

Minutes

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON TUESDAY 21 MARCH 2017 IN KNIGHT HALL, GREEN PARK, ASTON CLINTON, COMMENCING AT 1.30 PM AND CONCLUDING AT 3.40 PM

PRESENT

Headteachers	Mr P Rowe (Chairman) Mrs D Rutley Mr D Hood Mr A Rosen Ms S Skinner Mr A Gillespie Miss K Douglas Mr O Lloyd Ms J Freeman Ms K Tamlyn Mrs K Duckworth	Princes Risborough School Wycombe Grange PRU Cressex Community School Aylesbury High School Bowerdean School Burnham Grammar School Brookmead School Iver Heath Junior School King's Wood School & Nursery Cheddington Combined School Padbury CE School
Governors	Dr K Simmons Mrs G Bull	Cressex Community School Haddenham St Mary's Church of England School
Representative	Mr A Nobbs Mr P Ward Fiona Brooks Ms C Glasgow Mr M Moore Ms L Grexhammer	Ashmead School Chilternway Academy St Mary's Pre-School NASUWT Catholic Diocese of Northampton Bucks NUT
In Attendance	Mr Z Mohammed (Bucks County Council)	
Officers	Mr J Huskinson, Ms A Sayani, Carter, Mr N Wilson, Try, Ms R Bennett, Ms S Callaghan and Ms A Mapplethorpe	

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies had been received from Angela Coneron, Wendy Terry, Karen Collett, Kevin Patrick and Steven Sneesby.

During the meeting Mr Wilson introduced the new Director of Education Mrs Sarah Callaghan.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 JANUARY 2017

The following amendments and comments to the notes of the meeting held on 17 January 2017 were highlighted:

Attendees

Gaynor Bull was present at the meeting.

Growth Fund

The Growth Fund sub group meeting had taken place.

NFF Consultation

The group discussed the timings of the response to the NFF and High Needs Funding Consultation and members of the group were unhappy that the meeting in 31 January, where the consultation responses were going to be discussed, was cancelled. It was confirmed that the consultation was discussed at various liaison groups including BASH, PEB and the Chairs and Head teachers meeting and that some responses had been made directly to Government rather than via the BCC consultation survey.

The group discussed the process that had taken place when cancelling the meeting on 31 January and the need to check the Schools Forum Constitution to see what constituted Chairs action. Mr Rowe apologised for the lack of clarity over the cancellation of the meeting.

ACTION: Ms Bennett and Mr Rowe

BASL Funding

Mrs Sayani updated the Forum in relation to BASL and Teaching Talent (TSAN) Activity funding. It was confirmed that there would be cuts in both areas as below:

	16/17	17/18
BASL	55,000	30,000
TSAN	60,000	55,000

Early Years Funding Formula

The Forum received an update report on the decision regarding Early Years funding formula and a copy of the completed Equalities Impact Assessment.

New Delegations

It was agreed at the previous meeting that a de-delegation working group would be arranged with maintained school representation which took place. It was noted that after the meeting Mr Hood agreed to be part of the working group but had not been included in the meeting that took place with the primary sector, although had corresponded regularly with Mr Huskinson. Mr Huskinson responded that this was an unfortunate cross over of communication and that Mr Hood would be included in any meetings going forward.

It was also noted that the voting numbers for De-delegation appeared incorrect and did not add up to 7. The voting numbers would be checked.

ACTION: Ms Bennett

Contingency Fund

It was agreed that it was omitted from the previous notes the agreement that the Secondary representative agreed the secondary de-delegation figure would be changed to £12.50 with the Primary figure to remain at £10.

4 MATTERS ARISING

Information items regarding Early Year Funding were attached.

5 SCHOOL CONTINGENCY FUND TERMS OF REFERENCE

Mrs J Try presented an update report to the Forum outlining the changes to the Contingency Fund Terms of Reference. The main changes to the terms of reference were highlighted as:

- Moving from four meetings a year to one in order to make the process fairer as all bids would then be considered at the same time
- The meeting would be held in March with all bids expected a minimum of four weeks prior
- There would be no appeals process

The Forum discussed the need for an appeals process. It was confirmed that this would be escalated to the Local Authority and would follow the Bucks Complaints procedure. The Forum requested that wording to be added to the terms of reference to that affect and for the wording to be checked with Legal.

ACTION: Mr Rowe and Ms Bennett

RESOLVED: With the changes stated above the Forum AGREED the Contingency Fund Terms of Reference.

6 GROWTH FUND START UP - GREEN RIDGE ACADEMY

Mr J Carter presented the report outlining the start-up grant and Diseconomies for Green Ridge Academy (Reach2).

The Forum were asked to formalise the agreement of £175k towards the pre-opening costs and delegate responsibility to the Start-up/Diseconomies Panel to enable the funding for diseconomies to be agreed in time.

Currently Reach2 were asking for formula funding based on agreed class sizes; however this could not be calculated at this point in time as were not able to predict the future take up, there would also be a one off £100k to meet costs while pupil numbers grow.

If delegated, the panel would scrutinise the details of the proposals and agree a final figure. The Forum discussed the need for a limit to be set for the panel to work with.

The Forum agreed that the Start Up Fund process needed to be reviewed and lessons learnt created. This was to include setting boundaries and delegation. It was discussed that there may be a common approach applied nationally that could be adopted locally. Mr Huskinson agreed to contact the LGA to inquire.

ACTION: Mr Huskinson

The Forum agreed the £175k start-up funding and Mr Carter agreed to follow with all members of the Forum offline in order to agree an amount that the panel could work with when they meet with Reach2 on Thursday 30 March.

ACTION: Mr Carter

7 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT UPDATE

Mrs Sayani advised that the County Council had been invited to a meeting with the DfE to discuss the School Improvement Grant, which would be £140m nationally. The DfE invited comments on how these funds would be distributed.

The DfE were devising clear criteria on what could be applied for and how. A consultation would then go out to all schools for input. The grant is due to be available from the beginning of September 2017.

8 F40 UPDATE AND NFF AND HIGH NEEDS FUNDING CONSULTATION

Mr Z Mohammed attended the meeting to provide an update on F40. A meeting had been held of the F40 where the responses on the NFF consultation were discussed. Following on from this meeting a F40 response to the Prime Minister had been written and signed by all members of F40, including the County Council and a copy of the letter was shared with Forum members.

Mr Mohammed advised that although he was in general agreement with the F40

response he did express some areas of concern including the use of the phase double funding and the weighting around additional needs.

Mr Mohammed confirmed that 85% of schools in Buckinghamshire would gain funding with 15% losing and there was obviously concern regarding this. The Forum discussed the perception of the 'winners and losers' of the funding and agreed their concerns laid purely within Bucks and not the comparison to other areas.

The Forum discussed where the 15% of those losing were and referred back to the Strategic Objective set to close the gap in all areas. Mr Rowe confirmed that the Government refuse to accept that there was a real crisis with funding and that even though more money was being put into Schools, this was not keeping pace with increased numbers in schools, nor did it acknowledge the extra expenditure on pensions, NI and the Apprenticeship levy.

The Forum agreed that more schools in Buckinghamshire needed to respond to the consultation and members of the Forum agreed to email colleagues that evening to encourage them to respond by the closing date 22 March 2017. It was also mentioned that schools should get their unique positions over in their responses rather than stock responses.

Mr Rowe discussed an issue raised that Schools Forum information was not disseminated to the primary sector as easily as secondary. Mr Rowe confirmed that he had spoken to the County Council's Schools Liaison Officers and information from Schools Forum would go on the Primary liaison agendas, it was recommended that members on liaison groups ensured this was happening.

Mr Rowe also updated the Forum of a letter written by a number of Head Teachers which would be going to local MPs and as well as schools to pass on to parents, explaining the current funding issues faced by schools. The final version of the letter was due to be circulated to Schools on 22 March and sent to parents by the end of the week where possible.

9 DE-DELEGATION CONSULTATION

Mrs Try presented the report that set out the results of the de-delegation consultation. The following points were highlighted

- There had been 28 responses to the consultation including 22 Primary schools out of 164, 5 responses from 4 Secondary Schools out of 7, and 1 response for 2 Special schools out of 8.
- Following some changes the requested amount from mainstream schools had dropped from £18.00 to £11.75 and from £72 to £19 per place for Special Schools and PRUs
- Some rates had also been revised since the consultation as outlined in the report
- Confirmation that primary and secondary cannot vote separately

The forum had the following discussions:

- Additional school improvement was still a large proportion of the £11.75 which resulted in the secondaries subsidising the primaries. None of the secondaries recognised or would use the service as described in the consultation
- A meeting had been held with BLT to begin discussions with stakeholder groups regarding commissioning. It was confirmed that the LA was committed and obligated to use the BLT until the end of their contract in 2018. The Forum discussed the need to re-scope the relationship with the BLT
- Mr Wilson confirmed that there had been £1m council tax money left in budget for school improvement and that he was unaware of any other authority that had invested such an amount, which reflected a positive approach by the LA. It was felt that the voting wasn't made clear and not enough time and information was given to those completing the consultation feedback

Mr Rowe suggested that over the next year each of the elements be looked at in more detail and where there was disagreement, options would be looked at and a further consultation could then take place.

Mr Huskinson agreed to send an explanation to those schools that were affected and to arrange a meeting between the maintained schools and the BLT to start to discuss options going forward. All maintained schools at the Forum confirmed that they wanted to be invited to the meeting.

ACTION: Mr Huskinson

An update report would be brought to the next Schools Forum on 16 May 2017; this would include recommendations for the members to vote on.

10 AOB

No other business was discussed.

11 DATE OF NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS

The next Schools Forum will be held on 16 May 2017, Knight Hall, Green Park, Aston Clinton, starting at 1.30pm.

CHAIRMAN