



# **Rutland County Council**

Catmose Oakham Rutland LE15 6HP

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Minutes of the **MEETING of the SCHOOLS' FORUM** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HP on Thursday, 15th September, 2022 at 4.00 pm

<b>PRESENT:</b>		<b>Representing</b>
1.	Mr B Solly (CHAIR)	Academies
2.	Mrs A Chambers	Academies
3.	Mr S Cox (VICE CHAIR)	Special Schools
	Mr P French	Dioceses
4.	Mrs S Milner	Academies
5.	Mrs K Pullan	Private, Voluntary & Independent (PVI) Early Years
6.	Mr C Smith	Academies
7.	Mrs F Wilce	Maintained Schools

<b>OFFICERS:</b>		<b>TITLE:</b>
8.	Dawn Godfrey	Strategic Director of Children and Families (DCS), RCC
9.	Andrew Merry	Finance Manager, RCC
10.	Louise Crookenden-Johnson	SEND Capital Programme Manager, RCC
11.	Jane Narey (CLERK)	Scrutiny Officer

<b>APOLOGIES:</b>		<b>Representing</b>
12.	Mr S Williams	Academies
13.	Gill Curtis	Head of Learning and Skills, RCC
14.	Bernadette Caffrey	Head of Early Help, SEND and Inclusion, RCC

<b>ABSENT:</b>		<b>Representing</b>
15.	Mr J Harrison	Post 16 Provision
16.	Mr G Morphus	Trade Unions
17.	Councillor D Wilby	Portfolio Holder for Education and Children's Services

## **1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and a minute's silence was held in honour of her late majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.  
Apologies were received from Stuart Williams, Bernadette Caffrey and Gill Curtis.

## 2 MINUTES AND ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 were approved as an accurate record.

### ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

No.	Ref.	Action	Person	STATUS
1.	4	It was agreed that the Schools' Forum would receive a report in September 2022 on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Nurture Hub and Practice A report exploring how additional funding could accelerate practice.</li><li>o EHCP Proposal for Banding. A report and a presentation from the Sector Led Task and Finish Group</li></ul>	<b>Bernadette Caffrey</b>	<b>ACTION COMPLETED</b> <b>Items on the agenda</b>
2.	5	Andrew Merry to discuss the proposed new formula for the High Needs Funding with Dawn Godfrey and Bernadette Caffrey.	<b>Andrew Merry</b>	<b>ACTION COMPLETED</b>
3.	11	Jane Narey to send out the tracked changes version of the updated Rutland Schools' Forum Constitution to members for their attention.	<b>Jane Narey</b>	<b>ACTION COMPLETED</b>

## 3 ANNUAL ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

The Clerk informed attendees that the only nominations received for the roles of Chair and Vice Chair for the academic year 2022-2023 were from the current Chair (Ben Solly) and Vice Chair (Steve Cox).

### **RESOLVED**

That the Schools' Forum:

- a) **AGREED** that Ben Solly and Steve Cox would be the Chair and Vice Chair respectively of the Schools' Forum for the academic year 2022-2023.

## 4 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION AND RULES OF CONDUCT

The updated constitution and rules of conduct were reviewed by the Schools' Forum. During the discussion the following points were noted:

- It was noted that Item 6.1 stated that 'two headteachers...should not hold the positions of Chair and Vice Chair simultaneously, unless agreed by the Forum' but this was the current situation.

- The Clerk stated that the updated constitution and rules of conduct had been circulated to all members and no comments had been received.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Schools' Forum:

- a) **AGREED** that the two headteachers (Ben Solly and Steve Cox) could hold the positions of Chair and Vice Chair respectively of the Schools' Forum for the academic year 2022-2023.

## **5 FINANCE UPDATE**

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

- All spending remained in budget except for the High Needs Block.
- The funding for the High Needs Block continued to be a concern even with the recovery plan in place.
- It was noted that his area of concern was not specific to Rutland as all local authorities were experiencing overspends in the High Needs Block.

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**Carl Smith joined the meeting at 4.10 p.m.**

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## **RESOLVED**

That the Schools' Forum:

- a) **NOTED** the contents of the report.

## **6 SEND RECOVERY PLAN**

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

- Total budget for the recovery projects for 2022/23 was £364k
- The recovery projects were designed to increase capacity within mainstream schools to support children and young people with SEND.
- Panel arrangements have changed to ensure a much speedier response for children.
- A Teams EIP Review meeting will be held three times a year. Chaired by the EIP Coordinator with all primary head teachers, SENCOs, the social worker (linked to Virtual School) and the Education Lead invited.
- The monthly Providers meetings continued and were proving effective.
- Collaborate engagement sessions had been held with families which had proved helpful but families had requested that the name of the Education Inclusion Partnership (EIP) be changed to the Schools Support Partnership (SSP) as people were confused by the EIP title.
- Pathways work was progressing.

- The DfE Delivering Better Value Programme would begin in January 2023. The review would look at what we were doing regarding the High Needs Budget and also identify what else, if anything, we could also do.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Schools' Forum:

- a) **APPROVED** the change of name for the Education Inclusion Partnership to the Schools Support Partnership.

## **7 NURTURE HUB AND PRACTICE**

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

- The report requested that the High Needs Block be increased by an additional £74k, to £172k.
- Nurture work in Rutland had been fantastic but more outreach work was needed moving forward.
- Children were not transferring back to their original schools as planned after receiving support from Edith Weston School. Instead, they were staying at Edith Weston School and this was putting additional pressure on the school and its staff.
- 25 children had been supported by Edith Weston School, 15 of those were through outreach work and 10 children had been prevented from leaving mainstream education. All had been prevented from moving to a SEND provider.
- The staffing needed to provide the outreach support was specialised and recruitment to these roles had proved problematic.
- A member commented that Headteachers needed a better understanding of what the nurture service actually was and did. Sharon Milner stated all were welcome to visit the service at Edith Weston School but that a briefing could be drafted for distribution to all schools.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Schools' Forum:

- a) **APPROVED** the increase of the financial commitment, to provide a further £72k to the High Needs Budget so that Edith Weston School had the capacity to respond to situations quickly before any window of opportunity was passed and that it helped staff in wider Rutland Schools to accelerate their inclusionary response.

## **8 EHCP PROPOSAL FOR BANDING**

A report was received from Helen Chester, Service Manager: SEND and Inclusion. During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- Following the SEND Summit in 2021, a working party was formed to develop a different High Needs Funding model for Rutland schools.
- A draft banding model was created based on a 5 tier matrix: Element 2, Band A, Band B, Band C and Band D.
- The model was tested and approved by SENCOs and all agreed that the model should be needs led.

- HNF would be reviewed at every annual review.
- **Individual banding would be agreed in discussion between the Local Authority and schools. This would be a separate discussion to the annual review but would need to be held before each annual review.**
- Helen was thanked for a fantastic piece of work as it was just what was needed.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Schools' Forum:

- a) **AGREED** to a new banding approach to HNF.
- b) **ADOPTED** the banding matrix.
- c) **ADOPTED** the proposed funding allocation for each band.
- d) **AGREED** that the new funding model was implemented from January 2023 for all new HNF applications and all new EHCP's.
- e) **AGREED** that, through the annual review process, existing EHCP's would be switched to the banding model.
- f) **AGREED** that any existing HNF applications would be switched to the new banding model at the next point of review / reapplication.
- g) **APPROVED** the suggested next steps:
  - Working Group to support the redesign of the HNF application form.
  - Communication with families to support them to understand the benefits of changes to the system.
  - Schools to provide feedback on the model and any adaptations which may need to be made will be undertaken and a revised/updated matrix released towards the end of the summer term 2023.
  - Working Group to be extended to establish how the banding matrix can be adapted and extended to incorporate the early years and post-16 provisions.

## **9 HOMES FOR UKRAINE (H4U)**

A report was received from Gill Curtis, Head of Learning and Skills. During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- Gill Curtis was unable to attend the meeting but the update report had been circulated prior to the meeting.
- Two meetings of the Homes for Ukraine Working Group had been held - 7<sup>th</sup> July and the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022.
- Funding guidance had been published by central government on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2022.
- A member commented that there might be a potential for some 'back-tracking' regarding funding from national government in light of current events but that schools would need to be notified as soon as possible of any changes.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Schools' Forum:

- a) **NOTED** the update report.

## **10 EARLY YEARS WORKING GROUP**

A verbal update was received from Kathryn Pullan, representative for the Private, Voluntary & Independent (PVI) Early Years providers. During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- The Early Years Working Party had met on the 5<sup>th</sup> September and issues discussed included funding, the cost of living crisis and the impact of this on families
- The funding provided for early years provision continued to not cover all costs.
- All Early Years providers were looking at other strands of income provision and training regarding business management was being investigated.
- Sustainability remained viable according to the last survey but places remained empty due to a lack of staff.
- Holiday care had been insufficient in 2022 but a Working Party had been created to further develop this for 2023.

## **11 PUPIL PLACE PLANNING**

A verbal update had been planned from Gill Curtis, Head of Learning and Skills but she was unable to attend the meeting and had sent her apologies.

## **12 FORWARD PLAN FOR 2022/23**

The Forward Plan for 2022/23 was discussed. During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- Dawn requested that the 'Delivering Better Value Programme' be added to the Forward Plan for meetings in March and June 2023.
- 'Nurture Hub and Practice: Update' to be added to the Forward Plan for the December and June meetings.

## **13 ANY URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

## **14 MEETING DATES**

Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 4 p.m.

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**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 4.47 pm.**

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