



## **f40 Executive Committee Meeting**

**Tuesday, September 27, 2022 – via conference call**

### **1. Attendances, apologies, and changes to committee membership**

**Present:** Cllr Alex Dale (f40 Chair and Derbyshire CC); Phil Haslett (Dep Chair and Glos CC); Karen Westcott (Secretary); Margaret Judd (Dorset Council); Andrew Minall (Hampshire CC); Jackie Smith (CEO Brunel MAT & Uplands Educational Trust); Carole Thomson (Oxfordshire Schools Forum); Ed Francis (Worc SEND primary headteacher); Cllr Victoria Aitken (East Riding Ccl); Cllr Shellina Prendergast (Kent CC); Cllr Fiona Baker (West Northants Ccl); Cllr Andrew Leadbetter (Devon CC); Cllr Bob Standley (East Sussex CC).

**Apologies:** Emma Hardy MP (Vice Chair); Emily Proffitt (Dep Chair and Staffs primary headteacher); Julia Harnden (ASCL); Deborah Myers (East Riding Ccl); Annette Perrington (Swindon Ccl); Cllr Bryony Goodliffe (Cambs CC).

AD welcomed members to the meeting and led a one-minute's silence in memory of the Late Queen Elizabeth II.

### **2. Minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2022**

The minutes were **APPROVED** as a correct record of the meeting.

### **3. Members update**

AD said KW had written to the lowest funded local authorities, inviting them to join f40.

KW said she had written to the Cabinet Members and Directors of Children/Education at 14 local authorities who were among the lowest funded informing them about the group and inviting them to find out more.

AM asked KW to circulate the list of local authorities as Executive Committee members may be able to approach key contacts within those local authorities.

**Action:** KW to circulate the list. **(KW)**

**Post meeting note:** The list of authorities has been sent to members.

### **4. Matters to be noted:**

- f40 response to the SEND Review Green Paper submitted – noted
- f40 response to NFF consultation submitted – noted
- f40 response to Early Years formulae consultation – noted

### **5. Letters to new Ministers and Secretary of State**

KW said she would be writing to the new education ministers and Secretary of State, inviting them to meet with f40 and outlining the group's main concerns.

It was agreed the letters should make reference to fairness, along with the cost of living crisis and the impact of rising costs on the lowest funded schools and local authorities.

It was also agreed that the increase to the Living Wage and its impact on schools, in particular to special schools, should also be raised as many schools were finding it increasingly difficult to pay their rising wage bill.

CT also suggested that the Minimum Per Pupil Funding Level (MPPFL) be mentioned as many schools, especially small rural schools, were finding it difficult to make their budgets stretch on the MPPFL. She said Government needed to get the basic funding right for schools, and then add on additional funding for specific school and pupil needs. She said the MPPFL was putting some schools in dire financial crisis.

BS said in East Sussex there were a lot of rural schools, and they were particularly struggling with the rise in energy costs. He said they had cut back as far as they could. He said Covid was still prevalent, and schools continued to feel the need to keep classrooms ventilated with open windows. He said it was particularly expensive to keep classrooms warm and ventilated at the same time.

CT said a lot of schools in Oxfordshire used oil to heat buildings and that, too, had also risen in price.

MJ said Government needed to get the basic funding right in schools, rather than using the MPPFL. She said if the basic funding was right there would be no need for MPPFL.

AM said there was a problem in the structure and sufficiency of funding. He said the basic structure of how schools were funded was all wrong.

AM said rising energy costs and staff costs were causing schools major financial problems.

JS said the costs of support staff in her special needs academy trust had risen by about 10% this year. She said with teachers' pay awards, as well, schools were simply unable to meet the costs.

PH said f40 needed to make the point to Ministers that pressures on mainstream schools had a negative impact on the work Government was trying to do to improve the SEND landscape and make mainstream schools more inclusive.

SP said schools in Kent were reporting shortages of teaching assistants. She said independent schools were paying teaching assistants more and mainstream schools were unable to compete.

## **6. Invitation to f40 MPs to campaign for fair and increased funding**

KW said she was preparing to send hard copy handout materials to every f40 MP, inviting them to campaign for fair and increased education funding.

VA suggested that hard copy handout materials also be sent to all Cabinet Members in f40 areas.

It was also agreed that f40 hold an online briefing meeting for Cabinet Members inviting them to get more involved and find out more about the f40 group and what steps they can take to assist the campaign.

**Action:** KW to arrange an online meeting for elected members. **(KW)**

**Action:** KW to send hard copy materials to all f40 MPs and Cabinet Members.

## **7. Westminster Hall debate on education**

Members agreed it would be useful to have a debate on education in Westminster Hall.

**Action:** KW to arrange an online meeting with David Davis MP, VA, and AD to discuss it. **(KW)**

## **8. Meeting with the EPI**

It was agreed that it would be good to meet with the EPI again in the autumn.

**Action:** KW to contact the EPI to invite them to meet with f40 later this year. **(KW)**

## **9. SEND Review Green Paper**

### **A. Draft letter to the SEND Review Team**

KW said f40's response to the SEND Green Paper had been submitted, but the group needed to send a letter to the DfE and the review team giving an overview of their thoughts and concerns around the paper.

PH said the letter needed to be part of the solution and needed to assist the SEND Review Team and DfE, rather than just raising issues.

AD said f40 needed to make the point that while there were some good intentions in the Green Paper, the suggestions would not solve the major issues with SEND any time soon and many of the suggestions would rely on significant extra funding.

CT said f40 needed to make the case that more funding was needed for SEND across the board, including in Early Years to enable early intervention to happen.

It was agreed that f40 present the DfE, SEND Review Team and MPs with case studies showing the impact the lack of funding was having on schools, from both a Schools and SEND perspective.

PH said real stories from schools made all the difference in getting messages across.

It was suggested that f40 Cabinet Members be invited to submit case study ideas that f40 could feature to highlight the issues.

A number of Executive members said they would be happy to provide case studies.

It was agreed that schools in f40 areas also be invited to take part in a short survey to explain the impact insufficient funding is having on them. The results of the survey could then also be presented to the DfE, MPs and review team.

AD said it was important that schools be informed why the survey was needed and what the results would be used for to encourage them to take part.

**Action:** KW to set up a meeting with AD, AM, MJ, PH and JS to discuss the survey. **(KW)**

**Action:** Executive Committee members to speak to their schools to help identify good case studies. **(ALL)**

**Action:** KW to work with AD on the letter to the SEND Review team.

### **B. Request meeting with the LGA team to discuss SEND**

AD said the Chair of the Children and Young People's Board at the LGA had changed, so arranging a meeting had been delayed. However, he said KW was still working with the LGA to arrange a suitable time.

**Action:** KW to work with the LGA on a date to meet. **(KW)**

### **C. Request a meeting with the DfE and SEND Review Team**

It was agreed that f40 should invite the DfE SEND team and the SEND Review Team to meet to discuss the review and concerns around High Needs.

**Action:** KW to make contact to see if a meeting can be arranged. **(KW)**

#### **D. Request a meeting with the County Council Network**

AM suggested it may be useful for f40 to also meet with the County Council Network to discuss matters where the two groups are aligned.

**Action:** AD said he could provide useful contacts for the County Council Network. **(AD)**

**Action:** KW to approach the County Council Network to invite them to meet. **(KW)**

#### **10. National Children and Adult Services conference – November 2022**

It was confirmed that KW, AD, MJ, and AM were attending the conference in Manchester. Other members said they were interested in attending and supporting f40 with its exhibition stand. Members agreed to update KW if they were able to attend.

It was agreed a separate meeting would be held to discuss the logistics for the conference, such as the exhibition stand and handout materials.

**Action:** KW to arrange a meeting to discuss the NCAS conference. **(KW)**

**Post meeting note:** Meetings have been held and materials and logistics are being arranged and updated.

It was also suggested that f40 enquire as to whether it could provide its handout materials to partner organisations that are holding events.

**Action:** KW to ask partner organisations, such as ASCL and NGA, if f40 could provide materials to their events. **(KW)**

#### **11. Financial Update**

**KW said f40 had a healthy bank balance.**

#### **12. Date of next committee meeting – January 2023**

It was agreed that the next meeting in January be held in person at the LGA.

**Action:** KW to liaise with members and the LGA to discuss a suitable time and to update members. **(KW)**

#### **13. Any other business**

##### **A. Re-tendering of the Secretariat role**

AD updated members on the tendering process for the Secretariat role and said it was being progressed by Derbyshire County Council.

##### **B. f40 briefing paper on school costs**

CT asked if f40 was considering updating its briefing paper on how much funding schools required to operate. She said she appreciated it was a lot of work, but said the data was always well received by the DfE and was useful to share with Schools Forum and other partners.

AM said he and MJ were looking at producing new figures. He said the data had just been received from the DfE and they would update members in due course.

**Action:** AM and MJ looking at the costs of running a school and how much funding education required. **(AM/MJ)**

**Ends**