

## **NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **SCHOOLS FORUM**

**20 January 2022**

#### **PRESENT: -**

##### **School Representatives**

Mr B Lawrance (Chairman), Mrs D West, Mr R Biglands, Miss A Nuttall, Mrs R Stephenson, Mrs M Potterton

##### **Academy Representatives**

Mr P Raspin, Mrs Z Birchall, Mr M Adnitt, Mr D Flowitt

##### **Non School Representatives**

Ms R Abbott, Mr L Riley

##### **PVI Representatives**

Mrs C Williams, Mr J Collins (representing Mrs M Drewery)

##### **Executive Elected Members**

Cllr J Reed

##### **Local Authority Officers**

Ms T Elliott, Mrs R Maughan, Ms J Frost, Mrs J Flintoff, Mrs N Raines, Mr D Chaplin and Mrs A Dawson (Secretary)

The meeting was held at the virtually via Microsoft Teams.

#### **949 WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS/APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr P Thompson, Mrs A Cvijetic and Mrs S Thomas.

The Chair welcomed Mrs Z Birchall from St Hybald's Academy to the meeting, Mrs Birchall had been appointed as the new Primary Academy representative.

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

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There were no declarations of disclosure pecuniary interests and personal and personal and prejudicial interests.

**951 MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING DATED 7 OCTOBER 2021/ACTIONS ARISING**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2021, having been printed and circulated amongst the members, be taken as read and correctly recorded, and be signed by the Chair.

Minute 944 – Membership update

The Secretary updated the Forum on changes to membership:

Mrs Z Birchall from St Hybald's Academy had been nominated as the new Primary Academy representative.

Mrs M Drewery was continuing her role as PVI representative – Early Years for a further term.

Mr D Keogh had been nominated as the new Secondary Academy representative, subject to members approval.

The Secretary had received an e-mail from Mr A West, resigning his position as Primary Academy Governor representative. Mrs D West advised that Angela Dunkerley from NLAGB was aware of Mr West's resignation and would be seeking nominations for a replacement member.

A request had been received from Mr Jonathan Kenyon, Deputy Headteacher at St Hugh's School, to attend Forum meetings as a substitute for Mrs T Millard, who was currently on long term sick. However, following discussion it was felt that the position should be opened up to Mr Alastair Sutherland, the Headteacher at St Luke's School, in the first instance.

**Resolved** – (a) That Mr D Keogh be named as the new Secondary Academy representative and (b) that the Secretary approaches Mr Alastair Sutherland with a view to offering the temporary position as Special Schools representative to him.

**952 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2022/23**

Mrs T Elliott presented the report.

On 16 December 2021, the Education Funding Agency published the 2022-23 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Allocations. These were based on October 2021 School Census data.

The allocation for North Lincolnshire was £156.733m after deductions for the direct funding of high needs places by the Education Skills Funding Agency

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(ESFA).

The report provided information on the planned use of the DSG for 2022/23.

The DSG allocations were presented in four blocks, each block was determined by a separate national funding formula:

- Schools Block
- Central Services Schools Block (CSSB)
- Early Years Block
- High Needs Block

Ms Elliott advised that following the Department for Education's decision to reduce the element of funding within the CSSB for historic commitments for 2020/21, allocations had once again been reduced by 20%. Councils were not able to increase spending on historic commitments but could, with the approval of the Schools Forum, maintain spending in this area using other funding sources if they wished to.

The council must pass through the early years formula 95% of its 3 and 4 year old funding. Five percent could be retained for central services or for movement out of the early years block to another block. Schools Forum approval was required for central early years block provision.

National increases to high needs funding meant that councils had received a further increase in funding for 2022/23. There had been a further increase to high needs funding following the 2021 spending review.

The additional high needs funding included funding in respect of the Health and Social Care Levy, and took into account that colleges and other post-school providers offering extra hours of study to 16 to 19 year old students, may require extra high needs top-up funding to support such students with high needs.

Taken together, this meant high needs funding for North Lincolnshire increased by 14% in 2022 to 2023.

**Resolved** – That the centrally retained schools budget, as set out in appendix 1 to the report, be approved:

- Central spend on the early years block provision
- School Admissions
- Servicing of Schools Forum
- Contribution to the responsibilities that councils hold for all schools.

## **953 SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA 2022-23**

Mrs R Maughan presented the report.

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On 16 December 2021 the Education and Skills Funding Agency published the 2022-23 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Allocations, based on October 2021 School Census data. The allocation for North Lincolnshire was £158.902m (£152.810m in 2021/22) before deductions for business rates and the direct funding of high needs places by the ESFA.

The element of the DSG available for the Individual Schools Budget (ISB) for all mainstream schools was £124.901m (£121.080m in 2021/22).

The Operational Guide set out how ISB shares could be calculated. To continue the introduction of the National Funding Formula (NFF) the Department for Education had consulted on forward plans to move to a direct NFF in the future, so that resources were distributed based on the individual needs and characteristics of every school in the country.

The council's local formula now reflected the NFF for all factors. The factor values were set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

The final decision on the formula would be taken by the Children and Families Cabinet Member.

**Resolved** – (a) That the distribution of the individual schools budget, using the proposed formula, as set out in the report, be endorsed, and (b) that the contribution of £7.80 per pupil towards the cost of Education Functions that the council provided on behalf of maintained schools, be approved by maintained schools representatives.

#### 954 **EARLY YEARS - DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT**

Mrs N Raines presented the report.

Early Years funding was participation based. Funding allocations were currently provisional for 2022/23. Allocations were determined by three census counts (January 2021, 2022 and 2023), final allocations were published in July 2023.

Funding allocations had increased for the 2022/23 financial year with an additional 17 pence and 21 pence per hour per child on the hourly rate for two year olds (£5.57) and three and four year olds (£4.61) respectively. The Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and Disability Access Funding (DAF) had both increased (6p) to 60p per hour per child and (£185) £800 per annum respectively.

Two year olds were eligible for a maximum of 15 hours funded early learning and care where their family circumstances meant that they were eligible for free school meals. They also qualified when the family was in receipt of Universal Credit/Tax Credits with an income of approximately £16,000, or where the child was in or had left the care of the council; or was in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or had an Education, Health and Care Plan. Approximately 600 children were eligible in North Lincolnshire.

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All three and four year olds were entitled to a maximum of 15 hours funded early education in the maintained, private or voluntary sector for 38 weeks of the year. Children with parents in employment could also be eligible for an additional 15 funded hours, if they were both employed. Approximately 44% of funded children took up the additional funded hours in North Lincolnshire. Provider payments were determined using the Early Years Single Funding Formula, comprised of a base rate and supplements. EYPP and DAF were ring fencing funding supplements for children that met eligibility criteria.

**Resolved** – (a) That the provisional funding allocation in relation to the Early Years Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2022/23 be noted; (b) that the proposed rate of £5.57 per hour per child for all funded two year olds be supported; (c) that the proposed local supplements of the Early Years Single Funding Formula, deprivation and a sufficiency lump sum, be supported; (d) that the preference of the childcare sector as identified via consultation, scenario one, as set out in the report at paragraph 3.4, be supported and (e) that the proposal that EYPP (60p per child) and DAF (£800 per annum lump sum) be paid at the nationally required rates, be supported.

#### **955 HIGH NEEDS AND INDEPENDENT PROVISION**

Mrs J Frost presented the report.

The report provided an update on SEND, including an analysis of out of area and independent school provision.

In January 2022 there were 1,210 children and young people in North Lincolnshire with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), which was in line with the national average. Of these, 147 were attending independent provision, 80% in North Lincolnshire.

The most common needs at Primary level recorded in North Lincolnshire schools were speech, language and communication needs. Whilst in Secondary school social, emotional and mental health needs were the most common.

The vast majority of children and young people with SEND were educated in mainstream early years settings, schools or colleges, most of which were judged good or better by Ofsted. Ninety three percent of children and young people with an EHCP were educated in North Lincolnshire.

During the last five years, work had taken place with independent providers to develop provision closer to home. Local independent providers had broadened their provision to meet the needs of children at Key Stage 2. It was important that this work continued and further opportunities were explored for children within North Lincolnshire, both in local or mainstream settings.

Mrs C Williams advised that there were currently four EHCPs in the pipeline

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at her setting and staff sometimes found it difficult to find support to assist with writing the plans, and she would welcome help with this. Ms J Frost explained that more training was being arranged for after the half term holiday and she would ensure that Mrs Williams was invited to the training.

Mr D Chaplin wanted to thank colleagues for their contributions with regard to the recent SEND inspection of the local area. Although the full report had not yet been received, the outcome was very positive. Provision developments had been well received by inspectors.

Cllr J Reed echoed Mr Chaplin's comments and passed on her thanks to colleagues for all their hard work and the importance of roles they played in the partnership with the council.

**Resolved** – (a) That Headteachers, Principals and the council continue to work together to implement and embed the area-wide solutions to ensure that children and young people's needs remained central, and (b) that a Task and Finish Group, comprising Headteachers, Principals and council officers, be developed to investigate funding models for Inclusion Hubs and explore opportunities for specialist units/resourced provision within mainstream schools.

#### **956 CHANGES TO SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT FUNDING**

Mrs J Flintoff presented the report.

All councils had a statutory duty to maintain standards in schools under the 1996 Education Act. In North Lincolnshire strong and effective partnerships had driven a robust approach to school improvement and mutual accountability.

Over the last nine years, the proportion of children educated in a good or outstanding school had greatly improved; children's outcomes had similarly improved. The council worked with all schools, regardless of designation as a maintained school, a free school or an academy. This core school improvement offer was funded through a combination of DSG Historic Commitments, the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Local Authority Monitoring and Brokering (LAMB) Grant and core council budget.

Most schools participated in bespoke challenge and support for raising standards which was provided through the external School Improvement Partner (SIP) and Peer Leader (PL) programmes. These were funded from DSG Historic Commitments. Due to national changes the budget had been reduced year on year by 20%, because of changes in the national guidance, the council was able maintain the DSG element for Historic Commitments at the current rate. This would enable the PL programme to continue and provide Learning Networks funding for the Primary Consortium and Secondary Headteachers and Principals for 2022/23, as well as covering the costs of central training and improvement programmes.

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Following consultation in November 2021, the Department for Education announced the decision on 11 January 2022 that the ESFA school funding improvement funding would be reduced by 50% for the financial year 2022/23 and removed in 2023/24. The government contribution to EFSA School Improvement funding in North Lincolnshire was approximately £200,000, the remainder of the costs of this team was met by council Core Funding (approximately £210,000). The government response to the consultation suggested that councils should seek to de-delegate funding from schools through Schools Forum for core school improvement activity.

Ms T Elliott clarified that it was hoped there would be a contribution from council resources but this would be subject to full council approval from April 2023. It was also hoped that some academies would buy in but this would be a decision for each academy individually.

A discussion ensued on the options put forward in the report and how this would work with academy colleagues.

Mrs Flintoff advised that she would be meeting with the primary consortium the following week and with secondary colleagues later in March. She thought it would be useful to call a briefing for headteachers and principals, as well as provide a paper pack for all.

Mr Lawrance suggested that there may be value in distributing information to Forum members prior to it being sent out to the wider group.

**Resolved** – That the proposal to meet the shortfall in school improvement funding through de-delegation be agreed by maintained school representatives.