

**LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS' FORUM
 26 JUNE 2018**

PRESENT: GAVIN BOOTH (CHAIRMAN)

Joanne Noble (Headteacher, Gainsborough Nursery School), Marilyn Bell (Governor, The Fenland Federation), Ian Randall (Head Teacher, Reepham Church of England Primary School), Martin Kyle (Head Teacher, St Faith and St Martin's Junior School), Professor Ken Durrands CBE (Governor, The King's School, Grantham), Ian Widdows (Head Teacher, Giles Academy, Old Leake), Mark Anderson, Lea Mason (Executive Head Teacher, Lincolnshire Wolds Federation, Louth), Josh Greaves (Chief Operating Officer, Wellspring Academy Trust), Mark Woods (Chief Executive Officer, Stamford Welland Academy), Helen Stokes (Branch Secretary, UNISON), Bridget Starling (Business Manager, Church of England, Diocesan Education Centre) and Julia Merivale (Manager, Trinity Day Nursery).

Also in attendance: Richard Linnell (Staff Trade Unions).

Officers in attendance:-

Elizabeth Bowes (Strategic Finance Manager, Schools Finance Team), Katrina Cope (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Jonas Gibson (Commissioning and Development Manager), Mary Meredith (Head of Children's Service Manager, Inclusion), Mark Popplewell (Head of Finance (Children's Services), Martin Smith (Children's Services Manager, School Standards), Tony Warnock (Operations and Financial Advice Manager), Heather Sandy (Chief Officer for Education) and Kate Capel (Children's SEND Locality Manager).

54 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Gavin Booth be elected as Chairman of the Lincolnshire Schools' Forum for 2018/19.

GAVIN BOOTH IN THE CHAIR

55 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Lea Mason be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Lincolnshire Schools' Forum for 2018/19.

56 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Nigel Sisley JP (Governor, St Francis Community Special School, Lincoln), Anthony Stevens (Governor, The Holt Primary School, Skellingthorpe), Michele Anderson (Head Teacher, Spalding High School), David Bennett (Governor, Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Horncastle), Caroline Saxelby (Head Teacher, Walton Girls' High School and Sixth Form, Grantham), Helen Hilton (Head Teacher, Little Gonerby Church of England Infant School) and Martin Shelton (Linkage Community Trust).

57 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTEREST

There were no declarations of members' interest made at this stage of proceedings.

58 MINUTES OF THE LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING HELD ON 19 APRIL 2018

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Lincolnshire Schools' Forum meeting held on 19 April 2018 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

59 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Head of Finance, Children's Services advised the Forum that an update report relating to the national funding formula for Schools had been deferred until the 11 October 2018 meeting, as the government's 2019/20 guidance was not expected to be published until the end of July 2018.

The Forum noted a high level update following officer attendance at key Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) working groups. The Forum noted that there no material changes were expected.

60 SECTION 251 BUDGET STATEMENT 2018/19

The Forum gave consideration to a report from Elizabeth Bowes, Strategic Finance Manager Schools Finance Team, which provided a copy of the Section 251 budget statement for the 2018/19 financial year.

It was reported that the Local Authority (LA) was required under s251 of the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 to prepare and submit an education and children's social care budget statement for the relevant period to the Secretary of State for Education (DfE) by 30 April each year. The Forum was advised that the Section s251 return was intended to provide a clear picture of the LA's planned spending on its schools budget, de-delegated items, high needs budget, early years budget, central provision within the schools budget and children and young people's services.

The Forum noted that the information for 2018/19 had been submitted to the DfE via its collection and management system for education. It was noted further that the LA, to ensure compliance with statutory requirements published the Early Years report,

the LA table report and the Schools Table report in the 'Downloads' section of the LCC's website.

It was highlighted that the overall Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding was considered when the LA completed its annual detailed budget setting exercise and certain budgets were formally approved by the Forum in January 2018. It was highlighted further that for 2018/19, the DSG comprised of four blocks: the Schools Block, Central Schools Services Block (CSSB), High Needs Block and Early Years Block, with each block having been determined by a separate national funding formula. The Forum noted that LA's were only able to transfer 0.5% of the Schools Block to another block, following consultation with all schools and academies and approval of the Schools Forum. It was noted that no budget transfer had been made in 2018/19 from the Schools Block. It was noted further that movements of budget from the Central Schools Services Block, or from the High Needs Block to any other block were not subject to any limit, and could be made in consultation with the Schools Forum. The Forum supported the transfer of savings (£0.250m) from the CSSB to the Schools Block to enable the LA to fully implement the national funding formula in 2018/19.

Attached to the report at Table 1 was a copy of the Schools Funding arrangements for 2018/19. The table provided an overall picture of the funding being allocated direct to schools and high needs delegations, and the amount being spent on education centrally and children's social care. The Forum were taken through the detail shown in Table 1.

It was reported that in 2018/19 Lincolnshire had received £5.2m of protection funding following the implementation of the new High Needs national funding formula to provide stability against the previous year's funding level. The Forum noted that for 2019/20, the High Needs Block was planned to increase by 0.5% (or £0.374m). As limited financial growth planned was not aligned to local data, the LA would continue to undertake detailed monitoring and trend analysis to ensure affordability of the High Needs Block, and continue to lobby central government in relation to cost pressures in the High Needs area. It was highlighted that funding levels post 2019/20 were the subject of the government's next spending review.

In conclusion, the Forum was advised that a further report of the s251 benchmarking would be received later in the year, following publication of LA's data by the DfE.

RESOLVED

That the Section 251 Budget Statement for 2018/19 be noted.

61 DE-DELEGATION OF MAINTAINED PRIMARY SCHOOL BUDGETS 2019/20 & 2020/21

Consideration was given to a report from Mark Popplewell, Head of Finance, Children's Services, which sought approval from the maintained primary school representatives' of the Forum to the (LA's) proposals for the de-delegation of certain budgets in 2019/20 and 2020/21.

The Forum was advised that the government's decision to implement a new funding formula in 2018/19 still allowed for the de-delegation arrangements for maintained schools to continue. Details of the key features of the arrangements were shown on pages 21 and 22 of the report presented.

The Forum was reminded that for 2018/19 maintained schools had agreed to de-delegate funding for contingency relating to schools in financial difficulty (namely termination of redundancy costs, consultant headteachers and school intervention); and for ethnic minority and traveller education team.

It was noted that no funds had been de-delegated for maintained secondary schools.

The report highlighted that the cumulative underspends at 31 March 2017 was £0.853m. The report further advised the agreement made at the 4 October 2017 meeting was to adjust the 2018/19 charges to reduce the level of underspend; details of which were shown at points 1 to 4 on page 22 of the report presented.

The Forum was advised that the cumulative underspend reported at 31 March 2018 was £0.608m. The Forum was advised further that at the year-end the LA had made a decision to move consultant headteacher costs of £0.260m from the de-delegation budget to core Council funding, which had increased the de-delegation cumulative underspend from £0.348m to £0.608m. This decision had been made to allow additional time-limited investment into school improvement activities over the next three years through additional school advisor support to maintained schools.

It was reported that in 2017/18 the expenditure incurred for termination of employment costs had been £0.264m for maintained primary schools, which had been £0.014m over the 2017/18 agreed budget level and higher than what had been expected. It was reported further that the budget for 2018/19 had been reduced to £0.150m therefore; there was a financial risk of this budget overspending, if activity remained at a similar level to the previous year.

The proposals for 2019/20 and 2020/21 were detailed on page 23 of the report. It was highlighted that the charges for 2019/20 would revert back to the required 2019/20 baseline amounts per pupil for the de-delegation budgets (as outlined in the October 2017 Schools Forum De-delegation budget report).

The report detailed that the per pupil rates would be set at:

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| • Contingency | £27.00 per pupil |
| • Ethnic Minority and Traveller Education Team | £5.55 per pupil |

Which would finance:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| • Termination of employment costs | £0.250m |
| • Consultant Headteachers | £0.291m |
| • Exceptional unforeseen costs | £0.380m |

- Ethnic Minority and Traveller Education Team £0.189m

The Forum noted that the figures shown were indicative and were based on the October 2017 census; and 34,106 maintained primary pupils. Information relating to the current services was detailed in Appendix A to the report.

It was highlighted that for 2019/20 the termination of employment budget for schools in financial difficulties would revert back to the 2017/18 budget amount of £0.250m, as a result of the expenditure incurred in that year. The Forum was advised that the national funding formula had increased the overall level of funding received by Lincolnshire mainstream schools in 2018/19, however, due to the demand-led nature of the termination of employment budget, a level of prudence needed to be applied.

The Forum noted that the government had updated guidance following the introduction of the School Improvement Grant to enable Schools' Forums to agree to de-delegate funding for additional school improvement activities for maintained schools. It was noted further that the LA was proposing to use the addition to the de-delegation guidance as an opportunity to consider whether there were alternative approaches to providing support to Lincolnshire's most vulnerable maintained primary schools to improve education standards and resilience within schools.

During a short discussion, the following points were raised:-

- One member of the Forum expressed thanks to the level of intervention received; and advised that the support had been extremely helpful and welcomed;
- Clarification was given that if schools were not in financial difficulty then schools would have to contribute from their main budget;
- A question was asked as to what percentage of Consultant Headteachers were deployed. It was felt that this was useful information for the Schools' Forum to know. It was highlighted that the posts were used to support and mentor all new acting Headteachers, of maintained schools, in Lincolnshire;
- One question raised was if there was a stand-alone Academy, who they could turn to. The Forum was advised that that the LA could not fund the help, but if there was a local school nearby the LA would help broker support arrangements. Confirmation was given that there was no capacity for Academies to buy in to the support. The support was for maintained schools only. It was highlighted that Academies could if they wished operate a similar model to the LA. Officers confirmed that for the coming year maintained schools would be contacted to see what improvement provision was needed going forward. It was noted that the Forum would receive an update on what the alternative provision might be for 2019/20;
- Some concern was expressed to the increased contingency rate of £27.00. The Forum attention was brought to what the Forum had agreed at their 4 October 2017 meeting (as detailed on page 22 of the report presented) when it had been agreed that the easiest way to return unspent funds to maintained primary schools was to adjust the LA's proposed charges downwards for the following year. The LA could no longer apply that approach from 2019/20;

- Some concern was expressed relating to the increase in redundancy costs and whether the amount of intervention was being monitored. The Forum was advised that intervention was monitored; and that there were robust policies in place to ensure that they remained sustainable; and that a staffing restructure was a measure to prevent a school going into a deficit position;
- One member felt that maintained schools needed to have a clear communication of the reasons for the increased per pupil figures in the proposals for 2019/20 and 2020/21; and
- An explanation was provided concerning the Intervention Funding budget; details of which were shown on page 29 of the report presented.

RESOLVED

That support be given from the maintained primary schools representatives on the Lincolnshire Schools' Forum to the proposals for de-delegation of the budgets for the period 2019/20, and 2020/21 (in principle) as set out in the report presented and detailed above.

62 CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICE PROGRAMME

The Forum received a presentation from Andrew McLean, Children's Service Manager, Commissioning, which provided the Schools' Forum with an update on the development of the Corporate Support Services review (currently being delivered by Serco); and to seek the views of the Forum and Lincolnshire Schools on how to best to keep them informed and engaged in the process.

The Forum was advised that the Council had agreed to a commissioning review of existing services delivered by Serco, which included IMT, Customer Service Centre, People Management, Payroll/HR Admin, Adult Care Finance, Exchequer Services and the provision of the Business World On (formerly known as Agresso) ERP System. It was noted that the agreement with Serco was in year four of a five year contract, which was due to end on 31 March 2020. A copy of the decision making timetable for the future delivery of these services was shared with the Forum. This included a detailed overview of the potential transition of the Council's Payroll/HR Admin Services to Hoople Ltd, via a shared service agreement with Herefordshire Council.

A copy of the governance structure for the re-provision was presented to the Forum; and confirmation was given that early engagement had taken place with the Lincolnshire Learning Partnership Board (schools' strategic group for school improvement) where an overview of the Hoople position was presented and discussed on how schools could be effectively engaged during the programme.

The Forum was advised that Hoople had been present in Lincolnshire from 14 - 31 May 2018; and had been carrying out extensive workshop sessions focussing on Finance, Payroll/HR Admin and Systems Technical Architecture. It was highlighted that the workshop sessions had given Hoople the opportunity to understand Lincolnshire's issues.

It was highlighted that the design workshops had been successful in providing the necessary confidence in Hoople's capability to provide an effective Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system solution and Payroll/HR Admin service.

The Forum was invited to comment on the most effective way to collectively engage with affected schools.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- The need for the involvement of schools business managers early on in the process, and that adequate time should be allocated for training. Reassurance was given that maintained schools would be taken on the journey. The Forum noted that Hoople did provide a financial system offer to Academies in their area, which was an addition to the current service offer. The Forum was advised that currently 170 schools would be moving over to the new system. The Forum was further advised that work was ongoing with Hoople to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the system to ensure that it was more stable in the future. Confirmation was given that there would be dual running of the payroll system ahead of the potential transfer on 1 April 2020;
- One member enquired as the existing system seemed to be working better now, why change? The Forum was advised that the existing system needed a lot of de-bugging; and that there was lack of accuracies pertaining to the payroll service. Reassurance was given that the Hoople ERP platform was a robust system, which had been tried and tested; and that Hoople had a proven track record for the delivery of Payroll/HR Admin services;
- One member enquired as to what the period of notice was for the existing contract for schools. The Forum was advised that the existing contract for schools had a one year notice period; and
- Some concern was expressed to the number of jobs being exported out of Lincolnshire; and for the need to ensure that the transition to Hoople was seamless. Officers appreciated the concerns raised regarding distance, but advised that there was an ongoing dialogue with Hoople for the option of a local office. The Forum was also advised that there was always risks associated with moving to a new provider, but there was a level of confidence as there was already a level of knowledge in the system that had been operating successfully for a number of years, which had not been the case at the point of transfer to Serco.

RESOLVED

That the presentation relating to the Corporate Support Service Programme be received.

63 SCHOOLS OUTREACH SERVICES UPDATE

The Forum gave consideration to a report from Mary Meredith, Children's Services Manager, Inclusion, Jonas Gibson, Commissioning & Development Manager and

Kate Capel, Children's SEND Locality Manager, which provided an update on the three strands of Lincolnshire's School Outreach Offer:

- The Behaviour Outreach Support Service (BOSS);
- The Autism and Learning Difficulties (ALD) Outreach Service; and
- The Physical Disabilities (PD) Outreach Service.

The Forum was reminded that the overarching aim of the Outreach Services was to feed into a robust and integrated support offer for Children and Young People within the County to enabled schools to better support pupils within their own settings.

It was noted that the services also contributed to the creation of EHC Plans and the SEND assessment and tribunal processes.

The Forum received a short update against each of the three Outreach Services:

Behaviour Outreach Support Service (BOSS)

The Forum was advised that since September 2016, BOSS had worked with 727 pupils. Table 1 on page 35 of the report identified the number of interventions carried out by BOSS.

It was also highlighted that since September 2017, 182 training sessions had been delivered in schools.

The Forum noted that permanent exclusion data had shown a general reduction in permanent exclusions since 2013/14. Chart 1 on page 36 provided information relating to the number of permanent exclusions since 2013/14.

The report highlighted that BOSS had conducted their Year 1 Stakeholder Survey in July 2017; to which all Lincolnshire Schools had been invited to participate in. It was noted that 75 responses had been received. The Forum noted the feedback from schools, parent/carers and pupils had been very positive. Some examples of Service User feedback were shown on page 39 of the report presented.

Autism and Learning Difficulties Schools Outreach

The Forum was advised that the provider was the Working Together Team (WTT). The Autism and Learning Difficulties Schools Outreach Service (ALD) had been commissioned to provide outreach support in schools for pupils with Autism, mild, moderate and severe learning difficulties and social communication challenges which had an impact on cognitive development and learning potential.

It was highlighted that the service was very much focussed on up-skilling schools with knowledge and confidence to create inclusive environments in which autistic pupils could thrive. It was noted that the service also worked with stakeholders, including families and the wider community, to support pupils through key transitions in their school.

It was reported that the ALD training offer comprised of both Autism Education Trust models and bespoke sessions, deliver in school settings.

It was highlighted that the WTT had become a nationally recognised example of best practice in Autism support, having been re-accredited by the National Autistic Society.

Table 2 on page 42 of the report provided details of the uptake of Autism Education Trust training.

The Forum noted that positive feedback about the service had been received which was detailed on page 42 of the report.

Physical Disabilities Schools Outreach

The Forum was advised that the provider was Lincoln St Francis School.

It was highlighted that the Physical Disabilities (PD) Outreach Service had been commissioned to provide outreach support in schools for pupils with profound and multiple disabilities, cognitive disabilities, life limiting conditions and sensory impact. The Forum noted that the service primarily focused on delivering bespoke packages of intervention in the classroom.

It was reported that training, support and advice was made available to school staff. It was highlighted that the service worked closely with classroom support staff in order to develop their confidence and skills in using the technology provided and learning how to best support pupils.

The Forum was advised that the uptake for this service had been high and Table 3 at the bottom of page 44 provided the Forum with the uptake figures for Year 2 and 3. The Forum was advised further that the feedback from schools had been positive; and that the contract continued to run well with no service delivery issues having been raised by either stakeholders or the service area.

During a short discussion, members of the Forum raised the following points:-

- The positive benefits of the Behaviour Outreach Support Service. A suggestion was made for an accreditation for those schools that were doing it right. Officers thought that was a good idea and agreed to look into the suggestion. One frustration raised was the Healthy Minds Service was a different agency; and that the multiple agency working was not always working. The Forum was advised that work was currently ongoing to iron out any issues; and
- Some concern was expressed that the BOSS contract was only for a further year. The Forum was advised that there was an option to extend for a further two years. Reassurance was given that the service would not just stop; there would be conversations with schools and head teachers regarding the integrated approach moving forward. Officers confirmed that the budget was available in 2018/19; and that this would be reviewed moving forward. The

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Forum was advised that Lincolnshire was in receipt of High needs block protection funding to the end of the current funding settlement period (2019/20), which the LA was making representation to central government on securing this for the long-term to ensure such services could be maintained to support schools.

RESOLVED

That the progress on the Schools Outreach Services Update be noted.

64 ACADEMIES AND TRUST UPDATE

The Head of Finance, Children's Services presented the Academies and Trust update report, which provided information on the latest number of academies, pupils in academies and academy trusts.

It was highlighted that since the effective date of the last report (1 March 2018), there had been two academy conversions of primary schools, which brought the total number for academies to 156 (43.1%) educating 67,690 (64.2%) pupils. Information relating to the projected six month status of all Lincolnshire State Schools was provided within the report presented.

The report also provided a list of the academy trusts that currently had the greatest number of academies in Lincolnshire.

RESOLVED

That the Academies and Trust Update be noted.

65 LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS' FORUM - WORK PROGRAMME

The Forum gave consideration to its work programme.

RESOLVED

That the work programme presented be noted.

66 FUTURE MEETING DATES

RESOLVED

That the following dates for future meetings of the Lincolnshire Schools' Forum be agreed:-

Thursday 24 January 2019 at 1.00 p.m.
Thursday 18 April 2019 at 1.00 p.m.
Thursday 20 June 2019 at 1.00 p.m. and
Thursday 10 October 2019 at 1.00 p.m.

The meeting closed at 3.05 pm