

<b>Meeting</b>	Schools Forum
<b>Date</b>	24 September 2024
<b>Time</b>	2pm to 4pm
<b>Venue</b>	Teams

**Attendees**

<b>Chair</b>	Jo Marsh
<b>Core Group</b>	Jo Marsh, Jo Stoaling, Kevin Burnett, Louise Malik, Richard Morgan, Roz Lambert, Hayley Trotman, Laura Donnelly, Fiona Skinner, Olwyn Donnelly, Alun Williams, Jo Stoaling, Phillip Frankland, Becky Biddlecombe (notes)
<b>Apologies received</b>	Andy Rothery Mary Cox Tim howes Will Godfrey Chris Wilford Mary Kearney Knowles Mandy Bishop

1.	Welcome and Apologies	ACTION
	<p>JM welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies noted as above.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Membership gaps - Early years vacant is available for the forum to replace Claire Crowther.</li> <li>Individual Academy Rep still vacant – JS suggested that if Helen agrees to be Special School rep she would be standalone academy rep</li> </ul> <p><b>Action - CW to speak to Jo Stoaling and Helen at NorthStar to discuss joining Schools Forum.</b></p>	CW
2.	Declarations of Interest	
	<p>Members were reminded to complete the declaration of interest forms once per year and to declare anything pertaining to the papers being presented.</p> <p>All members reminded to send forms to Director CYP inbox.</p>	
3.	Minutes of the last meeting	
	<p>Minutes accepted as an accurate representation.</p> <p>Actions completed from March meeting.</p>	
4.	DSG Safety Valve update	
	<p>OD gave an update around the DSG Safety Valve plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DfE are preparing to present the resubmitted plans to the new Minister and team</li> <li>They will be presenting our plans in November and have asked for final revisions and resubmission to be with them by 1<sup>st</sup> October</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are in the process of finalising these (with updated financials and activity data) ready for this date</li> <li>• The projects are underway and beginning to deliver (SEND and AP advice service in particular)</li> <li>• Capital projects are being closely monitored and will be resubmitted with the following changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Removal of Writhlington RB</li> <li>○ Plans underway for St Marks ASD RB to be included in the programme</li> <li>○ Charlton House one year delay</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A dedicated programme manager will be recruited, with post out to advert shortly</li> </ul> <p>KB – The dedicated programme manager, is this for Charlton house?</p> <p>OD – This is for the SEND collaboration Safety Valve work.</p>	
<b>5.</b>	<b>High Needs Working Group</b>	
	<p>LD gave an overview of the High needs working group. We are asking for school's forum to agree to the high needs working group, to look at challenges that are being faced by schools in the local area. Use data and financial information to make decisions that can be brought to school's forum around what happens next.</p> <p>RZ – my understating is an element of the high needs block goes to pay for special education needs in the early Years? sector I couldn't see anyone presenting this on the list.</p> <p>LD – thank you for picking this up, I will ensure someone from the Early years sector is included.</p> <p>LM – How do the papers link together? Is this a formal launch to a review and if so, what are the time scales around decision making?</p> <p>LD – banding will be agreed at school's forum, the working group will look into these issues. Update will be available at the next Schools Forum meeting. Reality looks at next September before making any changes.</p> <p>KB – Suggested that we should have MAT membership (e.g. SEND leads or CFO from each MAT) so that most B&amp;NES schools are covered, and the consequences of actions can be more accurately forecasted.</p> <p>KB also asked whether there are any significant third sector people that should have a voice or are a key part of your services that need to be represented? Include broader third sectors.</p> <p>JM – useful to have school reps and have the trust vision.</p> <p>LD – Those are good points; the purpose of this group is to come up with good ideas and some stuff could be challenging. It would be better kept within the schools at this time. Once we have the idea of where we would like to go that is when we would like to consult those people.</p> <p>All members agreed to the working party.</p>	

<b>6.</b>	<b>Schools Budget 25-26</b>	
	<p>RM gave an overview of the school budget for 25-26.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The DFE provide direction to the local authority in what the DFE intend to do with the national funding formula.</li> <li>• No guidance has been received, in regard to the increase in school budgets and local authority budgets yet.</li> <li>• RM asked that a consultation with schools will need to be turned around fast in order to meet the deadlines for school's budgets.</li> </ul> <p>AW – will this be a straightforward consultation or do we have a duty to look at the types of questions</p> <p>RM – it is unclear as no direction yet, but we will need to consult schools in regards to the high needs block.</p> <p>AW – could turn the consultation document round quickly and then send it to us as Members to agree within a very short time turn around. So at least we've got sight of it before going out?</p> <p>RM – look to slot in a half hour session late November/December at the end of consultation, to record the responses.</p> <p>JM – If consultation questions were 'usual items' that were consulted on each year, RM will continue with sending out the consultation. If it's something that has a complexity or a significant change, RM will call a digital meeting to give members a briefing, so we can just review those questions to check understanding before consultation is sent out to schools</p>	
	<b>Early Years Update</b>	
	<p>PF gave an overview of the early years update.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paper is looking at the expansion of the early year's entitlement lowering the age range and looking at the hours available and wrap around childcare offer.</li> <li>• In addition, 2-year-olds became eligible in April</li> <li>• 962 families were given a code in BANES and 917 were validated</li> <li>• Addition now with 9-month-olds, the code data has gone up to 1382 issued.</li> <li>• 82% of the codes have now been validated</li> <li>• Next September 2025 most cohorts will be eligible for 30 hours so it will be doubled.</li> <li>• There will a small uplift on the 3 and 4-year-old entitlement funding rate.</li> <li>• Wrap around childcare initiative, we have had funding available a project manager has been appointed.</li> <li>• The new government may introduce a free breakfast club available to all.</li> <li>• 750 schools can apply as pilots, this will be administered by the DfE.</li> </ul> <p>HT – impact of the funding with the codes?</p> <p>PF – should have enough budget, was given a provisional budget. We need additional census's form the summer and autumn term.</p>	

	<p>KB – the validation of codes and take up, has there been any information from the providers?</p> <p>PF – release some capital funding which should help with the increases in Bath and North East somerset.</p> <p>RL: Providers don't feel able to be fully inclusive at present with the given level of finance they receive</p> <p>KB – expansion of the hours around 9 months up to 2 years, will the new primary base nurseries expected to take some of this demand, and will they have particular demands on these nurseries that funding needs to take account of?</p> <p>PF – we haven't had detail on this, if they are under 2, they will need to be separately registered with Ofsted. School run provision is for children aged 3+ term time only hours, this doesn't sit with the offer of the funding.</p>	
<b>LA Commissioned Services- SAFS / LA Commissioned Services- SASS</b>		
	<p>OD asked forum members to ask for feedback in regards to the LA commissioned services – SAFS and SASS. Both services are about to be recommissioned, we will look at the size and nature of the service that needs to deliver what we want and look at applying inflationary pressures around utilities, over the length of the contract and come up with an annual fee over the 4 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current base cost £280,000 a year, looking at the cost of over 4 years. At the end of 4 year, it will be an increase of £312,580. The four-year total of £1,000,186, split over four years, that's an annual cost.</li> <li>• The student and family support service there is a pension increase around this. The current base position is £185,000 and mentoring plus provide that service.</li> <li>• Given the contract cost over 4 years this would increase to £205,723 slightly less than the uplift.</li> <li>• The new contract will have KPI's that will be aligned to the SEND and AP advice service.</li> </ul> <p>LM – is the decision going to be taken or will it be coming back to forum?</p> <p>OD – this is just for information; both of these services have been agreed by the local authority.</p> <p>RM – the schools forum operation guidance, for every contract that is led by local authority we should be information and consulting school's forum on the delivering of those services.</p> <p>LM – what is the impact in having agreed those increase on other services?</p> <p>OD – in previous papers both of them bring significant savings.</p> <p>KB- Should the two services be expanded during the recommissioning</p>	

	<p>process as both saving money by preventing placement breakdown?</p> <p>OD said LA were going to see how these two services worked with the new SEND &amp; AP Advice Service and then look at the situation with the new High Needs Working Group</p> <p>RM – the inflationary increase on all elements of the high needs block will be accommodated by the increase in the dedicated schools grant for the high needs block.</p>	
<b>HERS AWPU Charges to schools.</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RM – HERS service has a budget from the local authority, but at the same time it charges individual schools for the time in which the children are not in school.</li> <li>• Given the various grants now passed onto schools (e.g. Teachers’ Pay Additional Grant and Teachers’ Pension employer contribution grant), the AWPU charge made by HERS whilst caring for a pupil not in school doesn’t include these grants</li> <li>• The charges that the HERS service makes to individual schools, should include those individual grants as they will be rolling into the next financial year for schools</li> <li>• Proposal therefore to increase the re-charge from schools to reflect the various grants that currently aren’t rolled into the AWPU figures</li> <li>• The intention would be that in future any charges HERS makes should take account of grant allocations to schools</li> <li>• Utilising the grant increases and adding those to the AWPU rates in this current financial year will give a 5.93% increase.</li> </ul> <p><b>All forum members agreed to support the proposal of RM to apply the 5.93% increase to the school's HERS per pupil charge, as per the paper.</b></p>	
<b>Meeting dates</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All forum members preference is for the meetings to take place online via teams.</li> <li>• Jo Marsh and Jo Stouling happy to continue to be chair and vice chair for the School Forum meetings.</li> <li>• Forum open to other meetings IF the need arises but to keep ‘other’ meetings as ‘single-item’ meetings and as short as possible</li> <li>• RM may slot in meeting – end of November/early December for result of NFF consultation.</li> </ul>	
<b>10.</b>	<b>AOB:</b>	
	None.	

DRAFT