

**MINUTES OF THE NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING  
THURSDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> JULY 2021, 2.00PM**

**Present:**

**Members:**

Sandra Appleby (SA)	David Ross Education Trust
James Birkett, Chair (JB)	Wollaston School
Rob Hardcastle (RH)	Hatton Academies Trust
Pat Kelly (PK)	Millbrook Infant School
Cath Kitchen (CK)	Hospital and Outreach Education
Angela Prodger (AP)	Pen Green Nursery
Paul Wheeler (PW)	East Midlands Academy Trust

**NCC Officers:**

Hawa Bedwa (HB)	Dedicated Schools Grant Officer
Pauline Brennan (PB)	Democratic Services Officer
Tony Challinor (TC)	Assistant Director, Commissioning & Partnerships
Ann Marie Dodds (AMD)	Assistant Director for Education
Cathi Hadley (CH)	Director of Children's Services
Helen Hudson (HH)	HR Policy & Projects Advisor
Nicky McLoughlin	HR Policy & Projects Team Manager
Kelly Mills (KM)	Information & Support Team Manager
Paula Schofield (PS)	Senior Learning and Development Advisor
Raj Sohal (RS)	Democratic Services Officer
Cathryn Walker (CW)	Schools Support Team Manager

**1. APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE, FORUM MEMBERSHIP CHANGES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

1.1 Apologies were received from Laura Clarke, Councillor Scott Edwards, Peter Leaver, Joanne Sanchez-Thompson and Ron Whittaker.

**2. ELECTION OF CHAIR**

**RESOLVED that: The Forum ratified the vote previously held by the Northamptonshire Schools Forum to appoint James Birkett as chair.**

**3. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

**RESOLVED that: The Forum ratified the vote previously held by the Northamptonshire Schools Forum to appoint Paul Wheeler as vice-chair.**

**4. MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING HELD 16 MARCH 2021**

**RESOLVED that: The minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> March were agreed as an accurate record.**

**Action: Raj Sohal**

## **5. SCHEME FOR FINANCING SCHOOLS**

5.1 CW introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- Local authorities were required to publish schemes for financing schools, which set out the financial relationship between authorities and maintained schools.
- Following the disaggregation of Northamptonshire County Council, the document had been updated and tailored to North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) specifically, using DfE guidance for reference, to ensure compliance.
- The Schools Support Team Manager recommended that the updated document be formally adopted by Forum.

**RESOLVED that: The Forum approved the scheme for financing schools.**

**Action: Cathryn Walker**

## **6. SCHOOLS 2020/21 OUTTURN REPORT**

6.1 HB introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- There had been an error regarding the figures listed in the report, whereby the outturn position for 2019/20 budget had been combined with the position of West Northamptonshire.
- The DSG officer assured the Forum that this would be corrected and circulated to members at a later date, with the correct, amended figures.

**RESOLVED that: The Forum noted the report.**

**Action: Hawa Bedwa**

## **7. 2021/22 GRANT AND DSG BUDGETS UPDATE**

7.1 HB introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- The analysis in the report pertained to the DSG budgets that were presented to the Northamptonshire Schools Forum in January, for authorisation.
- The 2021/22 allocation for the Schools Block was £244M.
- The Forum had agreed to transfer £1.1M to the High Needs block.
- The DSG officer posited that this transfer had placed pressure on the position of the Schools Block and suggested that this transfer should be reduced to allow for a sufficient budget for the Schools Block.
- Another transfer had previously been undertaken for the Central Schools Services Block however, this had remained within budget.

7.2 PW explained that the Schools Forum had previously expressed concern regarding the pressures on the High Needs block. He suggested that a succinct paper be brought to a future meeting, outlining the position of each block and specific pressures; with a formal proposal to vote on. HB agreed that a full analysis would be required before the forum could vote on such a proposal.

**RESOLVED that: The Forum noted the report.**

**Action: Hawa Bedwa**

## **8. SCHOOLS FACILITY TIME ARRANGEMENTS**

8.1 HH introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- Maintained schools across Northamptonshire voted in November 2020 to de-delegate DSG funds into a pooled trade union facility time arrangement for the financial year 2021/22.
- Academy schools joined the 2021/22 pooled arrangements, contributing funds via service level agreement.
- The combined funds had been converted into 11 days per week of facility time and re-distributed amongst the trade unions, who requested facility time to support their members in NNC schools.
- For the period April 21 to March 22, the allocations for use across all schools participating in the pooled arrangement included:
  - GMB - 2 days per week
  - Unison - 2 days per week
  - NEU - 4 days per week
  - NASUWT - 3 days per week

**RESOLVED that: The Forum noted the report.**

**Action: Helen Hudson**

## **9. SCHOOLS APPRENTICE LEVY UPDATE**

9.1 PS introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- Apprenticeships were paid for through the levy account - all maintained schools were under the North Northamptonshire account, to cover apprenticeships.
- The authority had also worked with academies, to encourage mixed cohorts.
- The government provided monetary incentives to promote apprenticeships.
- Apprenticeships could be valuable to fill vacancies, develop talent, increase staff morale and for graduate development etc.

9.2 The Senior Learning and Development Advisor asked the Forum to consider where the greatest need was for apprenticeships: non-teaching, teaching or leadership and left the forum with the following question to consider: “what prevents you from using apprenticeships in your school?”.

9.3 The aim of Learning and Development was to work with Forum members to develop an annual development plan of targeted apprenticeship activity to meet staff and school/service requirements.

**RESOLVED that: That Forum noted the report.**

**Action: Paula Schofield**

## **10. HOSPITAL OUTREACH IN NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

10.1 CK introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- all funding had come from West Northamptonshire, as the head office was located in West Northamptonshire.
- Nevertheless a county-wide service would be provided, with support for pupils with medical and mental health difficulties across North Northamptonshire.
- An advice and guidance line had been established for statutory guidance.
- Information and resources had also been made available on the hospital and outreach website.
- The AV1 project had also been successful for children who were unable to attend school physically, while still participating virtually.

**RESOLVED that: The Forum noted the report.**

**Action: Cath Kitchen**

## **11. REMOTE MEETINGS**

11.1 RS introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- Government guidance allowed for meetings of the Schools Forum to continue to be held virtually.
- There had been a number of advantages of virtual meetings throughout the COVID-19 pandemic including:
  - Increased transparency of meetings, due to YouTube live streaming.
  - Increased attendance, with no issues of quorum.

11.2 Members of the Forum, while agreeing that virtual meetings had worked well, also posited that a return to in-person meetings would be valuable in the near future; pandemic

restrictions permitting. The Forum agreed that it would continue with virtual meetings but would review the possibility of in-person meetings regularly, at the chair's discretion.

**RESOLVED that: The Forum voted to continue with remote meetings, with the possibility of in-person future meetings, at the Chair's discretion.**

**Action: Raj Sohal**

## **12. SCHOOLS FORUM PLAN**

12.1 AMD introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- The next meeting of the North Northamptonshire Schools Forum would be held on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2021. The agenda for this meeting would include items on:
  - Schools Block Combined Services Reports
  - Schools Block 2022-23 central expenditure
  - Primary and Secondary maintained schools de-delegation 2022-23 (SIG, Trade union and school redundancies)
  - School budgets 2022-23 – weighted numbers for new schools/year groups
  - School budgets 2022-23 – PFI utility subsidy
  - High Needs place numbers 2022-23
  - Early Years Update
  - Pupil Growth 2022-23 – projections and 2022-23 rates
  - Schools funding formula 2022-23 – consultation feedback
  - DSG Finance Risk Register

**RESOLVED that: The Forum noted the report.**

**Action: Ann Marie Dodds**

## **13. URGENT BUSINESS**

13.1 There was none.

There being no further business the meeting closed.