

**LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS' FORUM
 25 JUNE 2014**

PRESENT:

David Bennett (Governor, Horncastle Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School), Ellenor Beighton (Headteacher, De Aston School, Market Rasen), Professor Ken Durrands CBE (Governor, The Kings School, Grantham), Jonathan Maddox (Headteacher, Bourne Grammar School), Richard Thomson (Headteacher, Rauceby Church of England Primary Academy), Roger Hewins (Governor, Corringham Church of England Primary School), Ian Wilkinson (Headteacher, Deeping St James Community Primary School), Michael Follows MBE (Governor, John Fielding Community Special School, Boston), Dave Thompson (Pupil Referral Unit) and Helen Stokes (Branch Secretary, UNISON), Terl Bryant (Stamford Queen Eleanor Community School) and David Scott (Deputy Headteacher, Kesteven and Grantham Girls School).

Councillor D Brailsford (Executive Councillor for Children's Services) also attended the meeting as an observer.

Officers in attendance:-

Debbie Barnes (Executive Director of Children's Services), Katrina Cope (Team Leader Democratic and Civic Services), Andrew McLean (Commissioning Manager - Children's Services), David McWilliams (Head of Performance Assurance), Catherine Southcott (Commissioning Officer) and Tony Warnock (Head of Finance - Children's and Specialist Services).

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Terl Bryant be elected as the Chairman of the Lincolnshire Schools' Forum for 2014/15.

TERL BRYANT IN THE CHAIR

2 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Michael Follows MBE and John Beswick be elected Vice-Chairmen of the Lincolnshire Schools' Forum for 2014/15.

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3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from John Beswick (Governor, Stickney Church of England Primary School), Graham Burks (Headteacher, Kesteven and Grantham Girls School), Vicky Cook, (Headteacher, Welbourn C of E Primary School, High Street, Welbourn), Sharron Close (Executive Principal, Tall Oaks Academy Trust), Roger Hale (Headteacher, Caistor Grammar School), Bridget Robson (Headteacher, Fortuna Primary School, Lincoln), Craig Miller (Governor, All Saints Church of England Primary School, North Hykeham), Joanne Noble (Headteacher, Gainsborough Nursery School), , Patricia Ruff (Headteacher, Dunholme St Chads Church of England Primary School), Bridget Starling (Faith Group Representative) and Jennifer Wheeldon (Headteacher, Ellison Boulsters, Primary, Scothern).

Apologies were also received from Councillor Mrs P A Bradwell (Executive Councillor Adult Care and Health Services, Children's Services).

Members were advised that David Scott (Deputy Headteacher, Kesteven and Grantham Girls School) had attended the meeting on behalf of Graham Burks (Headteacher, Kesteven and Grantham Girls School) for this meeting only.

4 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There was no declaration of members' interests declared at this stage of the meeting.

5 MINUTES OF THE LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING HELD
ON 23 APRIL 2014

Confirmation was given that the Dedicated School Grant funding was ring fenced and Members hoped that this would continue in to the future.

It was also confirmed that in relation Minute Number 39 (3), details of the further funding allocation was detailed in the minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2014.

Members were advised that the requirement for maintained schools to provide a Medium Term Budget Plan to the Local Authority had been implemented and that the plans had been received, and that the finance team were currently reviewing them.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Lincolnshire Schools Forum from the 23 April 2014 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to the line of paragraph one, on page 9 being amended to read 'ensuring that the Council received the best value possible up to the end of December 2015'.

Also, on page 9 the figure of 119 in the second paragraph of Minute number 46 being amended to 110 and that the figure of 110 quoted in the third paragraph of Minute number 46 being amended to read 119.

6 SCHOOLS BLOCK FUNDING FORMULAE 2014/15: ANALYSIS OF LOCAL
AUTHORITIES' SCHOOLS BLOCK FUNDING FORMULAE

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Finance – Children's and Specialist Services, which provided the Schools Forum with the DfE's analysis of local authorities' (LA) school funding formulae for 2014/15. The Forum was able to see how Lincolnshire's funding of mainstream schools compared to other LAs.

Appendix 1 provided the Schools Forum with Lincolnshire's school funding formula 2014/15 and the national position.

It was reported that a number of refinements had been made for 2014/15 and some of the key features of the current system were detailed at the top of page 12 of the report in points 1 to 6.

In June 2013, the Schools Forum was made aware of how Lincolnshire's new school funding formulae compared with other LAs. That information was then used as context to develop the LA's response to the government's refinements to the funding system for 2014/15.

In March 2014, the DfE had published its latest analysis of LAs local funding formulae. The LA had reviewed the DfE analysis, and the key outputs were shown in Appendix 1 attached.

In conclusion, it was reported that Lincolnshire's funding of schools was once again broadly similar to many other LAs. However, it was noted that in Lincolnshire:

- The Awpu values were lower than the majority of other LAs. As most of the funding for schools had to go through the awpus, this was a reflection of the DfE's relatively low funding of the authority. Of 152 LAs, Lincolnshire's figure for primary schools remained at the lower end of the range at £2,542;
- That funding for deprivation appeared to be lower than the national average. It was reported that the national variation in the percentage of funding distributed through deprivation factors was again significant, ranging from below 2% to nearly 20%. The largest number of LAs (33) were putting between 6% and 8% through deprivation factors. It was highlighted that Lincolnshire was in the next largest group (27) with its 5.89% falling within the 4% and 6% band. In conclusion Lincolnshire's level of funding through deprivation appeared to be a little below the national average;
- The amount distributed for low Prior Attainment was at the higher end of the LA range, and was slightly higher for the primary sector. It was reported that the amounts per pupil allocated varied tremendously. In the primary the range was from £115 to £2,874 and in secondary from £36 to £3,229. The comparative figures for Lincolnshire were £1,641 and £1,420 per pupil in primary and secondary respectively. This placed the County towards the upper quartile in the primary sector and just above half way in the secondary sector;
- The percentage of funding distributed through pupil led factors was one of the lowest in the country. That was as a result of the need for a larger sum for

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small rural schools. It was noted that factors such as basic entitlement, deprivation, Looked After Children, Prior Attainment, English as an Additional language and mobility were classified as 'pupil-led'. The Forum was advised that for 2014/15, a minimum of 80% of the Schools block had to be allocated through these factors. Lincolnshire was allocating 81.27% through pupil led factors and was therefore very much at the lower end of the range; and

- That relative funding between primary and secondary sectors had remained largely unchanged for many years and was at the national average of 1: 1.27. It was noted that lump sums ranged from £42,000 to £175,000. It was noted further that Lincolnshire's primary lump sum of £0.115m was in the middle of the LA range, and that the lump sum for secondary was set at the £175,000 cap, which was therefore at the top of the range along with 36 other LAs.

It was highlighted that the two main areas for closer consideration that might lead to a material change in the local funding arrangements relate to the size of the lump sum/sparsity funding and the proportion of funding distributed through the prior attainment factor. It was highlighted further that the LA's policy was to keep the local school funding formulae under review, and the LA will need to decide how to allocate any increase in the DSG that arises during 2015/16, as a result of the government's recent and provisional plans to allocate more resources to those LAs with greatest need. Further proposals on this would be brought forward for the Schools Forum to consider in due course.

The Forum extended their congratulations to officers for an excellent report.

During debate, the Forum raised the following points:-

- The cost of the pupil premium nationally. The Forum were advised that in 2010/11 £30billion was spent on schools, with a further 2.5billion being spent on pupil premium by 2014/15;
- The impact of the pupil premium and the suggestion that this was duplicating the funding available through the deprivation factor;
- A question was asked as to where Lincolnshire was losing out. It was reported that rurality was likely to be a key issue. The rural schools and the pressures they faced was something the government did not appear to fully understand;
- A question was asked about the implications if the funding became worse and whether any timescales were predicted. The Forum was advised that government funding had been fixed beyond 2015/16. At an earlier meeting the Forum received a report which advised that the LA may receive a share of £350m from April 2015; this would be allocated to those local authorities most in need. Lincolnshire may qualify for a 0.9% increase. Lincolnshire was one of 62 out of 152 authorities who would qualify for extra funding. It was highlighted that on the non-schools budget, the Council was planning for savings £90m was being planned for the four year period starting in 2015/16.

It was suggested that there needed to be a review of Schools Forum arrangements to ensure that funds were being put into the right areas.

Some discussion was also had with regard Notional SEN and the lack of understanding and the lack of consistency the percentages of notional SEN attributed by local authorities to each formula factor. It was noted that the LA was currently reviewing its approach to determine whether funding arrangements for Bands 6 to 8 statements needed to change from April 2015. The Forum was advised that a report on the findings would be presented to the Schools Forum in due course.

RESOLVED

1. That the report be noted.
2. That a link to the spreadsheet information discussed be sent to all members of the Lincolnshire Schools Forum.

7 SCHOOL FUNDING AND PERFORMANCE

The Schools Forum gave consideration to a report from the Head of Finance – Children's and Specialist Services, which provided information regarding school funding and performance.

It was reported that the primary responsibility of the Schools Forum was to oversee the use of the Dedicated Schools Grant; to assist with the development of the local school funding formulae used to distribute the majority of that funding to schools, and; to help set centrally held budgets. The funding in Lincolnshire, amounted to £484.9m in 2014/15 and the Section 251 budget statement for 2014/15 presented to the last meeting of the Schools Forum showed that the funding delegated to primary and secondary schools (Including the top-up funding for statements) amounted to £389m.

Details relating to funding, performance was detailed on page 20 of the report.

It was noted that it was difficult to assess value for money. Over recent years school funding had been reasonably stable, but overall the performance of Lincolnshire schools had not progressed as much as it had nationally. This therefore suggested that value for money was not improving as well as it was elsewhere.

In conclusion, it was highlighted that further performance reports would be presented to the Schools Forum for consideration, and the Schools Forum were invited to suggest any ideas for improving value for money, including through the use and distribution of the DSG; and how future reports to the Schools Forum might be developed.

Some discussion ensued, from which the Forum agreed that any comparison data needed to be like for like. A suggestion was made for someone to be brought in to do some research in relation to improving value for money, taking into consideration the rurality of Lincolnshire; and whether the current formula was fit for purpose.

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RESOLVED

1. That the contents of the report presented be noted.
2. That a funded piece of research be undertaken to improve value for money. That the detail of this aforementioned research be delegated to the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen in consultation with officers.

8 EARLY YEARS IN LINCOLNSHIRE - ANALYSIS OF THE LOCAL
AUTHORITY'S CURRENT EARLY YEARS PRIORITIES AND INTENTIONS
FOR 2014/15

Consideration was given to a report from the Interim Head of Service – Birth to Five, which advised the Schools Forum of the local authority's statutory duties under the current DfE guidance and analysis of Lincolnshire's priorities during 2014/15. The report enabled the Forum to see how Lincolnshire compared to other local authorities; this information would help them inform future discussion about early year's provision.

The Director of Children's Services guided the Forum through the report, making reference to:

- The quality of providers judged by Ofsted – It was reported that Statistical information released from Ofsted for the period up to July 2013 had demonstrated that 85% of Lincolnshire Early Years providers on 'non-domestic premises' were judged as being good or outstanding. This figure was 3% above the national average. It was further highlighted that over a third of Early Years providers on non-domestic premises had improved their Ofsted outcome under the new more rigorous Ofsted framework implemented in November 2013, and of those remaining, a strong majority had held their existing grading. It was highlighted further that Childminders in Lincolnshire performed slightly below the national average, but their outcomes had shown an improving trend throughout the year;
- The Early Years Entitlement for 2, 3 and 4 year olds – The Forum were advised that Lincolnshire currently agreed places for 2,264 children, which represented 69% of the total potentially eligible in September. The number of Early Years providers delivering funded 2 year old places continued to rise and there were currently 260 PVI providers, 103 childminders and 14 school governed providers offering entitlement for 2 year olds in Lincolnshire. It was noted that the number of 3 and 4 year olds accessing the free entitlement had continued to rise, and that national figures published in June 2012 indicated that 97% of 3 and 4 year old children accessed their free entitlement in Lincolnshire in 2012;
- Childcare Sufficiency – It was highlighted that a significant number of new childcare places had been developed around the county to support sufficiency needs since September 2012, including places for 2 year olds to support the current 2 year old programme and the roll out of funded education places. However, in January 2014 the large sufficiency budget to support the development ceased. This work was now being supported by the Birth to Five

Team. Childminders and Out of School Provision previously supported by commissioned contracts ended in March 2013. Since the end of the contract, those cohorts of providers had received little direct support. The Forum noted that currently, the Birth to Five service was reviewing the strategy to provide appropriate levels of information, advice and guidance to those providers as required by statutory duty;

- Graduate Support – The Forum were advised that the Graduate Support Programme Funding had enabled practitioners to continue with their studies;
- Partnership Working – It was reported that the service was committed to working in partnership with targeted teams and other agencies across Lincolnshire. The Forum noted that in several Children's Centres, the Children's Centre Teachers (CCT), working together with Children's Centre Teams had delivered a package of transition support through Linking Education, Partnership and Play (LEAPP) project, to an identified vulnerable group of reception children and their families accessing the schools across the county. The Birth to Five Service was also working alongside health to look at the obesity issue within early years, to see how to reduce the 25% of children who entered reception overweight;

Information relating to the areas for focus for 2014/15 was detailed on page 32 of the report.

From questions raised the Director of Children's Services advised that research indicated that Early Years provision needed to be classed as good, or outstanding, the authority was committed to deliver the 'Getting to Good' programme. The authority was also continuing to increase the number of Children accessing 2 year old free entitlement as this seemed to be having an impact as children transitioned into accessing the 3/4 year old offer.

The authority was already improving communication with health with good systems being in place for the most vulnerable.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

9 ANNUAL REPORT ON SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The Executive Director of Children's Services presented the Schools Forum with an annual update on Special Educational Needs, as required by the Schools Forum Regulations.

It was reported that the Council had 3,300 pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs. Higher Needs Level Statement provision (above 15 hours additional 1:1 weekly support and not including learners who attended Special Schools) had increased during the last 3 years from 794 higher needs statements at January 2011, to 828 in January 2014.

The number of new Statements had decreased (229 in 2013, to 311 in 2012) with schools meeting their pupils' special educational needs without the need for a Statement. It was highlighted that when schools did request a statutory assessment of SEN, they frequently reported that the needs of their pupils was becoming more complex.

The number of 'cease to maintain' statements (That is when the schools and other professionals advise the LA that the statement was no longer required) had remained relatively stable at approximately 17 cases a year.

With regard to the Notional SEN funding, it was reported that schools/academies for the 2014/15 financial year had, through most of their formula factors, a notional SEN funding allocation from which they were expected to contribute the first £6,000 towards a pupil who requires SEN/Additional support. It was noted that the higher level needs (top up funding) and targeted support provision currently remained outside of the notional SEN funding. The Forum was advised that any possible changes to SEN funding from April 2015 would be presented to the next meeting of the Schools Forum.

The Forum were also advised that Part 3 of the Children and Families Act, sought to streamline the system of SEN assessment, support and provision for children and young people 0-25, bring together the provision of a variety of Acts covering education, health and care as well as introducing new provisions. Details of the SEN reforms set out in the Act were detailed sat the bottom of page 39, top of page 40 of the report presented.

It was reported that the implementation of the SEN reforms in Lincolnshire was being managed through a Corporate Project Board. The central Government's expectations was that by 1 September 2014, the SEN local offer and arrangements for statutory assessments and Educational Health Care planning would be taking place for all new applicants. Existing SEN Statements and post 16 Learning Difficulties Assessments would be transferred to the new system over period of up to 2 years for Statements and 1 year for Learning Difficulties Assessments. It was noted that a restructure of the services would be carried out to meet the requirements of the SEND reforms.

Issues raised from the Forum, included:

- The number of student special educational needs. The Forum were advised that 75% of requests ended up being a statement;
- Clarification with regard to Education and Health Care Plans. The Forum noted that to have an Education and health Plan, there had to be an educational need; and
- The portability of the notional SEN funding. The Forum was advised that the top up from the LA would transfer.

RESOLVED

1. That the report be noted.

2. That any changes to the notional SEN funding be presented to a future meeting of the School Forum.

10 PUPIL PREMIUM FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Performance Assurance, which advised the Schools Forum of the education support for Looked After Children belonging to Lincolnshire County Council.

The Forum was advised that as at the date of the meeting there were 628 Looked After Children and the number and location of Looked After Children varied throughout the year. To ensure that each young person benefitted from the Pupil premium, the Council allocated funding based on numbers as at 1 April 2013, 1 September 2013 and 1 January 2014. It was highlighted that of the 373 Looked After Children of statutory school age, 299 were in care for 6 months on 1 January 2014, and received the termly allocation of £300.

It was reported that for 2014/15 Conditions of Grant (Appendix 4 to the report) had significant implications for the allocation of the pupil premium for Looked After Children. The Forum noted that the Department would allocate a provisional allocation of £1,900 per child for the number of children looked after for at least one day, as recorded in the March 2013 Children Looked After Data for Children aged 4 to 15 at 31 August 2012. This would then be updated in October 2014, based on the number of looked after for at least one day recorded as at March 2014. Pages 50/51 of the report provided examples of spend, secondary and primary.

During discussion the following points were raised:-

- Number of schools not using the ePEP system to report individual pupil premium spend. Page 45 of the report indicated that 67% of schools had not been using the system. The Forum noted that free schools meals attracted a pupil premium, and that asking schools for the additional information had been consulted on, but some were reluctant to provide the information. A member of the Forum expressed concern that staff were receiving abuse from parents regarding the issue of free school meals, and further confirmed that the take up for school meals was low. It was also highlighted that some schools were having difficulty using the ePEP system;
- Funding of additional posts. The Forum were advised that funding for the additional posts were contained within the existing budget;
- Last bullet point of page 65 in relation to each pupil aged 4 and over in Year Groups R to 11. A question was asked about who was in receipt of pensions under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) and the War Pensions Scheme (WPS) £300;

Note: Teri Bryant wished it to be noted that he was Vice-Chairman of a War Pension Committee.

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RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

11 OUTREACH SUPPORT SERVICE

The Forum gave consideration to a report from Head of Service, Children's Commissioning, which provided the Schools Forum with the progress of the Outreach Support Service, following the report submitted on the 23 April 2014.

It was reported a memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Lincolnshire County Council and each individual Outreach School, which included a detailed service specification, had been sent to all schools in receipt of funding. Appendix A to the report provided details of the funding assigned to each school for the period 2014/15.

To ensure that those schools providing services were able to demonstrate the work they were doing and the outcomes were being achieved, all those in receipt of funding would now be taking part in formal contract management meetings, using Children's Services Joint Evaluation Toolkit, which was based on a balanced scorecard approach. A list of performance indicators was shown at Appendix B to the report.

By the 2 July 2014, all Contract Management Meetings to review April – May delivery would have been completed. A further series of Contract Management Meetings would then be undertaken at the end of July to review delivery across Outreach in June and July.

In conjunction with the Contracts Management meetings, the stakeholder engagement phase had been entered into, which had involved the issuing of a questionnaire to all Headteachers and Educational Psychologists and internally to colleagues within Specialist Teachers & Applied Psychology Service (STAPS), Additional Needs and Youth Offending Services asking for their views on the existing service and inviting ideas for improved future service delivery. It was noted that engagement would also be taking place with the Parent Partnership and the Parent Carer Group. It was noted further that contact would also be made with the third sector, through the LA's connection with the Voluntary Sector; this feedback would help to identify any gaps in existing provision.

It was highlighted that alongside scoping stakeholder feedback, ten statistical neighbouring Local Authorities had been approached to find out more about the model, funding and future of their support service. This information, once received would provide a contextual benchmark to measure existing and proposed service delivery model against and allow Lincolnshire to review any innovative or best practice findings.

The Forum were advised that there were five schools delivering Outreach Support Service with confirmed funding until 31 December 2014, those schools were John Fielding School, Gainsborough Warren Wood Community School, Lincolnshire Wolds

Federation: St Bernard's School, and The Spalding Special Schools Federation: The Priory and The Garth.

Other activity to be undertaken between now and October included:-

- The distribution of a leaflet outlining the points of contact and specialisms of Outreach Schools;
- Continuing Contract management meetings with schools;
- Ensuring that the service links in to the Children's & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS);
- Attendance at Parent Partnership sessions; and
- Attending meetings with existing front line delivery staff and beginning to map service provision in conjunction with Outreach Schools;

In conclusion, the Forum were advised that the recommended final model and adjoining commissioning strategy plan would be sanctioned through the Sponsor Project Board before being presented to the Schools Forum in October.

RESOLVED

That the report presented be noted, and that approval be given for the extension of the funding for those services that end 31 December 2014, depending upon the final commissioning model agreed, to 31 March 2015 initially and then potentially 31 August 2015.

12 ACADEMIES UPDATE

Consideration was to a report from the Head of Property and Technology Management, which provided the Schools Forum with the latest information relating to the number of pupils in academies.

Overall, out of 359 schools (101658 FTE), 249 were Maintained (44485 FTE) and 110 were now Academies (57173 FTE).

The projected six monthly status of all the 362 Lincolnshire Schools (101658 FTE) showed that 242 would be Maintained (43325 FTE) and 120 would be Academies (58333 FTE).

RESOLVED

That the report presented be noted.

13 FUTURE MEETING DATES

RESOLVED

That the following meeting dates be noted:

- 8 October 2014 – 2.00pm;

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- 14 January 2015 – 2.00pm;
- 22 April 2015 – 2.00pm; and
- 24 June 2015 – 2.00pm.

14 INFORMATION PACK

RESOLVED

That the contents of the information pack presented be noted.

The meeting closed at 4.30 pm