

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 17th March**

**2015**

**Wellington Suite, Tollbar Conference Centre**

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| Present: | David Hampson (DH) (Chair) | Cllr Ros James (RJ) |
|  | Louise Wilson (LW) | Paul Cordy (PC) |
|  | George Krawiec (GK) | Denise Falconbridge (DF) |
|  | Jane Aukett (JA) | David Kirven (DK) |
|  | Allie Majer (AM)Sue Middlehurst (SM)Lorna Pendred (LP)Elaine Davies (ED) | Alex Allenby (AA)Kim Stevens (Minutes) |
|  | Chris Penzor (CP)Andy Zielinski (AZ) |  |
|  | Kim Leach (KL) |  |
| In attendance:  | Angie Kershaw (AK) for item 50/15Cllr Ray Sutton (observer)Jacquie Jennissen –Green, Unison (observer) |  |
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| Apologies:  | Trevor Wray (TW), Karl Gabbitas (KG), Simon Overal (SO) |  |
|  |  | **Action** |
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| **43/15****44/15****45/15****46/15****47/15****48/15****49/15****50/15****51/15****52/15** | **Minutes and matters arising of the meeting held on 9th December 2014**Minutes agreed as a true record – GKSeconded – CP33/15 Update on Schools Forum VacanciesThe following have become members of the Forum:* Allie Majer as Primary Academy Rep
* Phil Hutchinson as Alternative Provision Rep
* Andy Zielinski as Special Academy Rep

Karl Gabbitas has resigned from the Forum – this leaves 2 Primary Academy Rep posts vacant – reps will be sought after the Easter break.Vice Chair Vacancy – George Krawiec was elected into this post.There were no further matters arising.**DSG Financial Settlement 2015-16***The purpose of this paper is to provide school forum members with an update of the 2015-16 financial settlement in respect of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) which was published by central government on the 17th December 2014.*GK queried whether the increase in the School Block is additional funding or reflects changes in pupil numbers.DK responded that £13.2m is built into the settlement in respect of the non-recoupment academies and the remainder is due to an increase in pupil numbers.DK commented that DSG is cash flat protected as it was last year and recognises there are significant pressures on school budgets due to the increase in National Insurance, Superannuation and pay awards.RecommendationSchools Forum agreed the above.**Fairer Funding Formula for Schools 2015-16 Update***The purpose of this note is to update and advise Schools Forum members of the impact on the Authority Proforma Tool (APT) October 2014 submission following receipt of the October 2014 Schools Census data. This data formed the basis of the FINAL APT submitted to the EFA on the 16th January 2015 which determine the 2015-16 Schools Funding Formula to be allocated to schools through the schools block formula.*DH questioned whether schools are to be informed of the one off payment for 15/16.DK advised that maintained schools had been informed and he understood EFA were advising the academies direct.GK wished to pass on the Forum’s appreciation to DK and AA’s team for all their work on this.RecommendationSchools Forum agreed to support the final adjustments made.**Increase in NI Employer Contribution Rates***The purpose of this report is to advise Schools Forum Members of an impending change to the above from 1st April 2016 which will impact on their expenditure and will need to be managed within the schools overall budget allocation.*RecommendationSchools Forum noted the above.**Updated Schools Funding Contingency Procedure – Falling Rolls Fund Contingency***The purpose of this note is to recommend, subject to any comments Schools Forum may have, an updated procedure to be adopted in accessing additional funding where a schools is experiencing falling rolls but where local planning data shows the surplus places will be required in the near future. This procedure is being revised to clarify the funding that will be available to ensure that the limited resources are used where needed most, that is not distributed to schools who can afford the additional costs through their retained or predicted in year surpluses.*GK queried the position in respect of accessing the Falling Rolls Fund for those schools which no longer had an Ofsted classification due to conversion.DK responded that his interpretation is that for those schools that have converted for the purposes of accessing this fund the previous Ofsted judgement remains. GK asked for the position to be clarified.**Action: DK to investigate and report back to the next Forum**RecommendationSchools Forum agreed the above revised procedure in respect of the eligibility criteria to access this falling rolls fund. Schools Forum agreed that this procedure is reviewed in 12 months at the latest.**Early years Hourly Rate 2015-16***The purpose of this report is to advise Schools Forum members of the proposed Early Years hourly rates to take effect from the 1st April 2015.*RecommendationsSchools Forum note the report, andThe proposed hourly rates be adoptedGK proposed to take this forwardThis was seconded by CPMembers agreed unanimously to take this forward.**SEN – High Needs Block Allocation 2015-16***The purpose of this paper is to advise Schools Forum members of the proposed allocation of the High Needs Block (HNB) for 2015-16 and seek any comments they may have.*CP queried the criteria for accessing the Early Years SEN FundingDF responded that the criteria was agreed by the Early Years Working Group and will be circulated to all settings / providers.GK suggested that a presentation be held re Alternative Provision / High Needs for PRUs.AZ queried the Agency Placement and how many children this represents and asked for information around the monitoring of placements to be brought to the next meeting.DF responded, currently around 45 children **Action: DF to provide details of total number of children charged to the Agency Placement budget** RecommendationSchools Forum noted the above.**Post 16 Education Funding – Angie Kershaw***The purpose of this paper is to inform members of new proposals for commissioning Post 16 Further Education (FE) places for NEL High Needs students. This change does not apply to Schools. This report seeks to inform the Schools Forum of current issues, advise of the challenges ahead and highlight the plans in place for the future.*As proposed at the last Schools Forum, the LA has consulted with local Post-16 FE providers on the new system and following feedback has produced amended working documents.Assessments will start earlier and take place during the Year 9 Annual Reviews to identify and develop key outcomes for Post -16.The work is on track and the LA anticipates the final version will be ready by the 31st May 2015 and implemented for the 2015/16 academic year. This will enable all parties to meet the DfE timescales for this process.RecommendationThe approach outlined, work to date and working documents are endorsed by the Schools Forum and approval to proceed is given.**Any Other Business**None**Date and time of next meeting**Wednesday 1st July 2015, 1.00 – 3.00Wellington Suite, Tollbar Conference Centre |  |