

## Leicester City Council Schools Forum

**DRAFT** Minutes of the Meeting held at 1:00 pm on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at City Hall, 115 Charles Street.

### Present:

#### Schools members:

Academies:	Jim Cook (Chair)
Special Academies:	Julie Aquilina
Special School Governors:	~
Special School Heads:	Sarah Osborne
Secondary School Governors:	~
Secondary School Head representatives:	Julie Robinson, Simon Catchpole
Primary School Governors:	Glenys Mulvany, Khalid Mahmood, Steve Wilson, Wendy Martin
Primary School Head representatives:	Liz Warren, Karl Stewart, Purminder Samaria, Nigel Bruen
Pupil Referral Units:	Shaun Whittingham

#### Non-Schools Members:

Teaching Unions:	Jessica Edmonds
School support staff Unions:	~
16-19 Providers:	~
Early Years PVI Providers:	~
Voluntary Sector:	~

#### In attendance:

Paul Tinsley	Director of Learning and Inclusion
Martin Judson	Head of Finance, Education & Children's Services
Simon Walton	Senior Accountant, Finance
Ed Rowe	Clerk to the Forum
Paul Gobey	Area Development Manager, Neighbourhood Services

### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Maxine Clewlow and Sandra Hamilton-Fox.

### 2. Declarations of interest

A declaration of interest was received from Khalid Mahmood with regards to item 7, De-delegation, as a result of his employment by SDSA.

### 3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018 were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings.

### 4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

#### i) Update on re-pooling of landlord CMF monies for 2017/18

The Director of Learning and Inclusion had requested an update from the Head of Services, Estates & Building but this had not yet been received. He agreed to follow the matter up again.

**Action: Paul Tinsley**

It was noted that the buy-back scheme had closed in October 2018, at a point when it was cost neutral.

**ii) Performance management of the lead professional, Children's Centre Teachers**

Liz Warren had requested a volunteer from primary headteachers and would follow this up.

**Action: Liz Warren**

**iii) Out-turn 2017/18**

The chair distributed a handout entitled "Supporting excellent school resource management". This was a resource produced by the Department for Education aimed at helping schools reduce cost pressures. He suggested that a localised solution may be more beneficial. It was noted that a group of primary business managers were looking to set up a group to share best practice and review their peers' processes.

**iv) De-delegation 2019/20 draft consultation document**

The final text of the consultation document had been agreed.

**v) COLGA**

The Head of Finance, Education & Children's Services, confirmed that Alan Bowles was making arrangements to close the account and the funds would subsequently be transferred to the local authority. However, the money had not yet been received and it was agreed to follow this up.

**Action: Martin Judson**

An agreement had previously been reached to ensure that this money would be refunded to the schools that had subscribed to COLGA.

**vi) Department for Education good practice guide**

A copy had been circulated to all Forum members.

**vii) Self-assessment toolkit**

A copy of the completed assessment had been circulated to all Forum members.

**5. Bookstart project delivery 2017-18 and future funding**

The report of the Area Development Manager, Neighbourhood Services, was received. The scheme aimed to promote and encourage the sharing of books in the home and provided high quality resources including activities and guidance for parents.

The scheme had previously been funded from Early Years block centralised expenditure, following approval from Schools Forum. However, that route was no longer available and as a result, alternative solutions were being sought. One option was for schools to consider making a collective contribution towards continuing the service. The local authority was also seeking alternative funding routes.

It was confirmed that both academies and maintained schools were able to contribute towards the project, should they wish to do so.

Members noted that the work of Bookstart was well regarded and the value of the scheme was very clear. Schools Forum could not take a decision regarding funding on behalf of schools, but could consult through EIP and LPP to ascertain whether or not schools would be willing to make a contribution.

A query was raised regarding what would happen if the requested £70,000 could not be fully supported. The Area Development Manager, Neighbourhood Services, advised that the service was effectively shaped by the funding available, so that if the total funding was reduced, certain layers of existing interventions would inevitably have to be withdrawn.

The Director of Learning and Inclusion confirmed his desire for the scheme to continue, noting the value it added in raising literacy and reading levels from a low base. However, he appreciated the competing demands for resources within both schools and the local authority.

It was agreed that EIP and LPP would consult with their members and provide feedback by the end of the Autumn term.

**Action: Liz Warren and Simon Catchpole**

## 6. Revised constitution and membership

The Chair highlighted the proposed changes to the constitution and membership. Due to the number of academy conversions, it was planned to reduce the maintained school representatives by two and increase the academy representatives by the same amount. The long standing vacant post formerly held by Voluntary Action Leicester was also being removed.

One further change to the constitution was the addition of confirmation that there was no restriction on the number of consecutive terms of office that Forum members could serve.

The Chair had been invited to a meeting of MAT CEOs in December and planned to take the opportunity of promoting the benefits of appropriate Schools Forum representation and would also aim to identify a relevant mechanism for MATs to elect their representatives.

He also indicated that he proposed to take steps to write to any Schools Forum members who regularly did not attend meetings and would provide an update on developments at the next meeting.

It was agreed that membership would be reviewed on an annual basis in future, unless exceptional circumstances arose.

The Director of Learning and Inclusion queried whether any sectors were under-represented in membership terms. It was confirmed that the Early Years PVI providers had held a vacant position on Schools Forum for some time but had not provided a representative to fill it.

The Director of Learning and Inclusion offered to write to the relevant providers to ask again for a nomination.

**Action: Paul Tinsley**

It was noted that no nominations had been received for the vacant maintained secondary governor position. The EIP representative offered to seek a nomination from the maintained secondary schools.

**Action: Simon Catchpole**

The Head of Finance, Education & Children's Services, noted that some technical amendments were required to the functions of Schools Forum listed on page one of the constitution document, and it was agreed he would supply revised wording to the clerk for incorporation into the document.

**Action: Martin Judson**

The revised constitution and membership changes were approved.

## 7. School Funding de-delegation arrangements 2019/20 consultation analysis

The report of the Head of Finance, Education & Children's Services, was received. The consultation ran from 28<sup>th</sup> September to 15<sup>th</sup> October, although some late responses had been included in the final results.

Primary headteacher representatives recorded their thanks to those services that had provided additional information to help heads obtain a better understanding of exactly how the de-delegated money was spent. This had been helpful when assessing whether or not to continue to fund those services in future.

Voting took place by phase on each of the services currently funded by de-delegation, with the following results:

**i) Schools in Financial Difficulty**

Primaries: A decision was deferred until the January meeting.

Secondaries: Rejected

**ii) Schools Facing Exceptional Cost Pressures**

Primaries: A decision was deferred until the January meeting.

Secondaries: Rejected

**iii) Behaviour Support Services**

Primaries: Approved in principle.

However, clarity was required on exactly what the money was spent on. It was agreed that the Director of Learning and Inclusion would provide that information.

**Action: Paul Tinsley.**

Secondaries: Rejected.

**iv) Free School Meal Eligibility**

Primaries: Approved  
Secondaries: Approved

**v) Licences and Subscriptions**

Primaries: Approved  
Secondaries: Approved

**vi) Staff costs including supply costs (Union Duties)**

Primaries: Approved  
Secondaries: Approved

**vii) Closing the Gap**

Primaries: Approved.

However, it was intended only to fund this for one more year. It was also noted that the preference was for the LPP SISS Board, or successor group, to have a larger say in how the fund was used in future.

Secondaries: Rejected.

**viii) Traveller Education**

Primaries: Rejected  
Secondaries: Rejected

The Director of Learning and Inclusion confirmed that the local authority would continue to meet its statutory obligations in this area through the Education Welfare team.

**ix) Whatever it Takes**

Primaries: Approved.  
Secondaries: No vote.

**x) Academic Coaching**

Primaries: Approved.  
However, it was intended only to fund this for one more year

Secondaries: No vote.

**xi) Primary School Improvement**

Primaries: Approved.

It was also noted that the preference was for the LPP SISS Board, or successor group, to have a larger say in how the fund was used in future.

Secondaries: No vote.

Members noted that regular reports from services funded by de-delegation would be beneficial. A specific report on ECP expenditure was requested, and the Head of Finance agreed to produce that before the next meeting.

**Action: Martin Judson**

## **8. Any other business**

### **i) SEND consultation**

A suggestion was made that a Working Party be formed to obtain a clearer understanding of the current expenditure on SEND and any plans to reduce it in future.

The Director of Learning and Inclusion advised that decisions on expenditure in this area were a matter for the local authority, although it was good practice to consult Schools Forum. The Head of Finance, Education & Children's Services, noted that a breakdown of the High Needs Block had been provided in the latest out-turn report.

The Special Schools headteacher representative advised that the Finance workstream in the ongoing review had not yet started and was open to all if they wished to join it. She would be able to provide further updates when timescales had been confirmed.

***ii) School resource management self-assessment tool***

The Chair advised that the Department for Education had recently published a school resource management self-assessment tool and had offered to demonstrate it to Schools Forum members. It was agreed that the email from the DfE would be circulated to all members.

**Action: Clerk**

***iii) Simon Catchpole***

The Chair noted that this was Simon's final meeting, as he was retiring at Christmas. Simon had been a member of Forum for many years and, on behalf of all members, the Chair passed on his thanks for the valuable contribution he had made.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 2.15 p.m.

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