

Schools Forum

March 8th 2012 - Minutes

PRESENT:	
Diana Turner	Governors Steering Group
Chris Smart	Governors Steering Group
Ramesh Srivastava	Governors Steering Group
Philip Johnson	Governors Steering Group
Francesca Peterson	Governors Steering Group
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)
Tim Sara	Secondary Headteacher (Southern)
Tony Wilmot	Secondary Headteacher (North Warks)
Sybil Hanson	Diocesan Board of Education
Stephen Dyke	Representing Carolann Grewcock, PVI Sector
Cllr June Tandy	Elected Member
Cllr Heather Timms	Elected Member
Cllr Clive Rickhards	Elected Member
Ian Froggett	County Secretary NAS/UWT
Sam Kincaid	NAS/UWT
John Collins	County Secretary ATL
David Hazeldine	County Secretary ASCL
Andy Summers	Representing Max Hyde County Secretary NUT
Wendy Fabbro	Director, People Group
Mark Gore	Head of Service – Learning & Achievement
Chris Norton	Strategic Finance Manager – People Group
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
Alison Hallworth	Solicitor and Adult and Community Team Leader

1. Apologies – Apologies were received from the following:

Latika Davis	Governors Steering Group
Larry Granelly	Governors Steering Group
Peter Reaney	Governors Steering Group
Karen Howell	Nursery Headteacher
Richard Powell	Primary Headteacher (East)
Sheila Cowen	Special School Headteacher
Margaret Buck	Diocesan School Commission
Marion Plant	14-19
Cllr John Ross	Elected Member
Cllr Carolyn Robbins	Elected Member
Mick Haynes	Branch Secretary UNISON
Adrian Ross	District Officer TGWU
Paul Hamilton	GMB Union
Lorrie Cooper	Service Manager - Primary and Early Years

2.0 Minutes from Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

2.1 The minutes were agreed as accurate.

2.2 There were no matters arising.

3.0 Schools Forum Constitution and Updated Terms of Reference

Agreed: Representation on Schools Forum will be as follows:

School Sectors	% of pupils	Total HT and governors	% of HT and governors	Nursery	Special	Diocese	14-19	Early Years	TOTAL
Primary	57.44%	11	60.00%						11
Maintained Secondary	18.53%	4	20.00%						4
Academy Secondary	24.03%	5	20.00%						5
Other				1	1	2	1	1	6
		20		1	1	2	1	1	26

3.1 The above table includes amendments to the original suggestion for 12 Primary members and 4 Academy Secondary members. This was amended following academy comments regarding the rounding down of their allocation to allow for an even split of headteachers and governors.

3.2 It was agreed that it was reasonable to make these amendments but that the position will be reviewed in 12 months and revised accordingly to represent any change in the number of academy/maintained schools. However, it was noted that, where possible, efforts should be made to retain members of groups not affected by the changes to allow for some consistency in decision-making.

3.3 Agreed: The split of headteacher/governor representation of maintained schools will be as follows:

	Governors	Heads
Primary	6	5
Academy	2	3

3.4 It was noted that the geographical representation on the Schools Forum was important but that due to the emergence of academy and maintained schools, it was becoming too complicated to include the geographical split too.

3.5 Agreed: that copy of Schools Forum minutes are sent to the secretary of the Primary Learning Community groups and Secondary Area Groups. A record of attendance at future schools forums would also be useful.

3.6 A draft revised Terms of Reference for Schools Forum was discussed

3.7 Agreed: *The amended Terms of Reference.*

4.0 Pupil Reintegration Unit

4.1 Simon presented a paper and the Schools Forum were recommended to agree Proposed Budgets for the provision of education for children who have been excluded, or are at risk of exclusion for 2012/13.

4.2 The following comments were made:

- Area Behaviour Partnerships will decide how their budget is spent, even though a notional split has been included in a recent Cabinet report regarding the closure of the PRU.
- It was questioned whether the LA has a right to fund academy provision when this is no longer a role of the LA. The implications of providing funding to academies needs to be explored further.
- Consideration needs to be made of the fact that much of the alternative provision for year 11 pupils is college courses and colleges do not offer behaviour specialists.
- It was noted that the role of the Virtual Head was broad
- There may be a conflict in delegating ABP funds but looking to develop an in house BESD provision

4.3 Simon confirmed that the costs of the Virtual Head detailed in the report provided included on costs and admin support.

4.4 Agreed: *The proposed budgets in the paper were agreed. It was also agreed that the allocation methodology for 2012/13 funding to Area Behaviour Partnerships be based on Free School Meal data but for alternative data to be sought and reviewed during the year.*

5.0 SEN and Out County Provision

5.1 Simon presented a report on Out of County Costs and SEN trends. This was in response to previous discussions at the Schools Forum. Costs of providing out county SEN provision are increasing and this is factored into the current SEN review and the DSG report presented elsewhere on the agenda.

5.2 Agreed: *That more specific details of out of county expenditure would be presented to the next Schools Forum including a breakdown of how many pupils this relates to along with an update of the SEN review*

6.0 EMAG/EAL Funding 2012/13

6.1 A report was provided and Schools Forum were recommended to agree to amend the allocation methodology from April 2012 of Ethnic Minority funding to focus on schools with pupils from vulnerable ethnic groups where the pupil is attaining below the Age Related position.

6.2 The following comments were made:

- Schools that are not full may attract a higher proportion of EAL pupils and this strengthens the case for central funding to support these schools.
- A central team enables improved monitoring and where schools do not have a specialist this control is important.
- Schools should be able to choose whether they access a central team for initial assessments or whether they are allocated funding if they already have their own expertise.
- New arrivals need a full assessment and this is best done at the point of admission.
- Initial assessments should be tailored for the age of the pupil.
- Whilst each pupil should be placed where their needs are best met, this will be overridden by parental choice as usual admission regulations will apply.

6.3 Agreed: The recommended allocation methodology for Ethnic Minority Funding was agreed as well as the retention of £200,000 centrally for English as an Additional Language

6.4 It was re-emphasised that whilst Gypsy and Romany Travellers are excluded from this funding allocation arrangements, this was due to other funding streams available to deal with the specific needs of these pupils.

7.0 Dedicated School Grant 2012/13 – Indicative Budget Proposal

7.1 Simon presented this report.

7.2 The report included two new budget areas where it was suggested additional funding is allocated.

7.3 One new area was the inclusion of funding for the Kooth Contract – a confidential counselling scheme for 11 to 25 year olds. It was pointed out that some schools have their own counselling services and more information was requested regarding the benefits of the Kooth Contract scheme.

7.4 Agreed: Further details would be brought to the next Schools Forum regarding the Kooth Contract.

7.5 Secondly, a briefing note on The Key was provided to the Forum with a recommendation to approve the purchase of The Key's services for one year, with these costs being underwritten by individual schools in the event that alternative funding cannot be found. Concerns were raised that schools forum was not in a position to make a binding commitment from schools. Simon confirmed that it was anticipated this could be funded from underspends on centrally managed funds but in the unlikely event that this was not possible the issue would return to schools forum.

7.6 Agreed: To proceed with procurement negotiations with TEN Group to purchase The Key but that is funding could not be found centrally then a further update would be brought to the Schools Forum.

7.7 The position regarding purchasing The Key would be discussed at head teacher meetings.

7.8 Agreed: Allocation of dedicated schools grants as detailed within the report.

8.0 Schools Financing Policy Review Schedule

8.1 Members of Schools Forum were invited to join a project team to review ad hoc schools funding policies. Any changes subsequently agreed by Schools Forum would be effective from April 2013. Members that were interested in joining a project team were asked to contact Sara. Work is expected to take place during the year to develop options for recommendation to Schools Forum in January 2013.

9.0 Consultation on the Amendments to the Scheme for Financing Schools

9.1 Schools Forum were asked for any comments on the DfE consultation in relation to updating the Scheme for Financing schools.

9.2 Sara summarised the content of the DFE document. No comments were made. Sara confirmed that this paper only applies to LA mainstreamed schools and it was requested that on future papers it is indicated at the beginning of the paper which schools are affected by the subject.

10.0 Forward Plan

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

10.2 It was suggested that a YPLA representative be invited to talk to Schools Forum.

11.0 Academies Update

11.1 An updated list of Warwickshire Academies was provided.

12.0 Chair's Business

12.1 None.

13.0 Date of Next meeting

13.1 Thursday 17th May 2012, Northgate House, Warwick at 2.00pm