

**Department for Education Board Meeting
18 November 2021, 13:30 – 15.30**

**Blackpool Football Club, Bloomfield Road, Seaside Way, Blackpool,
FY1 6JJ and Microsoft Teams**

Attendees

Nadhim Zahawi, Rt Hon MP
Michelle Donelan Rt Hon MP
Alex Burghart, MP
Will Quince, MP

Robin Walker, MP
Richard Pennycook
Ian Ferguson
Irene Lucas
Toby Peyton-Jones
Nick Timothy
Susan Acland-Hood
Mike Green
Suzanne Lunn

Tony Foot

Title

Secretary of State (Chair)
Minister of State for Higher and Further Education
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Skills
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children
and Families
Minister of State for School Standards
Lead Non-executive Board Member
Non-executive Board Member
Non-executive Board Member
Non-Executive Board Member
Non-Executive Board Member
Permanent Secretary
Chief Operating Officer
Deputising for Director General, Social Care, Mobility
and Disadvantage
Strategic Finance Director

Presenters

Paul Kett

Andrew McCully
Julia Yong

Alice Lakeman
Susie Owen

Joe Billington

Title

Director General, Higher Education and Further
Education
Director General, Early Years and Schools Group
Deputy Head, Project Delivery Profession, Deputy
Director, Performance and Major Projects
Deputy Director, Central Strategic Finance
Director, Early Years, Childcare, School Food and
Teacher Regulation.
Deputy Director, Levelling Up.

Other Attendees

Julia Kinniburgh

Hollie Godsmark

Sevim Ekmekci
Shelley Cooper

Title

Director General, COVID-19 Response and Schools
Recovery
Principal Private Secretary to the Secretary of State

Head of Office to the Permanent Secretary
Board Secretary

Apologies

Indra Morris

Title

Director General, Social Care, Mobility and Disadvantage

1. INTRODUCTION, MINUTES AND ACTION TRACKER

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and noted apologies from Indra Morris.
- 1.2 The Chair noted that this would be Irene Lucas's and Ruby McGregor-Smith's last Board meeting and thanked them for their contributions to the Board and Department.
- 1.3 The minutes and action tracker from the previous meeting were accepted without amendment and no new interests relevant to the agenda were declared.

2. Performance Dashboard

- 2.1 The Board received an update on departmental performance and the DfE outcomes framework, noting updates on apprenticeships, school attendance, and T Levels
- 2.2 It was noted that performance delivery reporting was being simplified to ensure consistency across the Department and the centre of government.
- 2.3 The Board agreed that strategic priorities should be balanced against short-term, immediate priorities.

3. Spending Review Update

- 3.1 The Board agreed that the Department had secured a good outcome from the Spending Review, which would enable the delivery of the Department's strategic priorities.
- 3.2 The Board received an overview of the outcome of the Spending Review and the plans for its implementation.
- 3.3 The Board considered the departmental business plan and sought assurance that the right opportunities and challenges were being addressed in the planning process.
- 3.4 Board members agreed that it would remain important to deliver maximum value for money and that a three-year Spending Review settlement would give greater certainty to the education and care sectors.
- 3.5 The Board noted that the Department had been making a strong contribution to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) as it developed the Levelling Up White Paper.

4. Early Years

- 4.1 The Board noted updates on the findings of the Early Years and Childcare Review, including the on the implications of the rise in cost of living on childcare needs and that high quality early years education was critically important for children's long term educational outcomes.

- 4.2 Board members discussed the future workforce and the impact of the digital revolution in the context of early years market reform. Members agreed that the reforms should support education outcomes that ensure that children are educationally and socially ready for school.
- 4.3 Members noted that the needs of families differ across the economic and social spectrum. A clear understanding of which groups the reforms would benefit would influence the recommended market reforms.

5. Levelling Up

- 5.1 The Board was informed that the ambition of the Levelling Up White Paper would be to transform the country and support dynamic independent cities and regions with their own prosperous economies.
- 5.2 Members noted that the likely vision for Levelling Up would focus on productivity, leadership, place, and quality of life.
- 5.3 The Board also noted that the newly-established Future Skills Unit would develop a dynamic model of what the skills market looks like in the medium and long-term future.

6. AOB

Sub-committee update

- 6.1 The Board noted that the Department Group Accounts would be laid before Parliament in November 2021.
- 6.2 Board members received an update on departmental structural changes.