

**Minutes of a meeting of the Leicestershire Schools' Forum held at Beaumanor Hall  
on Monday 10 June 2019 at 2.00 pm**

**Present**

Nick Goforth	Secondary Academies Headteacher
Chris Parkinson	Secondary Academies Headteacher
Kath Kelly	Secondary Academies Headteacher
Chris Swan	Secondary Academies Governor
Martin Towers	Secondary Academies Governor
Suzanne Uprichard	PRU Representative
Jane McKay	Primary Academy Headteacher
Jean Lewis	Primary Academy Governor
David Thomas	Primary Academy Governor
Troy Jenkinson	Primary Maintained Headteacher
Karen Allen	Primary Maintained Headteacher
Claire Allen	Primary Maintained Governor
Zoe Wortley	Primary Maintained Governor
Ros Hopkins	Special Maintained Headteacher
Graham Bett	DNCC Representative
Clive Wright	RC Representative

**In attendance**

Ivan Ould, Lead Member, Children and Family Services  
 David Atterbury, Head of Service, Education Sufficiency  
 Tom Common, Head of Service, SEND and Disabled Children  
 Alison Bradley, Head of Service, Education Quality and Inclusion  
 Jenny Lawrence, Finance Business Partner, Corporate Resources

		<b>Action</b>
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Apologies and Substitutions</b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Jane Moore, Paula Sumner, Jo Blackburn, Dave Hedley, Dawn Whitemore, Carolyn Lewis, James Tickle, Martin Turnham and Julie McBrearty.</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Minutes and Matters Arising</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 12 February 2019 were agreed subject to the following amendments:</p> <p>Page 5, seventh paragraph should read "Nick Goforth stated that there were no surprises in terms of funding for 2019/20 but asked for thoughts on funding from <u>2020/21</u>".</p> <p>Page 6, fourth paragraph should read "Nick Goforth stated that from a</p>	

meeting with the Regional Schools Commissioner that single academies should consider MAT membership for school efficiency reasons".

### **Matters Arising**

#### Item 3 – 2019.20 Schools Budget

Jenny Lawrence stated Leicestershire's non-use of the sparsity factor in terms of the school funding created an issue in the baseline for the 2019/20 budgets. This will need to be looked at in the 2020/21 formula which may require an amendment to the formula.

Jenny stated that Graham Bett had asked for a list of local authorities that provide funding in addition to DSG. Jenny said that at the time the data was not available for 2019/20 but have since been able to access this information. There are an additional 29 local authorities that are putting a total £32.6M on top of the DSG grant.

Jenny confirmed Sophie Hayes-Watson has been successfully appointed to the post of School Strategic Financial Planner within Children and Family Services.

#### High Needs Block Recovery Plan

Karen Allen reported that herself and Jon Mellor (as Chairs of LPH and LSH respectively) met with the Leader regarding the Leicester Mercury report regarding SEN provision. Karen acknowledged that he had been misinterpreted and comments were taken out of context; he was very supportive of this move forward. Graham Bett commented that he had viewed the webcast and the statement had been accurately reported.

### **3. 2018/19 Schools Budget Outturn**

Jenny Lawrence introduced the report which presents the 2018/19 Schools Budget outturn position and confirms the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Reserve.

Jenny referred to the table in paragraph 5 which provides an analysis of the overspend and presents the position on the local authority budget. The Children in Care budget continues to be under significant pressure, however, the position is slightly better than anticipated. There is additional DSG funding received in December 2018 and there is a release of growth funding from the schools block which was not required in 2018/19 but is required in future years.

Jenny stated that in terms of maintained school balances there has been concerns raised for the previous 2 financial years about the accuracy of forecasting. This again seems to be the position for 2018/19 where schools have again overstated the use of accumulated balances The School Financial Planner will try to establish and understand the reasons for this financial position and will work with both maintained schools and academies.

The High Needs element of the DSG grant continues to be overspent

	<p>and is continually being looked at but until the High Needs Development Plan is delivered the High Needs deficit will increase.</p> <p>Jenny stated that in total the DSG reserves is £1.7m at the end of the 2018/19 financial year. The table in paragraph 11 offsets the previous balance against the high needs overspend. The early years element fluctuates, and a deficit will be held on high needs.</p> <p>Jenny reported that there is no information about school funding past 2019/20. At a Regional ESFA meeting it was stated that they had been working on a 3-year spending review depending on Brexit but it is still uncertain. The Timpson review of alternative provision which is suggestive of schools being more accountable for the costs of exclusions and a Call for Evidence was launched by the DfE in relation to SEND funding indicates a change to the balance of schools formula and high needs could all have an impact on school funding.</p> <p>Pay awards remain critical as a 2% pay increase for teachers, in line with inflation, is something schools cannot afford. Schools have been advised to assume 2020/21 has exactly the same funding levels as 2019/20.</p> <p>Karen Allen referred to page 12 of the report and asked about the underspend for targeted early help. Jenny explained that the majority of this saving was down to staff turbulence in terms of the early help review.</p> <p>David Thomas stated that schools are expected to fund the new pay increases – if it goes above 2% will there be some financial help. David also referred to the sub-division of the DSG reserve and asked if there is a choice. Jenny stated that managing schools growth needs to happen alongside the management of the high needs deficit although in cash terms they may offset each other.</p> <p><b>Schools Forum noted the financial outturn for the 2018/19 Schools Budget.</b></p> <p><b>Schools Forum noted the level of DSG reserve and the revised approach to its management.</b></p>	
4.	<p><b>High Needs Development Plan – New SEND Provision</b></p> <p>David Atterbury introduced the report which gives an update on the development of new SEND provisions as part of the High Needs Block Development Plan.</p> <p>David stated that this update reflects the position presented to Cabinet on 24 May 2019. David firstly gave an update on the establishment of new SEND places. The expansion of all 6 special schools will take place over the next 2 years and there are 15 new SEND units being established. There will also be a new 50 place Social, Emotional, Mental Health Needs (SEMH) School in South Leicestershire, mostly likely in Lutterworth and a similar sized SEMH school located at Shepshed Iveshead campus as part of a successful DfE free school bid.</p> <p>In terms of Post-16 SEND places there is new provision planned for</p>	

Maplewell Hall School located on the Charnwood College campus.

The new 80-place Communication and Interaction School, to be located in Barwell, is progressing well and is currently at the second stage of assessments. After the final stage of assessment (visits by the Council to existing similar academy currently operated by the applicant) recommendations of potential academy sponsors will be put forward to the Regional Schools Commissioner for a decision to be made to ensure the new school remains on schedule for September 2020 opening.

David outlined the plans to replace the hearing impaired unit at Beauchamp, the expansion of the Early Years provision at Wigston Menphys and Oakfield aspirations to develop north and south provision. Overall there are now 27 projects ranging from expansion of existing special schools, new C & I or SEMH resource bases and longer term new special schools. There are 2 key risks to delivery of the programme they relate to DfE consents for change and affordability of capital schemes.

David explained that the public consultation exercise closed on 31 March and the outcome was presented to Cabinet on 24 May 2019. The consultation responses were very supportive and David expressed his thanks to those who responded. There have been no objections received to the Statutory Notice during the representation period so, as agreed by the Cabinet in March, the Director of Children and Families Services will determine the Notice to allow the various SEND developments in maintained schools to proceed, particularly those planned to open in September 2019.

Jenny outlined the funding arrangements and the proposals for a one-off start-up allocation of £50,000, and a fixed allocation of £28,600 for each occupied place in the first year of opening for the new units. A letter has been sent to each school concerned to confirm the funding arrangements. There is no decision required from Schools Forum.

Suzanne Uprichard asked how children will be allocated to the new units and transport will be dealt with. David confirmed that pupils will be allocated by SENA, hence must have an EHCP. Transport will operate in accordance with the revised policy agreed by Cabinet. It is expected that as there will be more local provision over time the dependency on transport may reduce (bearing in mind also proposals for personal budgets).

**Schools Forum noted:**

- a) Details of the new SEND units;**
- b) The funding model for those units;**
- c) The outcome of the County Council bid to seek Department for Education funding to establish a 50-place free school for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs;**
- d) The planned Interviews of academy proposers (sponsors) to**

	<p><b>operate the new Communication and Interaction school in Barwell, which is in keeping with the requirements placed upon the Council by section 6A (the Free School Presumption) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, as introduced by the Education Act 2011.</b></p>	
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Autism Services</b></p> <p>Tom Common introduced the report which presents the Local Authority's plans to change the funding model for the provision of support through the Specialist Teaching Service, with regards to children who have autism.</p> <p>Tom outlined the key financial risks in terms of the current funding model and how the changes will align with the strategic direction of SEND Services. Tom highlighted that one of the changes will enable free access to early advice and support to schools. This will support early intervention to prevent the escalation of issues. Where children are not able to attend school Intensive Support will be charged in a way consistent with other services, such as Oakfield.</p> <p>Tom stated that further work is to be progressed during the next few months and a further report will be presented to Schools Forum.</p> <p>Ros Hopkins stated that this was a step in right direction and the next stages should involve effective pathways in health and wider family support, together with effective quality assurance.</p> <p>Discussion took place on the vulnerable children who schools suspect have autism but are pre-diagnosis and Karen Allen asked if there was any move to address this. Tom stated that this is being explored. Alison added that diagnostic issues for 0-5 children are also relevant and are being reviewed.</p> <p>Karen Allen stated that autism outreach was at capacity and there was a long time to wait to get provision for children with a diagnosis; children are at crisis point. Karen asked if there are there plans to extend the team to ensure there is provision. Tom said that there are no additional resources, but the new arrangements would mean that staff will be more able to advise schools at a whole school level, or with regards to children without a diagnosis.</p> <p>Ros stated that children who are displaying behaviours consistent with Autistic Spectrum Condition are vulnerable; a lot of those behaviours are not dependent on the diagnosis to get the help. The local authority are working with schools and partners to develop a specialist provision panel building upon arrangements for SEMH.</p> <p><b>Schools Forum noted the Local Authority's intention that</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i) From September 2019, to provide autism outreach support free of charge, providing early help advice to schools to promote inclusive practice.</b></li> <li><b>ii) From September 2019, to charge a day-rate recovery for pupils who are no longer attending their mainstream school.</b></li> </ul>	

<b>6.</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>  Jenny informed the meeting that the September meeting will be the election of a new chair and vice-chair.	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>  Monday 30 September 2019  Monday 25 November 2019  Monday 20 January 2020  All 2.00 – 4.00 pm at Beaumanor Hall	