



Buckinghamshire County Council

Minutes

SCHOOLS FORUM

AGENDA ITEM: 2

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON TUESDAY 2 DECEMBER 2003 IN MAIN HALL 1, COACH HOUSE, GREEN PARK TRAINING CENTRE, COMMENCING AT 1.30PM AND CONCLUDING AT 3.00PM.

PRESENT

Headteachers	Tim Andrew Mike Barrie Derrick Fiske Tim Heaton Bob Milne Sue Tanner Graham Norris Kieran Salter Linda Melton	Chesham High School (Chairman) Heritage House School Bedgrove Junior School Grendon Underwood School Tylers Green Middle School Chalfonts Community College Weston Turville School (for Shela Rowan) Aston Clinton School The Wye Valley School
Governors	Ian Scoones Dominique Moat Richard Morris Jenny Wainwright Mark Scott Ted Brown Brian Smith Martin Ball Dennis Morse	Newtown Infant School (for Catherine Hinds) Wingrave Church of England Combined School Sir William Ramsay School The Misbourne School Claytons Combined School Sir William Borlase Grammar School John Colet School Hamilton Primary School Alfriston School
Representatives	Janet Riddington Colin Roberts	NUT NASUWT
Observer	Andy Croft	Learning and Skills Council
Officers	Alan Mander Sue Butt	Assistant Head of Finance, Schools Democratic Services Officer

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Christine Wilding, Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership; Catherine Hinds who was replaced by Ian Scoones (Newtown Infant School) for this meeting only and Shela Rowan who was replaced by Graham Norris (Weston Turville Schools) for this meeting only;

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2003, copies of which had been previously circulated, were agreed as a correct record.

3 MATTERS ARISING

A copy of the Financing Maintained Schools Consultation document was distributed to members of the Forum for information.

As requested by the Forum, a copy of the DfES Standards Fund 2004-05 guidance document was circulated for information.

Agenda Item: 5 Update from Consultation Group – Newly Qualified Teachers

A member of the Consultation Group raised a concern about the decision endorsed by the Forum at the last meeting on the allocation of funding for NQTs in September where some NQTs have started at schools in January and then transferred before September. Concern was expressed that schools would be taking on a bigger risk by employing an NQT from January rather than September, when the funding would be allocated.

The Assistant Head of Finance reported that out of 240 NQTs that started with the LEA last year, only two that started at schools in January had then transferred before September.

The Forum acknowledged the concern and the Assistant Head of Finance confirmed that sympathy would be taken with those schools where an NQT transferred to another school prior to funding allocation.

Agenda Item: 7 Schools Budget 2004/05 – Targeted Transitional Fund

The Assistant Head of Finance for Schools reported that the DfES require the Targeted Transitional Fund plan from the LEA by the end of December. It was suggested and the Forum AGREED that due to the short response time the plan would be circulated to Forum members for consultation electronically.

The Forum discussed the content of the plan on the Targeted Transitional Fund and the following points were noted:

- The LEA will now be encouraging Schools to compile their expenditure budget and submit projected deficit plans to the LEA by Easter 2004 to enable allocation of funds in May
- The deficit will be the projected accumulated deficit as at the end of 31 March 2005.
- A threshold on the size of the deficit budget to determine schools eligibility for transitional grants is to be determined by the LEA and will be a set amount or percentage, whichever is the greater.

The Forum discussed the robustness of using a projected deficit budget as at end of March 2005 where some members expressed concern that the projected deficit should be to end of March 2004. The Forum noted that the LEA would be able to monitor more effectively schools budgets and deficit budgets by using a projected deficit budget as at end of March 2005.

4 REPORT FROM THE FUNDING GROUP

A report from The Funding Group setting out the work of the group and the conclusions drawn on the distribution of any available new money was circulated to the Forum and presented by Funding Group member, Kieran Salter.

The Forum considered the findings and discussed the formal recommendations made by The Funding Group.

RESOLVED

The following resolution was proposed by Kieran Salter and seconded by Dominique Moat with a vote of 20 for and 0 against.

That:

- a) The Forum unanimously urges the County Council to honour its commitment to fund its schools at the level of full Formula Spending Share (FSS) in the coming financial year (2004/05).**

The following resolution was proposed by Kieran Salter and seconded by Janet Riddington with a vote of 20 for and 0 against.

That:

- b) The Forum unanimously recommends that the County Council combines all available new money, including the additional money resulting from getting to FSS (£2.6m) and available headroom from government, to distribute to schools in the ratios proposed.**

The following resolution was proposed by Kieran Salter and seconded by Jenny Wainwright with a vote of 20 for and 0 against.

That:

- c) The Forum unanimously recommends that providing there is at least £2m the County Council distributes the available new money according to the following ratios:**
 - i) £200,000 to a Special Needs Project with business plan and monitoring procedure in place**
 - ii) 7% of remaining new money to Special Schools Sector**
 - iii) All remaining new money to be distributed to mainstream schools in the ratio of 1:1:4:1:1 for Foundation: Key Stage 1:Key Stage 2: Key Stage 3: Key Stage 4 bearing in mind the number of year groups in each Key Stage in order to address the higher perceived needs in Key Stage 2**

The Forum concluded that if the available new money were less than £2m then there would be insufficient funds to allocate £200,000 to a Special Needs Project.

The Forum endorsed the commencement of the future work outlined at the end of the report and the Chairman requested that this be considered at the next meeting in January. Representatives from the Upper School sector requested that the work into the way in which funding is split within the secondary level sector commence as soon as possible.

5 CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Forum discussed and resolved its recommendations for County Council under agenda item 4.

6 ANY OTHER BUSINES

FASNA Conference

Martin Ball reported that he had recently attended a conference run by FASNA for Schools Forum members which had provided a useful insight into how other authorities were running their Forums. It was suggested that the Forum consider holding one meeting a year in the evenings. The Chairman asked the Forum to consider this when setting dates for future meetings.

SHA Training Courses

The Chairman circulated information he had received from SHA on forthcoming training courses for Schools Forum members.

7 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN (TO MARCH 2004)

Kieran Salter was proposed by Derek Fiske and seconded by Jenny Wainwright. No other nominations were received. Forum members voted unanimously to elect Kieran Salter to the chair by 20 for and 0 against.

KIERAN SALTER IN THE CHAIR

8 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS

The Forum requested that the next meeting and all future meetings be held at Green Park Training Centre, where possible.

- Tuesday 13 January 2004 at 2.00pm, Seminar Room 1, Green Park Training Centre, Aston Clinton (previously 1.30pm in Mezzanine 2, County Hall)

CHAIRMAN