



Rutland County Council

Catmose Oakham Rutland LE15 6HP

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Minutes of the **MEETING of the SCHOOLS' FORUM** held via Zoom on Thursday, 9th December, 2021 at 4.00 pm

PRESENT:		Representing
1.	Mrs M Darlington	PVI
2.	Mr J Harrison	Post 16 Provision
3.	Mrs S Milner	Academies
4.	Mr G Morphus	Trade Unions
5.	Mr C Smith	Academies
6.	Mr B Solly	Academies
7.	Mrs F Wilce	Maintained Schools
8.	Mr S Williams	Academies

IN ATTENDANCE:		Representing
9.	Councillor D Wilby	Portfolio Holder for Education and Children's Services
10.	Councillor P Ainsley	Chair of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

DEPUTIES:		Representing
11.	Mrs K Smith	Special Schools

OFFICERS:		TITLE:
12.	Dawn Godfrey	Strategic Director of Children and Families (DCS), RCC
13.	Andrew Merry	Finance Manager, RCC
14.	Louise Crookenden-Johnson	SEND Capital Programme Manager, RCC

APOLOGIES:		
15.	Mrs A Chambers	Academies
16.	Mr S Cox	Special Schools
17.	Gill Curtis	Head of Learning and Skills, RCC
18.	Bernadette Caffrey	Head of Early Help, SEND and Inclusion, RCC

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES RECEIVED

Carl Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Alison Chambers, Steve Cox, Gill Curtis and Bernadette Caffrey.

2 MINUTES AND ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on the 16th September 2021 were approved as an accurate record.

Action 1

Mr Gooding confirmed that the working group had met but that they were waiting for information from Andrew Merry. Andrew Merry apologised for the delay, which was due to the Finance Team being short-staffed but that the required information should hopefully be available by the end of September.

Andrew Merry confirmed that the information had been sent. Action completed.

Action 2

Mr Gooding reported that he had not received any information regarding S106 and CIL funding. Andrew Merry confirmed that he was currently verifying the information but would send the confirmed information as soon as possible.

Mr Gooding reported he had also sent a freedom of information request to Andrew Merry regarding CIL and S106 funding but had not received anything. Andrew Merry confirmed he would action this as soon as possible and would notify the Forum.

Andrew Merry confirmed that the information had not been sent. Action not completed.

ACTION: Andrew Merry

Action 3

Andrew Merry confirmed that he would speak with Mr Gooding regarding the information required about the SEND funding and that he would allocate a member of the Finance Team to attend meetings of the Task and Finish Group.

Andrew Merry confirmed that he was attending the Task and Finish Group. Action completed.

3 ANNUAL ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE-CHAIR

- Jane Narey briefed attendees on the result of the recent member elections and the resulting change in membership as detailed in the agenda pack.
- She confirmed that a Governor representative from the Academies was still required and that we were awaiting confirmation of the new Dioceses representative.
- She also confirmed that one nomination had been received for Ben Solly to be the new Chairman. Fiona Wilce seconded the nomination. It was unanimously agreed that Ben Solly would be the new Chair of the RCC Schools' Forum.
- There were no nominations for the role of Vice Chair and it was agreed that Jane would contact the Primary sector members outside of the meeting for a nomination to balance the new Secondary sector Chair.

ACTION: Jane Narey

- It was agreed that Carl Smith would continue to Chair this meeting as he had approved the agenda/reports for discussion and that Ben Solly would take on the role of Chair as from the 1st January 2022.

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Mr S Williams left the meeting at 4.08 p.m.

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4 FUNDING UPDATE

A report was received from Andrew Merry, Finance Manager. During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- The report was for the Schools' Forum to agree to transfer 0.5% from the Schools' Block to the High Needs Block for 2022/23 and to agree the inflationary increase to the rates paid to mainstream schools from the High Needs Block.
- It was agreed that the new rates from the 1st April 2022 would be communicated to schools.

ACTION: Andrew Merry, Dawn Godfrey

RESOLVED

That the Schools' Forum:

- a) **AGREED** to transfer 0.5% from the schools' block to the High Needs Block in financial year 2021/22.
- b) **RECOMMENDED** to the Local Authority an option on inflationary increases on Mainstream Funding Rates (0-16) from the High Needs Block and that the inflationary increase be communicated to schools as from the 1st April 2022.

5 DSG RECOVERY PLAN: UPDATE

A report was received from Louise Crookenden-Johnson, SEND Capital Programme Manager. During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- The report was to update members on the progress of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Recovery Plan initiatives and projects designed to reduce the pressure on the Designated School Grant (DSG) High Needs Block
- The report also informed members about the planning and progress made to address the increased demand for secondary places for pupils with SEND.
- Senior Communications Needs Specialist had started working with the Early Years Teams.
- Ben Solly and Louise Crookenden-Johnson had been meeting fortnightly instead of monthly to progress work.
- There was an increased focus on secondary schools, but the aim was to carry on with the good work.
- A collection of £1 per head would be taken this year for the EIP work and would be part of the DRIP feed for primary schools.
- Louise Crookenden-Johnson confirmed that the flow chart within the report should read 'By end of March 2022' and not '2021' as stated.

RESOLVED

That Schools' Forum:

- a) **AGREED** to continue to implement each project and monitor success, measuring outcomes for children and gathering feedback from schools with a view to determining next steps.
- b) **AGREED** to actively review the financial impact of the Recovery Plan projects on the High Needs Block deficit for which there will be further detail in January 2022
- c) **AGREED** to utilise the learning and actions from the Task and Finish Group to review and revise the SEND funding formula and use of Teaching Assistant hours and work toward more creative use of the funds.

6 EARLY YEARS PATHWAY: UPDATE

A report was received from Louise Crookenden-Johnson, SEND Capital Programme Manager. During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- The report updated members on the work done over the past year regarding the Early Years Pathway and the plans made for the best use of resources.
- SEND Consultancy were appointed to undertake a review of the arrangements and provisions for children experiencing SEND in Rutland.
- This helped shaped the priorities for the next phase of the project including the establishment of a working group which resulted in the development of an action plan.
- Moving forward, it was proposed that SEND Consultancy should help develop a future business and operational plan.

RESOLVED

That the Schools' Forum:

- a) **AGREED** that SEND Consultancy would assist in the development of a business and operational plan based on Option 6 and that a reduced meetings schedule would enable capacity for OCEPS to undertake remaining research tasks.
- b) **AGREED** that the meetings with OCEPS and SEND Consultancy would help understand the potential impact, timeline and associated dependencies brought about by the OCEPS academisation process and bring a focus for the short term on shaping a suitable operational model.

7 ANY URGENT BUSINESS

None

8 FORWARD PLAN FOR 2021/22

It was agreed that 'Early Years Working Group: Update' should be added as a standing agenda item moving forward.

ACTION: Jane Narey

9 MEETING DATES

The next meeting would be held on Thursday, 3rd March 2022 at 4.00 p.m. via Zoom - <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87666091984>

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

No.	Ref.	Action	Person
1.	2	<i>Mr Gooding reported that he had not received any information regarding S106 and CIL funding. Andrew Merry confirmed that he was currently verifying the information but would send the confirmed information as soon as possible. Mr Gooding reported he had also sent a freedom of information request to Andrew Merry regarding CIL and S106 funding but had not received anything. Andrew Merry confirmed he would action this as soon as possible and would notify</i>	Andrew Merry

		<i>the Forum.</i>	
2.	3	Jane Narey to contact the Primary sector members outside of the meeting for a nomination to balance the new Secondary sector Chair.	Jane Narey
3.	4	It was agreed that the new rates following the inflationary increase from the 1 st April 2022 would be communicated to schools.	Andrew Merry and Dawn Godfrey
4.	8	'Early Years Working Group: Update' to be added as a standing agenda item moving forward	Jane Narey

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The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 4.37 pm.

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