

Lancashire Schools Forum meeting of 19 October 2021 via Microsoft Teams

Executive Summary

1. Election of Forum Chair and 2 Election of Forum Vice-Chair

To elect a Forum Chair and Vice-Chair for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 academic years

3. Attendance and Apologies for Absence and 4. Substitute Members

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

5. Forum Membership

To note the Forum membership changes since the last meeting.

6. Minutes of the Last Meeting and 7. Matters Arising

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 6 July 2021 and any matters arising.

8. Team Around the School and Setting (TASS)

Pita Oates Designated Lead for TASS will attend the Forum for this item

To receive a presentation about the TASS developments

9. Recommendations from the Schools Block Working Group

To consider the recommendations from the Schools Block Working Group held on 21 September 2021.

i. Government response to schools' business rates consultation

Steve Little, Principal Estates Surveyor, attended the working group meeting for this item.

This report provided an update on the government's response to the proposals for schools business rates from 2022/23

The Working Group:

a) Noted the report and that further information should be made available in due course.

ii. Service De-delegations 2022/23

Information was provided about 2022/23 de-delegation proposals and the consultation with schools

The Working Group is asked to:

a) Noted the report;

b) Noted that de-delegation papers would be circulated to members after the meeting;

c) Noted that consultation responses would be presented to the Forum meeting on 19 October 2021 and that the Forum would be asked to formally consider de-delegation decisions for 2022/23.

d) Supported the proposed de-delegation voting arrangements.

Analysis and comments from the de-delegation consultation responses will be presented to the Forum meeting on 19 October 2021 and members will be asked to consider the 2022/23 de-delegation proposals.

iii. Schools Block Funding Arrangements 2022/23

On 19 July 2021, the DfE made announcements about the 2022/23 school funding arrangements. This report provided relevant information, including proposals for a 2022/23 MFG level of 2%, which are the subject of consultation with schools and academies.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report and that final DSG allocations for 2022/23 would be notified in December 2021.*
- b) Noted that consultation responses on the level of MFG would be presented to the Forum meeting on 19 October 2021 and that the Forum would be asked to formally consider the 2022/23 rate.*
- c) Supported the proposed voting arrangements as set out for consideration of the de-delegation proposals.*

Analysis and comments from the MFG consultation responses will be presented to the Forum meeting on 19 October 2021 and members will be asked to consider the 2022/23 MFG proposals.

iv. DfE consultation: Fair school funding for all: completing our reforms to the National Funding Formula

The DfE had issued a consultation 'Fair school funding for all: completing our reforms to the National Funding Formula'. A report was presented offering information about the DfE consultation and providing a draft Forum response for consideration.

It was noted that due to the closing date for consultation responses being 30 September 2021, formal approval of a Forum submission will be sought using the Urgent Business Procedure.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report.*
- b) Noted that formal approval of a Forum submission will be sought using the Urgent Business Procedure.*

Subsequent to the meeting the Forum urgent business procedure was used to seek final comments and approval for the Forum response

v. Recovery Premium

On 6 September 2021, the Government made further announcements about one-off recovery premium as part of its package of funding to support education recovery. This report provided information.

The Working Group

- a) Noted the report about the Recovery premium funding.*

vi. *School Cost Pressures*

Queries had been raised with officers ahead of the meeting about cost pressures facing schools. Information on the issues raised was provided

The Working Group

- a) *Noted the report.*

The Forum are asked to ratify the Working Group's recommendations.

10. Recommendations from the High Needs Block Working Group

To consider the recommendations from the High Needs Block Working Group meeting held on 28 September 2021.

i. *High Needs Block 2021/22 – Budget Monitoring*

Summer term 2021/22 data had been utilised to provide High Needs Block monitoring and analysis for members

The Working Group

- a) *Noted the report.*

ii. *High Needs Block Funding 2022/23*

DfE announcements have been made about the 2022/23 HNB funding arrangements. This report provided further details.

The Working Group:

- a) *Noted the report.*

iii. *HNB Indicative Commissioned Place Numbers 2022/23*

This report provided an update on the 2022/23 HNB commissioned places process.

The Working Group

- a) *Noted the report and that further information would be provided as the commissioned place process continued.*
b) *Requested an update on the work of the Alternative Provision Strategy Group.*

iv. *Lancashire Hospital Education Service: Annual Report: Academic Year 2020-21*

The Lancashire Hospital Education Service (LHES) is a centrally managed service that is funded from the DSG High Need Block. Information was provided about the service in 2020/21.

The Working Group:

- a) *Noted the report.*

v. *Recovery Premium*

On 6 September 2021, the Government made further announcements about one-off recovery premium as part of its package of funding to support education recovery. This report provided information.

The Working Group

- b) *Noted the report about the Recovery premium funding.*

vi. *School Cost Pressures*

Queries had been raised with officers ahead of the meeting about cost pressures facing schools. Information on the issues raised was provided

The Working Group

- b) *Noted the report.*

The Forum are asked to ratify the Working Group's recommendations.

11. Recommendations from the Early Years Block Working Group

To consider the recommendations from the Early Years Block Working Group meeting held on 5 October 2021.

i. *Schools Forum Early Years Block Membership*

An update was provided on membership changes

The Working Group:

- a) *Welcomed Sharon Fenton as one of the formal Schools Forum representatives from September 2021.*
- b) *Thanked Sharon Alexander for her contribution to the work of the Forum*

ii. *Early Years Block Funding 2022/23*

This report provided an update on EYB funding for 2022/23 and highlighted the possibility that a schools block transfer may be unavailable from April 2022.

The Working Group:

- a) *Noted the report.*
- b) *Noted that a possible principles consultation could be undertaken with the sector in the autumn term 2021.*
- c) *Supported the use of reserves, to provide a level of protection in the transition to a 3&4 year old base rate that is no longer supported by a Schools Block transfer.*

iii. *Maintained Nursery Schools Consultation Update*

An update was provided on the progress on the MNS consultation.

The Working Group:

- a) *Noted the report.*

iv. Education Recovery Board

The Chair fed back on some of the early years issued considered at recent Education Recovery Boards.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report.*
- b) Supported the recirculation of the LCC/Public Health letter on testing in the sector bulletin.*

The Forum are asked to ratify the Working Group's recommendations.

12. Recommendations from the Apprenticeship Levy Steering Group

To consider the recommendations from the Apprenticeship Levy Steering Group meeting held on 5 October 2021.

Colleagues from the Apprenticeship Levy team delivered a presentation to members providing an update on the latest school related developments.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the information;*
- b) Expressed frustration at the continued difficulties caused by school pooled payroll issues;*
- c) Requested that schools and early years providers be encouraged to engage with the apprenticeship levy, via the schools portal and early years bulletins;*
- d) Requested that a more detailed breakdown of early years take-up be provided directly to the Forum early years representatives;*
- e) Thanked the Apprenticeship Levy Team for their continued hard work and dedication during difficult circumstances.*

13. Urgent Business

Information on the decision taken using the Forum's urgent business procedure is included in the Schools Block report

14. Oracle Fusion Presentation (Enclosure)

Jon Howard, Head of Payroll Services) will attend the meeting for this item.

To note the information provided.

15. Forum Correspondence

There is no Forum related correspondence to consider at this meeting.

16. Any Other Business

No known items

17. Date of Future Meetings (Enclosure)

To note that the next scheduled Forum meeting will be held at 10.00 am on Thursday 13 January 2022. Arrangements for the meeting will be confirmed in due course.

A copy of the forum schedule of meetings for the 2021/22 academic year is provided. The meetings include a physical venue but may be conducted virtually.