

Date: Friday, 18 January 2019

Democratic and Members' Services

Fiona McMilan
Monitoring Officer

10:00hr

Shire Hall
Castle Hill
Cambridge
CB3 0AP

**Kreis Viersen Room
Shire Hall, Castle Hill, Cambridge, CB3 0AP**

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for absence and declarations of interest**

*Guidance on declaring interests is available at
<http://tinyurl.com/ccc-conduct-code>*
2. **Minutes of Schools Forum 14th December 2018** **3 - 14**
3. **Action Log** **15 - 16**

Details
4. **School Admission Appeal Arrangements for all Admission
Authorities Financial Year 2019-20 Onwards** **17 - 30**
5. **2019-20 Schools Funding Formula - to follow**

Details
6. **Proposed Future Schools Forum Dates after July** **31 - 36**
7. **Agenda Plan** **37 - 38**

Details

8. Date of Next Meeting - Friday 29TH March

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Clerk Name: Rob Sanderson

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MINUTES OF CAMBRIDGESHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM

Date: Friday 14th December 2018

Time: 10:05am – 11:50am

Place: Kreis Viersen Room, Shire Hall, Cambridge

Present: P Hodgson (Chairman), Dr A Rodger (Vice-Chairman), L Callow, S Connell, T Davies, J Digby, J Lloyd, A Matthews, S Roscoe, R Spencer (substituting for M Woods), P Stratford, Dr K Taylor OBE and R Waldau

Observers

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Councillor S Bywater | Cambridgeshire County Council |
| Councillor P Downes | Cambridgeshire County Council |
| Councillor J Whitehead | Cambridgeshire County Council |
| J Duveen | Teacher Union |
| J McCamphill | Diocese of Ely |

Officers

J Lee, J Lewis, N Mills, R Sanderson, M Wade

Apologies: J North, D Parfitt and M Woods

79. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair's announcements

80. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies were received from Jackie North, Deborah Parfitt and Mark Woods.

There were no declarations of interest.

81. MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 5TH OCTOBER 2018

The minutes of the meeting on 5th October 2018, amended as set out in **Appendix A**, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

82. ACTION LOG

The Action Log was reviewed and updates noted.

With regard to the review of membership and proportionality, and the action to explore whether the Forum could decide to terminate an appointment in the event of a member's repeated non-attendance (Minute Number 63), an oral update was provided. Further to the previously discussed option of terminating an appointment after a member failed to attend four consecutive meetings, it was suggested that as four meetings amounted to two thirds of the annual total, it was undesirable for any school sector not to be represented in the Forum over such a lengthy period. It was therefore decided that the requirement be

reduced to three consecutive meetings, while it was noted that attendance of any additional meetings would also be included. Members were reminded that arranging a substitute to attend the meeting on their behalf would not count as an absence and they were also urged to send apologies to advise of their inability to attend any meeting. On being put to the vote, it was unanimously agreed to adopt this approach regarding repeated non-attendance at future meetings. **Action required:** Democratic Services

With regard to the collection of data on the High Needs Block (Minute Number 76), the Forum was informed that an updated pack of data would be collated by January and distributed to members. It was suggested that this could be repeated on a quarterly or termly basis and distributed as a note, rather than as a report to be considered by the Forum.

83. SCHOOLS FORUM NEW APPOINTMENTS

The Forum received a report that set out the details of appointments made to current vacancies in the Forum's membership, as well as the replacement of various members. Attention was drawn to the fourth recommendation, which was amended to state that Andrew Read would replace Sarah Conant in the role of observer on the Forum, with the directors of the Diocese of Ely Board of Education / Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust acting as his substitutes. The Forum was also informed that the Post 16 Further Education appointment had been made since publication of the report by Jeremy Lloyd, who was present at the meeting.

It was resolved unanimously to note that:

- a) Amanda Morris-Drake has been nominated to represent the Maintained Pupil Referral Unit.
- b) Paul Stratford, the Chair of Governors at Alderman Payne Primary School, having applied, has been accepted to the vacant place on Forum to represent maintained Governors.
- c) Jane Lancaster Adlam, who was the Academy Alternative Provision representative, has been replaced by Sarah Roscoe.
- d) Andrew Read has replaced Sarah Conant as the Diocese of Ely Board of Education / Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust observer on the Forum, with Alex Rutterford-Duffety, Jacqueline McCamphill and Amy Weaver as named substitutes.
- e) Jeremy Lloyd has been appointed as the Post 16 Further Education appointment.

84. ACADEMY APPOINTMENTS TO FORUM

The Forum received a report was tabled at the meeting and is attached to the minutes as **Appendix B**, which provided details on academy appointments to the Forum. It was noted that the number of representatives in the Forum had undergone frequent changes and that the report set out a formula to establish a fixed structure. Attention was drawn to the best practice guidance in section 2.1 and it was noted that this allowed the Forum a large amount of discretion in the appointment process, although a minimum of one

representative was required for each group. The Forum was asked to ratify the nominations listed in section 2.5.

In discussing the report, the Forum:

- Clarified that the size of the Forum was not being increased and that the process indicated in the report represented a restructuring of the proportionality based on pupil numbers to fill current vacancies to represent the Academy sector.
- Noted that members represented their sector, as opposed to their organisation or institution.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note the process for appointing academy representations.
- b) Ratify the following nominations with the new members to join the Forum in January:
 - Jane Horn – Principal at Cromwell Community College – representing the Active Learning Trust
 - Jon Culpin – CEO of Anglian Learning
 - Richard Spencer – Principal of Ely College
 - Philip Hodgson – Board Member – Anglian Learning
 - Alan Rogers – Board Member – Morris Trust
 - Patsy Peres – Principal at Ramsey Spinning Infant and Ramsey Junior

85. CAMBRIDGESHIRE 2019/20 SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA

The Forum received a report detailing the next stage in the process for setting the Cambridgeshire schools funding formula for 2019-20. Attention was drawn to the response to the consultation in sections 2.1 to 2.5 of the report and members were recommended to approve the transfer of £1.7m from the Schools Block to the Higher Needs Block to lower the £10.4m pressure they were currently facing. It was noted that similar issues were being experienced across the country and it was not specific to Cambridgeshire.

In discussing the report, the Forum:

- Noted that the same issue of a one off payment from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block had arisen the previous year and sought clarification on whether it would be an annual cost, as opposed to an actual one off payment. It was noted that it was the same amount as year, as opposed to a cumulative amount, which is why it was referred to as a one off payment. It was acknowledged that the transfer caused difficulties for schools when setting their budgets but there was no guarantee that this issue would be resolved by the following year.
- Was informed that the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding for 2019-20 was expected to decrease from £5m to approximately £3.5m due to a difference in the way funding was calculated, which would affect the whole Schools Block.
- Suggested that the funding mechanism did not represent the demographic. It was acknowledged that there had always been problems with the process and it was a flawed system that did not accurately represent needs. New schools were being

subsidised until they reached full capacity and they were not taken into account in the calculations. The Forum was informed that the issue had been repeatedly brought up in consultations with the Government but that it was hard to predict how much money would be available. It was proposed by a member that when new figures are published in January they should be compared to the projected numbers previously used, in order to identify the accuracy of predictions.

- Confirmed that new schools were initially funded based on guaranteed numbers until they reached capacity, after which their funding was based on actual numbers.
- Pointed out that schools suffered as a result of incorrect data predicting higher numbers of pupils. It was recognised that there were a number of factors that affected the actual levels of pupils and that while the information could not be 100% accurate, it was based on strong methodology. New developments, such as Alconbury, were given as examples of areas where the expected increase in child numbers had not occurred. It was suggested that it was preferable to over-estimate numbers than under-estimate them, but that it was also not in the Council's interest to open new schools or increase places unnecessarily.
- Recognised that it was for the Children and Young People Committee to set the funding formula and balance it.
- Expressed concern that the 30% response level to consultations was disappointingly low and that it indicated there was little belief that there would be much change.
- Noted that budget carryforwards were significantly lower in Cambridgeshire than elsewhere in the Country. It was suggested that discussions were necessary for how to spend this money, so as to not display unused surplus while lobbying for further funds.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Approve the transfer of £1.7m from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block in 2019/20.
- b) Discuss the proposal to fund the transfer by reducing the Age Weighted People Unit (AWPU) values.
- c) Discuss the implications and options in order to manage the £1.7m funding shortfall created from the revised Growth Funding formula.

86. GROWTH FUND AND NEW SCHOOLS FUNDING CRITERIA 2019-20

The Forum received a report on the proposed criteria for the Growth Fund and New Schools Funding to be applied from April 2019. Attention was drawn to section 1.4 of the report, which detailed some of the issues surrounding new schools, as well section 1.5, which was the response from the Education and Skills Funding Agency when questioned over this issue. The Forum recalled that at the last meeting it was proposed to raise the Growth Fund from £2.5m to £3m, but due to the overall fund being lower, it was proposed to maintain it at the current level of £2.5m. Members were reminded that the Growth Fund could not be used to support schools with financial difficulties or for maintaining class structures.

In discussing the report, the Forum:

- Noted that this was an area that had not received much scrutiny in the past.
- Expressed concern that a further £1.7m cut in addition to the transfer of funds to the High Needs Block would cause problems for school budgets. While it was acknowledged that the amounts were relatively small, their effects would be felt across the County.
- Proposed an increase in Council Tax that would specifically divert the extra funds to support children. Council Members informed the Forum that it would be difficult to allocate funds in such a way. It was noted that the Chairman of the Children and Young People Committee had been helpful and proactive in spreading awareness throughout the Council of the pressures faced by the High Needs Block.
- Decided to send a note to Cambridgeshire County Council saying that they would:
 - i) Support an increase to the Council Tax
 - ii) Request that money to be targeted to High Needs. **Action required:** Service Director Education
- Were informed that the Council did increase the Council Tax last year, raising £5m which went into a smoothing fund and subsequently into Children services.
- Amended the fourth recommendation to include additional scrutiny to compare the projected and final numbers.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note the national changes to Growth Fund allocations
- b) Approve the continuation of the centrally retained Growth Fund at £2.5m for 2019/20.
- c) Approve the criteria in sections 3.0-3.3 to be applied from April 2019 subject to Education and Skills Funding Agency approval.
- d) Approve the amounts for pre-opening and post-opening diseconomies funding as set out in Appendix C to be applied in 2019/20, with additional scrutiny of the numbers.

87. HIGH NEEDS BLOCK FUNDING – THE CHALLENGES FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE

The Forum received a report on the challenges around High Needs funding. Attention was drawn to sections 2.1 to 2.4 of the report, which detailed the national situation and compared it to Cambridgeshire. It was noted that the next steps, as laid out in section 4.1, would be looked at during the Schools Forum Working Group to be held on 1st February 2020. Decisions on changes would then start to be made from March 2020 onwards. It was suggested that it would be helpful to see the alternatives devised by other authorities. Forum was informed that it was currently hard to come up with such information, as many authorities were not revealing their plans at the current time.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note the position around High Needs funding – both nationally and within Cambridgeshire.
- b) Continue to work with officers to consider areas where efficiencies could be found and demand for high need services reduced.

88. EASTNET UPDATE

The Forum received an update of EastNet, the proposed replacement for schools' networks across Cambridgeshire, which also sought the Forum's approval to request a continuation of the current funding arrangements from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) beyond 2020. It was noted that there was already agreement for funding to continue until the end of 2019 and that EastNet would be able to provide the services that many schools were currently seeking.

Forum was informed that the Council had invested heavily in the infrastructure and the project was praised for providing excellent value for money. The Head of Integrated Finance Services stated that he did not want schools to be confronted with a further budget pressure and that given the inherently greater cost of providing the service to rural areas, he encouraged cost sharing to avoid rural schools suffering financially. Funding the installation of fibre connections across the county would benefit the whole community and not just the schools. It was noted, however, that discussions were still underway with the ESFA over how the funding would be spent if approved beyond 2020.

While discussing the report, the Forum:

- Established that approximately £1.37million of the funding was spent on installation and maintenance of the service, while the remainder was spent on infrastructure such as memory, security, anti-virus and filtering facilities. It was noted that under the proposed scheme, the cost of anti-virus programs and filtering would cost schools less than £500 per year, a considerable saving on making their own arrangements.
- Queried what would happen if the internet traffic surpassed 20Gbps, as mentioned in section 3.3 of the report. It was noted that such an eventuality was highly unlikely but that if it did occur, there were contingency plans to increase the bandwidth without impacting school budgets. It was noted that there were daily reports on usage and that calculations had been based on the past five years.
- Acknowledged that individual IT directors in schools often preferred to control such arrangements personally, but the benefits of working together and taking away the necessity for this work would be of benefit to all. It was noted that a certain flexibility existed in allowing for schools to choose whether or not to implement various features of the scheme.
- Noted that there would not be higher costs for small schools that do not currently have the infrastructure in place.
- Were informed that the infrastructure had been sized and costed on the assumption that all schools would sign up. Were there to be a significant number that decided not to do so, a redesign of the infrastructure would be required.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Agree that the previously approved 19/20 retained £1.458m be used to pay for Year 1 of the EastNet contract in 2019/20.

- b) Approve the proposal to request a continuation of current funding arrangements from the Education and Skills Funding Agency.
- c) Note the potential risks for future years.

89. AGENDA PLAN

Additions made to the Agenda Plan for the January meeting included:

- Confirming proposed dates for 2019/20 meetings
- Funding For School Admissions Appeals report
- Financing of Growth Fund report

It was resolved to:

Note the Agenda Plan

90. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Cambridgeshire Schools Forum will meet next on Friday 18th January 2020 at 10:00am in the Kreis Viersen Room, Shire Hall, Cambridge.

The next workshop will be held on Friday 1st February 2020 at 10:00am in Room 128, Shire Hall, Cambridge.

Chairman

Amendment to Minute 74 from the meeting held on 5th October 2018

In the third line, after the words “to help fund” and before the words “Education and Health Care Plans”, the insertion of the following additional text:

“a Special Education Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF) equivalent for the under threes, to reduce the number of”.

After the subsequent wording “Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs)” add the following:

“having to be applied for early”.

The wording then continues with:

“as currently there was no funding for under threes. Such funding would help address their needs at an early age and prevent some of the issues experienced as they became older and moved into the primary sector.”

Full wording:

In discussion the Early Years representative highlighted that with the removal of Early Years Access Funding some of the money moved to the High Needs Block was required in the Early Years Block to help fund **a Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF) equivalent for the under threes, to reduce the number of** Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs) **having to be applied for early**, as currently there was no funding for under threes. Such funding would help address their needs at an early age and prevent some of the issues experienced as they became older and moved into the primary sector.

ACADEMY APPOINTMENTS TO SCHOOLS FORUM

To: **Cambridgeshire Schools Forum**

Date: **14 December 2018**

From: **Jonathan Lewis – Service Director - Education**

Purpose: **To outline the process for making academy appointment to Schools Forum and present the latest position in relation to recruiting to vacancies.**

Recommendation:

Schools Forum is asked to note the process for appointing academy representation.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1.1 Schools Forum is intended to fully represent the different education groups within the County both within the maintained and academy sectors. There are currently 21 academy trusts operating in Cambridgeshire.

1.2 The current membership of the Forum from the Academy Sector is as follows -

Mainstream Academy

Susannah Connell 2015-19

Anna Reeder 2015-2019

Mark Woods 2014-31st December 2018

Andrew Goulding 2015-19

Jonathan Digby 2016-2020

Academy Governors

Philip Hodgson 2014-31st December 2018 (currently chair of Forum)

Alan Rodger 2014-31st December 2018 (currently Vice Chair)

Academy Special School Dr Kim Taylor 2016-2020

Academy Alternate Provision Sarah Roscoe 2018-2022

1.3 As a result of changing pupil numbers (which have increased the share of representation) and resignations, there are currently 3 vacant posts for academies. In addition, three members of the Schools Forum term of membership is due to expire at the end of the year. As a result, there is a need to appoint 6 members to the Forum.

2.0 APPOINTING ACADEMY REPRESENTATIVES

2.1 The best practice guidance for Schools Forum outlines the following –

The relevant group or sub-group is probably best placed to determine how their schools members should be elected. It's good practice for those who draw up the scheme to ensure that a vacancy amongst a represented group would be filled by a nominee elected according to a process that has been determined by all those represented in that group,

As a minimum, we would recommend that the clerk of a schools forum make a record of the process by which the relevant schools within each group and sub-group elect their nominees to the schools forum and be able to advise the Chair of the schools forum and local authority on action that needs to be taken, where necessary, to seek new nominees.

- 2.2 Academy members must be elected by the proprietor bodies of the academies in the local authority's area. Free Schools and University Technical Colleges are classed as academies for this purpose and there is no distinction between sponsored and converter academies.
- 2.3 There are three sub-groups for academy members: mainstream academies, special academies and alternative provision academies and it is for the proprietors of academies within each of these sub-groups to elect their representatives. There is no requirement for academies members to be split into primary and secondary sub-groups.
- 2.4 In order to establish a process for election moving forward, the following procedure will be undertaken for any academy vacancy –
- The Local Authority will notify the CEO of Academy Trusts of any vacancy on the Schools Forum. The vacancies will also be notified to all Heads groups.
 - Nominations will be sought over a 2 week period and collated by the LA.
 - If the number of nomination is below the number of vacancies, a further 2 week nomination period will take place. If the number of nomination remains below the number of vacancies, the LA will seek to directly appoint from within the academy sector noting the balance of places between primary and secondary.
 - If the number of nominations matches the number of vacancies, all nominations will be appointed to the Forum and ratified at the next meeting.
 - If there are more nominations than vacancies, an election will take place. The LA will administer the process and will collate the results as an independent body. Those with the most votes will be elected. There will be one vote per Academy Trust.
 - In the case of a tie, in line with the good practice guidance, the LA should appoint a member from within the nominations received.
 - The outcome of the elections will be notified to all academy trust CEO's
- 2.5 In light of the vacancies outlined in 1.2, an email was sent out to all CEOs for nominations with a deadline of the 13rd December. The following nominations were forthcoming -

- Jane Horn – Principal at Cromwell Community College - representing the Active Learning Trust
- Jon Culpin – CEO of Anglian Learning
- Richard Spencer – Principal – Ely College
- Philip Hodgson – Board Member – Anglian Learning
- Alan Rogers – Board Member – Morris Trust
- Patsy Peres - Principal at Ramsey Spinning Infant and Ramsey Junior – Elliot Foundation

2.6 Given the number of nominations matches the number of vacancies, Schools Forum is asked to ratify the nominations to join the Forum in January.

| Source Documents | Location |
|--|---|
| <i>Schools Forum Best Practice Guidance (2015)</i> | https://tinyurl.com/ydgooqb9 |

SCHOOLS FORUM MINUTE ACTION LOG

The Action Log captures the actions arising from meetings of the Cambridgeshire Schools Forum. This is the updated action log as at 9th January 2019

MINUTES 5TH OCTOBER 2018

| Minute Number | Title of Report | Lead Officer | Action | Update | Status |
|---------------|--|--------------|--|---|-----------------------|
| 76. | HIGH NEEDS BLOCK a) More detail on Main Areas of overspend | Jon Lewis | That for the next meeting the main areas of overspend highlighted in the table under para 1.4 needed to be broken down further to show age profile and location in the County. | This is currently being produced and will be circulated to Schools Forum when available. Oral update to be provided | Action ongoing |
| | | | | | |
| | b) Home Tuition | Jon Lewis | There was a request for information on how many of them had an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) | This is currently being produced and will be circulated to Schools Forum when available. Oral update to be provided | Action ongoing |

MINUTES 14TH DECEMBER 2018

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|-----|-------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|-----------------------|
| 82. | ACTION LOG | Rob Sanderson/ Nick Mills | Agreeing to terminate an appointment after a member failed to attend three consecutive meetings. | Democratic Services would be developing a monitoring system starting from the current meeting | Action ongoing |
|-----|-------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|-----------------------|

| | | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|---|--|------------------------|
| 85. | CAMBRIDGESHIRE 2019/20 SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA | Jon Lee | Suggested that it would be useful to have data on the carryforwards for schools in neighbouring authorities, as well as information on why the money had been put aside. Approaching other schools to share such information would also serve to open dialogue on the issue. Action: Head of Integrated Finance Services | This information will be looked into with a view to presenting a report to the March Forum meeting. | |
| 86. | GROWTH FUND AND NEW SCHOOLS FUNDING CRITERIA 2019-20 | Jon Lewis | It was agreed that a note should be sent to Cambridgeshire County Council stating that Schools Forum would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Support an increase to the Council Tax ii) Request that money be targeted to High Needs. Action required: Service Director Education | Oral Update to be provided | |
| 87. | HIGH NEEDS BLOCK FUNDING – THE CHALLENGES FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE | Jon Lewis | Work on looking at what efficiencies could be found and demand for high need services reduced would be undertaken by the Schools Forum Working Group to be held on 1st February 2020. It was suggested that it would be helpful to see the alternatives devised by other authorities. | This was ongoing work and would be the subject of reports back to Forum in due course. | Action Ongoing. |

**SCHOOL ADMISSION APPEAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR ALL ADMISSION AUTHORITIES
FINANCIAL YEAR 2019/20 ONWARDS**

To: Cambridgeshire Schools Forum

Date: 18th January 2019

From: Sam Surtees
Strategic Admissions and Attendance Manager
Sam.surtees@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel: 01223 699388, or 07768068342

Purpose: To advise Schools Forum of the need to change the way in which the cost associated with the provision of School Admission Appeals is funded in response to revisions contained within 2018/19 schools revenue funding operational guidance

Recommendation:

- a) Note the contents of the report; and
- b) To approve the increase in funding to the admissions service from the Central School Services Block to support the cost of delivery of school admission appeals for all schools in Cambridgeshire. The total additional requirement is £110k for the 2019-20 academic year (£64k for the 2019-20 financial year) with costs being reviewed annually

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The School Admission Appeals Code ("the Appeals Code"), issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, imposes mandatory requirements in relation to the appeals lodged against a decision to refuse the admission of a child to a school. The Local Authority (LA) is responsible for arranging appeals as the admission authority for community and voluntary controlled schools in Cambridgeshire. This is currently provided as a free service.

1.2 Own admission authority schools (Voluntary Aided, Foundation and Academies) are able to buy the following services from the LA:-

- All work undertaken in preparation for the Appeal hearing in compliance with the School Admissions Appeals Code
- Presentation of the case against admission at the independent appeal hearing,
- Clerking of the appeal hearing
- The presence of a legal advisor at the appeal hearing
- Communication with parents after the appeal hearing
- Response to any subsequent complaints lodged by the family

Democratic Services, working with the School Admissions Team to ensure the independence of the process, book meeting rooms and liaise with panel members for each appeal scheduled. Clerking of the appeal hearing is undertaken through a commissioned arrangement, currently, with LGSS Law Limited. **Appendix 1** details the current charges made to own admission authority schools for this service

- 1.3 Currently only 1 secondary school chooses not to use the appeal service provided for any admission rounds. A further 5 secondary schools, those who choose to manage their own in year admissions, are unable to use the service for appeals as the LA has not been involved in the decisions leading up to the refusal of a place.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 As stated in section 1.2, Cambridgeshire charges own admission authority schools who wish to use its appeals service. This arrangement has been in place for several years and has never been challenged. However, some recent correspondence (**Appendix 2**), shared by a colleague in a neighbouring LA, suggests that as a result of a change to Department for Education (DfE) Operational Guidance, it will no longer be possible to differentiate between own admission authority schools and those for which the LA is the admissions authority (Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools).
- 2.2 As own admission authority schools will have already made buy-in decisions regarding the school admission appeals service before the end of the last academic year, the earliest any change could come into effective would be for the start of the 2019 financial year.
- 2.3 The table below shows the number of appeals lodged and heard over the last four years and the total cost of delivering the statutory requirements of the appeals service in those years.

| <i>Academic Year</i> | <i>No of appeals lodged</i> | <i>No of appeals heard</i> | <i>Total cost of service</i> |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2014/15 | 721 | 486 | £128,590 |
| 2015/16 | 812 | 471 | £105,602 |
| 2016/17 | 711 | 480 | £109,031 |
| 2017/18 | 606 | 476 | £105,711 |

- 2.4 Officers have identified three possible options in response to the DfE letter attached as Appendix 2. The options appraisal is set out in **Appendix 3**. Officers' view is that Option 1 would provide the best means of securing a fair, independent and consistent school admissions appeals service for Cambridgeshire families irrespective of the status of the school at which they are seeking a school place.
- 2.5 Taking an average of the last four years it has been identified that an amount of £110,000 would be sufficient to enable the delivery of the statutory appeal services to all schools in the next financial year as described in Option 1. It is proposed that this amount would be found within the overall available Central Services School Block (CSSB), including any uplift received, without the need to ask schools for additional funding or any anticipated impact on any other services/budget.

| Source Documents | Location |
|---|---|
| <i>School Admissions Code (2014)</i> | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/389388/School_Admissions_Code_2014 - 19 Dec.pdf |
| <i>School Admission Appeals Code (2012)</i> | https://www.gov.uk/government/publ ications/school-admissions-appeals- code |

Service Level Agreement

School Admissions and School Admission Appeals Services Service Package Renewal - Academic Year 2018/19

The Service

This specification outlines the School Admission and School Admission Appeals services that are available from the Council to Schools during the Academic Year 2018/19 either free of charge or on payment of a subscription fee.

Service Package 1a: School Admissions Validation Service – Transitions (the point of entry to a School i.e. Reception and Year 7 for September 2019)

This is **only** available as a subscription service. It comprises, but is not limited to:

- Verification of a child's catchment area
- Verification of a child's home address
- Determination of whether the child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health Care Plan
- Determination of whether the child is Looked After or was previously Looked After
- Checking whether there are any older siblings already on roll at the School
- The calculation of the home to school distance measurements; and
- The subsequent ranking of applications against the school's published over-subscription criteria, with the any applications made under an Academy's church criteria.

In cases where a Voluntary Aided and Foundation school subscribed to this Service Package prior to conversion, no further charges will be raised for the remainder of Academic Year 2018/19.

Service Package 1b: –School Admissions In Year Validation Service (those applications received outside the normal transitions round)

This service is available free of charge. It covers the coordination of all admission applications received for children moving school during the course of the year and all tasks relating to this process (as provided in Package 1a above).

A list of all inclusions and exclusions of packages 1a and 1b is detailed within the full Service Level Agreement document.

Service Package 2a: Admission Appeals- Transitions

This is **only** available as a subscription service **in conjunction with** Service Package 1a. This will entitle you to a fully comprehensive appeals service for those families who are refused a place at your school as part of the Transitions process.

It includes:

- All work undertaken in preparation for the Appeal hearing in compliance with the School Admissions Appeals Code
- Presentation of the case against admission at the independent appeal hearing,
- Clerking of the appeal hearing
- The presence of a legal advisor at the appeal hearing
- Communication with parents after the appeal hearing
- Response to any subsequent complaints lodged by the family

Service Package 2b: Admission Appeals- In Year

This is **only** available as a subscription service **in conjunction with** Service Package 1b. This will entitle you to a fully comprehensive appeals service for those families who are refused a place at your school during the course of the academic year. The service is the same as that detailed in Service Package 2a.

A list of all inclusions and exclusions of packages 2a and 2b is detailed within the full Service Description document.

Please note that VAT will be charged for any School Admission Appeals services supplied after the date of conversion to Academy status.

The Period Covered by Annual Subscription to these Service Packages is:

1st September 2018 - 31st August 2019

Charging Details

Service Package 1a

Primary Academies - **£395.00 net/Academic Year**

Secondary Academies **£1995.00 net/Academic Year**

Service Package 1b

Free of charge

Service Package 2a and 2b – *(Invoiced termly on “pay-as-you-go” basis dependent upon the number of appeals heard over the course of the annual subscription period)*

For the first 5 appeals : **£320.00 net /Appeal**

For the 6th-10th appeal: **£290.00 net /Appeal**

For the 11th and subsequent appeals heard: **£205.00 net /Appeal**

NB Charges for appeals only become due once an appeal is heard. No charges are made if the appeal case is withdrawn, irrespective of the reasons for this. Invoices are then subsequently raised after the end of the term in which the appeals were heard.

Should you choose not to subscribe to Service Packages 2a and/or 2b, before 1 September 2018, but later identify a requirement for the Admission Appeals Services, you will be charged a £100 net administrative amendment fee.

If you wish to cancel your subscription at any time during the academic year, you will be required to give a minimum of one month's notice.

For any Queries, Feedback, Suggestions & Complaints

The School Admissions Service welcomes all feedback and will implement improvements where necessary.

Please contact: **Samantha Bennett, Education Admission Appeals & Fair Access Officer**

Tel: 01223 699794

Email: samantha.bennett@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Quality, Standards & Performance Indicators

Cambridgeshire County Council School Admissions Service undertakes to:

- 1) Commit to all reasonable steps to deliver the services described above.
- 2) Give due notice of any proposed changes in the terms of the agreement, charges or cancellation.

Additional Services

We also offer Admissions Policy checking Service

Further details including charges are available within the *full Service Level Agreement document*

**School Admissions and School Admission Appeals Services
Service Package Renewal - Academic Year 2018/19**

Academy Name:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Signature:

Please indicate below the service packages selected by your School for 2018/19:

| Service Package | Charge £ net | Selected? ✓ or X | | | |
|--|--|---------------------|--|----|--|
| 1a Admissions Validation, Transitions | <i>£395.00 Primary £1995.00 Secondary</i> | Yes | | No | |
| 1b Admissions Service, In Year | Free of Charge | Yes | | No | |
| 2a Admissions Appeals, Transitions | <i>£320 / £290 / £205 per appeal heard (Sliding scale)</i> | Yes | | No | |
| 2b Admissions Appeals, In Year | <i>£320 / £290 / £205 per appeal heard (Sliding scale)</i> | Yes | | No | |

Please return this completed form to Samantha Bennett, Education Admission Appeals & Fair Access Officer, by email samantha.bennett@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or by post to:

Samantha Bennett - Education Admission Appeals & Fair Access Officer

0-19 Places Planning & Organisation Service

Education Directorate

People and Communities

Cambridgeshire County Council

OCT1221

Shire Hall

Cambridge

CB3 0AP

FEEDBACK FORM

The School Admissions Team is committed to improving the service it provides and would welcome your views. Please assist us by completing and returning this form to, Operations and Policy Manager Admissions and EY Funding, 0-19 Places Planning & Organisation Service, Education Directorate, People and Communities, Cambridgeshire County Council, OCT 1221, Shire Hall, Cambridge, CB3 0AP
email: samantha.bennett@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Academy Name:

Contact for follow up discussion:

Have you used the Admissions Team's Services previously?

Have you been happy with the service that you have received? If not please provide details below.

Do you feel that the Services provided offer value for money?

Do you think that the service could be improved?

Either in its delivery?

Or in the packages offered?

Do you have any other comments or suggestions?



Education & Skills
Funding Agency

APPENDIX 2

Education and Skills Funding Agency
53-55 Butts Road
Coventry
CV1 3BH

Tel: 0370 000 2288

www.education.gov.uk/efa-enquiry-form

23 July 2018

If you've received this letter in error, please
[update your organisation's contact details](#).

Dear colleague

Funding for school admission appeals

We're writing to remind you about the duties of local authorities in relation to funding for school admission appeals. We're doing this as an academy within your trust has previously claimed funding for admission appeals from ESFA.

The role of your local authority

Local authorities receive funding through the central school services block (CSSB) of the dedicated schools grant (DSG) for the statutory duties they hold for both maintained schools and academies. The DSG conditions of grant state that the local authority must treat maintained schools and academies equally when using funding from the CSSB. This is also emphasised in the [2018 to 2019 schools revenue funding operational guide](#).

If local authorities use this funding to provide a free admissions appeals service for community and voluntary controlled schools, they must also provide this service free to academies, voluntary aided schools and foundation schools, although these schools may choose not to use it.

2018 to 2019 academic year appeals

For appeals related to the 2018 to 2019 academic year, we'll ask academies making claims to state in their covering letter that they have checked if they could access support from their local authority where the authority is holding DSG centrally for this purpose. Of course, we will continue to pay claims where this is not the case.

At a glance:

- your local authority might provide a free admissions appeals service
- familiarise yourself with your local authority's policy on admissions appeals services before you submit a claim to ESFA
- if you have any questions, contact us via our [enquiry form](#)

Further information

You should familiarise yourself with your local authority's policy on admissions appeals services before you submit a claim to ESFA.

If you have any questions about the content of this letter, contact us via our [enquiry form](#).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'Owen Jenkins', with a horizontal line extending from the middle of the signature.

Owen Jenkins

Academies & Maintained Schools Group

Funding Division

Education and Skills Funding Agency

Option 1 – Provide this service to all schools for no charge

| <u>For</u> | <u>Against</u> |
|---|--|
| We will continue to provide a robust, legally compliant and independent admission appeals service which we know ensures that the vast majority of parents applying for a place at a Cambridgeshire school are able to exercise their legal right to appeal. | There may be an increase in the number of appeals heard, as there is no cost implication for own admission authority schools when refusing places. This will make identification of the amount to be retained each year difficult. |
| We would look to manage from within the overall available Central Services to School Block (CSSB), therefore we would not anticipate any impact on other services/budgets. A sum of £110,000 would be required for this purpose. | |
| Continued low level of complaints regarding the service both to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) and the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). | As there will be no financial implication for own admission authority schools by refusing the admission of a child and the subsequent right of appeal, it may be more difficult to negotiate with a school regarding the admission of a child. |

Option 2 – Provide this as a chargeable service to all schools

| <u>For</u> | <u>Against</u> |
|---|---|
| Schools will stop and consider the possible financial impact of their decision to refuse a place | Where schools are restricted by Infant Class Size Legislation they will be penalised financially for being popular |
| The amount of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) currently retained to cover the cost of delivery of this service to LA maintained schools could be distributed back to schools in their budgets | This is such a small amount, £203 per school, the impact on schools will be minimal |
| | For maintained schools this will add an additional financial burden which they have not previously had to consider when budget setting. |

Option 3 – Provide this as a free service to Voluntary Controlled and Community Schools only

| <u>For</u> | <u>Against</u> |
|---|---|
| The reduction in the volume of appeals would create capacity within the current Education Admission Appeals and Fair Access Officer role which would allow for the development of this role to support Fair Access and Inclusion functions further. | Funding for this would need to be found within existing budgets as this could not be funded through the CSSB of DSG just for LA admission authority schools |
| | |
| | Own Admission Authority Schools would be required to find alternative ways of meeting this statutory duty. This could be more costly, less consistent and extremely difficult for the LA to monitor to ensure compliance with the School Admission Appeals Code. |
| | |
| | The continued provision of a robust service by the LA would be at risk. As more and more schools become their own admission authority, future job security would possibly affect retention of existing experienced staff and recruitment of suitable staff in the future. |
| | Significant risk of challenge from the DfE, own admission authority schools, the LGO and ESFA, potentially in terms of a Judicial Review. |

PROPOSED FUTURE SCHOOLS FORUM DATES AFTER JULY

To: Cambridgeshire Schools Forum
Date: 18th January 2019
From: Rob Sanderson Democratic Service
Email: Rob.sanderson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Telephone: 01223699181

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The agreed dates for future Schools Forum meetings are currently scheduled until July 2019 and therefore there is a need to agree future dates from the next Autumn term until July 2020.
- 1.2 The attached appendix identifies potential dates for Forum with an explanation on the dates identified.
- 1.3 The dates have very recently been shared with officers and the Chairs of the Primary and Secondary Heads Groups and any feedback received will be reported orally.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **To consider the dates highlighted in red, including a preference where two dates have been offered and agree them, subject to any alternatives being suggested.**

Background Documents: None

SCHOOLS FORUM: PROPOSED MEETING DATES 2019/20

Current school year dates for Forum

5th October 2018

14th December 2018 (Changed from 30th November as being too early in terms of relevant budget announcements)

18th January 2019

29TH March 2019

17th May 2019 (reserve meeting date)

12th July 2019

Need meetings in October, December, January 2020, March 2020, May 2020 and July 2020

To be held a minimum once each half term period e.g. once before and once after the half term holiday. Meetings not to be arranged on Teacher Training days or in school holiday periods.

Friday appears to be the preferred day and if possible a new requirement is to always have them the week before the last week of the term if the last day of term is a Friday. The December and January meetings need to co-ordinate with CYP Committee (who receive update reports on the funding formula in December and need to approve it at their January Committee meeting) and also to take account if known of the Authority Proforma Tool (APT) deadlines date. (Jon Lee will have details)

New dates required each half term period plus any additional ones around budget time.

Autumn Term 2019 - 4th September to 18th December – (Half term Saturday 19th October 2019 to Sunday 27th October)

CYP Committee 8th October 2019 and 12th November 2019

Suggested date for Forum Wednesday 16th October (Friday 18th October being last day of term so have avoided but could have it on this day but would need to be in Council Chamber as KV Room not available)

Second date in Autumn term to also take account possible late announcements

Wednesday 18th December 2019 KV Room

Do we need a further date before this in November??

Christmas holiday Thursday 19th December to Sunday 5th January 2020

Spring Term 2019 6th January 2020 to Wednesday 1st April 2020 (half term Saturday 15th February to Sunday 23rd February)

CYP Committee 4th December 2019 (deadline reports 22nd November Despatch 26th November)

CYP Committee 21st January deadline reports 9th January despatch agenda 13th January)

Second budget related suggested date

Friday 17th January 2020 (Council Chamber as KV Room being used)

Second half of term suggested date

Friday 27th March 2020 (KV Room)

Easter Holiday Thursday 2nd April Sunday 19th April 2020

Summer Term Monday 20th April to Tuesday 21st July 2020 (Half term Saturday 23rd May - Sunday 31st May)

First half of term suggested date

Friday 15th May 2020 (KV Room)

Second half of term suggested date

Friday 17th July (KV Room)

Friday 23rd May

Second half of term

Friday 18th July

- Friday 6 July 2018 (already set)
- Friday 5 October 2018
- (*RESERVE DATE: Friday 9 November*)
(CYP 13 November)
- Friday 30 November
(CYP 4 December – agenda publication 26 November)
- Friday 18 January 2019 to precede APT submission
(CYP 15 January – agenda publication 7 January)
- Friday 29 March
- (*RESERVE DATE: Friday 17 May*)
- Friday 12 July

CAMBRIDGESHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM – FORWARD AGENDA PLAN

All meetings will be held at 10.00am in the Kreis Viersen Room, Shire Hall, Cambridge CB3 0AP unless otherwise specified.
Correct as at 10.01.19.

| Date of meeting | Agenda Item | Report author | Reports due to reach Democratic Services by: |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| Friday 18 January 2019 | Apologies for absence and declarations of interest | <i>verbal</i> | Tuesday 8 January 2019 |
| | Action Log | | |
| | Minutes of the Meeting on 9 March 2018 | Rob Sanderson | |
| | Funding for School Admission Appeals | S Surtees | |
| | 2019/20 Schools Funding Formula | J Lee | |
| | Proposed Forum Dates beyond July 2019 | Rob Sanderson | |
| | Agenda Plan | Rob Sanderson | |
| | Date of Next Meeting | <i>Verbal</i> | |
| | | | |
| | | | Reports due to reach Democratic Services by: |
| Friday 29 March 2019 | Apologies for absence and declarations of interest | <i>verbal</i> | Tuesday 19 March 2019 |
| | Minutes of the Meeting on 9 March 2018 | Rob Sanderson | |
| | Early Years Funding | Sam Surtees / Shelley Kingston | |
| | Action Log | Rob Sanderson | |
| | Agenda Plan | Rob Sanderson | |
| | Date of Next Meeting | <i>Verbal</i> | |
| | | | Reports due to reach Democratic Services by: |
| Friday 17 May 2019 <i>(reserve meeting date)</i> | | | Tuesday 7 May 2019 |

| | | | Reports due to reach Democratic Services by: |
|----------------------------|--|----------------------|--|
| Friday 12 July 2019 | Election of the Chairman/woman and Vice Chairman/woman | <i>verbal</i> | Tuesday 2 July 2019 |
| | Apologies for absence and declarations of interest | <i>verbal</i> | |
| | Minutes of the Meeting on 9 March 2018 | Rob Sanderson | |
| | Action Log | Rob Sanderson | |
| | Agenda Plan | Rob Sanderson | |
| | Growth Fund Allocation | M Wade | |
| | Date of Next Meeting | <i>Verbal</i> | |
| | | | |