

**Lancashire Schools Forum meeting of 17 October 2019 at County Hall, Preston
Executive Summary**

As agreed at the last meeting in July 2019, Shaun Jukes will take the Forum Chair for the 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic years.

1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence and 2. Substitute Members

To note attendance and apologies for absence and welcome any substitute members.

3. Forum Membership

To note the Forum membership changes since the last meeting.

4. Minutes of the Last Meeting and 5. Matters Arising

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 4 July 2019 and any matters arising.

6. Recommendations from the Schools Block Working Group

To consider the recommendations from the Schools Block Working Group from 24 September 2019.

i. Update to Bank Account Guidance

The County Council has been reviewing the Guidance Notes for the Operation of Schools Local Bank Accounts, which includes a proposal to introduce a Cash Flow Advance Loan proforma, and sought Forum views about revised charges for 2020/21.

The Working Group

- a) Noted the report;*
- b) Supported the proposed bank account charges from April 2020.*

A copy of the updated bank account is attached at Appendix A to the report.

ii. Schools Block Funding 2020/21

This report provided information on Government announcements about an additional £14b of funding between 2020/21 and 2022/23, 'for 5-16 schools' and some DfE consultations. Initial analysis was included in the report, but further information is needed before the final implications for Lancashire schools can be fully assessed.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report;*
- b) Encouraged individual members to respond to the RPA consultation if appropriate;*
- c) Awaited further information and modelling about the 2020/21 funding arrangements.*

iii.2020/21 De-Delegation Proposals

Following reports to the Forum in the summer term 2019, the 2020/21 de-delegation consultation has been issued to schools. This report provided more details for the Working Group about the proposals and highlighted the main changes from 2019/20.

The Working Group

- a) Noted the report and the interim information provided on the consultation responses to date;*
- b) Noted that primary and secondary school members of the Forum would need to formally vote on each of the relevant de-delegation proposals, by phase, at the Forum meeting on 17 October 2019;*
- c) Requested that further information be provided around the take up and impact of the Inclusion Hub proposals across all district;*
- d) Encouraged individual members to respond to the consultation.*

Further information is included in the Forum report.

Paul Duckworth, Head of Service – Education, Quality and Performance (Acting) and Lynsey Austen, South Primary Area Team Leader, Education, Quality & Performance will attend the meeting to provide information about Primary Inclusion hubs to help inform de-delegation considerations.

Primary and Secondary School members of the Forum will be asked to formally vote on the relevant de-delegation proposals.

iv.Split Site Policy Update

Following a review of the Lancashire split site criteria, a revised criteria for the allocation of split site funding was agreed by the Forum at the January 2019 meeting. Information was provided to the Working Group about the eligibility of schools against the revised policy and the application of the 2020/21 transitional protection criteria.

The Working Group

- a) Noted the report;*
- b) Supported the application of the revised split site arrangements.*

v.DfE Consultation Financial transparency of local authority maintained schools and academy trusts

The DfE issued a consultation on 'Financial transparency of LA maintained schools and academy trusts'. The County Council shared a draft response with the Working Group.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report;*
- b) Supported the content of the draft LCC consultation response.*

vi. High Needs Block Provision Task and Finish Group Report

Members were informed that a report from the LCC High Needs Block Provision Task and Finish Group had been produced and had been agreed by the Cabinet. It was originally intended to share the document with the Forum at this round of meetings, but the report now required reevaluation in light of the recent Government funding announcements.

The Working Group will be kept up to date with developments.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report.*

The Forum are asked to ratify the Working groups recommendations.

7. Recommendations from the High Needs Block Working Group

To consider the recommendations from the High Needs Block Working Group from 26 September 2019.

i. Election of a Chair for the High Needs Block Working Group

Peter Higham, headteacher at Great Arley School, was elected as the new Chair of the High Needs Block Working Group.

ii. High Needs/Central Schools Services Block Budget Monitoring 2019/20

Summer term 2019/20 data was used to provide monitoring and analysis for the High Needs Block, Central Schools Services Block and Central items. The forecast High Needs Block budget position at 31 March 2020 predicts an overspend of some £2.6m.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report and the latest budget monitoring position;*
- b) Noted the comments provided around the forecast overspend and that further information would be provided at the Schools Forum in response to certain queries.*

Further information is provided in the report to the Forum as requested by the Working Group.

iii. High Needs Block Funding 2020/21

Funding announcements from the Prime Minister about school funding included a commitment for £700m extra for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in 2020/21. This report provided initial information about the implications for Lancashire and about a Major Review into Support for Children with Special Educational Needs.

The Working Group:

- a) *Noted the report;*
- b) *Noted that more detailed information about the Lancashire implications around funding announcements and government reviews would be provided in due course.*

iv. High Needs Block Provision Task and Finish Group Report

A verbal update on the High Needs Block Provision Task and Finish Group Report was provided for the Working Group, including proposals to develop project plans for each of the options set out in the report agreed by the LCC Cabinet.

The report also made reference to a recent National Audit Office Report: Support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities in England.

The Working Group:

- a) *Noted the report;*
- b) *Noted that more detailed information would be provided in due course.*

A copy of the 12 recommendations arising from the LCC Cabinet Developing the Approach and Provision for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities report are provided for the Forum.

The Forum are asked to ratify the Working groups recommendations.

8. Recommendations from the Early Years Block Working Group

To consider the recommendations from the Early Years Block Working Group from 1 October 2019.

i. SEN Inclusion Fund

Information was provided to the Group to indicate that PVI and maintained providers should now have received details of the SEN Inclusion Fund. Members fed back that they did not recall receiving the communications and asked if this information could be checked.

The Working Group:

- a) *Noted the information provided, but asked if the distribution of the Inclusion Fund information could be checked.*

A copy of the guidance documentation and proforma have now been circulated Working Group members.

ii. Early Years Block Budget Pressures

Reports had been presented to previous working group meetings about the financial pressures facing the sector and this report provided an update, including:

- *Forum letter to District Councils lobbying for a reduction in business rates for nurseries;*
- *Lobbying Central Government for Increased Funding.*

The Working Group:

- a) *Noted the report;*
- b) *Noted that further information on Early Years Block funding would be provided in due course.*

iii. Consultation on Discretionary Payments in the Lancashire Early Education Formula 2 Year Old Funding Arrangements

The Working Group were provided with a new an update on the consultation on Discretionary Payments in the Lancashire Early Education Formula 2 Year Old Funding Arrangements, together with an interim analysis of the consultation responses and comments, as at 30 September 2019.

The Working Group

- a) *Noted the report and the consultation responses to date;*
- b) *Recommended that the Forum support the continuation of the existing criteria in the 2 year old offer that aids discretionary groups.*

iv. Payments for Social Services Supported Children

The Working Group Chair provided a verbal update for members in connection with the payments to providers for Social Services Supported Children.

The Working Group:

- a) *Noted the information provided;*
- b) *Supported the ongoing systems issues being subject to further review.*

The Forum are asked to ratify the Working groups recommendations.

9. Fraud and Cybercrime Presentation

Hannah Regan, from NatWest Bank, will attend the meeting to provide information on Fraud Prevention and Cybercrime.

10. Schools Forum Urgent Business Procedure

No decisions have been taken using the Forum urgent business procedure since the last meeting.

11. Forum Correspondence

There has been no Forum related correspondence since the last meeting.

12. Any Other Business

13. Date of Future Meetings

To note that the next scheduled Forum meeting will be held at 10.00am on 14 January 2019 at County Hall, Preston.