

Schools Forum

June 24th 2014 - Minutes

Forum Members Present:	
Stella Saje - Chair	Primary Maintained Headteacher
Diana Turner – Vice Chair	Secondary Academy Governor
Chris Smart	Primary Maintained Governor
Philip Johnson	Primary Maintained Governor
Latika Davis	Primary Maintained Governor
Paul Hyde	Secondary Academy Governor
Cathy Clarke	Primary Headteacher
Larry Granelly	Primary Governor
Ramesh Srivastava	Secondary Governor
Rachel Gillet	Nursery School Headteacher
Kate Gover	Primary Maintained Headteacher
Ian Dewes	Primary Maintained Headteacher
Ranjit Samra	Secondary Maintained Headteacher
Philip Hamilton	Secondary Academy Headteacher
Patsy Weighill	Secondary Academy Headteacher
Chris Marshall	Special School Headteacher
Sybil Hanson	Church of England Diocese
Peter Reaney	Academy Governor
Steve Dyke	Early Years (PVI)
Jane Burrows(for David Kelham)	Academy Governor
Andy Summers (substitute)	Teachers Union
Non Members Present:	
Sam Kincaid	Trade Union Representative
John Betts	Head of Finance
David Hazeldine	ASCL
Laura Kisby	ATL
Wendy Fabbro	Strategic Director, People Group
Nigel Minns	Head of Service, Learning and Achievement
Sara Haslam	Schools Funding & Strategy Manager
Chris Norton	Strategic Finance Manager
Amanda King	Bedworth Heath Nursery School (Item 4)
Cllr Hayfield	Portfolio Holder for Education & Learning
Ruth Waterman	Clerk

Forum Members Apologies:	
Keir Beaumont	Secondary Academy Governor
Susan Shannon	Primary Maintained Headteacher
Samantha Dennis	Primary Academy Headteacher
Lisa Capper	14-19 representative
John McRoberts	Primary Governor
Margaret Buck	Catholic Diocese

1.0 Apologies

1.1 See above for all apologies.

2.0 Minutes from Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

2.1 Corrections: David Hazeldine and Sam Kincaid were both present. Attendance to be amended.

2.2 The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters Arising:

2.3 *Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks (Ref 2.6, pg 2):*

- A note was circulated with the papers with additional data on CRBs.

2.4 *Schools Forum Terms of Reference (Ref 3.1, pg3):*

- An updated Terms of Reference was circulated with the papers with an additional sentence to clarify that any voting members may send a substitute if they are unable to attend meetings.

2.5 *SEN Strategic Development and Capacity Building Group (Ref 5.1, pg 5):*

- A contact sheet of people who are part of this group was sent out with the papers for the meeting.
- **Action: Mainstream headteachers should have received an email asking for representation on this group. Nigel will chase this up to make sure it has gone out.**

2.6 *Commissioning of support for Specialist ISGs / Early Intervention (Ref 7.2, pg 8):*

- A statement has been produced in response to the concerns raised at the previous meeting around the EIS commissioning arrangements. Nigel agreed to circulate this to members after the meeting. A range of discussions did take place at the December 2013 meeting however no actions were agreed to go out to tender for this contract. The Primary School Improvement Board also gave their support for the approach that was taken. Wendy noted that the SLA will be reviewed and there is no commitment to this being provided in house for a set length of time.
- **Action: Circulate the position statement following the meeting. Report to be brought to next meeting to include hard data on the impact of EIS and exercise around quality assurance.**

3.0 Dedicated Schools Grant Savings Programme

3.1 Nigel presented the report and circulated an amended version of the draft action plan produced following a recent meeting of the DSG group.

Action: Nigel will present an updated action plan along with a review of progress at the October meeting.

4.0 Nursery School Additional Funding Bid

4.1 Amanda King presented the report and the following comments were made:

- Concerns raised that the report concentrates on funding for mainstream Early Years only and there is no recognition or support for the quality of provision in the PVI sector or additional financial support that they would welcome to become more business like. Amanda explained that the group is lobbying for more funding for the whole of the Early Years sector however in reality the money is just not available centrally.
- It was noted that the request for funding is to extend the work of the Early Years Teaching Centre so that it can continue to provide outreach to nurseries in Warwickshire. The £40k would help to release staff with the expertise to deliver training.
- Concerns that this would result in continuing pressure on this budget if more funding is requested in future. Amanda explained that the £40k for each nursery would be pump-priming initially and they intend to be self-sustaining and have a financially viable model after the first year. Therefore no additional funding would be requested after this.
- Some members expressed some unease in agreeing to the recommendation which included the nursery schools group exploring possible structural solutions, such as academisation or foundation status, and were unclear how this would improve outcomes for children.

Agreed: The Forum agreed to a review of the Early Years Funding Formula in 2015/16 for changes to be implemented in 2016/17.

The Forum agreed to move onto the next item (Allocation of Additional DSG 2015/16) before taking a vote on whether any additional funding would be allocated to the Nursery Schools group. See below for decision.

5.0 Additional Dedicated Schools Grant 2015/16 Allocation

5.1 Sara presented the report which has tried to bring out the narrative around what the funding is for.

5.2 There was a request that a further allocation option be explored to distribute funding between the blocks whereby the additional funding is allocated proportionately based on the current direct schools/providers budgets.

5.3 Sara noted that the funding is still not yet confirmed and all figures are provisional but it is expected that the DfE will make an announcement before the end of the summer term. The hope is that schools will then receive indicative budgets before the summer break

5.4 Point of clarification requested on rates for EY providers – different rates are applicable to different providers for e.g. PVI, school nurseries however the inflation rate will be the same.

5.5 There was a recognition by the Forum that special schools should be taken into consideration when allocating out the additional funding from the High Needs Block.

Agreed: It was agreed, in principal, for the funding to be shared across the 3 blocks (Schools, Early Years, High Needs) subject to confirmation of funding amounts and a further option of allocating funding based on an only “schools/providers” basis. These options will then be discussed again at the next meeting.

Agreed: A vote was taken and the majority vote was for Option 2 – that any additional funding to schools would be allocated through all of the pupil related factors of Basic Entitlement, Deprivation and Prior attainment.

Action: Options paper to be presented at the next meeting in October with models for Early Years and High Needs block allocations so the Forum can make an informed decision on how this funding should be allocated.

Agreed: The Forum agreed that no decision would be taken at the meeting on the request from nursery schools for additional funding and that a further report should be provided in October to model the impact this will have on the rest of the Early Years Block.

6.0 2013/14 Dedicated Schools Grant Outturn

6.1 Chris Norton presented the report. It was noted that the Closing Balance figure for Schools Reserve (page 3) of £17.536m is only LA maintained schools and there are further reserves in academies.

Agreed: Members agreed to retain the General DSG Reserve in full to assist in offsetting in part the spending pressures in 2014/15.

7.0 Consortia Funding Update

7.1 Nigel presented the report and explained that the proposals outlined would be subject to discussion and agreement from headteachers over the coming weeks when details will be shared at the Heads' Briefings.

7.2 Governor members again expressed concerns that there is no involvement of governors in the consortia process. Given that they are responsible for schools' budgets it would be helpful for them to understand the process around funding particularly. Nigel explained that the paperwork will need to be signed off by Governors so there will need to be a discussion before a school can apply for any funding.

7.3 One member was unsure why funding would be given to academies. Nigel explained that the £500k available is not DSG funding but is additional money from the County Council to help address the area of school improvement. The LA also still has a statutory duty to ensure every child attends a good or outstanding school and this funding will help to address this issue.

7.4 Negotiations are currently underway to secure two headteacher secondees to work with consortia to provide support in putting together their bids and to be a contact within the LA for support during the process.

8.0 Consultation Response to Non Recoupment Academies

8.1 Sara presented the report outlining DfE proposals currently under consultation to change the funding arrangements for Free Schools. If the proposals were agreed this could put increased pressure on the centrally managed funding as academies and free schools would be eligible for part of this but the LA would receive no additional funding to offset increased costs. Also, if Free Schools are set up where this is not a need for places this could eat into the LA's Growth Fund.

8.2 Sara has fed these concerns back via the consultation process. Sybil noted that Coventry Schools Forum has also done the same.

9.0 Academy Update (Sara Haslam)

9.1 Sara presented a current position statement of the status of Warwickshire schools which was noted by members. There are potentially another 2 secondary schools and 7 primary schools converting in the next year.

10.0 Forward Plan (Chair)

10.1 Additional items for Forward Plan agreed as follows (October meeting):

- Impact of EIS (to include position statement)
- Early Years and High Needs Block Overview