

Schools' Forum Meeting

6 December 2022

Attendees:

Members

Carole Bradley (CB) (Academy – Primary)
 Lisa Grieg (LG) (Academy – Special)
 Toni Ray (TR) (Early Years)
 Chris Simmons (CS) (Academy – Governors)
 Mark Tilling (MT Chair) (Maintained Secondary)
 David Turner (DT) (Maintained Primary)
 Lee Walker (LW) (Academy – Primary)
 Zoe Westley (ZW) (Academy – Special)
 Leanne Yates (LY) (Maintained Primary)

Local Authority Officers

Jacqui Braithwaite (JB)
 (Integrated Services for
 Learning Manager)

Sandra Shears (SSh) (Head of
 Finance – Corporate and
 Schools)

Jo Stubbs (JS) (Administrator)

Danielle Swainston (DS)
 (Assistant Director
 (Commissioning))

Jane Watt (JW) (Group
 Accountant)

Amanda Whitehead (AW)
 (Assistant Director
 (Education))

Agenda Item	Action
<p>1 Apologies -</p> <p>Apologies were submitted by the following and accepted by Forum:</p> <p>Sara Crawshaw (Diocese RC) Tracey Gibson (Secondary) Mandy Hall (Academy – Primary) John Hardy (Academy – Primary) Jo Heaton (Diocese C of E) Andrew Jordan (Academy – Secondary) Sue Sharpe (Maintained Primary) Joanne Wilson (Academy – Primary)</p> <p>Members discussed the current practice around non-attendance at meetings and the appointment of substitutes. It was agreed that in future anyone who failed to attend or provide a substitute for 2 consecutive meetings should receive a letter from the Chair asking them to either resign</p>	

	<p>or appoint an alternative substitute. DS noted that some may have been less inclined to attend today's meeting as there were no decisions to be made and that this should be considered by officers in future.</p> <p>The Chair advised that a member had queried whether they could join today's meeting remotely. He queried whether members were happy to continue meetings in person or would prefer to return to remote meetings. SSh advised that legally remote meetings could take place and a link sent to any non-members that requested it. Hybrid meetings could also take place depending on the technology being available. While members acknowledged that remote meetings made it easier to attend, particularly if people were isolating, there were also less opportunities for people to make a meaningful contribution online than in person. It was agreed therefore that meetings would continue in person.</p> <p>The Chair advised that Mandy Hall had resigned as an Academy – Primary representative.</p>	
<p>2</p>	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting – 18 November 2022 - Minutes approved.</p> <p>Matters Arising</p> <p>SSh to distribute annual declarations of interest forms to members for completion.</p> <p>Corrections to the breakdown of the profile of children placed into independent provision by year group which had been previously circulated to members were complete and would be recirculated in due course.</p> <p>DS was facilitating the setting up of a Task and Finish Group to look at funding of Horizon places.</p>	
<p>3</p>	<p>Early Years Update</p> <p>Members would be asked to make recommendations on the 2023/24 hourly rate for Early Years providers in March 2023. Government funding is based on an hourly rate payable to providers. The rates were different for 2 year-old and 3-4-year old provision. Since 2016/17 there had been a funding shortfall on 2-year-old provision which had been offset by underspending on 3-4-year-old provision. In 2019/20 the Early Years block had begun to overspend overall and been funded using Dedicated Schools Grant reserves. In Summer 2019 a Task and Finish Group had been established to propose options to tackle the 2-year-old provider funding deficit. Within the 2021 Autumn spending review the Government had announced additional funding for early years entitlements from 2022-2025 to allow an increase in hourly rates. Forecasts for Early Years spending in 2022/23 showed an underspend of £0.100m. The reason for this unusual overspend was not yet clear and it was possible that this was just a one-off benefit that may not continue in future years.</p>	

	<p>The Task and Finish Group had reviewed the changed position projected for 2022/23. They felt along with Council officers that further time was needed to clarify whether the change in funding position was temporary. Previously the Task and Finish Group had proposed that any rate reduction proposals to be made by the Task and Finish Group be delayed until the December 2022 consultation window. Given the current underspend uncertainty a further pause to December 2023 was recommended.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>	
4	High Needs Block Projected Outturn 2022/23	
	<p>DS advised members that the projected outturn for the High Needs Block was showing a mid-case estimated overspend of £0.438m. Reasons for this projected overspend included increases in independent school fees and top up funding and support.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the report be noted</p>	
5	High Needs Task and Finish Group Update	
	<p>DS confirmed that a meeting was scheduled for the following day. In January the Group would be considering spending plans for the High Needs Block and setting up panels.</p>	
6	Any Other Business	
	<p>The next meeting of the Forum would take place on Wednesday 1st February at 2pm.</p>	

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS LOG

Meeting	Description	Owner
18/11/22	That a Task and Finish Group be set up to look at issues around funding of Horizon places	Danielle Swainston
18/11/22	Annual declaration of interest forms to be sent to members	Sandra Shears

Financial Year 2022/23: Children’s Services Committee – Log of Schools’ Forum
Recommendations and Committee Decisions

Last Updated: 16 January 2023

Committee Date	Report	Recommendation and Decision Details
15/11/22	Dedicated Schools Grant (Former Education Services Grant rate per pupil) – Disapplication Request	<p>The Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Agreed the 2023/24 funding rate at £60 per pupil/place. b) Agreed to submit the disapplication request to the Secretary of State to set the Education Services General Duties rate at £60 per pupil/place for 2023/24. c) Noted this will be the seventh consecutive year the local authority has applied for disapplication and that the previous six applications have been successful. d) Agreed that a request for additional funding be sought from the Secretary of State, on behalf of the Children’s Services Committee, to assist in discharging statutory responsibilities to schools.