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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
SCHOOLS FUNDING FORUM
Zoom
23 March 2021 (9.30 - 11.20 am)**

Present:

Representative Groups

LA Maintained School Representatives

Head Teachers: Emma Allen
Steve Bowers
Kirsten Cooper
Hayley Durrant
Hayley McClenaghan

Governors: Dave Waters

Academy Representatives

Primary: Kate Ridley-Moy

Secondary: Denise Broom
Neil Frost
David Turrell
Keith Williams

Special: Vicki Fackler

Non-School Representatives:

Trade Unions: Peter Liddle, UNISON
John McGill, NASUWT

53 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS OR OBSERVERS**

Apologies were received for the absence of Georgina Delmonte, David Unwin-Bailey and John Delaney.

54 TO AGREE THE NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The notes of the meeting of the Forum held on 14th January 2021 and the notes of the special meeting held on 23rd February 2021 were agreed as a correct record

55 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

56 LOCAL AUTHORITY DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Forum received a report on the progress of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Management Plan which had also been presented to the SEND Executive Board.

Members noted that at the end of the 2019-20 financial year, Havering had an overall deficit on the Dedicated Schools Block of £1.13million. This had been due to an overspend on the High Needs Block of £4.6m.

Members were presented with a projection for the overspend on the High Needs Block for 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24. Initiatives aimed at containing costs in future years included a new 60 place Special free school for children and young people aged 3-16 who have complex ASD or social emotional and mental health needs. There is to be an expansion of additionally resourced provisions (ARPs) in mainstream settings for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and communication and interaction needs.

Officers had been invited to an 'informal' meeting with the DfE on 15h April 2021 to discuss progress and support available on DSG management plans.

The forum noted the report.

57 HIGH NEEDS NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA REVIEW CONSULTATION

The Forum was provided with details of the DfE consultation on changes for 2022-23 to the national funding formula used for allocations of high needs funding to local authorities. The consultation closed on the following day.

A breakdown of how Havering's High Needs Block allocation for 2021/22 had been calculated was presented.

Question 1 of the consultation asked whether the historic spend factor in the formula should use 2017-18 budget figures or 2017-18 outturn figures. Members noted that the proposed change would be unlikely to affect the

allocation that Havering received as Havering received the minimum year on year increase (funding floor).

Question 2 looked at the proportion of funding made up by the historic spending factor and asked whether it should be changed. This had fallen by 10% since the current funding mechanism was introduced.

In Question 3 the DfE were seeking suggestions on alternatives to the historic cost factor that would enable local circumstances to be recognised in the formula.

Question 4 proposed that attainment for 2019 was counted twice in the formula, in the absence of suitable data for 2020.

In Question 5 the DfE asked for ideas on which factors could be added to the formula.

The Forum noted the report and asked that the response submitted by the Local Authority be brought to the next meeting.

58 **SCHOOLS FUNDING 2021-22**

The Forum were informed that final allocations of funding for the financial year 2021-22 had been issued to LA maintained primary schools on 26th February 2020. Primary and secondary academies had received notification of their funding from the EFSA for the financial year starting 1 September 2021.

Anonymised allocations for each school and academy were provided to Forum members. It was explained that de-delegation of funding applied to LA maintained primary schools only. All academies, and LA maintained Special schools, had to meet any costs in the areas de-delegated from their budget shares.

The Forum noted the report.

59 **PUPIL PREMIUM FUNDING 2021-22**

The Forum received a report that showed the impact on school funding of the change to the date used for calculating Pupil Premium allocations. In future funding would be calculated using data from the previous October pupil census rather than the January pupil census. In total £514k less would be allocated in Pupil Premium funding with 50 schools losing funding and only three gaining. The largest single loss was £28k.

The Forum noted the report.

60 **THE FINANCIAL IMPACT OF COVID-19 FOR SCHOOLS AND EY SETTINGS**

The Forum received an update on the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Local Authority's schools and Early Years settings.

The Forum noted that 24 LA maintained schools submitted a second claim for 'Exceptional costs' in December with a further two submitting a claim for the first time. £510k had now been received by schools in total.

The autumn and spring tranches of the Catch up premium had been received by schools and academies, with a third tranche due in the summer term.

The DfE on-line claim form for the Workforce fund was currently live. It was explained that schools do not have to calculate whether they meet the absence criteria. This is shown as schools enter details of absences.

It was noted that funding for mass asymptomatic testing was available for those schools required to carry out testing. This would be paid retrospectively based on the number of recorded tests on their individual NHS Test & Trace accounts.

Members were presented with the results of a survey of Early Years settings on the financial impact of coronavirus. 50 settings had responded with loss of income having had, by far, the greatest impact. The average net loss for day nurseries that had participated in the survey exceeded £100k.

61 **NEXT MEETINGS**

The next meeting of the Forum would be held on Thursday 17 June at 8.30am and would take place at CEME or via Zoom.

62 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.