

Unconfirmed minutes of the Suffolk Schools' Forum held at Endeavour House, Ipswich in the Elisabeth Room at 9:30 am on Thursday, 5 May 2016

Present:

Maintained school governors (and PRU managers)	Allison Coleman, Federation of Fairfield and Colneis Schools Pauline Lucas, Hillside School, Sudbury Pat Wilkinson, Kingsfield PRU
Maintained school headteachers	Odran Doran, The Bridge School (arrived 10.50 am) Annie Hookway, Holbrook Primary School (arrived 10.05 am) David Hutton, Northgate High School Dave Siddall, Westbridge PRU
Diocesan representatives	Hugh O'Neill, St Benedict's Catholic School, Bury St Edmunds
Early years providers	Pat Chapman, Bacton Under 5s Amanda Havers, Tiddlywinks Nursery
14-19 Providers	None present
Academies	Lynn Eldrett, Bungay High School Sue Hargadon, Farlingaye High School Steve Lovett, Thomas Mills Upper School Mark Kemp, The Ashley School (Special School Academy)

Local Authority

Local Authority	Gavin Bultitude, Assistant Director, Resources and Support Helen Carter, Interim Programme Manager Sue Cook, Director for Children and Young People Fiona Heath, Schools Funding Policy Manager Councillor Gordon Jones, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills Susan Cassedy, Democratic Services Officer (Clerk)
------------------------	---

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Gavin Bultitude informed Forum members that Alison Bowman, who was due to chair the meeting was unable to attend and in her absence he welcomed Forum members, local authority officers and observers to the meeting. Gavin Bultitude also welcomed Mark Kemp, who was due to take over from Odran Doran as Special School Head representative, to the Forum.

The Forum was advised that apologies for absence had been received from:

Alison Bowman

Louise Spall

Paul Elstone

James Leese

Helen Wilson

2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

On the proposition of Pat Wilkinson, seconded by Pauline Lucas it was agreed that Alison Bowman be elected as Chairman.

On the proposition of Pat Wilkinson, seconded by Allison Coleman it was agreed that Dave Hutton be elected as Vice Chairman.

In the absence of Alison Bowman, Dave Hutton chaired the meeting.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2016 (Paper A) were approved and signed by the Chair subject to the following amendments:

Page 3, Item 2: Title of item should read 'Minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2015'

Page 6, Item 7, Third paragraph: add 'Academy representatives raised concern at the level of academy representation'.

Matters arising:

Gavin Bultitude informed the Forum that the modelling template for IDACI had been emailed to all schools, however some Forum members reported that they had not received the information. (Post meeting note – the information was sent to members on 21 February 2016).

Gavin Bultitude confirmed that split site funding had not been looked at further and advised that Helen Wilson had been advised to include her concerns within her response to the funding reform consultation.

4. School Forum Development

The Forum considered Paper B which requested the Forum to agree which of the approaches for determining the Forum size and composition it wished to adopt.

Concern was raised once again with regard to Academy representation and the Forum noted that this would need to increase as more schools converted to academies and that the new model would require a mechanism in order to allow for this.

After discussion the Forum ruled out Approaches 1 and 2 as members were not in favour of any type of weighted voting. The Forum was also of the opinion that the optimum size of the Forum membership should be in the low 20s.

During discussion on Approach 3, approaches 3a and 3c were also ruled out. The Forum was however of the opinion that merging an element of the sub option Approach 2c, where there was a mechanism for adjusting proportionality, with Approach 3b would be the best option to take forward. Members noted that this option would provide the Forum with a maximum of 22 voting members.

Decision: The Forum voted unanimously in favour to:

- i) recommend to the LA Approach 2c which should include a mechanism for adjusting proportionality; and
- ii) to request officers to email round a brief summary paper setting out the proposal for DMT decision making, to all Forum Members for information.

5. Consultation on Schools and High Needs Funding Reform

The Forum noted Paper C which was for information only. Gavin Bultitude advised that the consultation had now closed and the paper provided information on what had been submitted. He advised that the second stage of the consultation was likely to take place over the summer due to the DfE wanting to keep to its timetable and that the whole process was likely to be completed at great speed by the DfE.

A Member raised concern about funding of reception children and whether the funding received for this area came under the 'Schools' column or the 'Early Years' column. Gavin Bultitude advised that it was currently part of the Schools' funds but had appeared to drop off in the consultation and he had wondered whether this had been a mistake by the DfE. Gavin Bultitude confirmed that the LA was aware of this gap but was unsure on what it actually meant.

6. High Needs Block Update

The Forum noted Paper D which provided an update on the High Needs Block which had been requested by the Forum as a standing

item. Gavin Bultitude advised that the proposals within the funding consultation for the High Needs Block were not helpful as there would be a five year lag before funding would be received.

A member referred to paragraph 15 of the report and the SEND Further Education and Learning Committee and expressed concern about the gap in provision for older teenagers and those up to the age of 25. Gavin Bultitude described this as a very specific co-hort. Odran Doran advised that the first meeting of the SEND Further Education and Learning Committee had met the previous week and that programme of work was now being developed which included developing an approach to further education.

7. Reporting back from working groups and partner organisations

Resource Allocation Group (RAG)

Members were advised that the RAG had responded to the consultation on Schools and High Needs Funding Reform

Value for Money Group (VFM)

Members were informed that the VFM had not met since the last Forum meeting.

Safeguarding Board

The Committee noted that James Leese was not in attendance to provide an update on the Safeguarding Board.

Children's Trust

Annie Hookway circulated her notes from the Children's Trust meeting held on 15 March 2016 which included information on:

CIC Health outcomes – Children in care;
Transforming Care – Pupils with learning difficulties - continuing care;
Speech and Language;
SEND;
Emotional Wellbeing; and
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

In response to a member's query on why there were so many children receiving speech and language therapist support, Sue Cook advised that there were many reasons including previously undiagnosed speech and language problems and the level of awareness of expected ability. She suggested that drug and alcohol misuse and domestic violence were also possible contributors.

8. Forward Agenda

The Forum agreed the revised Forward Agenda as set out in Paper E. Gavin Bultitude advised that the second stage of the consultation may need to be added to the Forward Agenda and that he would let members know as soon as possible when further information and timescales was received from the DfE.

The meeting closed at 11.10 am