

## Leeds Schools Forum

Microsoft Teams Meeting  
 Thursday 17 February 2022 at 16:30

<b>Membership (Apologies in Italics)</b>			
<b>GOVERNORS</b>		<b>HEADTEACHERS</b>	
<b>Primary (6 seats)</b>		<b>Primary (6 seats)</b>	
<i>Sue Tuck</i>	<i>Ireland Wood</i>	<i>John Hutchinson</i>	<i>St Theresa's Catholic Primary</i>
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
Andrew Neal	Adel St John's Primary	Emma Wraight	Fieldhead Carr Primary
		Jo Smithson	Greenhill Primary
<b>Secondary (2 seats)</b>		<b>Secondary (2 seats)</b>	
<i>Barbara Trayer</i>	<i>Allerton Grange</i>	Delia Martin	Benton Park
David Webster	Pudsey Grammar		
<b>Special (1 seat)</b>		<b>Special (1 seat)</b>	
Russell Trigg	East SILC, John Jamieson	Diane Reynard	East SILC
<b>Non School</b>		<b>Academies – Mainstream (10 seats)</b>	
Angela Hynes	PVI Providers	David Gurney	Cockburn School
Helen Gration	PVI Providers	Neil Miley	Dixons Academy
Patrick Murphy	Schools JCC	John Thorne	St Mary's Academy Menston
Louise Turner	16-19 Providers	Joe Barton	Woodkirk Academy
<i>Dan Cohen</i>	<i>Jewish Faith Schools</i>	Rob Dixon	Cockburn School
Peter McQuillen-Strong	Catholic Diocese	Gavin Hosford	Green Meadow
		Rachel Colbourn	Bramhope Primary
		Sarah Talbot	East Ardsley
		Maria Williams	Brigshaw High
		Kate Burton	Alder Tree Primary
<b>Officers</b>			
Tim Pouncey, Chief Officer Strategy & Resources		<b>Academy – Special School (1 seat)</b>	
Louise Hornsey, Head of Service, Finance		Mary Ruggles	Springwell Leeds North
Shaheen Myers, Deputy Director Learning			
Lucie McAulay, Head of Service, Finance			
Val Waite, Head of Learning Inclusion		<b>Academy – Alternative Provision (1 seat)</b>	
Shirley Maidens, Finance		Vacancy	
Elizabeth Jackson			
Rebecca McCormack, Lead for Admissions & Family Information		Jonathan Renton	
Michael Cole		Louise Hornsey, Head of Finance	
Richard des Forges		Barbara Dostalov	
Claire Swift		Lawrence Clark	
Liz Honeyman			

Item	Title	Actions
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>	
1.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted and introductions made. Apologies were received from Sue Tuck, Dan Cohen, Barbara Trayer, Jatinder Ubhi, John Hutchinson and Helen Stott.	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Schools Forum Membership</b>	
2.1	It was noted that Kate Burton, Alder Tree Primary, has joined the Forum as an Academy Representative and that Jo Smithson is coming back for this year to cover the Primary Heads vacancy.	
2.2	It was noted that there are still the following vacancies: Secondary Heads x 1 Primary Governors x 1 Academy Specialist Provision x 1	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b>	
3.1	The Minutes of the previous meeting held on the 18 January 2022 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
4.1	Minute 7.4.2 – there is an outstanding action for Liz Jackson to look what can be put in place with any surplus to support schools covering the cost of staff absent through pregnancy and bring this back to the June meeting.	<b>LJ</b>
4.2	Minute 7.5 – there was a question around whether maternity and other cover included shared adoption and parental leave. Lucie McAulay stated that there is no specific guidance on this, but that some leave apart from just maternity has been charged against this and so the narrative should be expanded in the future to include adoption and paternity. Whilst the amounts are not significant it was agreed to increase the narrative in the guidance.	<b>LM</b>
4.3	Minute 7.14 – the vote for the de-delegation of services went through with a large majority.	
<b>5.0</b>	<b>DSG 2021/22 -Budget Monitoring Month 10</b>	
5.1	Lucie McAulay presented the report to advise members of the Schools Forum of the latest 2021/22 budget position on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) as at the end of January 2022. It was reported that this currently projects an in-year underspend of £2.274M which is made up of small underspends in the Schools Block, Central School Services Block (CSSB) and High Needs Block with a higher underspend in the Early Years Block. There is an overall projected deficit at 31/03/22 of £1.115M. Lucie then outlined the position for each block as follows.	
5.2	Schools Block – it was reported that there is a currently an underspend of £273K for this block and overall de-delegated services budgets are currently projected to be underspent by £472K. It was noted that there is an overspend of £120K on employees suspended from schools and explained that there had been an increased number this year which is probably due to the suspension processes being more drawn out due to the pandemic. The question was asked if this has been built into next year's figures and Shirley Maidens stated that they have asked for a higher figure in the budget for 2022/23 to manage this.	
5.3	Early Years Block – it was reported that this block has an underspend of £1.559M. It was explained that this is as a result of the difference between the way the funding is calculated and the actual payments made to providers. Early Years funding is usually paid to the local authority	

	<p>based on the January 2021 and January 2022 census, but this time it has been paid out to providers based on termly headcounts of the children attending settings. As a result, there is a difference between the funding received by the local authority and that paid out to providers. Secondly, there was a proposal in June to allocate Early Years block DSG surplus from financial year 2020/21 to Early Years providers. Following consultation it was decided not to pursue this proposal. Joe Barton queried this consultation. Rebecca McCormack stated that this was not a formal consultation and it was agreed that the report should reflect this more fully as it looks like this was a more formal process.</p>	<b>RM</b>
5.4	<p>The point was also made that there is always an underspend on the Early Years Block every year and how this should be looked into as Early Years does need funding to be spent. The question was asked by Joe Barton and Helen Gration if it is now too late to do something with this money for Early Years. Tim Pouncey explained that if they distributed this it would be small levels of payments which would not have a significant impact with the early years providers. It was also explained that there is a requirement for the Council to keep the DSG in balance and not the individual blocks. Helen Gration stated that if there is a regular underspend then this needs to be looked at to look at how this is spent and that it is wrong to ignore this underspend on early years and a local authority should be seen as doing something to tackle this and having an intervention. In terms of the unspent money, it was explained that this will go into the overall DSG surplus / deficit to reduce the overall deficit going forward, although it will not eliminate the deficit completely, otherwise savings would need to be found from elsewhere as there needs to be a balanced budget across the whole of the DSG and not for individual blocks.</p>	
5.5	<p>The point was again made that Early Years needs the funding and there is a need to develop more of a plan moving forward as if it is allocated to early years it should be spent on this. It was agreed that these points would be taken into consideration when determining the Early Years block funding formula for 2022/23.</p>	<b>RM</b>
5.6	<p>High Needs Block – this block is reporting an underspend of £369K, although this is after the assumption that £1.181M is required from reserves to fund the in-year expenditure and also following the transfer from the Schools Block. It was also explained that this is mainly due to the conversion of the North West SILC into 2 special academies. There has been an overspend in SEN pupils and in the hospital service, but this has been offset by income. The Children &amp; Families service are reporting a net underspend of £409K, which is due to vacant posts and delays in recruitment.</p>	
5.7	<p>It was reported that at the start of the year, it was expected that there would be a need for extra specialist placements from September 2021, but that as additional places have been provided in various settings, no expenditure is expected against this budget. A question was asked around this when specialist school places are so needed with children waiting for places. Val Waite explained that a specialist school should have been opening in September but that they have encountered massive delays so this will now not happen until next year, so whilst capacity is being developed this is happening much more slowly than they had anticipated.</p>	
5.8	<p>Mary Ruggles asked what was in the AIPs pot of money as there is a lack of clarity around this and that it would be useful to provide more information on this for the Forum so that everyone is clear what impact these funds have and what provisions they fund. Val Waite explained that each of the AIPs have Chairs and their own governance system with financial and performance reports and that people can liaise with headteachers in their own area to scrutinise this. It was also reported that they are in the process of sending out new contracts and having clear performance indicators. Mary also asked if there is an indication of the number of students who benefit from this money and Val confirmed that the Chairs of the AIPs would have the specific data and be able to drill down this data to individual schools. David Gurney stated that the work</p>	

	of the AIPs is invaluable and is of real help to them, but Val stated that there is some great partnership working with schools to manage this. Mary stated that it would be good to know the numbers involved.	
5.9	Central School Services Block – this block is reporting an underspend of £73K which is due to savings in the admissions service in vacancies and delayed recruitment.	
5.10	Reserves 2021/22 – the current position is a carry forward balance to 2022/23 of £1.115M at the end of the financial year, with £604K de-delegated, leaving a total carry over of £511K.	
5.11	The Forum noted the contents of the report.	
5.12	A question was asked that if a graph were to be plotted to show the deficit or otherwise over the years what would the graph look like, and it was agreed that a graph would be produced and brought back to the June meeting. Tim Pouncey explained that this is the cumulative impact of the cap and Emma Wraight asked if the cap could ever be challenged. Tim stated that this is always being challenged and Peter Harris explained that several letters have been sent to the Secretary of State, but no response has been received so far.	LM/TP
5.13	The supplementary paper at Appendix 1 is the Management Plan, but it was noted that not much has changed since the last meeting and that this is more for information.	
<b>6.0</b>	<b>High Needs Budget 2022/23</b>	
6.1	The report outlining the budget for the High Needs Block for 2022/23 is due to go to Full Council next week which is reporting a balanced budget with £103.98M of funding and £103.98M of spend.	
6.2	It was noted that the High Needs grant allocation for 2022/23 was issued by the Education, Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) in December 2021, though adjustments to this figure are expected up until July 2022. For Leeds the current allocation is an increase of £15.88M for 2022/23 which includes a new £4.15M supplementary grant. It was explained that further guidance is now being worked through which has been recently received and that this will be brought back to a future meeting when all of the work and modelling has been carried out, including the impact of the cap and ongoing funding pressures.	LM
6.3	The budget for commissioned services has increased which is mainly as a result of a successful bid for increased funding as a result of a new ward opening at Leeds General Infirmary. Diane Reynard queried the new ward and stated that this was due to a new hospital at Red Kite View and not a new ward at the LGI. It was agreed that Diane would check and let Lucie know the correct detail.	DR
6.4	The High Needs budget for 2022/23 also assumes an Invest to Save budget of £600K, which will be used to develop actions in the management plan which will require a robust business case and be able to demonstrate savings in other areas of the High Needs budget.	
6.5	A budget has been set within the funding available, but there is a risk that demand will rise further. Clarification has been received from the ESFA on assumptions to be made on grant increases in future years. It had been assumed that the increase for 2023/24 would be 8% but this is now 5% and 3% for each year after that, which will impact on future years and the position will need to be closely monitored.	
6.6	The proposed budget for 2022/23 was then outlined line by line and the Forum were asked to note the position.	

6.7	Gavin Hosford asked about the cost to special schools due to the levy as there is a proposed £1M to special schools but will it cover the cost of the levy? Lucie McAulay stated that they have still not got the figures, but that £1M should be enough to cover all settings otherwise this would feel like a cut to the special school budgets and it was agreed to bring this information back to a future meeting to work through the details. Gavin also asked about the budgets for the academies so that the academies can look at the impact and plan for the future and it was also agreed to bring this to the next meeting.	LM LM
6.8	A discussion was then held around the Invest to Save budget. Val Waite stated that some thoughts are emerging about how to do this and asked that the Forum let them know of any ideas as this is an opportunity to address some of the issues in the future due to the future downward provision of funding for the High Needs Block. Val stated that a SEND framework is being developed to look at the needs and drives in the city and could look at how to use this budget to improve the service. The strategy is currently in its final draft and will be finished in the next month or so and use this as a driver for change. It was agreed that the proposals would be brought back to the Forum once there is more detail and how this will be used as a toolbox to simplify processes and that they are currently working on a pilot on how to introduce support into schools with the aim of reducing costs in the High Needs Block.	ALL  VW
6.9	The question was asked whether the £600K Invest to Save budget is for one year only or if this is ongoing. It was explained that this is just in the first year now and that they are working on the projection for future years. Louise Hornsey stated that they are working through the numbers and that hopefully the Invest to Save could continue and make savings elsewhere. Mary Ruggles asked if there are any practical examples of benefits being created. It was reported that they have worked with SEND companies on the growing needs of autism and training people to work with young children with autism and developing a toolbox to support this. Diane Reynard asked if this proposed funding model has gone anywhere further for comment. Val Waite stated that they have collated some feedback responses to take to the DSG Board, but that this has been delayed due to the Ofsted inspection, but there is a commitment to look at feedback for the key areas to address concerns, but that there is a generally a positive agreement about this approach. It was agreed that Val would bring a detailed plan back to a future meeting.	VW
6.10	Peter Harris asked about the £4M of supplementary funding, and with £1M to cover the social care levy what would the other £3M be spent on and if this has been allocated, and also why had there been a transfer from the Schools Block if the High Needs Block had received this supplementary grant and does this transfer still have to take place? Lucie stated that they had only just found out this detail and are still looking at it but felt that the transfer would still need to take place as the funding deadlines had now passed and details been submitted. It was agreed that there is a need to look at the DSG for the longer term at a future meeting.	LM
<b>7.0</b>	<b>2022/23 DSG Early Years Block</b>	
7.1	Rebecca McCormack presented a report outlining the funding for the 2022/23 Early Years Block and how the funding is proposed to be spent and that the Forum would be asked to vote on each of the proposals line by line via a link which has been provided to all members of the Forum. It was reported that the DfE have increased the rate paid to the Local Authority by £0.21 per hour per child for 2 year olds and £0.17 per hour per child for 3 and 4 year olds. Rebecca outlined the proposed commitments for the centrally retained element of the Early Year Block on which the Forum were asked to vote on each of the 12 items on the link provided. The amount to be centrally retained is projected to be less than in 2021/22 due to the reduction in central retention. There are corresponding reductions in the overall central retention costs, relating to the Early Years Action Plan which was a time limited commitment, and removing the contingency element which has not been utilised in previous years. Elements (1) to (10) are the same as for 2021/22.	

7.2	<p>The 12 items voted on were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Special Education Needs Inclusion Team</li> <li>(2) Commissioned Service – Portage</li> <li>(3) Sensory Services</li> <li>(4) Education Psychology</li> <li>(5) Early Years Funding for Inclusion Team</li> <li>(6) Family Information Service</li> <li>(7) Family Services</li> <li>(8) Sufficiency</li> <li>(9) Commissioned Services – Northpoint Wellbeing</li> <li>(10) Learning Improvement</li> <li>(11) Early Years Action Plan</li> <li>(12) Contingency</li> </ul>	
7.3	<p>Peter Harris confirmed that all 12 of the elements had been voted for and had been approved and that the details would be shared with the Minutes when they are circulated. It was also noted that the Director of Children and Families will determine the Early Years Block Funding Formula and the rates to be paid to providers in 2022/23 by the 25 March 2022.</p>	PH
8.0	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p>	
8.1	<p>There was no other business on this occasion.</p>	
9.0	<p><b>Meeting Dates for 2021-22 and Forward Plan</b></p>	
9.1	<p>The next meeting is due to take place on the 23 June 2022.</p>	
9.2	<p>Peter Harris asked the Forum what sort of format they would prefer for the meeting moving forward and whether this should return to face-to-face meetings, stay as a virtual meeting or take a hybrid approach. It was agreed that members of the Forum would send their views to Peter.</p>	ALL