

**PRESENT: GAVIN BOOTH (CHAIRMAN)**

Amy Stancer (Headteacher, St Giles Nursery School, Lincoln), Alan Howe (Governor, Sutton on Sea County Primary School), Michele Anderson (Head Teacher, Spalding High School), Professor Ken Durrands CBE (Governor, The King's School, Grantham), Philip Dickinson (Principal, Louth Academy), Simon Pickett (Head Master, The King's School, Grantham), Chris Fitzpatrick (Head Teacher, Tall Oaks Academy Trust), Tristan Revell (Head Teacher, Malcolm Sargent Primary School), Lea Mason (Executive Head Teacher, Lincolnshire Wolds Federation, Louth), Julia Merivale (Manager, Trinity Day Nursery) and Heather Marks (Vice-Principal, Boston College),

Also in attendance:

Officers in attendance:-

Elizabeth Bowes (Strategic Finance Manager, Schools Finance Team), Mark Popplewell Strategic Finance Lead - Children's Services, Martin Smith (Assistant Director for Children's Education), Emily Wilcox (Democratic Services Officer), Geraldine Willders (Head of Service - School Strategy) and Eileen McMorrow (Programme Manager - Special Schools Strategy)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Steve Baragwanath, Josh Greaves, Jo Slesser and Dr Stephen Hopkins.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Lea Mason declared a non-pecuniary interest as the lead for the workforce development project – Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING ON 18 JANUARY 2024

**RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**4        CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman announced that an election to fill the remainder of vacancies on the Forum had commenced and members were encouraged to share details with anyone who may be interested. The vacancies advertised were: one special schoolmaintained head teacher; one primary maintained governor, two primary maintained head teachers, one secondary academy headteacher and two primary academy governors.

**5        BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF SPECIALIST PROVISION STRATEGY: UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report by Eileen McMorrow, Programme Manager – SEND, which provided an update on the Building Communities of Specialist Strategy as set out on pages 13-26 of the agenda pack.

As referenced within the report, the capital programme continued to progress, and was expected to complete within budget by summer 2025. A timeline was set out at appendix A to the report.

The Forum was provided with an overview of progress and details of the key milestones for the capital programme met within the reporting period were highlighted.

Members were updated on the workforce development learning platform and advised that 311 schools were now engaging with the platform with over 7800 modules completed. The Programme Manager – SEND was pleased to report that schools were welcoming the learning development platform and utilising it in a way that could affect whole school special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) provision. The Council believed that the learning platform provided the education sector with an excellent resource to support teaching and learning for children and young people, and actively encouraged all schools to access the platform.

As the building communities of specialist provision strategy reached its final year of implementation, focus would now turn to outcomes expected to be delivered by the significant investment and looking at potential opportunities to meet the growing demand for special school places, further to the 527 places provided by the scheme.

The Assistant Director – Children's Education thanks to the project leaders, special school leaders and all those who had remained committed to the project, which meant Lincolnshire's special school estate was in a strong position and could be adapted to future demand for special school places whilst ensuring the best quality and affordability of placements.

Officers reiterated the need to focus attention on finding ways to manage the increasing demand for special schools' places, offering quality and affordability and managing the high needs block and plans were already progressing. The Department for Education had released

its funding allocations for capital grants to Local Authorities which provided financial capacity from a capital perspective to support the delivery plans.

The Forum welcomed the report and were pleased that the project was on track despite several challenges. Members extended their thanks to colleagues in Lincolnshire for their support in the development of SEND provision and highlighted the commitment of specialist school colleagues in continuing the work to develop specialist provision for Lincolnshire's children.

#### **RESOLVED**

1. That the report be received;
2. That recognition for the progress made and positive impact and the project has made to Lincolnshire's children be recorded.

#### 6 ACADEMIES AND TRUST UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report by Mark Popplewell, Strategic Finance Lead – Children's Services, which provided an update on the latest number of academies, and pupils in academies and academy trust, as set out on pages 27-31 of the report.

Since the last report, two schools had converted to academy status - Wrangle Primary Academy had joined the University of Lincoln Academy Trust on 1 March 2024, and Skegness The Richmond Primary Academy became an academy sponsored by The David Ross Education Trust on 1 March 2024. This meant that 43.4% of primary schools in Lincolnshire were now academies and that 54.6% of primary aged pupils attended academies. This position was not expected to change within the next six months.

The Forum noted the report and thanked Officers for providing a breakdown of data for multi academy trusts and single academy trusts, as requested at the last meeting.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

#### 7 LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS' FORUM WORK PROGRAMME

The Forum was invited to consider its work programme, as set out on pages 33-35 of the report.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 1.28 pm