

## Schools Forum

**November 27<sup>th</sup> 2014 – Minutes**

<b>Forum Members Present:</b>	
Stella Saje	Primary Maintained Headteacher
Ian Dewes	Primary Maintained Headteacher
Ranjit Samra	Secondary Maintained Headteacher
Michael Stoppard (on behalf of Patsy Weighill)	Secondary Academy Headteacher
Neil Wallace (on behalf of Paul Hyde)	Secondary Academy Headteacher
Latika Davis	Primary Maintained Governor
Larry Granelly	Primary Maintained Governor
Philip Johnson	Primary Maintained Governor
Jane Burrows (on behalf of David Kelham)	Secondary Academy Governor
Diana Turner – Vice Chair	Secondary Academy Governor
Michelle Nisbet (on behalf of Sybil Hanson)	Church of England Diocese
Steve Dyke	Early Years (PVI)
Kerrie Henton (on behalf of Lisa Capper)	14-19 representative
Andy Summers	ASCL
David Hazeldine	ASCL
<b>Non Members Present:</b>	
Cllr Hayfield	Portfolio Holder for Education & Learning
Cllr Whitehouse	Elected Members
Nigel Minns	Head of Service, Education and Learning
John Betts	Head of Finance
Simon Smith	Strategic Finance Manager (Resources and Schools)
Sara Haslam	Schools Funding & Strategy Manager
Pat Tate	Service Manager, Vulnerable Learners (Item )
Ruth Waterman	Clerk

<b>Forum Members Apologies:</b>	
Cathy Clarke	Primary Maintained Headteacher
Kate Gover	Primary Maintained Headteacher
Patsy Weighill	Secondary Academy Headteacher
Paul Hyde	Secondary Academy Headteacher
Philip Hamilton - Chair	Secondary Academy Headteacher
Rachel Gillet	Nursery School Headteacher
John McRoberts	Primary Maintained Governor
Chris Smart	Primary Maintained Governor
Keir Beaumont	Secondary Academy Governor
Peter Reaney	Secondary Academy Governor
Susan Shannon	Primary Maintained Headteacher (now resigned so post vacant)
Samantha Dennis	Primary Academy Headteacher
Judith Humphry	Special School Headteacher
Ramesh Srivastava	Secondary Maintained Governor
David Kelham	Secondary Academy Governor
Sybil Hanson	Church of England Diocese

Margaret Buck	Catholic Diocese
Lisa Capper	14-19 representative

## **1.0 Apologies**

1.1 See above for all apologies.

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

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

2.2 Members were informed that Ian Froggett has resigned from his role as Chair of the Teachers Representative Panel (TRP) and therefore his position on Schools Forum. Schools Forum noted their thanks to Ian for his support and hard work over the years and Sara agreed to send a note on behalf of the Forum to thank Ian formally.

## **3.0 Centrally Retained DSG Savings Programme (Nigel Minns)**

3.1 Nigel presented the main headlines from the report and highlighted the importance of action being taken now to address budget pressures to avoid being faced with a deficit budget of £9.514m in 2018/19.

3.2 Nigel reassured Schools Forum that a review is being carried out of children currently in out of county provision and it is expected that places at the new AEN school will be taken up by children who are currently in out of county provision or who would have been put in out of county provision based on their needs.

3.3 The volunteer sub-group established to review budgets for all services funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) will also be tasked with establishing a robust savings plan to reduce the forecast overspend. Members who were previously involved in this group will be contacted again shortly.

## **4.0 Special Schools Funding Project (Sara Haslam)**

4.1 Sara presented the report outlining progress in relation to the revised funding matrix for special schools. The report sets out revised timescales for implementation of the new matrix which will now be September 2015. .

4.2 Page 3: it is was pointed out that 'Emotional, Social and Behavioural Development' is no longer the correct term; this is now referred to as 'Social, Emotional and Mental Health development'. Sara to amend.

4.3 The changing profile of children's needs was noted, with Stella commenting that her school (Glendale Infant) is seeing an increasing number of pupils starting with additional needs.

## 5.0 De-delegation of centrally retained funding (Sara Haslam)

5.1 Sara reminded Forum members that they are given the opportunity to vote on whether or not they would like certain funding to be retained by the Local Authority, instead of being delegated to schools. Only members representing the maintained primary and secondary sector are able to vote.

5.2 There was some discussion over whether or not a vote should take place as Ian Dewes (maintained primary school representative) highlighted that the report noted that additional discussions had taken place with maintained secondary schools and that not everyone had received the same information. Sara explained that secondary head teachers were provided with additional information to clarify the impact of a change in decision over previous years de-delegation.

5.3 Sara explained that the retained budgets are £211,000 lower than last year (as stated in 3.2, page 4) and clarified that this figure is a combination of increased academy pupil numbers and reduced overhead charges.

5.4 Representatives of primary maintained schools – head teachers and governors – were asked to vote on the de-delegation of central budgets in 7 areas. The outcome was as follows:

School Improvement	De-delegate
Free School Meal Eligibility	De-delegate
Gypsy and Romany Travellers	De-delegate
English as an Additional Language	De-delegate
Behaviour Support Services	De-delegate
Trade Union Facility Time	De-delegate
Medical Referral of Employees	De-delegate

5.5 Ranjit being the only head teacher of a maintained secondary school present was asked to vote on the de-delegation of central budgets in 4 areas. The outcome was as follows:

Free School Meal Eligibility	De-delegate
English as an Additional Language	De-delegate
Trade Union Facility Time	De-delegate
Medical Referral of Employees	De-delegate

## **6.0 High Needs Places (Pat Tate)**

6.1 Pat Tate presented the report informing Schools Forum of the process for commissioning high needs places, including information about the number of high needs places to be commissioned at each institution.

6.2. The following comments were made:

- Although it is beneficial to have a variety of provision it is important to ensure quality of provision and to manage the element of choice carefully. Pat reassured members that the LA will be increasing capacity to ensure that quality assurance of providers can be carried out and the LA can ensure they are getting the best outcomes for all learners.
- It was noted that this process may mean that the LA is commissioning places unnecessarily in institutions where the current cohort do not require places (as the data is based on last year's cohort). John Betts responded that this issue has been raised at a national level but the DfE are currently focusing on ensuring stability of providers

## **7.0 Draft Vulnerable Learners Strategy (Pat Tate)**

7.1 Pat Tate presented the report asking the Forum to comment on the proposed approach to engage with key stakeholders to develop the Vulnerable Learners Strategy and the role of the Schools Forum reference group in further developing the strategy. Members also heard a summary of the draft strategy. It was noted that the draft strategy has also been shared with special school heads and will also be taken to the Primary and Secondary School Improvement Boards.

7.2 The following comments / questions arose in response to the presentation:

- Q: How have SENCoS been invited to pilot the revised threshold document?  
A: The document has been distributed at both primary and secondary SENCo network meetings however there is not an assumption that all schools will be using this. Pat is aware of some schools who have taken it on board and are working with it. Contact details of two dedicated SENCo practice leads who can offer advice and support have been circulated to SENCoS. Attendance at SENCo network meetings is good and has increased on previous years. If schools would like to find out if their SENCo attended one of the network meetings they can contact either:

Liz Lee, Primary - [lizlee@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:lizlee@warwickshire.gov.uk)

Details of network meetings are sent out to all SENCoS using a circulation list that is kept up to date when schools notify the LA of a change of SENCo.

- Q: Does the strategy propose that all additional support is accessed through CAF? Concern that there would be a big increase in the CAF caseload.  
A: No, not all support will be accessed via CAF; much of the support will be accessed through the early support process for e.g. looked after children, children with a child protection plan. It is hoped that the new process will remove some of the bureaucracy from the system. Schools will still access services from Early Intervention, Integrated Disability, Educational Psychology Service etc and these services will feed into the CAF process.
- Comment: Schools are doing a lot of the work behind the CAF and external partners do not always engage; it is key that schools are supported and that there is a strong commitment from external agencies and that they engage in the process. Concerns from headteachers that this has not been their experience so far with CAF.
- Q: What is the relationship between CAF and identifying priority families? This does not appear to be included in the proposed pathway.  
A: Priority families will fall into one of three categories; the first two are dealt with through the CAF process.
- Q: If schools have the information and ability to deal with the issue without going through CAF would this not speed up the process?  
A: Pat advised this would be one issue that will be picked up though the consultation as the document being shared is in draft and so changes can be made following stakeholder feedback.
- Progress of children relies on other sectors providing funding and support as well, it is not just about education e.g. health, social care
- Feedback was that the presentation was much more useful than the document itself. It was suggested that there were some contradictions around English as an Additional Language (EAL) in the report although the presentation made this clearer.
- Feels like the document is a 'wish list' rather than a strategy; it doesn't really explain how things will be done. There are also no timescales against expected outcomes and no real recognition of cuts in services for e.g. children's centres

- Would like to see included on page 27 that schools/providers will have the opportunity to share good practice once this document is agreed.

7.3 There has been a strong response to invitations for expressions of interest from schools to develop resource based provision. Individual meetings will take place with special school heads to look at the development of satellite provision, capacity issues etc. Further meetings will then be held to look at how to take this forward at a district level.

7.4 It was discussed whether the Schools Forum Reference Group should be re-established. Forum members felt this was unnecessary as their comments would be taken forward in the revised draft that would then go out to consultation.

## **8.0 Update of Schools Capital Programme (Sara Haslam)**

8.1. Sara Haslam presented the report asking Schools Forum to note key schools related capital projects for 2014/15. Sara noted expansions in the Bedworth and Rugby areas in particular.

8.2 Sara advised that the local authority are still waiting to hear from the DfE regarding capital funding allocations for 2015/16, following revised pupil data being submitted at the end of October. Sara will keep Schools Forum updated on this.

## **9.0 Academy Update (Sara Haslam)**

9.1 Sara circulated the current school position statement (as of 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov) for information.

9.2 The report now includes a summary indicating in which year schools converted to academy status, however members stated they would prefer the report to include new academy conversions only to keep this to the minimum number of pages possible.

9.3 It would also be helpful for the summary to include the total number of establishments in Warwickshire alongside the number of academies in each phase, as well as the total number of pupils being educated in each phase and the funding to each.

## **10.0 Forward Plan (Chair)**

10.1 Sara reminded members that the next meeting will be held on 18<sup>th</sup> March and will start at 1pm.

10.2 Early Years Funding Formula agreed as an additional agenda item to be added to the forward plan for the meeting in March.

10.3 Members requested that all future reports include any specific terms in full for first use and then abbreviations / acronyms as these are public documents so the audience is not always familiar with acronyms used internally in WCC.

### **11.0 Chairs Business**

11.1 None.