

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM

10 June 2021

PRESENT: -

School Representatives: Mr B Lawrance (Chairman), Mrs D West, Mrs R Stephenson

Academies Representatives: Mr M Adnitt, M Drewery, D Flowitt, B Lawrance (Chairman), P Rospin, R Stephenson, P Thompson, A West, D West and C Williams

Non Schools Representative:

Mr P Thompson

PVI Representatives:

Mrs M Drury and Mrs C Williams

Officers: Ms T Elliott, Mrs R Maughan, Mr D Chaplin, Mrs W Holmes and Mrs N Raines

The meeting was held virtually via MS Teams.

930 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Julie Reed, Mrs T Millard, Ms Z Bidmead, Mrs A Nuttall, Mr R Biglands, Mrs A Cvijetic, Mrs J Flintoff and Ms J Frost.

931 **DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND PERSONAL OR PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS (IF ANY)**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and personal or personal and prejudicial interests.

932 **MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING DATED 21 JANUARY 2021**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2021, having been printed and circulated amongst the members, be taken as read and correctly recorded, and be signed by the Chair.

933 **UPDATE OF SCHOOLS FORUM REGULATIONS**

Ms T Elliott advised members that there had been a change to The Schools Forum (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 to make permanent provisions to enable Schools Forum meetings to be held remotely. She explained that it had been added to the agenda in order to gauge opinion on this going forward.

Discussion ensued, whilst members felt meeting face to face was more interactive, virtual meetings also held benefits and a blended approach was

SCHOOLS FORUM
10 June 2021

favoured.

Resolved – That from this point on, two meetings a year be held face to face, and two meetings a year be held remotely.

934 **SCHOOLS FORUM REPRESENTATION - NON SCHOOLS MEMBERS**

Mrs A Dawson explained that she had been approached via e-mail by Jason Brister, North Lincolnshire NEU Branch Secretary, requesting that a trade union representative take a seat on the Schools Forum.

Mr Brister had also asked for points to be raised for consideration on the Trade Union Facility Time 'underspend' for April 2020 – April 2021. Ms T Elliott advised that the annual report on de-delegations would be submitted to the forum in October, she believed that the underspend would be better discussed then.

Ms Elliott explained that there were currently 21 members on the forum, up to a third of these could be non-school members. As there were currently five non-school representatives on the forum, if a trade union representative were to be added to the forum, a change to the constitution would be required. She advised that it was up to the forum to decide whether adding a trade union representative would be to the benefit of all pupils in North Lincolnshire.

DC added that he believed that there were other forums which involved consultation with all union representatives in the local authority, these meetings could be fed into if there was anything that members of the Schools Forum felt was relevant to them.

Mr B Lawrance felt that it came down to the purpose of having union representation, there would only be very limited subjects that would be of interest to such a member and there would be opportunities via another meeting to raise these issues. DF suggested that perhaps it would be more beneficial to look to other groups if the forum wished to broaden its remit, perhaps to go in a different direction.

Resolved – (a) It was agreed that the constitution would not be amended to include trade union representation, and (b) a response to Mr Brister would be prepared by Mr Lawrence, Ms Elliott and Mrs Dawson.

935 **DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2020/21 OUTTURN**

Mrs R Maughan presented a report updating the Schools Forum on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) outturn for 2020/21.

The DSG was a ring fenced specific grant that must be used in support of the schools' budget as defined in the School and Early Years Finance (England) (No 2) Regulations; it could be used for no other purpose.

Councils were responsible for determining the split of the grant between central expenditure and the individual schools' budget (ISB) in conjunction

SCHOOLS FORUM

10 June 2021

with local Schools Forums.

Councils were also responsible for ensuring that the DSG was deployed in support of the schools' budget. This includes both DSG funding allocated to central expenditure and funding for the ISB allocated in accordance with their local schools funding formula.

The final DSG allocation for 2020/21 was £142.227m (£86.869m following academy and high needs recoupment of £55.357m).

Funding deployed to maintained schools amounted to £60.658m. Central expenditure for early years, high needs and central provision amount to £24.439m. A breakdown of expenditure for each of the central budgets for early years, high needs and central provision was shown in Appendix 1 to the report.

The report set out the contribution to the DSG ring fenced earmarked reserves.

New provisions had been put into the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2020, which meant that councils are required to carry forward overspends to their schools' budget. This created, on a statutory basis, a new requirement that a deficit must be carried forward to be dealt with from future DSG income.

Resolved – That the final reported outturn for 2020/21 be noted.

936 **SCHOOLS OUTTURN FINANCIAL YEAR 2021**

Mrs R Maughan presented a report informing the Schools Forum of the outturn individual school budgets and the overall financial position of North Lincolnshire maintained schools at the close of the financial year 2020-21.

Individual school budgets for 2020-21 amounted to £112.378m of which £54.990m was recouped by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for academy schools. In addition, maintained schools carried forward balances of £3.196m from 2019/20.

Actual expenditure by maintained schools in 2020-21 was £57.637m, resulting in an in-year contribution to reserves of £3.022m.

At the end of 2020-21 the number of school budgets with deficit balances was five. Two primary schools had cleared their one-year deficits and one primary federation of two schools had cleared a long-standing deficit. One primary school converted to an academy with a deficit balance which would be reimbursed by the ESFA in 2021-22. One primary school unexpectedly ended the year with a deficit balance within 2% of their total budget. The school had set a budget plan to clear the deficit within 2021-22 and was not required to apply for a licensed deficit.

Three schools continued with ongoing deficits, all were making progress and

SCHOOLS FORUM
10 June 2021

had reduced their deficits.

Thirty five schools had increased or maintained their surplus balances including those reducing removing their deficit balances. Seven schools held positive excessive balances, with four of these having held such balances for over two years. These schools had therefore been asked to provide further details of the intended use of the surplus reserves.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

937 **DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2021/22 UPDATE**

Mrs R Maughan presented a report providing information on the updated Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Allocations published in March 2021 and planned spending of central expenditure.

The DSG allocations were presented in four blocks. Each block was determined by a separate national funding formula.

In March 2021 the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) updated DSG allocations for recoupment and high needs deductions for academies. The report set out details of changes made to each block.

Since December there was one change to the Schools Block being the conversion of one maintained primary school to academy status.

The change to the High Needs Block was due to an increase in places being agreed from September 2021 at the Alternative Provision Academy. The 2021 to 2022 High Needs import/export adjustment data published in July 2020 had been used for the provisional 2021 to 2022 allocations data.

Ms T Elliott explained that Mr D Chaplin and his team would look at how the increased allocation for high needs would be used. Mr Chaplin advised caution with regard to the figures, the increase was due to the rising number of EHCPs. The rise was not as significant as other areas and he believed it would balance out through the year. However, the debate about how additional monies could be used could be opened up going forward.

Full details of the changes to DSG budgets were also set out in the report.

Resolved – That the changes to the Dedicated Schools Grant funding allocations and planned central expenditure for 2021/22 be noted.

938 **EARLY YEARS - DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT**

Mrs N Raines presented a report advising members of a revision to the funding allocation process for the Early Years Dedicated Schools Grant (EYDSG) for the financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22.

Early Years funding was participation based. The EYDSG for each financial year was determined based on three census counts, usually this would be based on 5/12th of January 2020 part time equivalent (pte) child numbers (to

SCHOOLS FORUM

10 June 2021

cover April 2021 to August 2021) and 7/12th of the January 2021 pte child numbers (to cover September 2020 to March 2022). Final funding allocations for 2021/22 were normally based on pte numbers of children recorded on the January 2022 census.

The provisional funding allocations for 2021/22 were determined using the January 2020 census and the January 2021 census occurred as normal. However, the Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) recognised that take-up of funded early education in settings was affected by the lockdown in January due to Covid-19. As a result, they had issued further guidance and a revised funding approach for the financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22. A census count of early years funded hours would be undertaken termly to determine revised allocations.

Resolved – That the revisions to the Early Years Dedicated Schools Grant funding allocation process for financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22 be noted.

939 **FAIR PRIMARY AND SECOND FAIR ACCESS AND INCLUSION PANELS (FAIP)**

Mrs W Holmes presented a report updating Schools Forum on the progress of the primary and secondary Fair Access and Inclusion Panels (FAIP), and on the proposed closure of the Key Stage 3 Darley Centre Pupil Referral Unit.

Both the primary and secondary FAIP were regularly well attended by schools and continued to build on their strengths. Both panels had additional representation from the police, SEND, Behaviour Teams, ASET and YOS where necessary. The FAIPs had an independent chair. Through consultation with headteachers, secondary schools now had responsibility for seeking their own alternative provision for individual pupils where required, although requests for places at the Darley Centre and Coritani continued to be heard via the FAIP.

Managed moves had reduced in recent months, however they continued to be sought school to school without the need for FAIP. Once pupils had left at the end of the summer term the number of young people in alternative provision would be at its lowest.

A revised system for monitoring alternative provision had been developed and trialled in recent weeks which included provisions undertaking and rating their own SEF, uploading all documents and policies and providing opportunity for a full day visit by a monitoring officer, culminating in a comprehensive rag rated report against the SEF and the five areas of Ofsted regardless of whether they were Ofsted registered or not.

Following initial discussions with the Headteachers/Principals Chairs' Group, and specifically on the basis of reduced need, following a significant drive on inclusion, the council had launched a consultation with the proposal to close the Darley Centre with effect from end of July 2021.

Mr Chaplin advised that the report had been presented to the Schools Forum

SCHOOLS FORUM 10 June 2021

in order to highlight the partnership work previously referred to, which had resulted in an overall reduction in the use of alternative provision, in particular the Darley Centre. Secondary school would have places in their own accommodation to help children with social and mental health needs. It was felt that now was a good opportunity to think about different provision with a view to closing the Darley Centre at the end of the academic year. The council would work closely with the young people and staff affected. Discussion was needed as to how these resources would be used going forward, Mr Chaplin thought it would be useful to discuss this at a future meeting of the forum.

Mr Lawrance stressed that it was important to monitor the impact of the funding and what it is used for. Mrs Holmes added that consideration was needed as to what was required additionally at primary level before progression to secondary.

Resolved - (a) That headteachers and principals continue to work with the council to implement and embed area-wide solutions, as outlined in the report; (b) that further local inclusion opportunities (SEND Capital Funding) be developed; (c) that the consultation on the proposed closure of the Darley Centre be considered by headteachers and principals, and (d) that a report be submitted to the next meeting on how the funding reference above could be used to support mainstream schools.

940 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS** F40 Group

Ms Elliott explained that North Lincolnshire had been a member of the F40 Group, which had been set up by the 40 lowest funded local authorities in the country, for some years. However, although the council was not now one of the 40 lowest funded local authorities, it had continued to be a member of the group, as it was felt that the contribution was worth it. The membership had now come up for renewal.

Resolved – That the F40 membership be renewed for the forthcoming year.

Terms of Office

The Secretary informed members that the terms of office for all four governor representatives on the forum were shortly due to expire.

Resolved – That Mrs D West request nominations at the next meeting of the Governors Association and inform the Secretary of the chosen representatives.