

Minutes

SCHOOLS FORUM

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON TUESDAY 3 MAY 2016
IN KNIGHT HALL (MAIN ROOM 2), THE COACH HOUSE, GREEN PARK, ASTON
CLINTON, COMMENCING AT 2.00 PM AND CONCLUDING AT 3.15 PM**

PRESENT

Headteachers	Mr P Rowe (Vice-Chairman)	Princes Risborough School
	Mrs D Rutley	Wycombe Grange PRU
	Karen Collett	Haddenham St Mary's Church of England School
	Susan Hartley	Spinfield School
	Ms O Davison-Oakley	Seer Green Church of England School
	Ms S Stamp	Long Crendon School
	Mr A Rosen	Aylesbury High School
	Mr S Sneesby	Kite Ridge House PRU
	Mr K Patrick	Chiltern Hills Academy
	Mr A Gillespie	Burnham Grammar School
Governors	Miss K Douglas	Brookmead School
	Mr O Lloyd	Iver Heath Junior School
	Mr D Letheren	Wycombe High School
	Mr A Ogden	Chesham Grammar School
	Dr K Simmons	Cressex Community School
Representative	Mrs G Bull	Haddenham St Mary's Church of England School
	Fiona Brooks	St Mary's Pre-School
	Mr M Moore	Catholic Diocese of Northampton
Officers	Ms W Terry	Manor Farm Pre-School
	Mr J Huskinson, Ms E Wilding, Ms A Sayani and Ms S Griffin	



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



1 ELECTION OF INTERIM CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Mr P Rowe (Headteacher at Princes Risborough School) be appointed Interim Chairman of Schools Forum until the formal elections for Chairman and Vice Chairman at the meeting on the 27 September 2016.

It was agreed that nominations for the permanent positions of Chairman and Vice Chairman would be sought and agreed prior to, rather than during the meeting in September.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies for absence were received from Mr D Hood, Mr S Kearey, Mrs A Coneron, Mr A Nobbs, Mrs C Glasgow, Mrs J Nicholls, Cllr Z Mohammed and Mr N Wilson.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

4 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 15 March 2016 were confirmed as a correct record subsequent to the following minor amendments:

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The deletion of the following duplicate paragraph:

Concern was expressed about the impact of the £70k reduction for School Meals and Participation Worker. Mrs Wilding reported that funding was not required as schools meals were no longer an in-house provision and that the funding source for the Participation Worker had changed, although this work was still taking place.

Page 8

Amendment to the national average percentage as follows:

Members were advised that apart from 2 Greater London Authorities, the percentage of pupils with a Statement of SEN or Education Health Care Plan was never less than 1% and that this figure was 3.28% in Bucks compared to the national average of **2.8%**.

Page 11

The following paragraph moved from page 11 and inserted after the point b) on page 10 'that insufficient free reserves and balances are able to cover these costs'.

Members of Schools Forum were asked for guidance on dealing with applications for additional schools numbers etc.

Page 12 – 6th bullet point

The correction of the spelling of the word difficulty

What the best way of addressing the issue of schools in **difficulty** would be

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The insertion of the paragraph:

The following four members of Schools Forum agreed to act as an Appeal Panel to discuss any applications that had been declined by the Contingency Panel: Mr N Wilson, Mrs T Haddon, Mr A Nobbs, Mrs G Bull.

Deletion of the Action: An appeal process would be discussed and an update given at the next meeting of Schools Forum.

Addition of the Actions:

The appeal process used by other local authorities would be looked into – Director of Education.

The Terms of Reference for the Contingency Panel would be updated accordingly to reflect any changes to the appeal process – Member Services Officer.

5 MATTERS ARISING

Electronic Election Process for Schools Forum representatives

Members discussed the document included in the agenda pack which gave details of the election process for Schools Forum representatives.

Members of Schools Forum AGREED with the use of an electronic election process subsequent to the following amendments:

- The officer name should to be amended to Clerk to Schools Forum.
- The inclusion of the clarification of the maximum number of words for the personal statement.
- Legal clarification of whether the election process needed to be carried out by post as well as electronically to take into account the possibility that a candidate did not have internet access.
- Point 2 (a) Nominations to be amended to – ‘any governor or **head** may nominate himself/herself as a candidate for election’.
- Point 3 (a) Voting - to be amended to ‘if **only** one nomination is received, the candidate will be automatically elected’.

6 SCHOOLS FORUM FUNDING GROUP UPDATE

Mr P Rowe gave an update on items discussed at the Schools Forum Funding Group meeting which took place on the 22 April 2016. The draft minutes are attached for information.

ACTIONS:

- **The current and revised versions of the Financial Scheme of Delegation and an overview of the major changes would be presented to Members of Schools Forum- Mrs E Wilding.**
- **The f40 group would be contacted to clarify their response to the next stage of the Fair Funding consultation – Mrs E Wilding**
- **Further legal advice would be sought on the clarification of the terminology used in the Terms of Reference–Service Director Education.**
- **A timeline for consultations and recommendations to be undertaken by Schools Forum would be compiled – Mr J Huskinson**
- **Legal clarification would be obtained of the proposed changes to the Constitution – Member Services Officer.**

7 NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY DISCUSSION

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

8 HISTORIC COMMITMENTS RETURN

Mrs E Wilding explained that Central Government wanted to create a new central schools block which would bring together two existing funding streams through which local authorities receive funding for their responsibilities:

- centrally retained Dedicated Schools Grant
- retained duties Education Services Grant

Members were advised that the proposal was to distribute funding using a simple per pupil formula. Local authorities had been asked to submit a return detailing their historic commitments by 27 May 2016.

Members heard that there were historic commitments still in place in some areas such as:

- the 5 year contract with Bucks Learning Trust as funding had been agreed prior to April 2013
- Schools PRC which was an ongoing national issue.
- The capital bid to expand Bierton School was committed to in 2012 but had been put on hold due to land issues and currently parking/council issues due to local opposition.
- The agreement by Schools Forum that 2016-17 was the last year that the £3.3m contribution to capital would be made which would be spread over two years £1.65m in 2016-17 and £1.65m in 2017-18

Members were advised that Mr A Johnson, 14-19 Commissioner, had presented a report at the last meeting of Schools Forum Funding Group explaining that the funding for Practical Learning Opportunities and 14-19 Commissioning dated back to April 2010

when the following two statutory duties transferred from the Learning and Skills Council to Local Authorities:

- To secure enough suitable education and training to meet the reasonable needs of young people who are over compulsory school age but under 19, and those aged 19-25 and are subject to learning difficulty assessment (LLDD).
- To encourage, enable or assist young people's participation in education or training.

Mr Johnson had also advised SFFG members that there were the historic commitments of the School Engagement Programme: Increasing Flexibility Programme: Parents and Carers Events to promote post-16 options: and the Raising of the Participation Age and Work Related Learning and that with the exception of the Work Related Learning, all of the above commitments were committed prior to 2013. Mr Johnson said it was felt that these budgets needed to be retained as without this funding many learners from disadvantaged backgrounds would be disadvantaged even further.

ACTION:

Clarification of the services provided by Bucks Learning Trust would be given at the September meeting of Schools Forum – Mr Huskinson

Members of Schools Forum AGREED with the retention of the budget for Historical Commitments.

9 F40 UPDATE

Members were advised that there had not been a meeting of the f40 group since the March meeting of Schools Forum.

10 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

No items of urgent business were raised.

11 DATE OF NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 21 June 2016, 2pm, The Knight Room, The Coach House, Green Park, Aston Clinton.

Future meeting dates for 2016:

27 September

29 December

CHAIRMAN

Schools Forum Funding Group Meeting

22 April 2016, The Outen Room, Green Park, Aston Clinton

Meeting opened: 9.30am

Meeting closed: 11.30am

Present

Members

Pete Rowe, Tessa Haddon, Alan Rosen, Michael Moore, Steven Sneesby, Wendy Terry, Sue Stamp.

Substitutes

Jenny Clarkin (Early Years)

Officers

John Huskinson, Nick Wilson, Emma Wilding, Adam Johnson, Jane Nicholls

1. Apologies for Absence/ Changes in Membership

Apologies were received from Wendy Terry.

2. Declarations of Interest

None

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on the 11 January 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising

None

5. Early Years 30 Hour Consultation

Members were referred to the report circulated at the meeting which gave a summary of the key information/changes to Capital Bids, Cutting Red Tape and 30 hour free Childcare entitlement.

The report advises that following the Childcare Act 2016 receiving Royal Assent, the Government announced on the 4 April 2016:

- A consultation on the proposed Code of Practice for 30 hours extended entitlement
- An opportunity for local authorities to bid for capital to support expansion for 30 hours by 29 April 2016. This would initially be the submission of an expression of interest for a share of the £50m capital for expansion.
- A review of cutting red tape for the sector (comments submitted can be viewed online - <https://cutting-red-tape.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/childcare/>)

During discussions, the following was noted:

- Some providers were refusing to take children who were eligible for Pupil Premium. This issue had been taken up with Government.
- A survey took place with 125 providers of which one third said they would not be engaging in the 30 hour scheme.
- The DfE had not increased the Early Years settlement for EY Block for 7 years.

- The announcement that the national average rates for three and four-year-olds would increase by 30p per hour (the rate for Buckinghamshire was currently £4.10). Even if the local authority received this increase, the funding would still not be enough to cover what it was supposed to.
- 400k DSG central retained Early Years income would be used to provide grants to providers for place development/quality improvement and sustainability. A further £250k would be used to support qualifications and recruitment.

In response to questions raised the following was noted:

- The expectation was that within the proposed funding there would be restrictions around central spend and that the consultation would also cover free school meals.
- The local authority was given trajectory revenue money when the Early Years market was developed 2 years ago but there was no indication similar funding would be made available for expansion to 30 hours.
- The focus of the Early Years 30 hour expansion is on getting families back into work rather than taking up childcare.
- At the BCC One Council Board (OCB) a colleague raised the question about the change in benefits and the consultation being an economic model.
- Government is reviewing the funding formula for the allocation of Early Years funding to local authorities.

Following discussion about the expansion of nursery provision at One Council Board (OCB) on 20 April 2016 the following agreement had been reached:

The local authority would submit an expression of interest for capital
Priorities would be:

- All eligible children to receive 15 hours free education
- Eligible 2 year olds
- 30 hours

The above three priorities received unanimous support from Schools Forum Funding Group.

6. Smaller Schools (shared services packages for bursars and headteachers)

At a previous meeting of Schools Forum, the question was asked why small schools were charged less for some services as there was some feeling that small schools are adequately taken care of through the schools funding formula and therefore should not be subject to special treatment.

Members of Schools Forum Funding Group said that all Bucks Services should be made aware that they would need a robust agreement to justify any differences in charges between sectors, phases or size of school.

7. Financial Scheme of Delegation

Members were advised that the document explained the financial relationship between the local authority and maintained schools in terms of financial controls, treatment of surplus and deficit balances, insurance and repairs and maintenance etc.

Updating the document was a lengthy process which involved different service areas of the County Council. The revised document would include information from the DfE document as well as take into the old document into account.

The current and revised versions of the document and an overview of the major changes would be circulated to Members of Schools Forum.

ACTION: Emma Wilding

8. Contingency Group update

There was no update as the Contingency Group had not met since the March meeting of Schools Forum. The next meeting was in June.

Discussions with other local authorities to clarify the process they had in place for Contingency showed a mixed picture; some did not have a process in place at all, in some local authorities senior officers made decisions about Contingency, other local authorities had the same process in place as Buckinghamshire.

Further legal advice was being sought on the clarification of the terminology used in the Terms of Reference. ACTION: Service Director Education

9. Historic Commitments

Members were advised that Central Government wanted to create a new central schools block which would bring together two existing funding streams through which local authorities receive funding for their responsibilities:

- centrally retained Dedicated Schools Grant
- retained duties Education Services Grant

The proposal was to distribute funding using a simple per pupil formula. Local authorities had been asked to submit a return detailing their historic commitments by 27 May 2016.

Funding for Practical Learning Opportunities and 14-19 Commissioning dated back to April 2010 when the following two statutory duties transferred from the Learning and Skills Council to Local Authorities:

- To secure enough suitable education and training to meet the reasonable needs of young people who are over compulsory school age but under 19, and those aged 19-25 and are subject to learning difficulty assessment (LLDD).
- To encourage, enable or assist young people's participation in education or training.

There were also the historic commitments of the School Engagement Programme, Increasing Flexibility Programme, Parents and Carers Events to promote post-16 options and the Raising of the Participation Age and Work Related Learning.

With the exception of the Work Related Learning, all of the above commitments were committed prior to 2013. It was felt that these budgets needed to be retained as without this funding many learners from disadvantaged backgrounds would be disadvantaged even further.

In discussion, the following points were raised.

- A Service Level Agreement was in place until the end of 2017/18 which would help to provide evidence of historic commitment and that the money was well spent.
- In terms of the evidence of the impact of the programmes, data could be provided about which programme an individual pupil had been on and their outcome.
- A 5 year contract was in place with Bucks Learning Trust.
- Some historic costs such as Schools PRC were an ongoing national issue
- School transport was not included in historic costs as this was driven by activity in schools.
- The capital bid to expand Berton School was committed to in 2012 but had been put on hold due to land issues.
- **The f40 group would be contacted to clarify their response to the next stage of the Fair Funding consultation. ACTION: Emma Wilding**

Members of Schools Forum Funding Group were in AGREEMENT of retaining the budget for Historical Commitments. Ratification would be requested at the May meeting of Schools Forum.

10. Protocols for non-member involvement

A discussion took place on the guidelines for when a non-member of Schools Forum could speak at a Schools Forum meeting, proxy votes and the circulation of correspondence from members of the public.

Members of the Funding Group were referred to the following sections of the Constitution:

6.6

'All Members have the right to speak at meetings the Forum and the following persons may also speak, even though they are not members;

- (a) The Director of Children's Services for BCC, or a designated representative;
- (b) The Chief Finance officer for BCC or a designated representative;
- (c) Any elected member of BCC with primary responsibility for children's services or education;
- (d) Any elected member of BCC with primary responsibility for BCC's resources;
- (e) Any person who is invited by the Forum to attend in order to provide financial or technical advice to the forum;
- (f) An observer appointed by the Secretary of State; and
- (g) Any person presenting a paper or other item to the Forum that is on the meeting's agenda, but that person's right to speak shall be limited to matters related to the item that the person is presenting.
- (h) Any other person with the permission of the Chair, at the Chair's discretion, (or the Vice Chair in the Chair's absence.)

7 Alternates / Substitutes

7.1 Any Member of the Forum may nominate an alternate member ('the Alternate Member') to attend meetings of the Forum in his or her absence.

7.2 Where a Member has nominated an Alternate Member, the Alternative Member may attend and vote in place of the Member. A Member may only

- nominate an Alternate Member who would himself or herself be eligible to be appointed or elected to the Forum under the same category as the Member.
- 7.3 The name of the Alternate Member must be notified to the Secretary of the Forum at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting in question where possible.

11 Voting

11.2 *'Any formal recommendations made to BCC shall be determined by a majority of the votes of Members present at a meeting of the Forum and not by sub-groups'.*

During discussions it was also noted that Members have the responsibility to declare any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests which relate to an agenda item being discussed during a meeting.

11. Timelines for consultations and recommendations to the County Councils for Schools Funding

A timeline for consultations and recommendations would be compiled.

ACTION: John Huskinson

12. Any Other Business

SEND Review

Members were advised that work was currently underway to narrow the scope of the SEND review. An update would be given to Members of Schools Forum at a future meeting.

Pupil Premium

Members were advised that there was a separate ringfenced pot of money for schools that convert to an academy status with a pupil premium deficit and that the guidance from the DfE was that pupil premium could be carried forward.

Members were also advised it was a statutory requirement for schools to post a detailed analysis of pupil premium spend on their website.

Members of Schools Forum Funding Group AGREED with the introduction of a local rule (or obtaining EFA approval) to say that the assumption is that all pupil premium is spent in the year received (or within 1 term) unless agreed otherwise with Schools Forum to prevent deficit manipulation due to claimed pupil premium unspent balances.

13. Date of the Next Meeting

27 May 2016, 9.30am, Green Park, Aston Clinton

