

## Schools Forum

### December 8<sup>th</sup> 2011 - Minutes

<b>PRESENT:</b>	
Diana Turner	Governors Steering Group
Latika Davis,	Governors Steering Group
Larry Granelly	Governors Steering Group
Peter Reaney	Governors Steering Group
Chris Smart	Governors Steering Group
Norman Large	Governors Steering Group
Ramesh Srivastava	Governors Steering Group
Philip Johnson	Governors Steering Group
Karen Howell	Nursery Headteacher
Cathy Clarke	Primary Headteacher (Central)
Stella Saje	Primary Headteacher (Nun & Bed)
Beverley Dandy	Primary Headteacher (North Warks)
Peter Kent	Secondary Headteacher (East)
Ramjit Samra	Secondary Headteacher (Central)
Dan Watts	Representing Tony Wilmot Secondary Headteacher (North Warks)
Tim Sara	Secondary Headteacher (South)
Sheila Cowen	Special School Headteacher
Sybil Hanson	Diocesan Board of Education
Stephen Dyke	Representing Carolann Grewcock, PVI Sector
Cllr Heather Timms	Elected Member
Andy Somers	Representing Max Hyde County Secretary NUT
Sam Kincaid	NAS/UWT
David Hazeldine	County Secretary ASCL
Wendy Fabbro	Director, People Group
Mark Gore	Head of Service, East – Learning & Achievement
Lorrie Cooper	Learning Improvement Team Service Manager – Primary and Early Years
Emma Ford	Education Senior Legal Assistant, Corporate Legal Services
John Betts	Head of Corporate Finances
Simon Smith	Strategic Finance Manager
Sara Haslam	Schools Funding & Strategy Manager
Clare Morris	Budget Planning Officer, Schools Funding Team

#### 1. Apologies – Apologies were received from the following:

Richard Powell	Primary Headteacher (East)
Margaret Buck	Diocesan School Commission
Marion Plant	14-19
Cllr John Ross	Elected Member
Cllr Clive Rickhards	Elected Member
Cllr Carolyn Robbins	Elected Member
Cllr June Tandy	Elected Member
Ian Froggett	County Secretary NAS/UWT
John Collins	County Secretary ATL
Mick Haynes	Branch Secretary UNISON
Adrian Ross	District Officer TGWU
Paul Hamilton	GMB Union

## **2.0 Minutes from Previous Meeting and Matters Arising**

2.1 The minutes were agreed as accurate.

2.2 There were matters arising regarding the Unallocated Dedicated School Grant – Allocation Update. Mark Gore apologised that a revised paper regarding specific spending proposals on Emotional Well Being and Mental Health Services was not yet available. The commissioning team are reviewing proposals to support low level mental health issues across Warwickshire rather than targeting a limited number of schools. Mark confirmed that it is appropriate that support is available to pupils of all ages across Warwickshire.

## **3.0 National Fair Funding Review - Update**

3.1 Simon presented the national formula consultation findings which had been obtained from a recent conference. The formal implementation date of the national formula is still not known. However, the national consultation stated that Local Authorities should be reviewing their formula funding and Warwickshire's local formula proposals are in line with the national trend.

3.2 The national consultation findings were that FSM ever 6 was the most popular method for allocating deprivation funding although the local review proposals were based on a FSM ever 3 indicator.

3.3 The proposal to strengthen the role of Schools Forums was not widely accepted and it was noted that further work was to be carried out on this area.

## **4.0 Local School Funding Review – Cabinet Report**

4.1 The Schools Forum was provided with a copy of the report to go to Cabinet on 15 December 2011. The report was based on the proposals agreed at Schools Forum on 20<sup>th</sup> October.

4.2 The Schools Forum previously suggested that alternative options for capping levels be produced for Cabinet to review and 3 options are included in the report - 0.5%, 1% and 1.5%, with 1% being the recommended option.

4.3 The report will go to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on December 14<sup>th</sup> with the Cabinet meeting the next day. If approved, the new formula will be implemented from April 2012.

4.4 A comment was made regarding how the loss of funding to some Secondary Schools, due to changes to Specialism Funding and YPLA sixth form funding, was encouraging academies to increase their admission numbers and how this in turn was adversely affecting all secondary schools. It was pointed out that the new appeals code is not linked to funding but it was felt that academies would not be making these admission changes if they were not losing so much funding.

## **5.0 Schools Forum Constitution**

5.1 There was a discussion around the paper presented. Several points were raised:

- Whether, due to the number of children within the PVI Early Years Sector, that 1 member was sufficient
- That the constitution will need to be reviewed on a regular basis, at least annually
- The LA can only recommend that Academy governing bodies elect to represent themselves with both head teachers and governors
- The Chair of the Schools Forum to issue a letter to Academies recommending a practical solution

**5.2 *Agreed: That it would be appropriate to convene a sub group to look at this and report back to the next Schools Forum meeting. Sara to organise this.***

## **6.0 Balances Control Mechanism**

6.1 It was noted that following the review of school balances at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011, no school will be subject to clawback of balances this year. All schools with balances in excess of the threshold have submitted returns indicating the requirements of the Balances Control Policy have been met.

**6.2 *Agreed: Amendments would be made to the Balances Control Policy so evidence required to carry forward balances is that of Spring Term Governors Minutes and a separate analysis within the budget submission clearly detailing the areas where funds from the previous year will be used in the following year.***

6.3 Sara confirmed that Warwickshire's Balances Control Policy does not apply to Academies.

## **7.0 DSG Outturn**

7.1 Simon presented a report on the DSG Outturn 2010/11.

7.2 The following comments were made regarding Centrally Managed Expenditure:

- It was confirmed that Out of County provision is required due to the lack of facilities within the county, particularly for Special Needs issues. It was suggested the LA should consider if efficiencies could be achieved if these services are developed in county but it was recognised that this must be carefully commissioned to take account of best value.

- Expenditure on Educating Children Out of School (ECOS) – the effectiveness of meeting the statutory duty for education children not in school requires separate scrutiny. Peter Thompson is now leading the Access and Organisation Team whose responsibility includes pulling all services together for pupils who are missing school.

7.3 Sara reported that the 1.6m Capital Bid Project had been completed and all schools that had applied were allocated funding which was capped at £10, 000/school. Schools had matched or topped up the bid funding from their own capital or revenue funding. This project was received very well by schools with many sending e mails of thanks.

## **8.0 16-19 Funding Consultation**

8.1 A draft copy of the 16 – 19 Funding Formula Review Consultation response form had been distributed to Forum members for any comments for inclusion.

8.2 Several points were noted:

- Funding should still take account of “success” which is important as the learning undertaken has to have an element of success to give the pupils a better chance of it being worthwhile after having left school.
- It was noted that there is a difference to the way that pre-16 is funded in that the DSG calculation takes into account specific school factors such as premises factors but that the 6th form funding does not. Why is there not an element for this in the post 16 funding?
- There was a comment about how this change all fits in with the existing changes that are happening to 6th form funding in schools ie the reduction down to college level.
- Also, there didn't seem to be a specific area to comment on SEN but that it maybe worth noting at the end that those pupils with disadvantages (not just economic) needs to be addressed, as children move into post 16 education, their special needs still need funding.
- Finally, that the governments apparent policy to increase 6th forms generally seems to be at odds with the reduction in funding generally for 6th forms. This may create more financial turbulence for those 6th forms that exist currently

8.3 Any further comments should be made to Sara by 16<sup>th</sup> December and she will liaise with 16-19 colleagues to include these on the consultation response form.

## **9.0 Forward Plan**

9.1 A Forward Plan containing a provisional programme of possible reports/issues for Schools Forum to consider over the next year was provided.

9.2 It was requested that a paper on the costs of Out County Places be added to the items for information/consideration.

## **10.0 Academies Update**

10.1 An updated sheet showing Warwickshire Academies, amalgamations/mergers and federations was provided.

10.2 The following comments were made:

- Two Warwickshire Primary schools have been formally identified by the DfE as not achieving 'floor targets' and as such may be forced to transform into academies. Mark Gore confirmed that discussions with the DfE and Governors are taking place to secure improvements through structural solutions with these schools and a further 2 Warwickshire Primary schools which may also be at risk of a forced academy route.
- It was noted that some sponsors/partners to Warwickshire Academies are Coventry schools.
- Four out of 7 of the central area secondary schools do not appear to be going down the academy route as far as we are aware.
- The vast majority of the Warwickshire Primary sector is currently not showing an interest in becoming academies.

## **11.0 Chair's Business**

11.1 None.

## **12.0 Date of Future Meeting**

12.1 Thursday March 8<sup>th</sup> 2012, Saltisford Office Park, Warwick, Conference Rooms 1&2, 2pm.