

Minutes

SCHOOLS FORUM

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON TUESDAY 25
SEPTEMBER 2018 IN KNIGHT HALL, GREEN PARK.**

PRESENT

Headteachers

Mr A Wanford	Green Ridge Academy
Mr A Rosen	Aylesbury High School
Mr S Sneesby	Kite Ridge House PRU
Ms S Skinner	Bowerdean School
Mr K Patrick	Chiltern Hills Academy
Mr A Gillespie	Burnham Grammar School
Mr O Lloyd	Iver Heath Junior School
Ms J Freeman	King's Wood School & Nursery
Ms K Tamlyn	Cheddington Combined School
Dr K Simmons	Cressex Community School
Ms C Glasgow	NASUWT
Ms W Terry	Manor Farm Pre-School
Fahey	Brindley House School

Governors

Representative

In Attendance

Officers

Ms J Try, Miss S Callaghan, Ms A Kenward and Ms E Williams

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: Mr A Rosen was elected as Chairman.

Mr Rosen stated he would be able to carry out the role for one year only and encouraged Forum Members to consider future options.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: Ms K Tamlyn was confirmed as Vice Chairman.

Ms Tamlyn stated she would be able to carry out the role for one year only and encouraged Forum Members to consider future options.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies were received from Ms J Antrobus, Mrs D Rutley and Mr D Hood.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

5 MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING

The following amendments to the minutes from the meeting held on 12 June 2018 were made:

- Ms S Stephen and Ms C Glasgow would be recorded as present
- The spelling of names would be corrected as necessary.

ACTION: Ms Kenward

The following updates to actions were noted:

- The full implementation of the National Funding Formula had been delayed until at least 2021
- On review no discrepancies were found with the Outdoor Education Advice Service.
- Ms S Harlock, Audit Manager, would bring an update on the audit report to the December meeting.
- Ms E Williams confirmed benchmarking the financial position of maintained schools vs academies was not possible due to their differences.
- Schools' surplus balances was item 10 on the agenda.
- Ms J Try would confirm if there would be an increase in funding for excluded pupils. Details would be published on the Schools Web.

ACTION: Ms Try

RESOLVED: With the above amendments the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2018 were AGREED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6 SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP

Ms J Try, Senior Accountant, gave an overview of the report, an updated version of which was tabled at the meeting and would be appended to the minutes.

Ms Try clarified that the report addressed the membership for schools representation only. The full membership would remain at 30 with the "other" category in the constitution remaining unchanged.

The Forum discussed the Department for Education (DfE) guidance which spoke of proportionate representation for primary and secondary schools but did not recognise further types of school within the groups, for example Grammar and Upper Schools. Ms A Kenward, Forum Secretary, would seek advice on whether the Forum was able to formally include their own formula within the present categories of membership that recognised the unique make-up of Buckinghamshire schools.

ACTION: Ms Kenward

RESOLVED: the Forum AGREED by vote a third option that was not included in the report:

- **10 primary level schools consisting of:**
 - **2 maintained infant schools**
 - **2 maintained junior schools**
 - **4 maintained combined schools**
 - **2 academies**
- **8 secondary level schools consisting of:**
 - **2 maintained schools**
 - **6 academy schools**

Changes would be reviewed in one year's time.

7 HIGH NEEDS BLOCK UPDATE

Ms S Callaghan, Service Director for Education, gave a presentation on the High Needs Block, to be circulated with the minutes.

Ms Callaghan asked the Forum to consider a further transfer from Schools Block to the High Needs Block for 2019/20.

Members of the Forum discussed wanting to see further information on outcomes and actions for example:

- Outcomes for the actions mentioned in last year's report
- Further information on how mainstream schools were being supported to better cope with additional needs.

In order to work out the methodology for the consultation with schools on the potential transfer, the Schools Forum Funding Group (SFFG) would meet on 9 October. The SFFG would then share their recommendations with the Schools Forum by email. If it was felt necessary to hold an additional Schools Forum meeting this would be on 30 October.

RESOLVED: It was AGREED to hold a Schools Funding Forum Group on 9 October 2018 to discuss the consultation process.

8 UPDATE ON NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA AND DSG GUIDANCE 2019

Ms E Williams, Head of Finance, Children's Services, gave an overview of the report and supplement which had been circulated with the agenda.

The Chairman expressed concern that the report seemed to propose a different relationship between Buckinghamshire County Council and that the Schools Forum Funding Group, where the report would have been scrutinised, had been cancelled by County Council Officers.

The meeting discussed that the methodology had been widely consulted on with schools in 2017-18, with the clear support from schools to use the same principles for implementing the full National Funding Formula in 2019-20.

Forum Members raised the following concerns:

- They felt that the High Needs Block funding had been mis-represented last year as being a one year commitment. Ms Callaghan confirmed that the previous report had requested stopgap funding for 2018/19 but had stated that it may also be necessary to come back to the Forum this year.
- The Forum wanted it to be made clearer where assumptions had been used.
- The wording used suggested the Forum had been consulted about the report before the meeting. The Forum did not feel it was appropriate to have such a statement in the public domain. Ms Kenward agreed to work with the Committee and Governance Manager, Ms K Sutherland, to address this.

ACTION: Ms Kenward

RESOLVED: It was AGREED to hold a Schools Funding Forum Group on 9 October 2018 to prepare recommendations for the funding factors to be used in the 2019-20 formula, to be considered at the December Schools Forum meeting.

9 DE-DELEGATION 2019-2020 - CONSULTATION WITH SCHOOLS

Ms J Try, Senior Accountant, gave an overview of the proposals circulated with the agenda.

RESOLVED: Report to be reviewed by the De-Delegation Group who would then provide a report to the Schools Forum December meeting.

10 SCHOOL BALANCE REPORT

Ms Williams, Finance Director, Children's Services, explained the report circulated with the agenda was in response to a request at the June meeting to:

- View information in more detail
- Include more information on DfE requirements
- Compare Buckinghamshire with what other local Authorities had been doing.

Ms Williams explained that:

- DfE offered no formal guidance but stated that consideration should be given where the surplus was greater than 15% of a school's annual budget and over

£10,000.

- It was unusual to see other local authorities pursuing claw backs but having a system to identify high surpluses would be could be a way to start conversations with schools.
- If the Schools Forum wanted to support the claw back of excess funds there would need to be a policy that outlined:
 - How money would be claw backed
 - How it would be redistributed.
 - A right of appeal process

Following further discussions the Forum Members felt that providing there was evidence an excess existed for a specific reason which benefited its pupils, there was no reason to resort to clawing back funds. Members of the Forum felt that to do so could discourage schools from saving towards important large projects such as building new classrooms.

RESOLVED: The Forum AGREED not to accept the recommendations of the report.

11 EARLY YEARS PAPER

The report was circulated with the agenda for discussion.

Mr Try confirmed that going forward all placement types would be funded by the DfE based on placement uptake. Previously there had been a local decision not to fund independent placements.

12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Membership of sub groups of the Schools Forum Funding Group were discussed. Memberships were set out as the following:

RESOLVED: Membership for the following sub groups were AGREED.

Schools Forum Funding Group

Mr Rosen

Ms Tamlyn

Mr Sneesby

Mr Patrick and Mr Gillespie on a rotating basis

Ms Terry.

Contingency Group – maintained schools only, meeting annually

David Hood as Chairman

Janice Freeman

Owen Lloyd

Plus 1 more

De-delegation group – maintained schools only

David Hood as Chairman

All maintained school representatives on Schools Forum plus open invite to other maintained schools

A Member of the Forum asked if the names, qualification and term end date of each member could be published on the Schools Forum website. Ms Kenward would take this forward.

ACTION: Ms Kenward

A discussion was held around what would be done to thank former Chairman Mr P Rowe for his work. Mr K Patrick would organise a gift. The Chairman would write a letter of recognition for the Forum.

ACTION: Mr Patrick and Mr Rosen

13 AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

No items were discussed.

14 DATE OF NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS

The next Schools Forum Funding Group meeting would be held on 9 October, 8am - 10am, at Aylesbury High School.

A provisional Schools Forum meeting was proposed for 30 October, 2pm - 4.30pm, Exhibition Suite, Market Square Aylesbury. This would be confirmed by 12 October at the latest.

ACTION: Ms Kenward

The next confirmed Schools Forum meeting would be held 11 December, 1.30pm - 3.30pm at Green Park, Aston Clinton.

CHAIRMAN