

EAST SUSSEX SCHOOLS' FORUM

MINUTES of a meeting of the Schools' Forum held remotely with Microsoft Teams on 18 November 2022

PRESENT

Secondary

Hugh Hennebry - **Chair** (Uckfield College)

Helen Key (Chailey School)

Secondary Governors

Monica Whitehead (Claverham Community College)

Secondary Academy

Kelly Johnson

Primary

Richard Blakeley (Harlands Primary)

Gemma White (The Bluebell Federation)

Primary Governors

Katherine Rabson Stark (South Ashdown Schools Federation)

Debra Vice Holt (Oak Tree Federation)

Primary Academy

James Freeston (King Offa Primary Academy)

Gavin Bailey (Swale Academy Trust)

Special Schools

Julie Campion (Grove Park School Crowborough)

Special Academy

Richard Preece (Saxon Mount and Torfield)

Jo Foulkes (SABDEN Multi Academy Trust)

Non School Members

Joanna Sanchez (Diocese of Arundel and Brighton)

Jon Gilbert (Diocese of Chichester)

ESCC representatives

Cllr Bob Standley (Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability)

Alison Jeffery (Director Children's Services)

Elizabeth Funge (Assistant Director Education)

Edward Beale (Schools Funding Manager)

Mark Whiffin (Head of Finance)

Sarah Rice (Schools Finance Manager)

Kirsten Coe (Schools Finance Team Lead)

Rachel King (Clerk)

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES (Note)

The chair welcomed all and thanked everyone for their attendance. A warm welcome was given to new member, Kelly Johnson from the University of Brighton Academies Trust.

1.1 It was confirmed the meeting was quorate, recognising the apologies below.

Phil Matthews - Hailsham Community College Academy Trust

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 16 September 2022 (Approval)

2.1 The minutes for the meeting held were approved as a true record and will be signed by the Chair and scanned to Lesley Leppard.
Actions noted as completed.

3. MATTERS ARISING AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (Discussion)

3.1 Matters arising - A letter had been written to Gillian Keegan, Secretary of State for Education from forum members re: impact of rising costs on school budgets. To be distributed after the meeting.
There were no declarations of interest.

4. GROWTH FUND / FALLING ROLLS FUND (Approval)

4.1 Forum members were given an outline of proposals and then asked for approval for funding for the 2023/2024 financial year.

Recommendation: Schools' Forum were asked to approve an allocation of £985,000 for the Growth fund. A short discussion took place.

4.2 A vote took place as follows.

YES	NO
13	0

5. DSG - CENTRAL SCHOOL SERVICES BLOCK 2023/2024 (Approval)

5.1 Forum members were given an update on the CSSB allocations for 2023/24.
Recommendation: Schools' Forum were asked to note and approve the proposals in relation to the funding of on-going responsibilities and historic commitments. It was asked that it was recorded that forum members offer huge thanks to East Sussex County Council for the transfer of those funds. Key points:

- With regards to the part of the budget that is going to attendance services, there was recognition of the new attendance duties and questions were asked regarding whether there is enough money going to this service. It was noted that with the new and additional responsibilities, there is a need to review attendance support. It was also noted that the funding for the on-going responsibilities are contributions to the budget areas, with Council budgets also part funding them.

- A question regarding children with SEN was raised and would part of the funds be available, from the Historic Commitments, for special schools. It was noted that these funds related to mainstream schools and academies only.
- A request was made for forum to have more detail to help give context - particularly for newer forum members. This was agreed for 2024/25 and it was also noted that previous Schools' Forum papers are also available on the website.

5.2 A vote took place as follows.

YES	NO
12	1

6. SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA - 'Exceptional Circumstances' Funding formula update (Information)

- 6.1 Forum members were given an update on the current funding formula factor that East Sussex County Council uses for 'Exceptional Circumstances' which was in relation to 'listed buildings' and 'rents & lettings'. It was explained that this factor was being reviewed, by the DfE, and LAs have to reapply to use this. It was confirmed that the funding comes to just over £70k and because, on an individual school basis, they are material amounts and would see a reduction in their budgets if not received, the LA is reapplying to continue to use these factors for 23/24.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

School Improvement Funding

Schools Forum were updated that a discussion has begun with Secondary and Primary Boards on how we are delivering school improvement - is the current model fit for purpose and delivering the right kind of support?

It was noted that the LA currently receives school improvement funding from the DfE, and that it is going to cease completely from 2023/24, having already been halved for the current year. The DfE is allowing LAs to fund school improvement via de-delegation as a replacement for the grant funding. It was noted that those conversations are happening and a paper will be brought to Schools' Forum in January.

Meeting concluded at 09:23 am

Next meeting - Friday 13 January 2023 08:30am. To be held on Microsoft Teams