

Minutes

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON TUESDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2015 IN KNIGHT HALL (MAIN ROOM 2), THE COACH HOUSE, GREEN PARK, ASTON CLINTON, COMMENCING AT 2.00 PM AND CONCLUDING AT 4.09 PM

PRESENT

Headteachers	Pete Rowe (Vice-Chairman) Debra Rutley Karen Collett David Hood Sue Stamp Alan Rosen Steven Sneesby Sue Skinner Andy Gillespie Katherine Douglas	Princes Risborough School Wycombe Grange PRU Haddenham St Mary's Church of England School Cressex Community School Long Crendon School Aylesbury High School Kite Ridge House PRU Bowerdean School Burnham Grammar School Brookmead School
Governors	Tessa Haddon (Chairman) Anthony Ogden Katy Simmons Gaynor Bull	Newton Longville Church of England Combined School Chesham Grammar School Cressex Community School Haddenham St Mary's Church of England School
Representative	Andrew Nobbs Fiona Brooks Michael Moore Wendy Terry	Ashmead School St Mary's Pre-School Catholic Diocese of Northampton Manor Farm Pre-School
In Attendance	Zahir Mohammed and Simon Rose	
Officers	John Huskinson, Emma Wilding, Atifa Sayani, Sharon Griffin, Simon Rose, Sandy Ayton, Sylvia Kershaw and Melanie Coyne	



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies for absence were received from Kevin Patrick, Angela Coneron, David Letheren and Jane Nicholls.

Sandra Skeggs substituted for Kevin Patrick and Keith Jones substituted for Angela Coneron.

Members were reminded if they were unable to attend a meeting a representative should be sent if possible.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

3 MINUTES

The minutes of meeting held on the 20 October were agreed as a correct record.

4 MATTERS ARISING

Elections were taking place for an Academy Representative and Junior School Head Teacher representative.

Discussions were taking place with the Legal department about the possibility of future elections taking place via email rather than hard copy.

5 SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF PAY INCREASE

Sandra Ayton, Senior Human Resources Officer and Sylvia Kershaw, Reward and Benefits Lead were welcomed to the meeting.

Members were advised that the consultation with Schools Forum has three elements:

- Annual percentage increase across all ranges from April 2016
- The new National Living Wage (NLW) from April 2016 of £7.20
- The withdrawal of the National Insurance rebate for employers and those employees in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) from April 2016

The current minimum hourly rate on Bucks Pay-Schools pay range is Range 1A £14,133 FTE per annum/ £7.33 per hour, which is above the NLW value for April 2016 (£7.20 per hour).

The impact on the current Bucks Pay-Schools pay ranges of the introduction of the NLW was discussed. It was agreed that the preferred approach was to retain A, to increase this in line with the NLW (from April 2017) and gradually decrease the ISN points within range 1B as they fall below the NLW, such as that R1B contracts, to a two point scale by

April 2020 (depending upon the value of the NLW at this time).

Members of Schools Forum:

VOTED IN FAVOUR of a 1% pay increase for all pay ranges in April 2016

6 SEN UPDATE INCLUDING SPECIAL SCHOOL FUNDING

Members were advised that a meeting had taken place with Special Schools Headteachers to look at funding requirements.

In light of the need for a 5 year SEND strategy to be written by summer 2016, it was agreed that it would be inappropriate at this point to move funding until the contents of the strategy was known. A decision about high needs funding was also awaited from the EfA.

The following questions were asked:

Who would be drafting the SEND strategy? Gill Shurrock will be establishing a project team which involves members of the special school heads group, stakeholders and parents. A SEND consultant will be appointed to lead the project. Consultation will also take place with members of Schools Forum.

It would be helpful to see the remit of the review for clarity i.e. is the question how much money is wanted to run the service or the number of models to run the service on or what the services would look like on local authority funding. Opportunity to contribute clarity of the expectation The context of possible future changes to funding would be included in the review.

Work on a previous review/project was stopped after a year. Would there be a review of the person leading this piece of work? The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills said he believed that the project being referred to was open ended and was stopped as it was found to be disproportionate in terms of finances. The proposed lead for the SEND strategy was very experienced and had undertaken similar pieces of work. Any concerns should be forwarded to him.

The budget envelope for the previous review was not managed carefully. There needs to be oversight of the work taking place. The Service Director for Learning Skills and Prevention advised that part of his role would be to oversee the review.

7 CONTINGENCY GROUP UPDATE (STANDING ITEM)

Anthony Ogden gave the following update:

The Contingency Group met on the 16 November.

Applications were received from 17 schools. Further information had been requested

from some schools as some of the applications were inadequate or unclear. On the basis of discussions, it was likely that the decision would be to give out £250,000 towards schools.

Unfortunately the group was not quorate as due to the retirement of the Schools Forum representative on group, the current membership consisted of two Governors. Ideally the Contingency group should include representation from a maintained secondary headteacher and primary headteacher.

Following discussions, David Hood and Katherine Douglas agreed to become members of the Contingency Group.

The Contingency Group would reconvene as soon as possible to discuss the applications received.

8 F40 UPDATE (STANDING ITEM)

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills advised the following:

The next meeting of the f40 group was taking place on 5 December 2015. Since the last meeting there had been a lot of activity behind the scenes which included a letter being sent to the Prime Minister about the fair school funding campaign. The response would be circulated to members of the Forum.

Action: Member Services Officer

The increase in the 2015/16 budget for education had been protected so far and would also be protected in 2016/17.

Buckinghamshire received an allocation from the extra £390m given to schools in a bid to make funding fairer nationwide. Some of the funding needed to be re-aligned.

Some of the lowest funded schools received an increase of 7% funding (from £4000 to £4300).

The Chancellor of the Exchequer is making an announcement about the Comprehensive Spending Review 2015 on the 25 November. The expectation was that the review would focus on Pupil Premium and other similar areas.

9 SCHOOLS FORUM FUNDING GROUP UPDATE (STANDING ITEM)

Modelling of the Formula changes

A lot of work had taken place at Schools Forum Funding meetings and Working Groups to look at if there was a need to change and consult about the changes to Fairer Funding for schools.

Modelling took place on the current formula with every factor pro rata to 98.5%. Modelling also took place in comparison with figures two years ago. Following discussions, a draft consultation document had been produced.

The consultation document included questions on:

1. Basic needs funding as % of total funding
2. Lump Sums
3. Free School Meals
4. IDACI
5. Prior Attainment
6. Other factors (including sparsity, EAL, LAC)
7. Minimum Funding Guarantee Protection and Capping

A general comments box would also be added to the document.

The aim was to launch the consultation at the beginning of December with a deadline for responses of the 18 December and a decision on the proposed Formula changes to be agreed at the Schools Forum meeting on the 8 January 2016.

Consultation would take place via Schools Forum, Schools Bulletin, Governor Times, BASH, Primary Executive Board and survey monkey.

The 2015/16 dataset Current Fairer Funding with 2 variances of capping and no capping would be circulated to members of Schools Forum.

Action: Emma Wilding/Melanie Coyne

Members of Schools Forum APPROVED the consultation document, subsequent to minor amendments.

Thanks were given to the officers for the work that had taken place to produce the funding models.

Capital Programme and funding from DSG

At the October meeting of Schools Forum, members were advised that following regulations changes in April 2013, it would be no longer possible to roll forward the DSG funding contribution of £3.8m.

The options presented for consideration were:

- No DSG contribution post 2016/17. The capital programme managed within the envelope available from Government funding and s106 or CIL with a strong risk that statutory demand for places will not be met. The capital programme would have to be managed accordingly and prioritised.
- Schools Forum agreed that BCC write to the Secretary of State for 'disapplication' to seek a continuation of capital contributions from DSG. Even if £3.8m was agreed, there would still be significant pressure on the capital programme; however it was not suggested that any figure higher than the current figure would be considered

Members of Schools Forum APPROVED the principle of funding being used for schools and not capital

Licences

In 2015/16 a budget of £250k was set to cover Licensing costs. However, after the budgets had been agreed, a further 4 licences were added to the statutory list giving an additional cost of £126k.

The EFA were asked to confirm if there would be further new licences added to the list. The response received was no new licences were expected although settlement had not been received as yet. The cost of the licences has been estimated and the budget set for 2016/17.

Growth Fund/Diseconomies Funding

There is a legal requirement for the local authority to fund any new school build. Following agreement at the last Schools Forum meeting, a working party had met to discuss the funding process. A series of caveats to the funding for Lace Hill had subsequently been put in place which included:

- looking in more detail at how the initial amount of funding was decided upon as well as staffing and pupil numbers.
- financial modelling and outcomes would be reported twice a year to the local authority for review (at the end of the financial year and the academic year).
- A surplus could be taken forward. The amount of surplus would be premised on yearly spend. If the balance was felt to be excessive, the Local Authority would have the right to claw back the balance.

Members of the Forum AGREED a surplus balance of 5% could be carried forward.

Contingency for Deficits

A model was produced sharing the 618k on an equal basis between lump sum and AWPU.

Option 1 lump sum tended to favour primary schools whereas option 2 APWU tended to favour secondary schools; option 3 was a 50% split which would be the best compromise.

Members of Schools Forum AGREED with Option 3, a 50% split.

Surplus Balances

Debra Rutley, Headteacher, Aspire attended a meeting of Schools Forum Funding Group to clarify the surplus position of the Aspire Group/PRU at the end of March 2015.

Following discussions, the surplus balance was found to be within tolerance levels.

Members of the Schools Forum AGREED that Aspire should be treated as other maintained schools in respect to a surplus balance. Any surplus balance over 15% would be reported to EfA and monitored appropriately.

Central Costs

Schools Forum approval was required on a line by line basis of Central Costs.

Modelling of the figures had taken place based on 95% (5% is to be removed from early years and central schools areas.).

A fundamental review of Central Costs would take place in 2017/18.

Business cases about the 5% reductions in central costs will be reviewed at Schools Forum Funding group in December.

10 FORWARD PLAN (STANDING ITEM)

Members of Schools Forum noted the Forward Plan.

11 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

No items were raised.

12 DATE OF NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting will take place on Friday 8 January 2016, **9.30am**, Green Park, Aston Clinton.

Future meeting dates

19 January	21 June
15 March	27 September
3 May	29 November

CHAIRMAN