

LEEDS SCHOOL FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held on
Thursday, 27th June, 2019, Times Not Specified at Merrion House, second floor, Meeting
suite rooms three and four

MEMBERSHIP (Apologies marked with an *)

Joe Barton, LSF - Woodkirk Academy
Peter Best, LSF - PVI Nursery Providers
Angela Cox, LSF - Leeds Catholic Diocese
Jim Ebbs, LSF - Woodlesford Primary
* John Garvani (LSF), LSF - Broadgate Primary School
* Ian Goddard, LSF - Ebor Gardens/Victoria Primary Ac
David Gurney, LSF - Cockburn School
Julie Harkness, LSF - Carr Manor Community school - Primary Phase
Peter Harris, LSF - Farsley Farfield Primary
* Claire Harrison, LSF - Wetherby Deighton Gates Primary
John Hutchinson, LSF - St Theresa's Catholic Primary
Scott Jacques, LSF - Springwell Leeds East Academy
* Amanda Jahdi (LSF), LSF - East SILC - SILC Governors
* Bill Jones, LSF - LCC 16-19 Providers
Susan Knowles, LSF - PVI Nursery Providers
Lucie Lakin, LSF - Wetherby High
Emma Lester, LSF - Woodkirk Academy
* Anna Mackenzie, LSF - Richmond Hill Academy
Ben Mallinson, LSF - The Stephen Longfellow Academy
* Delia Martin, LSF - Benton Park
* Doug Martin (LSF), LSF - Pudsey Grangefield
Ken Morton, LSF - Brigshaw LP MAT & Kippax Ashtree
* Patrick Murphy, LSF - Schools JCC
* Sara Nix, LSF - Rawdon Littlemoor Primary
Richard Noake (LSF), LSF - Diocese of Leeds
* Deryn Porter, LSF - Cobden Primary
Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Deputy Executive Member for Children & Families
Diane Reynard, LSF - East / NW SILC - SILC Principals
Siobhan Roberts, LSF - Cockburn John Charles Academy
Adam Ryder, LSF - The Morley Academy
Jo Smithson, LSF - Greenhill Primary
Helen Stott, LSF - Allerton C of E Primary
John Thorne, LSF - Co-operative Academy Priesthorpe
Councillor Fiona Venner, Executive Member for Children & Families
* Jason Waddington, Primary Governor - Hunslet Moor Primary
* David Webster, LSF - Pudsey Grangefield

Item		Action
1.	APOLOGIES	
	Apologies received from: John Garvani, Doug Martin, David Webster, Patrick Murphy Claire Harrison, Delia Martin, Steve Walker	
2.	INTRODUCTIONS	
	<p>The Chair welcomed new Governor Jim Ebbs and acknowledged three more new Governors who are unable to attend this meeting: Anna McKenzie, Jason Waddington and John Garvani.</p> <p>It was noted that Amanda Jahdi and Deryn Porter have resigned membership of Schools Forum.</p>	
3.	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	
	The minutes of the February meeting were agreed as a true record.	
4.	MATTERS ARISING	
	<p>4.1) <i>Page Seven, Item 5.3 Early Years Block:</i> A local government peer review of Early Years has just taken place and the action plan will be brought to the next meeting. This will help shape thoughts around what members of the forum would like to look at. Action: PM/ST</p> <p>4.2) <i>Page Seven, Item 5.4 High Needs Block:</i> to be considered at a future meeting. Action: TP</p> <p>4.3) <i>Page Eight, item 5.6 AIP Balances:</i> To be taken later in this meeting.</p> <p>4.4) <i>Page Ten, Item 7 Schools Forum Update:</i> Access to schools in financial difficulty fund. Guidance is being developed for schools. Anyone interested in joining the panel of maintained schools and representatives to contact Louise Hornsey. The panel makes recommendations to Children's Services on schools in financial difficulty. Action: LH</p>	

5.	SCHOOL AND EXTENDED SCHOOL BALANCES OUTTURN 2018-19	
	<p>5.1) Main Issues reported are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of 2018/19 there was a net surplus of £22.8m in the maintained schools and extended schools budget; a reduction of £2.6m on the previous year. • Schools surplus is now down from £18m to £16m. Within the net surplus some schools have a surplus above the 15% threshold. Balances still above 15% after three years can be clawed back. There are five schools in this situation and they have been asked to complete an application to explain why the surplus is so high. • Schools with a deficit balance of £10k+ have to complete a deficit action plan detailing how the school will recover the deficit within three years. <p>5.2) Finance colleagues provide support and challenge to schools at risk and work with them to look at where the risks are and what actions can be taken to get back on track. Internally, contact is made with counterparts in other local authorities to source best practice.</p> <p>5.3) Two schools have a deficit of over £1m and Finance are working very closely with them to provide high support and challenge.</p> <p>5.4) The interest on the surplus is absorbed by the Council to assist with cash flow issues on a day to day basis.</p> <p>5.5) Initial budget reviews suggest schools will be utilizing their reserves in future years and there is concern that at some point the deficits could impact on overall Council reserves.</p> <p>5.6) Future funding is uncertain at the moment so it is difficult to plan a three year funding budget.</p> <p>5.7) Some primary schools have taken in a third less children than last year which has an impact on funding. The ESFA has offered to provide a management advisor to work with schools.</p> <p>5.8) Extended services: The overall surplus balance stands at £6.3m and comes mainly from extended school facilities, clusters and AIPs. Surplus funds for AIPs are currently being reviewed and can be subjected to claw back.</p>	
6.	DSG OUTTURN 2018/19	

6.1) It was recommended that the Forum both note the underspend of the DSG and the high level forward view.

6.2) At the previous meeting in February we were predicting a £1.5m surplus. It now stands slightly down at £1.1m. The surplus is mainly due to extra in year funding for the High Needs Block.

6.3) Schools Block: an underspend overall which mainly comes from the growth fund. The intention is to use £400k of the underspend to support the growth fund in 2019/20.

6.4) Early Years Block: The underspend was noted. As mentioned at previous meetings this is not necessarily due to money not being spent or being withheld from providers but an anomaly around how the Government allocates funding. So far the Government has not clawed back any of the underspend but it could do so.

6.5) High Needs Block: DSG income higher than budgeted with the in-year grant of £1.759m received. Due to an increase in demand the SEN top ups budget is overspent by £1.8m. The outside placements budget is overspent by £1.4m. These two areas continue to be monitored closely.

6.6) Central Schools Services Block: there were some minor changes to this block, seeing an underspend of £6k.

6.7) 2018/19 Reserves: General reserves will see a surplus of £1.1m carried forward to 2019-20 and likewise £587k for de-delegated services.

6.8) Forward View 2019-20: There are uncertainties around individual schools and budgeting beyond 2019-20. There are also underlying pressures on the High Needs Block and going forward a deficit is expected by the end of 2019/20.

Diane Reynard left the meeting at 17:30

Some schools have additional pupil numbers in year but no additional funding. There will be a growth fund of £2.9m: £2.5m from DSG and £400k to be used from the reserves.

Action: to provide the Forum with details on which schools are due to receive growth fund payments in 2019-20. **SC**

There is a risk around what each service will cost each year due to peaks and troughs eg maternity funding. A large part of the funding is in relation to capitalised pension costs whereby if a school is experiencing difficulties, pensions for staff who are retiring are paid from the pot.

There is an underspend on SENIT and the Sensory Service which is due to staffing vacancies. The underspend is not likely to continue into 2019/20.

6.9) De delegation: In February a balance was projected although some of the costs are not known until end of the year. There was a higher underspend than thought on capitalised pensions. It was discussed whether the surplus on de-delegated budgets should be given back to schools as a one off payment. Proposals will be discussed in October. Only maintained primary and secondary schools can vote. Schools recently academised will have paid into the fund and it was suggested that it would be only fair to return funds to those schools as well.

7.	DSG HIGH NEEDS BUDGET 2019-20	
	<p>7.1) Initial work has been done around the wider projected position for the year taking into account known pressures. This gives an indication of what 2019-20 looks like. A full monitoring report will be taken to October's meeting.</p> <p>7.2) The High Needs budget income is supplemented with £1.4m from the Schools Block with £800k transferred from the central Schools Services Block. It is unlikely that we will be able to do this next year as the Government is likely to reduce the Central Schools Services Block grant.</p> <p>7.3) Outside and Residential placements have both increased in line with the rise in places and also in terms of trends of increase payments and top ups. It is anticipated there will be an overspend in 2019/20. Going forward initial work is being done on other potential costs pressures and this will be brought to an Autumn meeting.</p> <p>7.4) Dis-application request, Springwell Leeds: Scott Jacques and Ken Morton declared a conflict of interest on this subject and said they would not take part in the discussion or any decision. The issue is around the initial rate paid which is for places and not pupils. There is a risk that this will result in additional funding (£1m+) being paid in the 2019/20 budget that has not been provided for. There will also be much wider implications on the High Needs Block. If the request is approved it will be submitted to the Secretary of State who makes the ultimate decision.</p> <p>It was made clear to the Forum that this request was for 2019/20 only.</p> <p>After a lengthy discussion a majority of Schools Forum indicated their support for the disapplication request for 2019/20.</p> <p>7.5) DfE call for evidence: This is around funding for children and young people with special needs and how it is distributed. There is a link in the paper provided for Forum members who want to take part in the survey.</p>	
8.	PROPOSED UPDATE OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM TERMS OF REFERENCE	

	<p>8.1) Training sessions for governors: The Chair was concerned that the vast majority of governors were not aware of the training which is useful in keeping governors up to date with current issues. He asked if this could be publicised. Action: LH</p> <p>8.2) It was also felt that many governors were not aware of the existence of schools forum and what it sets out to achieve and what they themselves can contribute. Awareness of the Forum may help boost membership. Action: Officers to liaise with Governors Support Service to put together an information package for distribution before the October meeting. LH</p> <p>Action: Any comments on the terms or reference to be submitted to Louise Hornsey (louise.hornsey@leeds.gov.uk) All</p> <p>Action: Schools Forum was also asked about adjusting non-school membership to include other schools in the city ie Jewish schools. All</p>	
9.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
	None	
10.	MEETING DATES FOR 2019-20 AND FORWARD PLAN	

<p>Forward Plan</p> <p>10/10/19 DSG budget monitoring 2019-20 - <i>Information</i></p> <p>School funding update 20/21, including consultation Plans - <i>Information</i></p> <p>De-delegation 2020-21- <i>Decision</i></p> <p>High Needs Block projections - <i>Information</i></p> <p>Early Years budget review - <i>Information</i></p> <p>14/11/19 School funding formula arrangements 2020/21, including any transfers of funding between the DSG Blocks – <i>Decision and Consultation</i></p> <p>Family Outreach Service - <i>Information</i></p> <p>16/01/20 Final school funding arrangements 2020/21 - <i>Information</i></p> <p>13/02/20 Free Early Education Entitlement rates and centrally retained funding 2020/21 - <i>Decision and Consultation</i></p> <p>DSG budget monitoring report 2019/20 - <i>Information</i></p> <p>Next Meeting: Thursday 10 October, Second Floor Suite meeting rooms 3 & 4</p> <p>Future Meetings: Thursday 14 November, Second Floor Suite meeting rooms 3 & 4 Thursday 16 January, Second Floor Suite meeting rooms 3 & 4 Thursday 13 February, Second Floor Suite meeting rooms 3 & 4</p>	
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