

Schools Forum

October 11th 2013 - Minutes

Forum Members Present:	
Stella Saje - Chair	Primary Headteacher
Chris Errington	Primary Headteacher
Diana Turner – Vice Chair	Governor
Chris Smart	Governor
Latika Davis	Governor
Ramesh Srivastava	Governor
Andrew Clay	Secondary (Academy) Headteacher
Ranjit Samra	Secondary (Maintained) Headteacher
Philip Hamilton	Secondary (Academy) Headteacher
Chris Marshall (for Judith Humphry)	Special School Headteacher
Sybil Hanson	Diocesan Board of Education
Steve Dyke	PVI Representative
Andy Summers	Teachers Union Representative
Forum Members Apologies:	
Philip Johnson	Governor
Larry Granelly	Governor
Phil Clucas	Governor
Cathy Clarke	Primary Headteacher
Gill Humphriss	Primary Headteacher
Tony Wilmot	Secondary (Maintained) Headteacher
Patsy Weighill	Secondary (Academy) Headteacher
Rachel Gillett	Nursery School Head Teacher
Lisa Capper	14-19 representative
David Kelham	Governor
Cllr June Tandy	Governor
Richard Hawkins	Primary Headteacher
Peter Reaney	Governor
Margaret Buck	Catholic Church Schools
Non Members Present:	
Cllr Heather Timms	Elected Member
Cllr Whitehouse	Elected Member
Avie Kaur	Trade Union Representative
Ian Froggett	Union Representative NAS/UWT, Chair of ATP
Max Hyde	County Secretary NUT
Sam Kincaid	Trade Union Representative
LA Officers:	
Sara Haslam	Schools Funding & Strategy Manager
Sarah Callaghan	Head of Service, Learning and Achievement
Philip Edmundson	Service Manager, Learning & Performance
Chris Norton	Strategic Finance Manager

Jayne Mumford	SEN Manager
Ruth Waterman	Clerk

2.0 Minutes from Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

2.1 Typing errors were highlighted (page 2, para 3.3 and page 3, para 3.10) and will be corrected.

2.2 Pending changes above, the minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

3.0 Election of Chair and Vice Chair

3.1 Stella Saje was elected as Chair and Diana Turner as Vice Chair for a 12 month period.

4.0 Main Schools Funding Formula 2014/15

4.1 Sara presented a report updating on the review of the Warwickshire Schools Funding Formula. It was noted that Jane Burrows should be included on the list on page 2 (2.2) and that Sara would update the report.

4.2 There were various comments regarding sparsity:

- A question was asked regarding the impact of the change in the Admissions Policy. It was noted that although an assessment has been made of boundary changes, the Admissions Policy has not been changed
- It was also noted that parents often drive their children to school now so the issue of sparsity is not clear
- The LA is facing transport budget pressures that would be a factor to consider when offering places to pupils not at their nearest school
- Key issue is sustainability rather than sparse – these may not relate to the same schools
- Protection of these schools will divert funding from all schools
- Perhaps the local flexibility in the new National Funding Formula could be used to offer support as we deem necessary locally rather than being tied to the national definition of “sparse”

4.3 Agreed: The Forum agreed that the main schools funding formula should not be amended in 2014/15 but should retain the same headings as is the position in 2013/14.

5.0 De-delegation of Centrally Retained Budgets in 2014/15

5.1 Sara presented the report.

5.2 Clarification was sought regarding the value of the LA School Improvement service and it was noted that whilst the number of officers had reduced, the intention was that a focused service could still be offered to meet the LA's statutory responsibilities.

5.3 A comment was made regarding the accountability and transparency of the work carried out by Teachers Unions whilst being funded by the Facilities Time budget and there was a response to this that should schools have any issues, they should contact the Teachers Union groups.

5.3 Sector votes were taken on the de-delegation of funding for services to enable the LA to continue the delivery of these services on behalf of maintained schools.

5.4 Agreed: The following budgets to be retained by the local authority in 2014/15 in order that they can continue to provide support to maintained schools (unless otherwise stated this is for both primary and secondary maintained schools):

- **School Improvement – primary schools only**
- **Free School Meal Eligibility**
- **Gypsy & Romany Travellers – primary schools only**
- **English as an Additional Language**
- **Behaviour Support Services – primary schools only**
- **Trade Union Facility Time Funding**
- **Medical Referral of employees**

6.0 Update on the review of Special Schools Funding Matrix

6.1 Sara presented the report for information and explained that further work is required particularly around the place funding at special school nurseries. It may be that Forum members will be asked to comment on the proposal via email so that this can go forward to Cabinet on 12th December.

6.2 The following comments were made:

- The report to Cabinet will need to be clear about where the money saved from nursery places will be directed. Will this go to universal services or to non-specialist nursery provision?
- There is little mention of social services involvement within the report and it is important that there is joint working between education, health and social care colleagues. Sarah Callaghan reassured Members that colleagues are working together to develop a strategy for implementing a single education, health and care plan.

6.3 Agreed: Forum members agreed for further work to go ahead on reducing the place funding at special school nurseries and, if necessary for a proposal to be circulated electronically for comment in order for this to go to Cabinet in December.

7.0 Dedicated Schools Grant update 2013/14

7.1 Chris Norton presented the report and explained that it was for information and to provide more transparency to Forum members around the expenditure of centrally managed DSG funding.

7.2 Concerns were raised that there is an approx. £57k forecasted underspend against Safeguarding when schools are under a lot of pressure to manage this.

7.3 Action: Chris to investigate why there is a £57k underspend forecast against the DSG Safeguarding budget (update: this is due to additional income being received by the service from a greater take up than expected rather than a reduction in costs)

7.4 Members felt it was useful to see the summary of the forecast spends against each of these areas. It was also highlighted that a number of the headings contribute to aspects of safeguarding and it should always be remembered that any cuts affect individual children.

7.5 The £600k underspend forecast against funding for 2 year olds was also raised as a concern. It was noted that there is an element of trajectory funding to stimulate places where they don't exist but that the local authority is meeting the statutory duties in relation to 2 year olds and money not spend here can contribute towards savings.

8.0 High Needs Block Update

8.1 Sarah Callaghan presented the report.

8.2 Forum members agreed that it would be important for there to be representation from schools on the High Needs Block Working Group but suggested that it would be more beneficial for this to be a SENCo, rather than a head teacher as they have more expertise in this area.

8.3 It was also suggested that there should be representation from governors on this group and that the Governors Forum could be asked to nominate this person. The group may also benefit from having input from a Union member with a SEN specialism.

8.4 Amendment: The third priority should be 'To reduce the attainment gap between pupils on FSM6 and their peers' (change from 'FSM').

8.5 Action: Sara to email all of the Schools Forum to seek volunteers from head teachers, governors and union representatives to be part of the High Needs Block Working Party.

9.0 Out of County Update Report.

9.1 Jayne Mumford presented an update report outlining the strategy to support the placement of pupils with severe and complex educational needs in specialist provision. The following comments were made:

9.2 Members welcomed the report however urged the local authority to be mindful that decisions made in relation to this will potentially have a big impact on families. It is important to look at this in partnership with other services such as health and social care, to take an integrated approach.

9.3 Although it was recognised that steps are being taken to increase the number of places providing specialist provision in- county, it was felt that these would still not be sufficient to meet the needs. However, part of the work being carried out is to stimulate the market to provide places at a more competitive rate.

9.4 Concerns were raised that schools will be put under increased pressure if the use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is increased to provide support to families. The responsibility needs to be shared with other service providers, not just by schools. The pressure on CAF officers was also noted and concern about their capacity to take on additional workload.

9.5 There are instances where out of county provision is required.

9.6 There is concern that if top up funding is not agreed for certain high cost pupils, then this will impact on the ability to provide for other pupils in the school.

9.7 It was noted that ABP funding was for non-statement pupils whereas the AEN school would be for statement pupils.

9.8 Action: Further update on the strategy to be provided at a future meeting.

10.0 Primary Inclusion Update Report

10.1 Philip Edmundson presented the report and the following comments were made:

10.2 Some members of the Forum were concerned that funding for the existing primary ISGs would no longer be provided and felt that some of the

ISGs would not be sustainable without additional funding from the local authority.

10.3 Concern was also raised about the expectation that schools would be able to fund part of this provision from their Pupil Premium as this has now increased. Members urged the local authority to be cautious of 'raiding' the pupil premium to fund such provision and to take into consideration that this funding could be stopped by central government in future.

10.4 The distribution of resources between the primary and secondary phases was also highlighted as a concern as primary received less funding from the closure of the PRU and with the proposed withdrawal of funding for ISGs it seems that primary will receive even less funding. It was suggested that the funding within EIS could be looked at to see if this could be redistributed differently to help fund this provision.

10.5 A head teacher member commented that there has been real success within the ISGs and that the current model has encouraged the sharing of good practice and it would be a shame for this to be lost. The school where the ISG is based may also be put under additional pressure and this should be taken into consideration.

10.6 It was also noted that there was some concern amongst secondary head teachers that the funding for ABPs is also being reviewed and a plea was made for information to be shared with schools at the earliest possible opportunity if ABP budgets are going to change.

10.7 Action: Further clarity around the funding for primary ISGs to be provided at the next Forum meeting (5 December 2013).

11.0 Pupil Increase Policy Funding allocation

11.1 Sara Haslam presented the report and asked members to note the number of schools meeting the criteria for the pupil increase policy thereby attracting additional one off funding in 2013/14.

11.2 It was noted that an assessment would need to be carried out to determine where the £99,500 shortfall could be found within the DSG funding allocation.

12.0 Schools Capital Update

12.1 Sara Haslam presented the report and the following concerns were raised:

12.2 The criteria applied to select those schools eligible for capital funding is unclear and Forum members felt it would be helpful if this criterion could be shared.

12.3 The local authority's strategy is for all through primary schools however the approval to expand Henry Hinde Infant school seems to go against this. It was suggested that this strategy should be taken into account within the criteria. It was noted that it was likely that Henry Hinde Infant had been included in order to meet sufficiency targets but that this would need to be looked at.

12.4 Action: Sara to circulate the criteria that was applied to determine which schools would be eligible for the capital expansion programme for comment.

12.5 Agenda Item: Capital Programme Criteria to be added to the Forward Plan and revisited at the next meeting.

13.0 Academy Update

13.1 A current Position Statement on Status of Warwickshire Schools was provided and noted by members.

14.0 Forward Plan

14.1 The following items should be included in the forward plan:

- Update on primary ISGs
- Capital Programme Criteria
- ABP's out turns

14.2 It was noted that the meeting for the summer term was not included on the Forward Plan. This is arranged for 15 May and will be added to the list. The meeting in January has been cancelled.

15.0 Chairs Business

15.1 Sarah Callaghan announced that she would be leaving the authority in December to take up a new post as the Director of Children and Young People's Services in Warrington. Sarah thanked colleagues for all their hard work and support during her time in Warwickshire.