

## Schools Forum

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday, 16 January, 2019 at 4.00 p.m. in the Large Hall at Pelsall Educational Development Centre (EDC), Pelsall Lane, WS4 1NG

**Present:-**

- Dr. A. Bruton (Vice Chair)
- Mrs Cathy Draper
- Mrs Michelle Sheehy
- Mrs Jenny Garratt
- Mr. Sean Davies
- Mrs Natalie Boys
- Mr. Mark Moody
- Mr. Andy Seager
- Mr. Ray Beech
- Mrs Chris Fraser
- Ms Lesley Foster
- Mr. Mike Fox
- Mr. Fran Hodgkinson
- Mrs Margaret Turley
- Ms Jenny Thompson
- Mr. Russ Bragger (Observer)
- Councillor Towe (Observer)
- Mr. Anthony Orlik (Observer)

**In Attendance:-**

- Ms Sally Rowe – Executive Director, Children’s Services
- Mrs Anne Birch – Assistant Director, Access & Achievement
- Mr. Lloyd Haynes – Senior Finance Manager
- Mrs Dawn Morris - Schools & Early Years Finance Manager
- Ms Isabel Vanderheeren – Transformation Lead, Children’s Services
- Ms Emma Thornbery – Lead Educational Psychologist/Strategic Support Manager
- Ms Nicola Hart – School Improvements/Ready Early Years Adviser

		<b>Action</b>
	At the start of the meeting, the Clerk requested a nomination for an Acting Chair in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair.  Mrs Michelle Sheehy in the Chair.	
<b>1. 16.01.19</b>	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>  Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Mr. Max Vlahakis, Mr. Keith Whittlestone, Mr. Brian Powell, Mr. Steve Prichard-Jones, Mr. Ian Baker and Ms Debbie Clarke	

<p><b>2.</b> <b>16.01.19</b></p>	<p><b>Minutes – 5 December, 2018</b></p> <p>That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December, 2018, a copy having been previously circulated to each Member of Schools Forum, be approved and signed as a true record, subject to the inclusion of Mrs Natalie Boys to the attendance list.</p>	
<p><b>3.</b> <b>16.01.19</b></p>	<p><b>Matters Arising from the Minutes of 5 December, 2018</b></p> <p>There were no matters arising from the minutes.</p>	
<p><b>4.</b> <b>16.01.19</b></p>	<p><b>Late Items (urgent) to be introduced by the Chairman</b></p> <p>There were no late items.</p>	
<p><b>5.</b> <b>16.01.19</b></p>	<p><b>Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended)</b></p> <p>The Forum was advised there were no agenda items that required the exclusion of the public.</p>	
<p><b>6.</b> <b>16.01.19</b></p>	<p><b>Apprenticeship Levy</b></p> <p>There was no update at that time.</p>	
<p><b>7.</b> <b>16.01.19</b></p>	<p><b>SENDI Action Plan</b></p> <p>Mrs Anne Birch, Interim Assistant Director – Access and Achievement presented the report which had been submitted to provide an update and clarification on the progress made against the SEND Action Plan (appendix 1). The Action Plan provided details of the progress against the recommendations arising from the review of the Council’s preparedness to test out the effectiveness of SEND practice prior to an Ofsted inspection of how well it supports children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.</p> <p>(see annexed)</p> <p>Members considered the report and in response to a number of queries, Anne advised that the Action Plan had been included to provide Schools Forum with clarification of the progress made to date and that all recommendations would be met by the end of March, 2019.</p> <p>Mrs Sally Rowe, Executive Director, Children’s Services advised that the local authority was in the process of reviewing the whole progress with regards to Schools Places and that future Schools Forum meetings would include discussions around redefining the future of schools services, the organisation of school places as well as linking into the state of some school buildings.</p>	

	<p>Sally advised that a report would be presented to a future Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and she advised that a new Assistant Director for Children’s Services would commence in March.</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>That:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The Action Plan be revised to include anticipated timescales in the ‘Progress’ column as opposed to traffic light indicators</li> <li>ii. SEND to remain a standard item on the agenda.</li> </ul>	<p>To be actioned</p> <p>To be actioned</p>
<p><b>8.i</b> <b>16.01.19</b></p>	<p><b>Schools Ready Investment</b></p> <p>The report of Ms Nicola Hart, School Imp/Ready Early Years Lead Adviser was submitted</p> <p>(see annexed)</p> <p>Ms Nicola Hart – School Improvements/Ready Early Years Adviser advised Schools Forum of the background to the report, advising members of the outcomes of its £250,000 investment over the last four years, and detailing the huge difference the monies had made to date. Nicola added that the investment had been designated to improve children’s outcomes by the age of 5 years, through plans and activities delivered through the investment, which reflected within Walsall’s corporate vision of reducing inequalities for children and maximising their potential by targeting money where it was needed most.</p> <p>Members considered the report favourably and a number of queries were raised, which included how many schools had utilised the service; the reason for the fluctuation in the expenditure between 2016/17 and 2017/18 and the longevity of the project at the end of the Schools Ready Improvement funding.</p> <p>In response, Nicola advised members that only six schools had not yet accessed any of the training or attended any of the network meetings but that she had arranged to speak with the Heads of the schools in question in the hope of engaging them in the near future; the expenditure differences between 2016/17 and 2017/18 were due in part to a member of staff leaving and the subsequent gap before a new member of staff commencing, plus some funding having been allocated direct from DfE. Nicola added that training had been focused on leadership, with practitioners gaining tool kits in skills as a legacy to continue once the funding has been utilised.</p>	

	<p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>That Schools Forum noted and were happy with what had been delivered to date and were content with the plans for 2019/20 and would add any further ideas or suggestions for ongoing improvement</p>	<p>To note</p>
<p><b>8.ii</b> <b>16.01.19</b></p>	<p><b>Update on 2 year old expenditure</b></p> <p>The report of Ms Nicola Hart, School Imp/Ready Early Years Lead Adviser had been submitted to update Schools Forum on the spend and impact of the 2 year old capital and trajectory fund that enabled the Local Authority to carry out its duty to provide early learning for eligible two years.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>That Schools Forum agreed to make the remaining funds available in order to further improve sufficiency, quality and take up.</p>	<p>To note</p>
<p><b>9.</b> <b>16.01.19</b></p>	<p><b>Approval of Central Expenditure Budgets for 2019/20</b></p> <p>The report of Mr. Lloyd Haynes, Senior Finance Manager was submitted which set out the amounts that Walsall Council proposed to utilise from the Central Schools Services Block of DSG and the central budgets to be retained from the Early Years Block of DSG. The report sought Schools Forum's approval of the proposed Central Expenditure for 2019/20 budget, which had been determined by the EFA and as set out in the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations.</p> <p>In response to a query whether the responsibilities outlined in appendix 1 of the report were the same as last years, Lloyd confirmed the responsibilities were the same albeit combined into the one report as opposed to three separate reports to last year's forum.</p> <p><b>Resolved (14 Members in support and none against)</b></p> <p>That Schools Forum approved tables 1 and 2 as set out to form the basis for central expenditure for the 2019/20 financial year.</p>	<p>To note</p>
<p><i>Dr. Alison Bruton, Vice Chair arrived at this juncture of the meeting and resumed the role of the Chair.</i></p>		

<p><b>10.</b> <b>16.01.19</b></p>	<p><b>Final Mainstream Schools Funding Formula 2019/20</b></p> <p>The report of Mr. Lloyd Haynes, Senior Finance Manager was submitted</p> <p>(see annexed).</p> <p>Lloyd reported that Cabinet had approved Schools Forum’s endorsed funding formula for mainstream primary and secondary schools for 2019/20 at its meeting December 2018. Lloyd further added that although the Schools Block Unit of DSG for 2019/20 had been over estimated by £4.2m from the 2018/19 total, £3.01m was now required to meet the increased costs in per pupil AWPU funding and FSM factors, albeit the value from the AWPU was always lower than the actual figure and therefore pay more from local funding formula.</p> <p>Lloyd advised that he had not received any dates for the NFF and that MFG had been set at zero in line with Schools Forum’s recommendation of 5 December, 2018.</p> <p><b>Resolved (unanimously)</b></p> <p>That Schools Forum:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Note the overall level of DSG funding;</li> <li>ii. Note the adjustments to funding factor values that are required for 2019/20 to ensure that allocations to mainstream schools via the local funding formula are affordable within the funding that is available as set out in Appendix B of the report;</li> <li>iii. Endorsed and recommended the formula, as set out in Appendix B of the report submitted, including the changes to funding factor values that are indicated and set out within the report, to the Director of Children’s Services, the portfolio holder for Education and Skills, and the ESFA.</li> </ul>	<p>To note</p> <p>To Note</p> <p>To note</p>
<p><b>11.i</b> <b>16.01.19</b></p>	<p><b>Effectively Reducing Exclusions</b></p> <p><b>Maintained Schools De-delegation of Integrated Behavioural Support Services</b></p> <p>The report of Anne Birch, Interim Director - Access and Achievement was submitted to advise Schools on the progress to develop an Inclusion Focused Integrated Behaviour Support Service following the support received from Schools Forum at the meeting in January, 2018 to utilise one-off DSG reserve funds for this purpose and she highlighted the salient points therein.</p> <p>(see annexed)</p>	

	<p>Anne advised members that the report was to be read in conjunction with a second report at agenda item 11ii entitled 'Proposed Transformation Model', in relation to the proposed creation of a multi-disciplinary team based in localities to support the needs of vulnerable learners.</p> <p>A number of comments were made by members with regard the limited effectiveness of the spend to date and whether the remaining funding should continue to finance the service until the end of the financial year. In response, Lloyd Haynes, Senior Finance Manager reminded members they had approved the continuation of the funding of the services until the end of the financial year or until the funds are fully utilised.</p> <p>Anne Birch went on to say that although the limited effectiveness of the one-off funding from the DSG reserve funds in supporting the implementation of the Inclusion Focused Integrated Behaviour Support Service had been recognised, it had proven beneficial in a number of ways by enabling the consideration of different work models, thus assisting in the recognition of the need for an early, holistic approached intervention.</p> <p>By way of explanation, Sally Rowe, Executive Director for Children's Services said the directorate had experienced many changes and subsequent challenges during the last twelve months and she emphasised both her own and the Council's confidence in the 'Walsall's Right for Children' vision.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>That Schools Forum noted the work that had been undertaken in year, the outcome of the review that had been commissioned by the Director of Children's Services, the draft Inclusion Strategy that was currently being consulted on and the proposed model of support that the authority was seeking to implement in support of this and item 11.ii entitled 'Proposed Transformation Model' in relation to the proposed creation of a multi-disciplinary team based in localities to support the needs of vulnerable learners.</p> <p><i>Andy Seager left at this juncture of the meeting.</i></p>	<p>To note</p>
<p><b>11.ii</b> <b>16.01.19</b></p>	<p><b>Effectively Reducing Exclusions</b></p> <p><b>Proposed Transformation Model</b></p> <p>The report of the Transformation Lead had been submitted to consult with Schools Forum on the proposed transformation model which aimed to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- develop a proactive and position relationship between schools and the local authority,</li> </ul>	

- create simplified pathways and access to support for children who display behaviour that is negatively impacting of their learning of others,
- reduce the number of exclusions, children on reduced timescales, managed moves or children missing education and children not in education by delivering an integrated timely response.

Ms Isabel Vanderheeren, Transformation Lead and Ms Emma Thornbery, Lead Educational Psychologies/Strategic Support Manager gave an informative over view of the proposed transformation model as contained within the report and respective appendices and drew Members attention to section 4 of the report pertaining to the aims of the proposal, which included -

- What are we looking to achieve?
  - create simplified pathways/access to support all pupils
  - Develop positive and clear pathways / partnership relationships between Local Authority and Schools to ensure agencies do not work in isolation;
  - Develop trust between Local Authority and Schools;
  - Opportunity for collaborative approach/working
  - need much quicker responses to schools and therefore structure / staffing under review
  - Need to build specialisms - some children (autism/ anxiety/SCE differences)
- What do we know?
  - Not enough focus on interventions
  - Lack of information sharing between agencies leading to lack of knowledge, understanding and planning to meet child's identified needs
  - Need to link with exclusions
  - Transformation a slow process
- Proposed Response
  - develop a strong collaborative approach between the Local Authority and Schools;
  - develop proactive and consistent good practice to meet needs of pupil;
  - create a sustainable, accessible well-co-ordinated memo of support across each of the 4 localities;
  - subsequent to the Local Authority's unsuccessful funding bid to the DfE to pilot a new way of working by way of focusing on moving services closer to families and communities, the Local Authority is committed to continue

	<p>with a new operating model to see social work resources deployed into localities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>How will we review?</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Propose that the Strategic Education Inclusion Board oversees the implementation and monitoring;</li> <li>- To be clear on what needs to be fixed – journey with all schools for pupil needs</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Schools Forum considered the report in detail and it was:-</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>i. That Schools Forum noted the proposal of the local authority to establish a multidisciplinary 'Integration Team' and expressed its views on this and the proposed funding of this team from a mixture of existing local authority budgets and a one-off use of High Needs block reserves</p> <p>ii. That Schools Forum be included in further discussions to identify any gaps in provision.</p> <p><i>Anthony Orlik left at this juncture of the meeting</i></p>	<p>To note</p> <p>Await further discussions to identify any gaps in provision</p>
<p><b>12.</b> <b>16.01.19</b></p>	<p><b>Forward Plan</b></p> <p>The Forward Plan was submitted.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>That the Forward Plan be noted.</p>	<p>To note</p>
<p><b>13.</b> <b>16.01.19</b></p>	<p><b>Late Items (if any)</b></p> <p>There were no late items.</p>	
<p><b>14.</b> <b>16.01.19</b></p>	<p><b>Correspondence (if any)</b></p> <p>There was no correspondence.</p>	
	<p><b>Date and time of next meeting</b></p> <p>It was <b>NOTED</b> that the next meeting of the Schools Forum was scheduled for Wednesday 13 March, 2019 at 4.00 p.m. at Pelsall EDC, Pelsall Lane, Rushall. WS4 1NG</p>	<p>To note</p>

The meeting terminated at 5.45 p.m.

Signed .....

Date: .....