <p>The LA previously ran an academy election process on behalf of the academy sector on the same basis as the maintained sector methodology, one vote per school. Given that the appropriate body for academy schools is the trust board, it was discussed whether the process should be amended. National guidance states that the sector can decide what to do. It is therefore up to the academy sector to decide.</p> <p>Question to Forum members is that as not all trusts are on forum should Forum decide or academy sector? This should clearly go to academy sector to decide (SL).</p> <p>We have time to run an election. Therefore, Forum members are being asked to think about this question and respond back to AO.</p> <p><b>ACTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Election thoughts back to AO by end of the week.</li> <li>• Exclusions report: this will be circulated as a written report.</li> </ul> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 October were agreed and signed off by the Chair.</p>

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3.	De-delegated Budgets 2020-2021	<p><b>What is the Forum being asked to decide?</b>  Schools Forum is 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 A-D: Intervention Fund, County Inclusion Support Services (CISS), Support to underperforming ethnic groups including bilingual learners and Trade Unions, by phase for maintained primary and secondary schools.</p> <p><b>Reason for recommendation</b>  Funding for de-delegated services is allocated through the funding formula to all schools, but can be passed back i.e. de-delegated, for maintained mainstream primary and secondary schools, so that the service can be provided centrally.</p> <p>This is specifically for maintained schools, voted on by phase. The information in the paper sets out the rationale per proposal of money that would be taken back from school budgets.</p> <p>Funding is unchanged from last year and based on pupil numbers. Should schools become academies before the end of the financial year the pot changes, therefore these are best estimates at this moment in time.</p> <p><b><u>Intervention</u></b> (schools in financial difficulties)</p> <p>After voting unanimously in favour the <b>5</b> primary maintained schools members <b>agreed</b> to a per pupil amount of £11.00.</p> <p><b><u>County Inclusion Support Service</u></b></p> <p>After voting unanimously in favour the 5 primary maintained schools members <b>agreed</b> to a per pupil amount of £12.18.</p> <p><b><u>Support to underperforming ethnic groups and bilingual learners</u></b></p> <p>This strand of work continues to be necessary and increasing complex, due to the rising numbers particularly of European Roma pupils. Almost all have English as an additional language (EAL), showing an increase in need and demand for this</p>

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		<p>service.</p> <p>How many people does it effect? (MKp)  Ethnic minority pupils make up 14.1% of the pupil population. 8.6% EAL are school age. The work of the GRT Engagement Officer who has supported the Elective Home Education team to increase effective engagement with GRT families – around 32 pupils. Similar project in Ipswich.</p> <p>Who is leading on this piece of work? (DJ)  Fran Alexander, Lead Standards and Excellence Officer leads on EAL – peer reviews are taking place. There was also an EAL conference last week which included input from NALDIC (National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum).</p> <p>After voting unanimously in favour the <b>5</b> primary maintained schools members <b>agreed</b> to a per pupil budget of £1.91.</p> <p><b><u>Trade Unions</u></b></p> <p>Continuing this arrangement helps manage the risk of an additional burden falling on school leaders and governors as the negotiations are undertaken centrally on their behalf.</p> <p>Paul Widdowson, Suffolk Branch NEU, in attendance for this item.</p> <p>Regular Staff Forum meetings take place with Adrian Orr and Janice Lee, there is also a caseworker for each union. Pay policies and capability policies are one of the unions' functions. Collective engagement between unions/LA does help in working together.</p> <p>Can I ask about the rate being charged to academies by trade unions, which is far more than £1.50? (MKp)  PW knows this is an issue, which he is looking at and will try and do something about it.</p> <p>After voting unanimously in favour the <b>5</b> primary maintained schools members <b>agreed</b> to a per pupil amount of £1.50.</p> <p><b><u>Voting for Secondary Maintained School</u></b>  Due to no maintained secondary representation,</p>

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		<p>Helen Wilson will liaise with secondary representatives and respond to Adrian with regards to their voting on these 4 de-delegated services.</p> <p><b>ACTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AO to ask that future EAL reports include the numbers of children and young people supported by the de-delegated funding with regards to the amount of pupils question raised by MKp</li> <li>• HW to liaise with secondary representatives to confirm voting on the De-delegated services.</li> </ul>
4.	Central School Services Block (CSSB) 2020-21	<p><b>What is the Forum being asked to decide?</b></p> <p>DfE guidance means that each year the Schools Forum need to approve the continuation of the functions and services funded by the CSSB budgets as previously agreed by Schools Forum.</p> <p>Due to a 20% reduction in the CSSB of £1.3m, which Local Authorities were notified about on the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2019, Schools Forum are being asked to agree a transfer of 0.5% of the Schools Block (£2.13m) and 0.5% of the High Needs Block (HNB) (£0.375m). In 2020-21, the Schools Block indicative increase is £21.28m (5.24%) and the HNB £10.25m (16.34%). This transfer of funds would be used to offset the DSG deficit, which is projected to be £10m at the end of this financial year, as well as mitigate any CSSB savings that in agreement with Schools Forum, are not fully achievable in 2020-21 due to the timescales involved.</p> <p>Schools Forum is asked to agree to set up a working group to work alongside Local Authority officers to ensure that a planned timetable of savings and service restructures can be brought back to Schools Forum next year for approval. This will include a plan of how further CSSB savings will be managed in future years.</p> <p><b>Reason for recommendation</b></p> <p>The budgets funded by the CSSB provide the services that fall under the on-going responsibilities, retained duties and central functions required of the</p>

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		<p>Local Authority, or are contributions towards service budgets for which no other funding is available, that have been agreed by Schools Forum previously. Without continuation of these service budgets, the local authority would be challenged to meet its retained duties and the relevant services provided to schools would cease and schools would need to source individually.</p> <p>Whilst the DfE had intimated that the historic commitment element of the CSSB budgets would start to reduce from 2020-21, there was no indication that the reductions would be at the scale at which they have been implemented. This gives the Local Authority very little time to review how these services can be delivered under a different model for the start of the new financial year based on the level of savings that need to be made.</p> <p>By agreeing a transfer from other blocks within the totality of DSG funding for 2020-21, both of which have had increases, this gives the Local Authority and Schools Forum time to agree together how this level of saving to the CSSB can be made, and plan for future savings of the same amount each year and how this will effect services delivered to schools. Given the scale of the savings that will be required, it would seem prudent to agree a timetable of service reductions or changes that are not restricted to this coming financial year.</p> <p>This combined transfer of £2.5m would be used to offset the CSSB savings that cannot be met immediately in 2020-21, with the balance used to reduce the DSG deficit which is forecast to be £10m at the end of this financial year, and which will need to be recovered from DSG budgets at some point.</p> <p><b>Central Schools Services Block</b> (All Forum Members able to vote):</p> <p>The DfE previously provided a grant to local authorities, the Education Services Grant (ESG) to support their statutory education functions and duties. The ESG was removed nationally in September 2017, with part of the funding being re allocated as additional funds within the Dedicated Schools Grant. CSSB brings together funding</p>

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		<p>previously allocated through ESG, (funding for ongoing central functions) and budgets for historic commitments agreed.</p> <p>The Paper sets out the rationale and reasoning on which the LA seek approval for the continuation of the activities funded through the CSSB, along with annexes to show how the money is being used. Voting is on the 2 elements of blocks in the CSSB (statutory services and historically agreed commitments).</p> <p>Although only a one year settlement, there has been some additional money in the HNB but not confirmed as on-going. The Schools Block has also had an increase, and this will be followed by 2 further annual increases. The historically agreed commitments element of the CSSB has had a 20% reduction, providing an immediate financial challenge for Schools Forum and the Local Authority. This paper sets out a strategy of how we manage the reduction, how we could move money from the different blocks, and requests a working group looking at the historic spend element in detail and agree how savings could be implemented. There is an acknowledgement that this reduction impacts on schools and the LA, and that the budget reduction comes into effect from 1 April.</p> <p>There may be some service areas that schools feel more confident and positive that they could manage without or procure differently. There is some capacity in the current CSSB budget which means that although the budget reduction is £1.3m, the group may need to identify just over £1m to cut from 1 April.</p> <p>Forum are being asked to agree a transfer of 0.5% from the Schools Block for 2020/2021, which is felt an appropriate amount to ask for in order to start to reduce the DSG reserves deficit, alongside providing some resource is in case not all the CSSB savings are achievable in year.</p> <p>The recovery plan is more about addressing in-year expenditure so that it is contained within the annual budget rather than how the whole DSG reserves deficit will be recovered. On 30 June 2020 a recovery plan would need to go to DfE, having been agreed</p>

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		<p>with Schools Forum, as the deficit will be more than 1% of Suffolk's overall DSG.</p> <p>Is the block in future going all together? (CJ) SH – DfE have stated that they don't think it's correct to keep the funding for historical commitments on an ongoing basis. Not yet clear how further reductions will be implemented, but likely to lose all the funding over a period of time.</p> <p>Need to work around insights in this one-year settlement. (AO)</p> <p>Question raised around the landlord duties service, as compared to what is included in the buy-back service (LJ)</p> <p>Matt West/Andrew Brown in attendance and commented on this question. "We have tried to be more specific this year on the landlord duties, however, will seek to provide further clarity through the working group."</p> <p>Currently it is not clear what is included in landlord duties (CJ) Specific example. £12,000 being paid for aerated concrete work.</p> <p>Impact of the Head Teacher Association – can we have some evidence for this? (LJ)</p> <p>Working Group timescales: when will working group meet and when will it come back here. (AB) SH commented we are hoping to have 2 meetings before April, in order to come to Schools Forum on 28 April.</p> <p>Work on high needs block – how will that effect JM/GM work? (DJ) 20-21 is doable to support central commitments by moving the requested amount across.</p> <p>Forum members below expressed an interest in being part of the CSSB Working Group to help plan how further CSSB savings will be managed in future years: Angela Ransby, Alison Bowman, Allison Coleman, Colin Turner, Steve Lovett, Sharon Waldron, Darron Jackson, Darron Woodward, Karen Mills and Dawn</p>



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		<p>Carman-Jones (who expressed her interest via email).</p> <p><b>Voting took place by Forum members:</b></p> <p>After voting <b>10 forum members in favour</b> of 0.5% and <b>1 abstained</b>.</p> <p><b>ACTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SH to contact those who expressed an interest in becoming part of the CSSB Working Group.</li> </ul>
5.	Schools Block Funding Formula: 2020-21	<p><b>What is forum being asked to decide?</b> The paper provides an update to the National Funding Formula (NFF) for 2020-21, the continued direction of travel for Suffolk schools and further information on the additional funding provided and any changes.</p> <p>A new and improved (optional) mobility factor has been introduced for 2020-21, therefore forum will need to decide if this should be introduced to the Suffolk formula or to continue using the same factors as in 2019-20. Three model proformas have been produced:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using the same factors as 2019-20</li> <li>Introducing the mobility factor where £0.8m would be directed to those schools with a mobile pupil population.</li> <li>Transferring 0.5% to other DSG blocks</li> </ol> <p><b>Reason for recommendation</b> The recommendation is to continue to follow the NFF to determine schools' budgets in 2020-21 and to agree the introduction of the mobility factor (further details in the main report and Model 2 in Annex B). This will be the third year Suffolk has followed the NFF.</p> <p><b>Alternative options</b> There are no alternative options in respect of the NFF as Forum have agreed to follow the NFF. Forum could decide not to introduce the mobility factor in which case the same factors would be used in 2020-21 as in 2019-20.</p>

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		<p>Around 60-70 LA's are following the NFF.</p> <p>Mobility factor would allocate funding to those schools that have mobile pupils in each phase who reach about a 6% threshold. (eg. primary school 100 pupils £875.00 allocated to that school and £1,250 for secondary).</p> <p>Suffolk would be making a decision to mirror the the DfE recommended model, if the NFF mobility factor is implemented.</p> <p>What is the main problem we are trying to solve and is it a big problem? (HW)</p> <p>DfE are pushing for LAs to use mobility – recommended as we also use sparsity. For instance, it would help rural schools around air bases, reflect the impact on them and put some money in their formula. Amount per pupil: £2857 Primary (Years R-6); Key Stage 3 £4,018; £4,561 Key Stage 4.</p> <p>Going forward nationally: 2.6 billion in schools block 2021-22; 7.1 billion investment over the next two years. Teacher pay grant will continue next year but not sure after that. £250.00 increase in primary sector, minimum pupil funding. May need more funding allocated in our formula for schools that do not meet that threshold. LA suggesting model 3 as the preferred option.</p> <p><b>Vote took place by Forum members:</b></p> <p>Schools Forum voted for <b>Model 3:</b> Transferring 0.5% to other DSG blocks paper and the mobility factor – <b>in favour: 8 and 3: abstained.</b></p>
6.	Modelling the Impact of the SEND Capital Strategy on High Needs Block	<p><b>What is the Forum being asked to decide?</b></p> <p>To note the report to Forum on the first phase of modelling work being undertaken to project the impact of the SEND Capital Programme on the High Needs Block over the next five years. Further reports will follow as the subsequent phases of modelling work are undertaken.</p> <p><b>Reason for recommendation</b></p>

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		<p>To enable Schools' Forum members to assess the potential impact that the SEND Capital Programme will have on the High Needs Block, in particular in mitigation of the current overspend, and in meeting future projected increases in demand for specialist placements.</p> <p>Currently 269 are educated in specialist independent placements because there is no suitable provision within the local offer.</p> <p>Potential to reduce cost of a specialist placement per annum which could release up to £8 million after the 5 years.</p> <p>Looked at where we can save money, looked at cost per placement, where to move child to, options to deliver services locally. Also looked at children at an individual level, to get an accurate picture of need and placement proposals.</p> <p>SEMH Ipswich school opening in September 2020 plus a Bury school; C&amp;I schools in Bungay and Ipswich are also planned.</p> <p>Five categories have been investigated:</p> <p>Moving to pre-16 offer; pre-16 existing offer; post-16 offer; leaving education and some leaving as is over the next 5 years in independent specialist placements.</p> <p>Growth demand up to 2020 has been projected at 7% per annum which will create the need for additional places. Total growth in places over 5 years is 8% per annum so predicted to meet the growth in demand.</p> <p>Next steps looking at modelling for all our children. In January, propose to provide information that includes: inflation (which has not been taken into account as yet), costs of servicing borrowing to enable capital investment, where we are with it and what will it cost. Look at revenue costs within the growth of service and the impact of net transitional protection.</p> <p>In April, will have had a look at pathways for individual pupils who have no school place or</p>

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		<p>alternative tuition.</p> <p>October early intervention strategy. We currently do not have benchmark data but that work is underway, so will then be able to compare the impact of service.</p> <p>Capital repayment schedule? (AB) Corporate discussion to take place where services and borrowing will land and when we will start paying.</p> <p>Is the capital programme on schedule? (LJ) 2020-21 opening SEHM Ipswich (opening in September 20) 30 pupils in 2020. No interest from the north to host units on mainstream sites, need to talk to mainstream schools to seek willingness to host units in the north. 24 units will open over the next 2 years. SEMH in Bury 2023. C&amp;I Bungay 2023 / C&amp;I Ipswich 2023 / SEMH 2023-2024 / Chalk Hill 2024.</p> <p>Ipswich units KS3/4 – Darron Jackson’s school currently host Year 7 and 8 group. Over the next year will seek a host senior school, as parents want children connected to senior school and not primary setting when their children reach that age.</p> <p>First phase of modelling work underway, further work will be completed to refine the model. No decision needs to be made at this meeting. Should you wish to raise any comments about the report please send them through to Gemma Morgan. To come back to a future Schools Forum meeting.</p> <p>Modelling and proposals will continue to be considered by the High Needs Group who will look at the modelling in more detail on behalf of Schools’ Forum,</p>
7.	Forward Agenda	<p><u>Change of meeting date</u></p> <p>Please note the 2 July meeting has now been changed to take place on Thursday 18 June, 1.30pm at Landmark House.</p> <p><u>Item to add to January meeting:</u></p> <p>Add DSG Recovery Plan.</p>

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		<u>April meeting</u> Early Years Funding - Proforma
8.	Date of the next meeting	The next meeting is confirmed as <b>Tuesday 7 January 9.30am in the VMC at Landmark House.</b>
		Meeting closed at 3.30pm.