

## Schools Forum

### Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday, 7 December 2021 at 4.00 pm Digital Meeting via Microsoft Teams

*Held in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulation 2020; and conducted according to the Council's Standing Orders for Remote Meetings and those set out in the Council's Constitution.*

#### Schools Forum Members Present:

Mr M. Vlahakis (Chair)	–	Primary Head teacher
Mr A. Seager (Vice-Chair)	–	Secondary Academy Head teacher
Mr C. Bury	–	Alternative Provision School Principal
Mr B. Downie	–	Secondary Academy Head teacher
Mrs C. Draper	–	Primary Head teacher
Ms L. Foster	–	Primary Governor
Mr M. Fox	–	Primary Governor
Mr T. Hopkins	–	PVI representative
Mr M. Moody	–	Primary Academy representative
Mr S. Pritchard-Jones	–	Pupil Referral Unit representative
Ms S. Guy	–	National Education Union (Observer)
Mr A. Orlik	–	C of E Diocese (Observer)

#### Officers Present:

Mrs S. Rowe – Executive Director of Children's Services  
Mrs S. Kelly – Director of Access & Inclusion  
Ms J. Nash – Interim Head of SEND  
Mr N. Perks – Quality Assurance Team Manager  
Mr R. Thomas – Head of Access  
Mr R. Walley – Technical Accounting, Treasury Management & Education Finance Manager  
Dr P. Fantom – Democratic Services Officer

		Action
<b>1.</b> <b>07.12..21</b>	<b>Welcome</b>  The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and explaining and rules of procedure and legal context in which the meeting was being held. He also directed members of the public viewing the meeting to the papers, which could be found on the Council's Committee Management Information System (CMIS) webpage.  Members confirmed they could both see and hear the proceedings.	

<p><b>2.</b> <b>07.12.21</b></p>	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>Apologies for absence had been received from Mr I. Baker, Mrs N. Boys, Mr S. Davies, Mrs C. Fraser, Mrs J. Garrett, Miss E. Phillips, Mrs M. Sheehy and Councillor C. Towe.</p>	
<p><b>3.</b> <b>07.12.21</b></p>	<p><b>Minutes – 12 October 2021</b></p> <p>The Schools Forum received the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2021 (see annexed).</p> <p>The Chair put the recommendation to the vote and it was:</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <p>That the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2021, a copy having been previously circulated to each Member of Schools Forum, be approved and signed as a true record.</p>	<p>To note</p>
<p><b>4.</b> <b>07.12.21</b></p>	<p><b>Matters Arising from the Minutes of 12 October 2021</b></p> <p>There were no matters arising from the minutes.</p>	
<p><b>5.</b> <b>07.12.21</b></p>	<p><b>Late Item/s (urgent) to be introduced by the Chair</b></p> <p>There were no late items.</p>	
<p><b>6.</b> <b>07.12.21</b></p>	<p><b>Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)</b></p> <p>The Schools Forum noted that there were no items for consideration in the private session.</p>	
<p><b>7. &amp; 8.</b> <b>07.12.21</b></p>	<p><b>SEND Improvement Programme Update and EHCP Timeliness and Performance Update</b></p> <p>In relation to AOC4 – Autism, it was noted by Mrs C. Draper that she had been involved in an autism outreach service development, and that a limited pilot – of six schools and six children – was currently underway.</p> <p>Further to a question from the Chair regarding the number of EHCP assessments exceeding the 20-week deadline, an explanation of the steps being taken to address this was provided by Ms J. Nash, Interim Head of SEND. She highlighted the following measures recently introduced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A recovery plan had been introduced on 1 November 2021 and which would run until 1 March 2022, with a ‘deep-dive’ being undertaken to understand where the pressure points and weaknesses lay.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To tackle the annual review backlog, the statutory assessment backlog and issues within placements where children were waiting for a placement, the SEND teams had been formed into four areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Statutory assessment recovery team</li> <li>- Review recovery team</li> <li>- Commissioning and placements recovery team</li> <li>- Tribunals and liaison team</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Statutory assessment recovery team was to remove all out-of-date assessments by 1 March 2022.</li> </ul> <p>During discussion, the following further points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That in relation to timeliness, when there was a backlog of statutory assessments, this meant that the 60 – 80% target could not be achieved. Therefore, it was necessary to clear the backlog by 1 March 2022.</li> <li>• That the majority of the backlog was in the primary sector, due to the bulk of assessments coming from primary schools, and that this was the case nationally.</li> <li>• A review of processes and systems was being undertaken and Ms Nash explained the measures introduced to achieve timeliness within the 20 weeks.</li> <li>• That this information should be communicated to the various Heads fora and briefings.</li> </ul> <p>Mrs S. Kelly, Director of Access &amp; Inclusion, reminded the Forum that having regard to the annual review backlog, whilst steps were being taken to address this in terms of process and systems as outlined, support was also required from schools, including the timely submission of paperwork and she urged all Forum Members to relay this to representative agencies and partners.</p> <p>Further to a question concerning the availability of the online system for new assessments, Mrs Kelly explained the arrangements for this via the hub and the training that was available.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <p>That the correspondence be noted.</p>	To note
	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <p>The following items of correspondence were submitted (see annexed):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter of 11 November 2021 to Minister for Schools Standards from Chair of Walsall Association of Secondary Head teachers.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter of 16 November 2021 to Minister of Schools Standards from Walsall Council.</li> <li>• Letter of 2 December 2021 from Minister for Schools Standards</li> </ul> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <p>That the correspondence be noted.</p>	To note
<p><b>10.</b> <b>07.12.21</b></p>	<p><b>Forward Plan</b></p> <p>A copy of the Forward Plan was submitted (see annexed). The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the item: Proposed for Mainstream Schools Local Funding Formula 2022/23, scheduled for the December 2021 meeting, if required, it was noted that this would an item for the January 2022 meeting.</li> <li>• That the Strategic Education and Inclusion Board had now become the Walsall Learning Alliance. This body was to meet and once it had done so a report would be presented to the Schools Forum.</li> <li>• That an item on De-delegation was to be added to those to be considered at the March 2022 meeting of the Schools Forum.</li> </ul> <p>In relation to the Forward Plan item: Proposed Early Years Funding Formula for Two, Three and Four Year Olds (if required), a Member enquired whether this could be brought forward from the March to the January 2022 meeting.</p> <p>In response, Mr R. Walley, the Technical Accounting, Treasury Management &amp; Education Finance Manager, explained that the funding allocations were received in late December but he undertook to check whether it would be possible to bring the item to the January meeting and to advise School Forum Members accordingly.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <p>That the Forward Plan be noted.</p>	To note
<p><b>11.</b> <b>07.12.21</b></p>	<p><b>Late Items</b></p> <p>There were no late items for consideration.</p>	

<p><b>12.</b> <b>07.12.21</b></p>	<p><b>Date and Time of future meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18 January 2022 at 4.00 pm</li> <li>• 9 March 2022 at 4.00 pm (It was agreed that the date of this meeting be changed from 8 March due to another meeting being scheduled for that date/time and it only being possible to live stream one meeting.)</li> <li>• 21 June 2022 at 4.00 pm</li> </ul> <p>The Chair ended the meeting by wishing all Members of the School Forum the compliments of the season and he extended his congratulations to Mrs S. Rowe, the Executive Director, and all staff in the Children’s Services Directorate for the recent positive outcome of the Ofsted inspection.</p>	
---------------------------------------	---	--

The meeting terminated at 4.26 pm.

Signed .....

Date: .....