.

**Schools Forum Meeting Minutes of Wednesday 18th May 2022**

**Via Microsoft Teams**

**08.30am – 10.09 am**

Approved 13th July 2022

In Attendance

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| Rod Lane (RL) – Chair | Jo Barak (JB) | Simon Wall (SW) |
| Murray Sackwild (MS) | Ruth Bird (RB) | Luke Bulpett (LB) |
| Jo Santinelli (JS) | Simon Thompson (STh) | Carole Herman (CH) |
| Paul Banks (PB) | Harriet Phelps-Knights (HP-K) | Clare White (CW) |
| Philomena Cozens (PC) | Nigel Hill (NH) | Emily Welton (EW) |
| Lyn Wright (LW) | Claire Styles (CS) | Sue Bardetti (SB) |
| Sean Moriarty (SM) | Marilyn Smith (MS) | Mark Farmer (MF) |
| Debs Watson (DW) | Jinnie Nichols (JN) | John Hunter (JH) |
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| **LA Officers** |  |  |
| Yannick Stupples-Whyley (YSW) | Cllr Tony Ball (TB) | Carolyn Terry (CT) |
| Andrew Page (AP) | Julie Keating (JK) | Val Cleare (VC) - Minutes |
| James Haughey (JHa) | Will Goodchild (WG) |  |
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| **Observing** |  |  |
| Nina Chapman |  |  |

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| **1** | **Apologies for Absence and substitute notices**  Rod Lane welcomed everyone to the Teams meeting.  Apologies have been received from Jeff Fair, John Revill, Pam Langmead, Ruth Sturdy, Suthan Santhaguru, Richard Green and Clare Kershaw.  Murray Sackwild is substituting for Jeff Fair. Emily Welton is substituting for Ruth Sturdy.  Cllr Tony Ball informed there is a SEND Inspection taking place today and that is why Clare Kershaw has been called to address issues and was therefore unable to attend the meeting and sent her apologies.  John Revill has resigned from Schools Forum as he is taking up a new principal post in South-West England. On behalf of Forum, I wish John well for the future and thank him for his commitment and contribution to Forum and the High Needs Review Group. John will be replaced by Clare White.  Laura Grant has also resigned as the Early Years PVI member. Again, on behalf on Forum I wish Laura well for the future and thank her for her commitment and contribution to the Forum and the Early Years Sub Group. Laura will be replaced by Chanel Lassman.  There are 3 observers expected at today’s meeting. Two are from the Authority and one is from Becket Keys Free School. |
| **2** | **Top-up Funding for pupils with EHCP’s that are dual registered at PRU’s –**  **Julie Keating**  JK presented the report by Ralph Holloway which sought the approval of the Forum for the Authority to implement a policy that ceases Pupil Top-Up Funding to schools where a pupil attends a Pupil Referral Unit (including St Aubyns and Poplars Adolescent Units).  For the majority of pupils with an EHCP, the Pupil Top-Up funding paid to their  school is ceased when they are referred to a PRU. However, there are currently  14 pupils where schools are being paid Pupil Top-Up funding for pupils attending  PRUs. This equates to **£83,500** in a full year. We want to make it policy that all  Pupil Top-Up funding ceases for schools when pupils attend a PRU.  **Questions**  SB stated we received a bill in mainstream. Can we apply? I have taken a child  from another school who has been in the PRU. What about the AWPU?  JK said it is about how we can support schools that are taking people back in  from the PRUs. If a child returns direct from a PRU, there is no funding that  follows that pupil. We are looking at how we can support schools and recognise  it is a problem and hope we can give more positive outcomes soon.  PC asked will there be any flexibility around this? A young person came to us in  a primary school and during the time they were in the PRU the TA goes with  them. Be careful about the calling it double funding. It may well be we put in  support.  JK to reassure PC. We have a similar situation in the county where banding is at  a higher level and whether the higher level of funding can be considered. Will  consider on a case-by-case basis if funding is at a higher level.  **Recommendations**:  It was recommended that the first two recommendations go to the Higher Needs Review Group and then can see how that process works:   1. That from 1st September 2022, the Pupil Top-Up Funding paid to a school for a pupil with an EHCP is ceased, where that pupil is dual registered with a Pupil Referral Unit. 2. That schools are sent a communication that explains the funding implications for pupils with EHCPs who are referred to a PRU. 3. That a future paper is presented to the High Needs Review Group to show the flow of funding following excluded pupils.   Members were asked if they were happy to accept the recommendations. All agreed. |
| **3.** | **Notional SEN Fund – Yannick Stupples-Whyley**  YSW updated the Forum on the impact on the Notional SEN budget of moving to the National Funding Formula (NFF) and updates Forum of the benchmarking exercise undertaken. Local authorities, through agreement with Schools Forum,  are required to specify within their funding formulae what percentage of funding  allocated through each formula factor contributes to their notional SEN budget. It  is called the ‘Notional SEN Budget’ because it is up to schools to decide how they  spend their budgets.  Table 2showed how the notional SEN budget is calculated for Essex schools.  With the exception of Deprivation FSM which funds schools to provide free  school meals, the total funding each school receives for the additional needs  factors form part of the notional SEN budget together with a proportion of the  basic entitlement.  Table 3 showed the impact where the overall increase is higher than the Notional  budget. The DfE funds high needs on a place plus approach, which for  mainstream schools is split into 3 elements:   * Element 1 – Basic Entitlement per pupil * Element 2 – Notional SEN budget * Element 3 – Top-up funding from the High Needs Block   Elements 1 and 2 equate to the **£10,000** place funding for special schools and  PRUs and the DfE set Element 1 as **£4,000** and Element 2 as **£6,000** for  mainstream schools. This therefore led to schools being required to fund **£6,000**  for each EHCP from the Notional SEN budget.  Should a school have insufficient funding in its notional SEN budget to fund the  **6,000** contribution to each EHCP, the Authority will provide additional funding. For  example, a school with 200 pupils has a Notional SEN budget of **£30,000** but has  8 EHCPs. To ensure the school has sufficient funding the Authority will fund an  additional **£18,000**.  The Authority also provides additional protection to ensure schools have a  minimum **£105** per pupil in its notional SEN budget once the contribution to  EHCPs has been deducted. This is not a requirement of local authorities. Using  the above example there would be nothing left in the Notional SEN budget so the  Authority would fund an additional **£21,000** (200 x £105).  Table 4 showed a comparison against other Local Authorities. In the formula  factors that the Authority uses to calculate the notional SEN budget we are below  average for the amount of basic entitlement used but above average for all of the  additional needs factors with the exception of Deprivation – FSM which is not  used. Where Essex is ranked 1=, there are a number of other authorities at the  same value.  Table 5 showed for secondary schools how Essex compares against other local  authorities.  It was noted that Kent does not use basic entitlement in the calculation of the  notional SEN budget. It uses all of the additional needs factors except for  Deprivation FSM and Mobility and where used, like Essex, 100% of the funding  allocated counts towards the calculation of notional SEN. Kent also uses the  lump sum, exceptional premises, MPPL and MFG in calculating the notional SEN  budget.  Essex had a total school budget of **£980.8 million**, of which **£108.9** **million**  (11.1%) is the notional SEN budget in 2021/22. The average across 150 local  authorities is 11%, so it appears that Essex is in line with other local authorities.  The notional SEN budget has increased due to the transition to NFF. Overall, the  formula used to calculate the notional SEN budget is in line with other local  authorities and therefore it is proposed that no changes are made. The paper has  been discussed at both the High Needs Review Group and the Finance Review  Group and both groups recommend that the Forum agree that no changes are  made.  **Questions**  JN indicated small schools have been disproportionately high for SEN and it is  difficult to provide SEN services as a large school. Small schools run on a 1/3rd of  the SEN support. Any thoughts about that?  YSW responded £105. It is a small number of pupils if you did have a lot of  EHCP’s. It is something YSW can talk to Ralph Holloway about.  **Voting**: Majority were in agreement.  **Recommendation**:  The Forum agreed with the recommendation of both the High Needs Review  Group and Finance Review Group that no changes are required to the formula  for calculating the Notional SEN Budget at 4.21. |
| **4.** | **Analysis of School Balances – Yannick Stupples-Whyley**  YSW updated Schools Forum of the review of school balances undertaken by the Finance Review Group (FRG) and sought the Forum’s approval for the next stage of review. The FRG had undertaken an analysis and presented to the Forum last October.  Tables 1 – 7 the DfE are looking at which presented primary schools, secondary schools, special schools and PRU’s monetary value and the top percentage his held. Tables 2, 4 and 6 showed actual distribution of rebalances in each of the sectors. There are 44 primary schools with balances over 30% and there are only 10 secondary schools with balances between 0% and 5%. There are 8 special schools which have balances between 0% and 8% and the PRU’s have balances above 8%.  Table 8 showed the correlation of the balances to deprivation rurality factors and found of the 21 schools in rural hamlets and isolated dwellings, 17 are in the lower half of primary school balances and 6 schools are in the fourth quartile. The remaining tables 10-23 looked at the highest and lowest balances.  The FRG chart at the end of the report is what the DfE and Treasury will see. The Treasury will look at the level of school balances across the country which is increasing and the DfE will have a harder battle of asking for money for schools.  **Questions**  PC raised one of the issues has been the impact of Covid-19 and schools may not have spent the amount of money during Covid. It is not a picture of what has gone one. We should be wary of the current situation in Essex. When we tried to spend money on supply teachers, it is increasingly difficult. We have to use our own staff. PC quoted examples like Harwich where we are trying to manage and everything is out of our control for a building in the Clacton centre.  SW was concerned about Lexden Springs School and felt the figures were a bit harsh when trying to sort things out.  YSW offered to double check the numbers.  For High Needs providers it should be the number of places funded. This is leading to the recommendation that the FRG want to understand why schools are holding balances. We are talking to schools with balances over 30% or more.  JN had a query about Table 9 about rural versus funding. Is the FRG going to take this forward how potentially rural schools can be supported and not left behind? Rural schools have specific challenges and difficulties. Perhaps there needs to be a greater understanding of our situation. JN’s colleagues are also having finance difficulties. Deprivation has increased in support to external agencies. There is a black hole. Is there a plan to understand this and put a plan in place to support the rural schools?  YSW responded currently we are analysing year on balances. Maintained schools are part of that analysis where we will look to see if there is still that correlation and if there is will discuss with FRG on how to take this forward.  SM observed the table highlights pressures. There is concern from the FRG and understand in special schools there will be other factors. The main concern/focus has been mainstream, primary school and secondary school where there are balances in terms of the tables you have seen at the top level which is eye watering. Concern is that going to the table at the back of the paper YSW has got if the DfE were going to the Treasury for more funding for rural schools, they will say they are not spending the money.  SM said going back to the recommendation on this paper, FRG wants to drill down a little more on those schools that are in the main sector holding a balance of 30%.  SM asked YSW – at the last FRG meeting there was uncertainty how multi academy trusts fit into this. SM observed some of the schools appearing with the highest balances are members of multi academy trusts. At the last meeting there was a verbal update and a suggestion that some of the balances might be higher.  YSW commented a number of trusts are pooling budgets and therefore not recording a balance against individual academies within the trusts. These balances are reported under Central Services so the Authority is collecting this information on each trust to show a correct position on school balances.  **Recommendation:**  The Forum approved for the FRG to undertake a more detailed review of the schools with balances of 30% or above when compared to the budget allocation. |
| **5.** | **Any other business, feedback from schools through Associations and from Schools Forum representatives on other Bodies.**  **ASHE**  STh commented the focus this year is on the return of examinations in secondary schools and holding formal examinations. It was noted there has been coverage in the press about the shortage of invigilators and this has had an impact in Essex schools. Schools are still coping with Covid-19 absence of staff and students and its impact. There is a focus looking at the recently published White Paper and Green Paper in terms of funding.  CH informed about the National Tutoring programme. Colleagues will be aware of the big focus on catch up in schools and money allocated for a small programme. Money has been passported to schools so that local tutors are more likely to be employed, but there has been a focus from the Secretary of State that we should all be using the National Tutoring Programme. There was a letter saying we would be named and shamed if not using this programme. Many of us have found it is not meeting needs which is why we asked for passporting. There is a concern about what this is going to mean. It is slightly contradictory It is very much focused on looking at gaps in learning and filling those gaps as best we can. It is not helpful having contradictory information and then you will be named and shamed if you do not use the National Tutoring Programme.  SB commented we have the same worry. SB contacted Schools Communication who clarified we are not using the National Programme. SB was reassured by both the Schools Communication and Clare Kershaw that was not the case and we are doing the right thing.  **EPHA**  HPK reported the Spring term was very challenging for primary schools and we found this particularly at the beginning of the term, but has since been a little more settled, and there are still staff absences which have had some impact on schools and budget planning. A supplementary grant has helped schools meet the employer’s cost of the Health and Social Care levy but the sharp increase in fuel prices has put extreme pressure on the school’s budget with some between £80k and £100k increase so that has been a concern. There has been no recognition or support from the Government around this.  The Government White Paper mentioned National changes but expected the increase to schools to come up to 32½ hours will be a challenge for some schools and again no associated funding. There are some major concerns around this. Schools welcomed an increase in the Pupil Funding allocation recovery premium, but this was not continued this year. Tutoring grants has caused some concern and has been seen as too little too late. Schools are frustrated by the complexity and inflexibility of the grant. Schools have not had time to organise additional tutoring. There is a lack of understanding of what schools are facing and needing to do.  The Education Task Force continues to be supportive for primary schools and they have just agreed to provide additional funding to support primary school headteachers’ wellbeing, particularly those headteachers in small schools. Epha continues to offer regular meetings, briefings, webcast meetings and individual support for new and inexperienced teachers both in person and online. Examinations are back and had Year P6 SATS last week, KS1 SATS are being done, Y1 Phonics, and Y4 Times Tables and schools are working through that timetable as well.  **ESSET**  EW indicated there are issues for special schools as well as are pressures and stresses, whilst they are not being examined, there are concerns around national insurance and energy costs, a financial burden faced by all schools which we are all feeling restrained by all of this. There are pressures and stresses on special school headteachers. We have three new headteachers taking over special schools in September and that will be interesting and challenging times.  The real focus as well as funding is around the new rebanding exercise and special schools are in the first cohort of the rebanding programme. There will be events next week with Ralph Holloway and the ISOS team. We are to start our staff training on that and this will be the big focus for the rest of the summer term and the start of the autumn term.  SB reported about the school day, and it is going to have a huge impact on the school day where we have increased our teaching time by making our lunchtime shorter. Now the day has got to go from registration to the end of the day, and there has been absolutely no regard to how much teaching time is taking place and my teaching time will be longer. SB now has to increase her day by 15 minutes per day and does not understand where that has come from. RL enquired is this from the School Bill and SB confirmed this is the case.  JN spoke about the tutoring grant with regards to the level of accountability and reporting by headteachers which is a very small amount of money and is disproportionate. For example, JN mentioned from the £1200 received she is spending a lot of time in reporting back what she has done with the money which she has used. There should be consideration and following up. Is there a level of cut off which is reasonable for headteachers to account for that money?  **PRUs**  PC reported we are under the same regime as everyone else. We are at 50% female in the PRUs which is unusual. We are just entering the examination season which is proving to be quite a challenge and the ability to get external invigilators that you normally have. We are struggling to get enough for the young people. There are children who have other issues where they need to have two invigilators at home. We are engaging with Julie Keating and her team in terms of referrals, finance and reintegration and colleagues who have read the Green Paper will have noted the direction of travel is that PRUs to more outreach support work, which headteachers want more of this work but if are full to capacity to offer that is difficult. It requires a change of behaviours in secondary schools. Lydia Sherbourne has been working from primary school to offer outreach support to change that behaviour. People need to take cognizance in light of the inclusion agenda how it can be put into place.  JB indicated we are embracing our first new build and are in a really positive place. We are about to enter a second building phase. There will be some changes next year and it is about being prepared to face the changing demand and whether placements in the actual PRUs or support in schools, then there needs to be some time to adjust over the next year or so.  **Early Years – Nurseries**  DW stated Covid-19 hit us here, however, seems more settled now. All funding pressures seem and still are under review. We now wait to see what implications will be of the White Paper and Green Paper for our sector.  **ESGA**  RB reported we had to cancel our coffee and chat morning because Ofsted called to our presenter’s school. We are just planning the conference for the autumn term and waiting for guest speakers to reply to our invite. Generally governors are supporting schools with everything mentioned so far.  **Unions**  **Unison**  MS responded we are aware of the cost of living on businesses and on staff and the impact it will have over the following year. With interest, we have noted the school day. We will have to keep an eye on this along with the impact it have on staff.  **Church Rep**  There was no representation and no report.  **High Needs Sub-Group** - agenda items 2 and 3, minutes on agenda item 5a.  **Finance Review Group** – agenda items 3 and 4, minutes on agenda item 5b.  **Early Years Sub-Group** – agenda item 9, minutes on agenda item 5c. |
| **6.** | **Minutes of 12th January 2022**  Minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the discussion. |
| **7.** | **Minutes of 21st April 2022**  Minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the discussion. |
| **8.** | **Minutes Action Log**  All have been actioned by Yannick Stupples-Whyley  DSG budget 2022/23 meeting held with the maintained nursery heads to discuss funding concerns on 18/1/22 – completed.  Amendment required to Agenda Item 2 comment made by SM of minutes of meeting held on 24/11/21 – completed. |
| **9.** | **Early Years and Childcare Update – Carolyn Terry**  The report updated the Forum on the draft outturn position for 2021/22 and the impact of Covid-19 on the Funded Early Education Entitlement funding.  The Early Years paper set out the forecast budget for the current financial year and updated on the impact of Covid-19. Section 4 updated on funding entitlement. There had been a high take-up of two-year olds accessing funded places of 87% which is still significantly higher than the national average. Section 4.3 updated on the take-up for universal three and four-year old funding which is 94.9% of those eligible.  Section 5 updated on the funding implications. Section 5.1 showed a reduction of £2 million down to £84.3 million. In Section 5.2 the Local Authority retention was £3.4 million. Table 2 showed the breakdown of funding with an underspend on the two-year old take-up. It is hoped the census figures will catch up. The overall position is predicting a slight overspend on the budget document, but we do have surplus money and hope the census figures will bring in more funding to mitigate that. In section 5.5 the outturn position is reduced to £2.5 million because of adjustments the DfE made, but based on January 2022, there is a £3.5 million surplus. CT informed we are looking at proposals and will bring back to the next Forum to discuss.  Section 6 showed the impact of Covid-19, and the childcare sector is fully operational offering the full range of FEEE places. CT explained take-up of two-year old is good. We are starting to see a few more providers having problems with sustainability. Where costs have gone up, there are still some pushes to be made and we are looking at what we can do.  Section 6.4 showed a surplus balance has reduced to £2.5 million. Financing options will bring this back. We are looking at a one-off payment to all Early Years and childcare providers offering the Funded Early Education Entitlement funding proportionate to the level of funded hours provided. We are also looking at increasing the level of support childcare providers for children with SEND needs. We propose looking at a sufficiency grant for . any of those that we know have a shortfall. We will continue to share communications in the sector in ways to continue to support them.  Section 7 updated on the Childcare Reference Group where there has been an increase in number of Early Years children with emerging additional needs that need more support, alongside concerns over the level of support the sector is receiving for children with SEND from ECC. We are doing work on the descriptors on the level of need. We are also working with childcare providers to streamline the process and Early Years Panel process aligned to avoid duplication. This is a national issue across all areas of the economy and is having an impact on Early Years provision. Feedback generally, is very welcome but it has closed the deficit. Recruitment and retention of staff is a concern, and we need to manage. Parents are under pressure with disposable income. We are starting to see new providers coming to the market. We will continue to have discussions on points in this growth.  **Questions**  Cllr Tony Ball observed under 7.2.1 you talked about the increasing demand for things such as Speech and Language therapies and paediatricians. What are Council Members doing with Health to try and resolve the situation? It is an ongoing issue with regards to therapies.  Cllr Ball stated there is a shortage of qualified speech and language therapists and Provide, our current provider, is struggling to recruit. Two Cabinet meetings ago Cllr Ball took a paper on the recommissioning of speech and language therapies. The Provide contract is running out. There are changes to move to the opportunity for providers to bid for quadrant contracts rather than countywide. Cllr Ball said he has a paper in his inbox to progress this further. There is an issue, and we are trying to find innovative solutions. Cllr Ball will keep you informed of an update.  **Recommendations**:  The Forum noted the Early Years Block draft outturn position for 2021/22 at 5.3. |
| **10.** | **Draft Schools Budget and Education Functions 2021/22 Outturn Report – Yannick Stupples-Whyley**  The report updated the Forum on the draft outturn position for 2021/22. YSW described the financial implications and stated the total Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) received in 2021/22 after academy recoupment was **£523.0 million**. The DSG in 2021/22 was under spent by **£5.5 million**. Table 2 showed the movement in the overall DSG balance between 1st April 2021 and 31st March 2022. We had in year adjustments to the Early Years Block in January 2021. Overspend on Early Years Block was covered in Item 9.  At 31/3/21 all blocks are on line or in surplus  The High Needs Block (HNB) had an overspend for Maintained Providers of £553,000. The overspend is due an increase in the number of Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs) within maintained schools. With regards to top-up funding for Academies, Free Schools and FE Colleges there was an overspend of **£281,000.** The overspend is due to an increase in the number of EHCPs in academies (**£1.3 million**). This is mostly offset by an underspend (**£1.0 million**) for Post 16 FE where there is a reduction in the number of learners than forecast.  There was an overspend on top-up funding Independent Providers of **£974,000.**  There was an underspend of £7.4 million for SEN Support Services which related  to headroom due to the increase in funding for 2021/22 £6.3 million; Enhanced  provisions were also underspent £812,000 due to only 326 of the planned 431  places being occupied by Essex pupils. There were an additional 160 individual  pupil resourcing agreements compared ot 2020/21 which resulted in an  overspend of £698,000. Vacancies across the quadrant SEND teams resulted in  a £457,000 underspend. Due to the pandemic, there was a reduction in SEND  support required in Early Years settings resulting in an underspend of £439,000.  Table 4 showed Educational Functions for Maintained Schools. It was noted  there were no academy convertors during 2021/22 so no recoupment was  necessary. Table 5 shows the provisional outturn which is an overspend of  **£76,000**. This overspend is funded within the Education Non-DSG budget.  The overspend for Strategic Management (**£80,000**) reflects the ongoing effects  of the pandemic and the need to provide additional resources to support the  school system. Annex A showed the Schools Budget Draft Outturn 2021/22.  **Recommendation:**  The Forum noted the draft outturn position for 2021/22. |
| **11.** | **Completing the Reforms to the NFF – DfE Consultation Responses – Yannick Stupples-Whyley**  YSW updated the Schools Forum on the Government’s response to the consultation on ‘Completing the Reforms to the National Funding Formula’ last year.  For 2023/24 the DfE will require:   * Local authorities to use all, and only, NFF factors in their local formulae * All local formulae factors to move at least 10% closer to the NFF, except where local formulae are already “mirroring” the NFF. * Local authorities to use the NFF definition for the English as an Additional Language (EAL) factor.   Flexibility over the sparsity factor methodology will remain in 2023/24. The  approach to transition in subsequent years will depend upon the impact in the  first year. By mirroring the NFF means that each of a local authority’s local  formula factor values are within 1% of the NFF’s value. The impact for Essex of  the 2023/24 requirements is that the primary lump sum is the only factor not  mirroring NFF. Based on the consultation with schools it will mirror the NFF value  in 2023/24.  In order to develop the Schools NFF, the consultation included proposals for how  specific aspects of the current funding system would need to be changed and  developed to move to the direct NFF. This included developing the Schools NFF  to allocate premises costs on a formulaic basis and a better approach to funding  schools seeing significant growth in pupil numbers or falling rolls.  Over the coming year the DfE will be consulting on the approach to the split sites  factor and to the PFI factor in the NFF. In the second stage consultation, include  proposals for the revised growth and falling rolls factor, including some options  which would allow a degree of local flexibility. In the second stage consultation,  include proposals for an exceptional circumstances factor.  The consultation proposed to review how the funding operated to ensure greater  transparency and to reflect the changing roles in a trust led system. The proposal  included moving funding from the Central School Services Block (CSSB) to the  Local Government Funding System (LGFS). The common issued raised was  moving funding from CSSB to LGFS with the highest response concerned over  reduced transparency and the prospect of less funding being directed to  education services as funding would likely be directed towards other pressures  within local authorities.  The DfE’s response was to review the services funded through the ongoing  responsibilities element of CSSB aligned to the Schools White Paper. Ongoing  services will continue to be funded through central Government funding. For  central services delivered on behalf of schools, local authorities will continue to  have flexibilities to de-delegate funding from maintained schools and MATs  will have the ability to continue to top-slice academy funding. The DfE recognise  the concerns raised around the transparency of MAT top-slices and will examine  changes to improve and standardise this process. The second stage  consultation will include further details on how the DfE expect the process of de-  delegation to continue.  The approach to the funded year is to move from a financial year to an academic year but due to a mixed response that has been dropped. The full consultation is under 8.1.  **Recommendation**:  The Forum noted the report. |
| **12.** | **Constitution and Membership of Schools Forum – Yannick Stupples-Whyley**  Based on the January census Table 2 requires no change in the number of primary school and secondary school members and no academy converters.  Whilst we have at least one maintained secondary school we must always have a maintained secondary school member on the Schools Forum.  Table 4 showed the members who are coming to the end of their term of office.  HPK’s term of office has been extended to May 2026 through the agreement of EPHA.  There was a primary and secondary academy governor vacancies which will be advertised in Education Essex.  Carole Herman advised her term of office is ending at the end of August, so she will be resigning her position.  **Recommendation**  The Forum noted the report. |
| **13.** | **Forward Plan – Yannick Stupples-Whyley**  YSW read this out and added paper on High Needs Funding Review.  It was noted the September meeting will be an in-person meeting (details tbc) |
| **14.** | **Confidential Minutes of 12th January 2022**  The Forum unanimously approved these minutes. |
| **15.** | **Chair’s Closing Comments** (Rod Lane)  RL thanked everyone for attending and for their contributions. RL looked forward to the next meeting.  **Date of next meeting – Wednesday, 13th July 2022 at 8.30 a.m.**  **via Teams**  **Post meeting note:**  Pam Langmead has given her apologies for 13th July 2022. |