

Leeds Schools Forum

Microsoft Teams Meeting
 Thursday 7 October 2021 at 16:30

| Membership (Apologies in Italics) | | | |
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| GOVERNORS | | HEADTEACHERS | |
| Primary (6 seats) | | Primary (6 seats) | |
| <i>Sue Tuck</i> | <i>Ireland Wood</i> | John Hutchinson | St Theresa's Catholic Primary |
| David Kagai | St Nicholas | <i>Helen Stott</i> | <i>Allerton C of E Primary</i> |
| John Garvani | Broadgate | Peter Harris | Farsley Farfield Primary |
| <i>Jatinder Ubhi</i> | <i>Swarcliffe Primary</i> | Julie Harkness | Carr Manor Community School |
| <i>Andrew Neal</i> | <i>Adel St John's Primary</i> | Jo Smithson | Greenhill Primary |
| | | Emma Wraight | Fieldhead Carr Primary |
| Secondary (2 seats) | | Secondary (2 seats) | |
| <i>Barbara Trayer</i> | <i>Allerton Grange</i> | <i>Delia Martin</i> | <i>Benton Park</i> |
| <i>David Webster</i> | <i>Pudsey Grangefield</i> | Lucie Lakin | Wetherby High |
| Special (1 seat) | | Special (1 seat) | |
| Russell Trigg | East SILC, John Jamieson | Diane Reynard | East SILC |
| Non School | | Academies – Mainstream (10 seats) | |
| <i>Angela Hynes</i> | <i>PVI Providers</i> | <i>David Gurney</i> | <i>Cockburn School</i> |
| Helen Gratton | PVI Providers | <i>Danny Carr</i> | <i>Dixons Academy</i> |
| <i>Patrick Murphy</i> | <i>Schools JCC</i> | <i>Neil Miley</i> | <i>Dixons Academy</i> |
| <i>Louise Turner</i> | <i>16-19 Providers</i> | John Thorne | St Mary's Academy Menston |
| <i>Angela Cox OBE</i> | <i>Catholic Diocese</i> | Emma Lester | Woodkirk Academy |
| <i>Dan Cohen</i> | <i>Jewish Faith Schools</i> | Siobhan Roberts | Cockburn John Charles |
| | | Joe Barton | Woodkirk Academy |
| | | <i>Anna McKenzie</i> | <i>Richmond Hill</i> |
| | | Rob Dixon | Cockburn School |
| | | Helen Richardson | Kippax Ash Tree |
| Officers: | | | |
| <i>Sal Tariq, OBE, Director</i> | | Academy – Special School (1 seat) | |
| Tim Pouncey, Chief Officer Strategy & Resources | | Mary Ruggles | Springwell Leeds North |
| Louise Hornsey, Head of Service, Finance | | | |
| Shaheen Myers, Deputy Director Learning | | | |
| Lucie McAulay, Head of Service, Finance | | Academy – Alternative Provision (1 Seat) | |
| Val Waite, Head of Learning Inclusion | | Vacancy | |
| Shirley Maidens, Finance | | | |
| Rebecca McCormack, Lead for Admissions & Family Information | | | |
| Elizabeth Jackson | | | |
| Richard des Forges | | | |
| Liz Honeyman | | | |
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| Item | Title | Actions |
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| 1.0 | <p>Apologies Apologies were received from: Neil Miley, Sue Tuck, Anna McKenzie, Saleem Tariq, Dave Gurney, Jatinda Ubhi, Delia Martin, Dan Cohen, Helen Stott and Dave Webster.</p> | |
| 2.0 | <p>Introductions and Schools Forum Membership The Chair welcomed Shaheen Myers, Deputy Director for Learning.</p> <p>The vacancy for the alternative provision seat was advertised on 6 October with a deadline of 29 October.</p> <p>The academy vacancy has been filled by Helen Richardson who has moved from a primary governor role to an academy. This now leaves a vacancy for a primary governor.</p> | |
| 3.0 3.1 | <p>Minutes of Previous Meeting The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.</p> | |
| 4.0 | <p>Matters Arising <i>Page One, Item 3.1:</i> The data released by the office for National Statistics around local, regional and national birth rates was circulated during the meeting.</p> <p>Page One, Item 3.3: The information on alternative provision and AIP places has been circulated.</p> <p>Page One, Item 4 – Schools Balances: A summary to be brought back to the next meeting.</p> | |
| 5.0 5.1 5.2 5.3 5.4 | <p>DSG Monitoring Report 2021-2022</p> <p>The report details the latest monitoring position for 2021-22 on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) at the end of August 2021. The DSG is projecting an in year overspend of £1.84m and a carry forward deficit of £5.49m.</p> <p><i>Schools Block:</i> the majority of the funds are allocated to primary and secondary schools with a small amount to de-delegated services and the growth fund. The block is projecting a small saving of £44k. Overspend of the de-delegated services is projected at £436k. Within this there is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an overspend of maternity pay of £155k • additional income of £92k due to post September academy conversions. • Underspend of £499k on the contingency fund. <p><i>Growth Fund:</i> The budget was set assuming there would be an adjustment to DSG income. This is known as a recoupment adjustment.</p> <p><i>Early Years:</i> As reported at the June Forum the Block is expected to report a £2m underspend which is a result of the uncertainty on funding due to the pandemic. At the previous meeting there was discussion around a one-off exceptional payment. There is a change in dates for when the ESFA finalises funding, from July to November and as such it is difficult to accurately state how much the Block will receive. If the £2m is refunded it would be paid at a supplementary hourly rate based on the hours claimed last year and would be distributed to all Early Years providers. However it was pointed out that in doing this the amounts received by providers would be relatively small.</p> | |

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| 5.4.1 | The Forum was advised that one of the proposals under consideration was to retain the £2m in the DSG Balance. No decision has been taken yet and a whole series of views will be taken into consideration beforehand. |
| 5.4.2 | It was felt that there are significant areas of need either deprivation or special needs and that the £2m should be targeted at Early Years high needs provision. There are an increasing number of pupils entering nursery with additional needs. This could have an impact on children earlier in their life when it is needed most and help them to be better prepared for the transition to schools. |
| 5.4.3 | Members wishing to submit representation about Early Years and the £2m are encouraged to do so. For clarity it should be noted that the £2m is a one-off and is not expected to be repeated. The Early Years FFI was overspent in 2020/21 by £298k. |
| 5.4.4 | The Director of Children and Families will make the final decision and the plan at present would be to take this as a delegated decision in according with the constitution and de-delegation scheme. |
| 5.4.5 | The Forum was informed that the £2m cannot be ringfenced specifically to the High Needs Block. |
| 5.5 | <i>High Needs Block:</i> Overall the Block is projecting a small saving of £44k with the assumption of £1.181k transfer from reserves and £2.887m transfer from the Schools Block. DSG income of £2.4m is less than budgeted for mainly due to the recent conversion of the North West SILC and offset by reduced spend. A bid for £170k to expand the hospital provision in Leeds was successful. |
| 5.5.1 | There is a continued pressure on statutory assessments for EHCPs both in Leeds and across the country. Many children are returning to school with greater difficulties and significant social, emotional and mental health needs. It is anticipated that Leeds will maintain approximately 7,000 EHCPs by 2025. SEN top ups continue to be overspent at £426k. However this is lower than was anticipated. Numbers in Post 16 are lower than expected but there is a projected deficit of £975k due to the North West SILC conversion. |
| 5.5.2 | Services provided by Children and Families will see an underspend of £375k. This is due to vacant posts and delays in recruitment. |
| 5.5.3 | There was an expectation that there would be a need for extra specialist placements from September 2021. However additional places have been provided by SILCs and RPs and as a result no expenditure is expected in this budget. |
| 5.5.4 | Massive staffing issues exist particularly with regard to Educational Psychologists and work is taking place to recruit more staff to support schools. |
| 5.5.5 | It was appreciated that there is a need to save money across the local authority and set recruitment levels. However if children do not get the early support they need it gets more expensive despite the moral argument. |
| 5.5.6 | The draft SEND and Inclusion Strategy is being rolled out and one of the key elements of work in the strategy is how to engage in early work and support schools and SENCOs with all they need. Discussions are taking place at regional and national levels and various things are |

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| | <p>happening eg the development of a trauma service and a SEND practice framework. Every school has a named Educational Psychologist.</p> | |
| 5.5.7 | <p>Leeds is unique to other local authorities in that it has a mechanism to passport funding to settings without the need of an EHCP and conversations are now taking place with all providers.</p> | |
| 5.5.8 | <p>In the January census Leeds had 37.1% of EHCPs placed in specialist settings; other core cities are at 42.6%. Of the new EHCPs coming through 63% are in mainstream schools.</p> | |
| 5.5.9 | <p>It was confirmed that EHCPs were still processed through the pandemic albeit on a different basis. Applications are rising and during one month of this term 112 were received. Children are back in school but with a greater need than before the pandemic due to the trauma they may have experienced. The number of requests for EHCPs have now risen 105%, this is mainly for young people not children in early years.</p> | |
| 5.6 | <p><i>Central School Services Block:</i> This Block is split between historical commitments and funding for ongoing responsibilities carried out by the local authority on behalf of schools. The Block is projecting a saving of £73k due to vacancies and delayed recruitment in the Admissions Service.</p> | |
| 5.6.1 | <p>Changes to admissions codes gives new burdens to the local authorities and some schools. There is now a much faster turn-around when considering admission requests. Plans are in place to recruit to the vacancies.</p> | |
| 5.7 | <p><i>2021/22 Reserves:</i> There is a carry forward deficit of £5.49m with a surplus balance on delegated reserves of £568k.</p> | |
| 5.8 | <p>Finally, a condition of the DSG is that the local authority has to present a plan on how it manages future spend.</p> | |
| 5.9 | <p>Schools Forum noted the content of the report.</p> | |
| 6.0 | <p>DSG Medium term Financial Strategy Projections</p> | |
| 6.1 | <p>The report outlines the medium-term financial strategy for the five year period 2022/23 to 2026/27. In the next five years the authority is projected to receive £2,623m. However as with other local authorities Leeds is not receiving its full allocation due to the cap on funding increases. If the cap had not been in place Leeds would have received a further £30.4m between 2018/19 and 2021/22. The funding cap will apply to 2022/23 and equates to £1.9m on the High Needs Block.</p> | |
| 6.2 | <p>Both the Schools and Early Years Blocks are expected to balance over the next five years. There will be a small pressure on the Central School Services Block due to a phased reduction on historical council expenditure. In line with national trends the key pressure continues to be on the High Needs Block.</p> | |
| 6.3 | <p>There are assumptions and risk in these projections. The outcome of the National SEND Review in 2019 has been delayed three times so far. Recommendations on the review will have implication on both children and the projection of the High Needs Block.</p> | |
| 6.4 | <p><i>Funding increases:</i> it is not known beyond 2022/23 what level of funding will be received. The projections in the report follow trends on previous years and assumes an 8% year on year increase. Every 1% of funding in the High Needs Block equates to an extra £1m.</p> | |

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| <p>6.5</p> <p>6.6</p> <p>6.7</p> <p>6.8</p> <p>6.9</p> <p>6.10</p> | <p><i>Cap on gains:</i> The cap on gains will still be in place next year and Leeds is one of 36 local authorities who are still being capped. It was confirmed that every opportunity is taken to make representations to the ESFA about the cap. The ESFA argues that there is a finite amount of money to allocate and under the new funding formula there are authorities who will lose funding. Schools Forum asked officers to explore whether a legal challenge could be made. Action: approach Legal Services for advice</p> <p><i>High needs demand and complexity:</i> Leeds continues to experience an increase in demand for high needs and any additional funding received will be exceeded by costs. It is a testament to partnership working across the city and work carried out in schools that the situation is not as bad as it could be.</p> <p><i>Funding paid to high needs settings:</i> the ESFA does not require an increase in the per pupil funding paid to settings. No decision has been made in these assumptions so projections are made on the existing rate.</p> <p><i>Funding transfer within blocks:</i> since 2017/18 £12.69m has been transferred to the High Needs Block from other Blocks. It is not known if this will be possible after 2022/23. It was confirmed that the local authority does not assume this can be done year on year. It is something that is consulted on with schools and ultimately in the gift of Schools Forum. It is however flagged up as a potential.</p> <p><i>DSG management plan:</i> this is being worked on and will be brought to a future forum.</p> <p>Schools Forum noted the content of the report.</p> | |
| <p>7.0</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p> <p>7.3</p> <p>7.4</p> <p>7.5</p> | <p>Schools funding update</p> <p>The final allocation will be confirmed in December 2021 and will take into account the October 2021 pupil data. For 2022-2023 the base structure of the national funding formula has not changed and as in previous years each local authority can have a local funding formula. From 2023-2024 local authorities will have to move closer to the national funding formula.</p> <p>The Schools Block indicative allocation for 2022-2023 is £613M; an increase of £11m compared to 2021-2022</p> <p>There are a number of technical changes to the funding formula:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools sparsity funding use to be based on straight line distances. It is now calculated on road distances. • Data used to calculate free school meals will be based on the October 2020 census rather than January 2020's. • Schools Business rates will now be paid directly by the ESFA on behalf of maintained schools. • Low attainment factor: will be based on the 2019 assessment data due to the cancellation of assessments in 2020 and 2021. <p>The Authority can continue to transfer 0.5% (£3.069m) of the Schools Block funding to other blocks for 2022-2023.</p> <p>The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) will continue with local authorities being able to set a local MFG between 0.5% and 2% per pupil. The minimum per pupil funding levels will increase:</p> | |

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| <p>7.6</p> <p>7.7</p> <p>7.8</p> <p>7.9</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary schools £5,525 compared to £5,150 in 2021/2022 • Primary schools £4,265 compared to £4,000 in 2021/2022. <p><i>High Needs Block:</i> indicative allocation for 2022-2023 is £109m, an increase of £11.1m. Every authority receives between 8-11% funding increase per head of population. Leeds receives the maximum funding of 11% with a cap on gains of £1.9m.</p> <p><i>Central School Services Block:</i> The allocation of £5.1m sees a £59k decrease compared to 2021-2022. Funding in this Block is split between ongoing services and historic commitments.</p> <p><i>De-delegation of Services:</i> Later in the year schools will be consulted on the local funding formula for 2022-2023 and the proposal to move as close as possible to the national funding formula. Item 2.8 of the report summarises what will be covered in the consultation. The consultation will run from 4 to 20 October. An online briefing session for Headteachers will be held and schools will be encouraged to complete the consultation. A report will come to the November Schools Forum.</p> <p>Schools Forum noted the content of the report.</p> | |
| <p>8.0</p> <p>8.1</p> <p>8.2</p> <p>8.3</p> | <p>SIMS Update</p> <p>A number of queries have been raised at previous meeting about SIMs licences and the reason for de-delegation. The local authority continues to purchase licences on behalf of both maintained primary and secondary schools and SILCs. The proposal to de-delegate this service for next year will be brought to the Forum.</p> <p>Schools see SIMs as a dated system and a number of them are opting to buy in a different system, despite also having to pay for the de-delegated service.</p> <p>It was suggested that the local authority come up with a system whereby schools opting into SIMs still get a cheap price but that those opting out are refunded the £1.4k.</p> <p>Action: contact IDS Service with a view to exploring this further Schools using the alternative provider Arbour to provide Tim Pouncey with details of costings. Explore the figures in the North Yorkshire framework pick up with colleagues issues around SID .</p> | |
| <p>9.0</p> | <p>Any Other Business None</p> | |
| <p>10.0</p> | <p>MEETING DATES FOR 2021-22 Thursday 18 November 2021 Tuesday 18 January 2022 Thursday 17 February 2022</p> | |