

## SCHOOLS FORUM

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### **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING HELD ON 4 OCTOBER 2012 AT MELKSHAM TOWN HALL, MARKET PLACE, MELKSHAM, WILTS. SN12 6ES.**

#### **Present:**

Mr N Baker, Dr Peter Biggs, Mrs Julia Bird, Mr Andy Bridewell, Mr Steve Clark, Mrs A Ferries, Mrs Jane Franchi, Jan Hatherell, Mr J Hawkins, Mrs Sue Jiggins, Mr M Keeling, Mr J Proctor, Mr Martin Watson and Mrs C Williamson

#### **Also Present:**

Julia Cramp, Service Director Commissioning and Performance, Cllr Lionel Grundy OBE and Mr Ted Hatala

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#### **21 Election of Chairman**

##### **Resolved:**

**To elect Mr N Baker Chairman for the ensuing year.**

Mr N Baker in the Chair

#### **22 Election of Vice-Chairman**

##### **Resolved:**

**To elect Mr M Watson Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.**

#### **23 Apologies and Changes of Membership**

Apologies were received from:

Mrs Ingrid Sidmouth – SEN sector, Rowdeford School  
Rev. Alice Kemp – SEN Governor representative  
Dr Tina Pagett – 14-19 Group representative

And also:

Stephanie Denovan – Service Director, Schools and Learning  
Carolyn Godfrey – Corporate Director  
Councillor Laura Mayes – Portfolio Holder, Children's Services  
Rosheen Ryan – Parent Governor representative

**Changes to membership:**

Ms Jan Hatherell replaces Mr David Cowley as Academy representative

**24 Minutes of the previous Meeting**

**Resolved:**

**To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes from the meeting held on 13 July 2012.**

**25 Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

**26 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman noted the change in venue due to the refurbishment of Old County Hall in Trowbridge and asked members to feedback to either Liz Williams or Kirsty Butcher on its suitability.

**27 Children and Young People's Trust Board Update**

Julia Cramp, Service Director Commissioning and Performance gave a brief update.

The "Bouncing Back" conference in September was very successful, and saw the launch of a new resource directory on support for children and young people with emotional and mental health difficulties, and also a mental health charter developed by young people which they are keen for schools to sign up to.

Meetings are scheduled with both PHF and WASSH to discuss the mental health charter and also the new model policy for schools on self harm which has been developed by a multi-agency group including school representatives and CAMHS.

Work has continued on revising the multi-agency thresholds document which was signed off by the LSCB and the Children's Trust last year. This document includes information about social care thresholds. Some changes had been made to the Children's Social Care Referral and Assessment Team and it is hoped that this will result in better communication and dialogue with referrers.

**28 Budget Monitoring**

Liz Williams, Head of Finance introduced the report which gave the position as at the end of August 2012.

Key area highlighted were the under spend in both the independent special schools placement and early years free entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds, and the significant overspend in maternity costs.

**Resolved:**

**To note the report.**

## **29 Reports from Working Groups**

Liz Williams introduced the report and minutes from the Schools Funding Working Group, SEN Working Group and Early Years Reference Group, and noted that the minutes for the Early Years Reference Group were not attached to the agenda but circulated at the meeting and attached to these minutes.

She highlighted that the Minimum Funding Guarantee Exceptions 2013/14 report had been considered by the Schools Funding Working Group and their recommendations used to complete the submission within the deadline of 30 September 2012.

The Forum's attention was drawn to the recommendations from the Early Years Reference Group with respect to the Early Years Single Funding Formula.

### **Resolved**

**To note the reports.**

## **30 Update on SEN Green Paper Pathfinder/DCA review and Personal Budgets**

Julia Cramp, Service Director Commissioning and Performance provided a verbal update and informed the Forum that the Green Paper had now been followed by draft legislation. She explained that Wiltshire Council was one of twenty pathfinders and that the single assessment process was currently being piloted. She drew attention to the potential for personal budgets, including direct payments. She confirmed that there was currently no published directory of providers from whom families taking direct payments could purchase their own support.

In response to questions she confirmed that Early Years SEN (Inclusion Advisors) were part of the pilot and that further information was available through Susan Tanner, Head of Commissioning or Nicholas Breakwell, Interim Head of Service for the pilot project. The draft legislation is clear that in the future there should be both joint commissioning and joint provision across education, health and social care.

It was agreed that a report on the pilot would be brought to the Schools Forum on 24 January 2013.

## **31 Young People's Support Service Update**

Liz Williams introduced the report and invited questions.

Concern was raised over the number and variety of alternate providers and the feedback through the NFER questionnaire not being used by all schools, however this had been partially addressed through changes to the spreadsheet.

### **Resolved:**

**To bring an update back to the Schools Forum meeting on 6 December 2012.**

## **32 Schools Revenues Balances 2011-12**

Liz Williams, Head of Finance introduced the report which provided the annual update and showed that whilst the number of schools in deficit had decreased the value had increased, although this was due to one school and did not present a significant risk.

In response to questions she explained that deficits needed an agreed recovery plan which had to be signed off by the Chief Finance Officer, the deficit was financed by the local authority (Wiltshire Council) and recovered through the plan and that it was subject to great scrutiny. Clarity was sought over Academy conversions and she confirmed that if schools converted through the new method (Good / Outstanding) the deficit was taken and plan agreed with the Education Funding Agency (EFA) who reimbursed the local authority. If schools converted through sponsors the local authority inherited the deficit. She also explained that should a school close any surplus or deficit would come back to the local authority, and should schools federate or amalgamate any surplus would be kept by the new school or any deficit would be inherited by the local authority.

**Resolved:**

**To note the report.**

## **33 The Early Years Single Funding Formula - extension to 2 year olds**

Simon Burke, Head of Business and Commercial Services introduced the report and explained that the recommendations would form the basis for consultation.

He drew attention to the feedback given to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) detailed in paragraph 14.

He clarified that the suggested amendments were to the rate for 2 year olds and this was what would be consulted on.

A discussion followed where concern was raised over affordability as money received from the Government may not cover the full amount and it could impact on the dedicated schools grant.

**Resolved:**

- i. To apply the methodology of the existing Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) to calculate the hour rates for two year olds;**
- ii. To amend the EYSFF to add an element for consumable toiletries in respect of two year olds;**
- iii. To amend the EYSFF staffing model with a staff:children ratio of 1:4 in respect of provision for two year olds;**
- iv. To adopt a single hourly rate for all private/voluntary/independent settings providing free entitlement childcare for two year olds;**

- v. **That the hourly rate paid to childminders be consistent with that for three and four year olds**
- vi. **To incorporate a deprivation supplement into the basic hourly rate for two year olds (if allowed by regulations);**
- vii. **To approve the principle of applying the existing EYSFF, with the amendments above; be subject to consultation with all providers of free entitlement childcare for two year olds; and**
- viii. **To note concerns over affordability and bring costings of potential issues to the Schools Forum meeting being held on 6 December 2012.**

**34 Schools Funding Reform - workplan to address implementation of funding changes for high needs pupils**

Liz Williams, Head of Finance introduced the report which detailed the work needed around high needs pupils and drew attention to an error in paragraph 4 bullet point 2, which should read:

- The place plus methodology is to be implemented for all specialist provision including maintained and academy provision.

It was explained that a distinction was needed between pre-16 and post-16 as the funding came from different places.

**Resolved:**

- i. **To agree the work set out in Appendix 1 as required for the implementation of funding reform for high needs pupils in the Wiltshire context.**
- ii. **To keep the Formula Review Group for High Costs Pupils in place as the consultative group through this process, reporting to the SEN Working Group.**
- iii. **To expand the membership of the Formula Review Group to include a member of the Children's Services Commissioning Team to provide expertise in relation to independent sector provision and support on contracting arrangements.**

**35 Schools Funding Reform - Review of funding formula**

Liz Williams introduced the papers circulated at the meeting and attached to these minutes.

The subsequent discussion felt that responses shown in percentage terms did not show the pupil impact and it was agreed that the data should be analyzed to also show the representation in pupil numbers and that this would be brought to the meeting on 18 October 2012.

Concern raised over the inadequacy of deprivation measures gave confirmation that the deprivation could be different between the phases, and this was to be discussed at the next WASSH meeting and fed back to the Forum at the 18 October 2012 meeting.

### 36 **School Finance Regulations 2013**

Liz Williams, Head of Finance introduced the report and confirmed that the proposals had been taken into account in the new formula.

**Resolved:**

**To note the report.**

### 37 **Minimum Funding Guarantee Exceptions 2012-13**

Liz Williams, Head of Finance introduced the report and explained that as the deadline was 30 September 2012 the submission had made with input from the Schools Funding Working Group.

**Resolved**

**To note the recommendations as listed below:**

**Special staff costs:** To seek approval in principle from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) to remove safeguarded salary funding from the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) when it is no longer payable.

**Service school safety net:** To seek approval from the EFA in principle to remove service school safety funding from the MFG where a schools pupil numbers used in the forthcoming financial year budget calculation exceeded the protected numbers under this factor in the previous year.

**New school allowances and new school year group funding:** To seek Department for Education (DfE) approval to remove this funding from the MFG.

**Early Years Single Funding Formula Rates abatement:** To seek approval from the EFA to remove the abatement from the MFG otherwise the cost of rates in schools with nursery classes would not be fully funded.

**Small school curriculum protection:** The removal of this funding from the MFG would cause a significant reduction in funding for one school that received it this year. Following consideration by the Schools Funding Working Group it is recommended that it should not be removed from the MFG in 2013/14.

**Rents, where the school no longer qualifies under the revised funding proposals:** To seek approval from the EFA to remove rents from the MFG where the cost does not exceed 1% of a schools budget share.

**Split site funding where a school no longer qualifies:** To seek approval from the EFA to remove split site funding from the MFG where a school no longer qualifies under the revised definition.

**Service school turbulence funding:** As the removal of this funding from the MFG would cause turbulence for a number of schools it is recommended that it should not be removed from the MFG

**In year “trigger” funding for pupil growth:** To seek approval from the EFA to remove “trigger” funding from the MFG and to confirm that existing arrangements for pupil growth will be held centrally from April 2013.

**38 Confirmation of dates for future meetings**

Future meeting dates were detailed as:

18 October 2012  
6 December 2012  
24 January 2013  
14 March 2013  
27 June 2013  
3 October 2013  
12 December 2013  
23 January 2014  
13 March 2014

**Resolved:**

**To note the dates.**

**39 Urgent Items**

Thanks was given to Phil Cooch and Liz Williams for their work on the Schools Funding reform.

(Duration of meeting: 1.35 - 3.40 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Kirsty Butcher, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 713 948, e-mail [kirsty.butcher@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:kirsty.butcher@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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