



LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS' FORUM 12 JANUARY 2017

PRESENT: MARK ANDERSON (CHAIRMAN)

Joanne Noble (Headteacher, Gainsborough Nursery School), Nigel Sisley JP (Governor, St Francis Community Special School, Lincoln), Patricia Ruff (Headteacher, Dunholme St Chads Church of England Primary School), Ian Wilkinson (Headteacher, Deeping St James Community Primary School), Roger Hewins (Governor, Corringham Church of England Primary School), David Bennett (Governor, Horncastle Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School), Professor Ken Durrands CBE (Governor, The King's School, Grantham), Nichola Shore (Head Teacher, Banovallum School, Horncastle), James Storr (Governor, The Deepings School), Ian Widdows (Head Teacher, Giles Academy, Old Leake), Helen Stokes (Branch Secretary, UNISON), Alison Hill (Area Manager, Paper Moon Day Nurseries) and Martin Kyle (Head Teacher, St Faith and St Martin's Junior School).

David Morgan (NASUWT), Ken Rustidge (Staff Trade Unions) and Julia Merivale (Manager, Trinity Hay Nursery) attended the meeting as observers.

Officers in attendance:-

Katrina Cope (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Andrew McLean (Service Manager Commissioning), Mark Popplewell (Head of Finance, Children's Services), Tony Warnock (Operations and Financial Advice Manager), Gavin Booth (Children's Services Manager, Education and Strategy), Sara Gregory (Commissioning Officer) and Martin Smith (Children's Services Manager, School Standards).

57 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Marilyn Bell (Governor, The Fenland Federation), Vicky Cook (Head Teacher, Welbourn C of E Primary School), Helen Hilton (Head Teacher, Little Gonerby C of E Infant School), Jeremy Newnham (Head Teacher, Caistor Yarborough Academy), Lea Mason (Executive Head Teacher, Lincolnshire Wolds Federation), Matthew Orford (Director of Education, Linkage College), James Todd (Governor, Woodlands Infant and Nursery School) and Geraldine Willders (Head Teacher, St Mary's Catholic Primary School).

58 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTEREST

No declarations of members' interest were declared at this stage of the proceedings.

59 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 OCTOBER 2016

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Lincolnshire Schools' Forum held on 5 October 2016 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to 'Declarations of Members' Interest' at Minute number 44 being amended to read as follows *'The Vice-Chairman, Geraldine Willders, declared an additional interest in Item 9 – De-Delegation of Maintained Primary School Budgets 2017/18 and 2018/19 in her role as consultant Head Teacher supporting Maintained Primary Schools commissioned by the local authority'*.

60 SCHOOL FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS 2017/18

Consideration was given to a report from Mark Popplewell, Head of Finance, Children's Services, which advised the Schools Forum on school funding arrangements for 2017/18; and sought support from the Forum for the Local Authority's (LA) proposals relating to a number of centrally held budgets.

In presenting the report, the Head of Finance, Children's Services made particular to the following points:-

- It was highlighted that the government was not planning to make any changes to the school funding arrangements for mainstream schools in 2017/18; and that the government was proposing to introduce a schools national funding formula in 2018/19, which was intending to provide greater consistency and fairness in funding across the country. The Committee noted that the consultation period concerning the proposed changes closed on 22 March 2017; and the LA encouraged all schools to respond.

It was also highlighted that a high needs national funding formula consultation was also out for stakeholder consideration with a closing date of the 22 March 2017. The intention of the consultation was to provide a better distribution of funding to LA's.

The Committee noted that there was still a significant amount of work to be done before school budgets were due to be published on the 28 February 2017.

- Background - The report presented provided the Forum with information relating to how the operation of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) would remain largely unchanged;
- School Funding Announcements - Page three of the report, provided details relating to the 2017/18 DSG allocations, and it was reported that Table 1 highlighted that there still remained a significant differential between Lincolnshire's per pupil funding rate for mainstream schools and the national average; and that stage 2 of the government consultation planned for 2018/19 was intending to provide fairer funding across the country;

- DSG allocation 2017/18 - The Forum was advised that the LA was currently working with the early year's sector to determine a new early year's national funding formula (EYNFF) in light of the government funding changes. The Forum was advised further that an additional Schools' Forum meeting had been arranged for 22 February 2017, to discuss these changes. It was noted that the government established LA universal entitlement rate had been set at the minimum funding rate of £4.30 per hour per pupil, compared to the national average rate of £4.78. The Committee noted further that Lincolnshire's indicative allocation for additional 3 & 4 year olds entitlement for working families was £4.582m, which represented the period September 2017 to March 2018; and that funding was at the same rate as the early year's entitlement up to 15 hours.

The Committee noted that funding for the most disadvantaged two year olds was being increased in 2017/18, and Lincolnshire's hourly rate per pupil would be £5.20 compared to the national average of £5.39. The Committee noted further that details would be made available at the additional meeting due to be held in February.

It was also reported that for 2017/18 the government was intending to provide c.£130m nationally of additional funding to LA's to respond to the growing challenges facing the high needs block. It was highlighted that Lincolnshire's allocation was £1.496m;

- Pupil Premium – The Forum noted that the pupil premium rates for 2017/18 would be protected at the 2016/17 current rates. Details of which were included within the report presented;
- Free School Meals – The Forum was advised that the grant for universal infant free school meals continued at a meal rate of £2.30 for 2017/18 academic year;
- DSG School Budgets 2017/18 – The Forum was advised that work was underway calculating the budget allocations for individual Lincolnshire schools through the LA proforma tool, which required submitting to the Department for Education by 20 January 2017 for approval. Details of the government's formula factors criteria changes for 2017/18 were summarised within the report. It was highlighted that the LA had no plans to change the local school funding formulae for 2017/18 subject to affordability;
- DSG Central Budgets 2017/18 – The Forum noted that it was important that the LA took a prudent approach to the setting of central budgets within the DSG; and reasons why were included within the report;
- Table 2 – The Forum was advised that the budgets detailed in Table 2 required Schools Forum approval. The Forum was advised further that the proposed budget as detailed in Table 2 was prudent and that it had been subject to an annual budget setting review;
- The proposed new Emotional Wellbeing Service in Lincolnshire for school aged children and young people. Appendix 1 to the report provided the Forum with more details pertaining to the new service. The service objectives were to provide support and stability to pupils and families, resulting in greater opportunities for pupils to achieve their full potential. It was highlighted that the LA was proposing to fund the service from Council budgets at a cost of

£1m per annum. The service would be commissioned for three year's initially, with an option of a further two year's. It was reported that Lincolnshire would receive £1.496m of high needs funding from the £130m government funding nationally distributed in 2017/18 to support growth and complexity in the sector. The Forum was advised that the LA was proposing to use £1m of this high needs increase to support the proposed Emotional Wellbeing Service, therefore creating a £2m p.a. service, and the Forum was asked to support the proposal of £1m being funded from the high needs block. The Forum received a short joint verbal update on the proposed service from the Andrew Mclean, Children's Services Manager, Commissioning and Sara Gregory, Commissioning Officer;

- Education Services Grant – It was reported that the Chancellor had announced in the autumn 2015 spending review that £600m savings nationally would be made from the Education Services Grant (ESG). The Forum noted that the government had confirmed that the savings would be achieved by removing general duties rate funding from 2017/18. The Forum noted further that the general duties rate funding from ESG was to end on 31 August 2017, and that the decision of the LA was to not retain funding for the period to March 2018 for the LA's statutory duties relating to maintained schools, but to undertake a review outlining the LA's intentions and funding requirements for 2018/19. It was highlighted that the retained duties rate funding that had been added to the DSG for 2017/18 to support the LA's statutory duties of all schools was proposed to be retained centrally to support the delivery of those services. Details relating to the General Duties Rate and Retained Duties Rate were contained within the report presented; and
- The financial outlook for the Council and Children's Services – The Forum noted that when developing the Council's financial plan, the Council had considered all areas of current spending, levels of income and council tax, and use of one off funding to set a balanced budget. It was noted further that the Council's total income was £426.704m in 2017/18 with planned expenditure including cost pressures of £491.935m, leaving a budget shortfall of £65.231m. The total of planned savings for 2017/18 was £39.172m leaving £26.059m to be met from the use of one-off reserves to fund the gap. It was highlighted that the financial situation of the Council obviously had a major bearing on the Children's Services budget of £105.113m.

During discussion, the Forum raised the following issues:-

- Clarification was sought with regard to the amount of funding required for the proposed new Emotional Wellbeing Service for Children and Young People. Officers confirmed that the LA would be funding the proposed service from Council budgets £1m per annum for three years, a then it was proposed that the DSG would match fund the Council's investment of £1m p.a.

Some concerns were expressed as to how the final model would look. The Forum was advised that a working group had been set up which included some members of the Forum to look at what was required and what would be suitable to take forward to help bridge the gap in provision going forward. Officers confirmed that all sectors were represented on the working group.

Another issue raised included the use of existing trained resources presently supporting wellbeing activities in schools. Officers advised that it would be up to the provider to decide whether to use any existing provision as a sub-contractor. Part of the Lincolnshire contract could be that providers contact all schools to see if they would like to share with existing provision.

Some members highlighted that when the service got off the ground, there would be savings to be made, and the service would help Lincolnshire schools, pupils and families;

- One member enquired as to whether there would be any additional funding from the government to support mental health issues. The Forum noted that there was a pilot that had been funded through the Clinical Commissioning Groups, but officers were not aware of any other funding through the CCGs ring fenced for mental health issues;
- Concern was expressed as to whether the proposed new Emotional Wellbeing service would meet demand. It was highlighted that the new service would enhance what was already being provided; and that appropriate monitoring arrangements would be put in place. The Forum requested that the findings of the working group should be presented to the April meeting.
- Some clarity was requested as to how the Council planned for school places. It was agreed that some information would be sent out to members of the forum after the meeting; and
- Reference was also made to the cost of school transport. The Forum noted that this was a statutory duty that the Council had to provide home to schools transport and that it was funded from Council funded budgets.

RESOLVED

1. That support be given to the Local Authority's proposals for the setting of the central budgets as shown in Table 2 of the report presented.
2. That support be given to the Local Authority's proposals to contribute £1m annually from the high needs block for the Emotional Wellbeing Service.
3. That support be given to the Local Authority's proposals for holding centrally the retained duties rate funding (former ESG funding) into the (DSG) to fund the service responsibilities Local Authority's hold for supporting all schools in Lincolnshire.

61 2016/17 SECTION 251 BENCHMARKING INFORMATION

The Committee gave consideration to a report from Mark Popplewell, Head of Finance, Children's Services, which shared with the Schools' Forum the latest Section 251 benchmarking data which had been published by the Department of Education in September 2016.

The Head of Finance, Children's Services guided the Forum through the report and the benchmarking data as detailed at Appendix 1. The report presented considered the key service activity subtotals with in Appendix 1 concerning DSG and Council

6

LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS' FORUM

12 JANUARY 2017

funded budgets, and highlighted a number of key points/issues relating to them. It was noted that the s251 benchmarking data would continue to be used by the LA each year, to inform its future spending plans.

The Forum was advised that overall the Lincolnshire DSG position had not changed significantly since the previous year. It was noted that Lincolnshire's DSG funding remained low, and the 'per pupil' spending on the Schools Budget was £388 less than the England average. This situation was compounded by the fact that Lincolnshire County Council's spending was £134 per pupil more on school transport than the England average. One member asked for further information regarding how the Council's Home to School Transport dealt with a situation of a family going to more than one school. It was agreed that information would be forwarded to members of the Forum after the meeting.

In conclusion, officers encouraged schools to respond to the government consultations on school-related funding, bearing in mind the implications it would have from a school level perspective.

RESOLVED

That the Section 251 benchmarking data presented be noted.

62 ACADEMIES UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report from John O'Connor, Children's Services Manager, Education Support, which provided the Forum with information on the latest number of academies and pupils in academies.

The Head of Finance, Children's Services presented the report and advised the Forum of the position statement provided was as at 1 December 2016, and the pupil figures were based on the October 2016 census data.

It was highlighted that since that last meeting there had been two further conversions to academy status. This brought the total number of primary academies to 79, which was 28.2% of the total; and that the number of pupils educated in primary academies was 20,714 FTE, which was 37.3% of the total.

As suggested at the previous meeting, the report contained information pertaining to the status of academies. The report highlighted that there were thirty-six active multi-academy trusts within Lincolnshire and that there was a total of ninety-nine Lincolnshire academies that were members of multi-academy trust, which equated to 69.2% of all Lincolnshire Academies. It was noted that forty-four (30.8%) of Lincolnshire academies were not members of multi-academy trusts.

It was highlighted that there were eight schools currently targeted to academy status by 1 June 2017.

RESOLVED

That the Academies Update report be noted.

63 LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS' FORUM - WORK PROGRAMME

Members of the Forum were invited to put forward items for inclusion in future agenda items. None were received at the meeting.

RESOLVED

That the Lincolnshire Schools' Forum Work Programme presented be agreed, subject to the inclusion of an update report on the New Emotional Wellbeing Service for Children and Young People to the April meeting.

The meeting closed at 2.20 pm.

This page is intentionally left blank