

Minutes

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON TUESDAY 12 JUNE 2018 IN GREEN PARK, DARKE HALL, COMMENCING AT 2.00 PM AND CONCLUDING AT 4.55 PM

PRESENT

Headteachers	Mr P Rowe (Chairman)	Princes Risborough School
	Mrs D Rutley	Wycombe Grange PRU
	Mr D Hood	Cressex Community School
	Mr A Rosen	Aylesbury High School
	Mr S Sneesby	Kite Ridge House PRU
	Mr K Patrick	Chiltern Hills Academy
	Ms K Tamlyn	Cheddington Combined School
	Governors	Dr K Simmons
Mr A Nobbs		Ashmead School
Mr P Ward		Chilternway Academy
Representative	Fahey	Brindley House School

In Attendance

Officers Mr J Hickson, Ms J Nicholls, Carter, Miss S Callaghan, Despina, Ms S Harlock and Mrs M Stanford

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

The Chairman welcomed the members or the forum, press and public to the meeting.

Apologies were received:

- Mr A Wanford
- Mr G Drawner
- Mr A Gillespie
- Mr S Kearey
- Mrs G Bull
- Mr O Lloyd
- Mrs S Fahey
- Mrs A Coneron
- Mrs J Antrobus

Changes in membership for Schools Forum were to be discussed according to percentages. This was to ensure that all areas were represented. A report is due to come back to the next meeting

Action: Ms Archak

Mr P Ward, representative from Chilternway Academy advised that the meeting was his last as he was resigning as a governor after 40 years. The forum thanked Mr Ward for his contribution made.

Going forward Ms E Williams, would be taking over from Mr J Hickson as Finance Director for Children's Services.

1A ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following items were discussed:

- The Chairman advised that in the future any cancellations of meetings would be opened up to the forum for discussion/agreement.
- It was requested that clarity be sought on what the Schools Forum meetings were to be used for in the context of the National Funding Formula for schools and the future role of Schools Forum.

ACTION: Ms E Williams

- A virtual meeting of Schools Forum Finance Group (SFFG) was requested to discuss the charging discrepancies on the Outdoor Education Advice Service with report back to the next Schools Forum on the actions taken.

ACTION: Mr Hickson

- The Chairman advised that he would be stepping down as the Chairman of the Schools Forum, and this would be with immediate effect. He thanked the forum for all their support through his term. Mr Hickson thanked Mr P Rowe on behalf of the Council for his contribution to the forum and wished him well.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on the 16 January 2018 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

4 OUTTURN AND DSG BALANCE

Mr J Hickson, Finance Director for Education, presented the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Outturn Report.

The following points were raised and discussed:

- There was a typographical error in item 3.4 (i) with the amount of £1.3k. It should have read £1.3 million.
- The level of DSG reserve was questioned as to how big they should be. It was agreed that a benchmarking exercise would be completed to compare with other authorities.
- A member of the forum raised a question about the wording of item 3.2 (iii) which Mr Hickson agreed to re-word.

ACTION: Mr Hickson

The Chairman thanked Mr Hickson for his report

5 AUDIT COMBINED REPORT

Mrs S Harlock, Audit Manager and Mrs MA Stanford, Senior Auditor from Buckinghamshire County Council presented their report.

The following points were raised and discussed:

- The Audit team were compiling terms of reference with their internal teams and schools. Auditors would visit selected schools for three days, gather findings and share the recommendations report with the school.
- The forum requested a summary of the audit report to be shared.

ACTION: Mrs Harlock

- Schools were revisited after a year to monitor any changes and improvements made.

ACTION: Mrs Harlock

A member of the forum made the following observation:

- In the SVF Accounts Income section, trips for the smaller rural and urban secondary schools proved to be an inconvenience in sending through invoices for every small amount all the time. Mrs Harlock advised that the benefits of the audit trail were to demonstrate the control of the processes. The audit trail actions were different for different schools.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Harlock and Mrs Stanford for their report.

6 CONTINGENCY GROUP UPDATE

Mr D Hood, Cressex Community School, presented the outcome of the Contingency Panel meetings held in 2017-18.

The following points were raised:

- At the meeting held in June 2017, it was decided that all schools who met the criteria received funding.
- All schools were invited to apply for contingency funding and an appeal process was in place if required
- It was confirmed that the fund was only available for maintained schools, not academies. Academies were encouraged to contact the DfE.
- Schools were dealt with on a case by case basis and there were restrictions to what could be done due to limited criteria that could be applied.
- Requests for support with high needs funding could be considered by the Council but not as part of the contingency panel process
- The next group meeting would be held in March 2019.

7 SCHOOL BALANCES REPORT

Mr J Carter, Management Accountant, Buckinghamshire County Council, presented the report.

The following items were discussed:

- The revenue balances for maintained schools were now at £10.9million at the end of 2017-18.
- The insights into academy budgets were now available for the general public to view online. All academy accounts were available online which offered a high level of transparency. The forum would see if they could benchmark the financial position of maintained schools versus academies.

ACTION: Ms E Williams

- A dedicated team had been set up to support maintained schools that were in need of financial help
- It was agreed by the Schools Forum that schools that have excessive surplus balances would be required to report to Schools Forum on an annual basis

ACTION: Mr Carter

- A discussion took place on pooling all the resources across the schools.
- It was explained that if a school had a surplus and they became an academy, the school would take their surplus with them.
- Mr Carter agreed to develop a process, within the scheme for funding schools, of clawback for excessive balances. A report would be brought to the next forum meeting.

ACTION: Mr Carter

An update on Mandeville School was given by Mr J Hickson. The following points were discussed:

- The school's deficit at the end of 2017-18 was £790,000. The issue around turning Mandeville School into an academy was still at hand.

There was an earmarked reserve of £900,000 for The Mandeville School from 2016-17 set aside.

8 INCLUSION AND STRANDS: QUARTERLY

Ms S Callaghan, Director of Education, gave a presentation to forum members.

The following points were raised and discussed:

- Ms Callaghan suggested the forum consider how it would address budget pressures and meet the objectives of The Education and Skills Strategy to support the most vulnerable children by looking at all resources available across the different schools and contracts.
- A member advised instead of creating a new group that this task group be added to the Inclusion Hub.
- The Chairman advised that the forum's focus was on budgets and funding as well as where they could make a saving and where the funding was being spent on.
- There was no news on the PEN site application for a Free School.
- The next round of applications had not yet started

The Chairman thanked Ms Callaghan for her detailed report.

9 EXCLUSIONS: FEEDBACK FROM FUNDING GROUP

Mr A Rosen, Aylesbury High School, updated the forum on the meeting of the Schools Forum Funding Group on 2 March 2018.

Mr Rosen stated that the group had discussed the issues around the financial values the receiving school was getting against the work entailed both for Permanent Exclusions and Managed Moves. If the Exclusions money per pupil went up in value to £3000, then managed moves would also need to rise, to avoid perverse disincentives and recognise similar work. Mr Hickson agreed to continue looking at funding and report back to the forum.

ACTION: Mr Hickson

At its meeting on 16 January 2018, Schools Forum agreed to delegate to the Schools Forum Funding Sub Group, a review of the current local agreement for Charges for Permanently Excluded Pupils and to consider the options.

10 THERAPIES CONTRACT DEVELOPMENTS

Mrs M Gasper, Head of Service, CYP Therapies, briefed the forum on her presentation.

There would be a Stakeholder's Group, with a schools' focused session held on the 12 July 2018. This would be open to the public and all were invited.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Gasper for her presentation.

11 SCHOOLS FORUM FUNDING GROUP UPDATE

See point 9

12 DATE OF NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting would be held on the 25 September 2018 at Green Park.

CHAIRMAN

