

Minutes of a Meeting of the Schools Forum

Monday 3rd March 2014

Shaw House

Present:	Fiona Bridger-Wilkinson	Nursery Schools	Headteacher	Victoria Park Nursery School
	Patricia Brims	Primary Schools	Governor	Brimpton Primary School
	Jackie Hegg (substitute)		FE Representative	Newbury College
	Jeanette Clifford	Academies	Governor	St Bartholomew's School
	Reverend Mary Harwood		Church of England Representative	Oxford Diocese
	Jon Hewitt	Special Schools	Headteacher	The Castle School
	Peter Hudson	Primary Schools	Governor	Mortimer St Johns Infant School
	Brian Jenkins		Early Years PVI Representative	Jubilee Day Nursery
	Chris Prickett	Primary Schools	Headteacher	Streatley Primary School
	Clive Rothwell	Secondary Schools	Governor	John O'Gaunt School
	Eileen Selsey	Academies	Governor	Park House School
	Graham Spellman		Roman Catholic Representative	Portsmouth Diocese
	John Tyzack	Primary Schools	Governor	Falkland Primary School
	Keith Watts		Union Representative	
	Stacey Williams	Pupil Referral Units	Headteacher	Reintegration Service
	Councillor David Allen		Shadow Portfolio Holder for C&YP	
	Councillor Irene Neill		Executive Portfolio for C&YP	
	Shannon Coleman-Slaughter		CYP & Safeguarding Finance Manager	
	Carolynn Loosen		Schools' Funding Officer	
	Ian Pearson		Head of Education	
Jane Seymour – item 7		SEN & Disabled Children Manager		
Maria Shepherd – item 6		Early Years Childcare Manager		
Suzanne Taylor		Headteacher	Hungerford Nursery School	
Claire White		Schools' Finance Manager		

Action

1. APOLOGIES RECEIVED

Sarah Brinkley	Secondary Schools	Headteacher	John O'Gaunt School
Cathy Burnham		Social Inclusion Manager	West Berkshire Council
Nathan Butler-Broad	Primary Schools	Headteacher	Spurcroft Primary School
Fadia Clarke		FE Representative	Newbury College
Paul Dick	Academies	Headmaster	Kennet School
Kate House	Primary Schools	Headteacher	The Ilsleys Primary School
Catherine Morley	Primary Schools	Headteacher	Theale Primary School
Derek Peale	Academies	Headteacher	Park House School
David Ramsden	Secondary Schools	Headteacher	Little Heath School
Charlotte Wilson	Academies	Headteacher	Trinity School

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING DATED 20TH JANUARY 2014

The minutes of the meeting on 20th January were approved.

All actions from the previous meeting were completed.

3. ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Item 6 Early Years and High Needs Budgets 2014/15

Reports finalising the early years and high needs budgets 2014/15 are Items 6 and 7 on this meeting's agenda.

Item 7 School Formula and School Budget for 2014/15

The school formula was submitted to the EFA and the school budget allocations have been distributed to the schools. We have since received confirmation from the EFA that the formula adheres to the finance regulations.

Ian Pearson has sent a letter to the Richard Stewart the EFA Observer that attended the Schools' Forum on 20th January to follow up on the further information that was requested at the meeting on whether the EFA will be reviewing top up funding for FE placements and universal free school meals for KS1 pupils and its impact on the LA.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. MEMBERSHIP

Micky Allfrey the School Business Manager at Lambourn Primary School has decided not to take up the role of Primary SBM Representative. The Primary Heads Association is in the process of nominating a replacement.

Derek Peale from Park House School has been appointed to the vacant Academies Representative post.

Suzanne Taylor of Hungerford Nursery School is to replace Fiona Bridger-Wilkinson of Victoria Park Nursery as the Nursery School representative. The Schools Forum congratulated Fiona on her secondment to HMI.

6. EARLY YEARS FUNDING AND BUDGET PROPOSALS 2014/15

Maria Shepherd and Claire White presented the report on Early Years funding and the budget proposals 2014/15.

The Early Years Steering Group sought approval to make no changes to the Early

Years formula for 2014/15 and carry forward the under spend for 2013/14 currently forecast at £632k in order to compensate for the loss of the universal provision funding, continue to build participation numbers and maintain the funding rates in 2014/15.

The carry forward cannot indefinitely cover the shortfall in funding in the DSG. There is the possibility of national changes to the formula in 2015/16 but if funding does not increase the hourly funding rate may have to be reduced in the future.

There has been a review of the method used to allocate deprivation funding. The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) is the only indicator that can be used for early years but a few affluent houses in a post code can adversely affect the deprivation funding. In order to target funding more fairly the Early Years Steering Group decided to reduce the lowest band to 5% likelihood of disadvantage and reduce the funding rates.

The change in the IDACI bandings and rates adversely impacts on Victoria Park Nursery by £13k reducing their deprivation funding from £23k in 2013/14 to £10k in 2014/15. Members of the Schools' Forum asked if the impact could be dampened but protection is per pupil either cash or %. Victoria Park Nursery are still receiving the highest level of deprivation funding but the Early Years Steering Group are of the opinion that the funding as a whole is now better targeted and still fairly allocated.

DECISION: It was agreed that the under spend in the Early Years Block in 2013/14 be carried forward to the Early Years Block in 2014-15.

DECISION: The changes to the Early Years deprivation IDACI bands and rates were approved.

DECISION: The Early Years budget 2014/15 as set out in section 3 of the report was approved without amendment.

7. HIGH NEEDS BUDGET PROPOSAL 2014/15

Jane Seymour presented the report on the High Needs budget proposals for each cost centre in 2014/15.

It was highlighted that the FE College top up budget remains difficult to predict especially with the increase in the age range to 25, so a virement may be required in 2014/15.

Ian Pearson asked the members to note the reduced budget on non maintained special schools and reiterated that the use of contingency to increase internal provision and therefore reduce external provision costs is value for money. However the number and outcome of tribunals is difficult to predict.

Graham Spellman asked about the Early Intervention budget which has been reduced from £45k to £33k Jane explained that this budget is for a teacher to assist with language difficulties training and that this is a reduction in cost not level of service.

ACTION: The Schools' Forum requested a report on investing in West Berkshire high needs provision to further reduce the use of more expensive out of county provision.

DECISION: The High Needs budget 2014/15 as set out in the report was approved without amendment.

8. PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT BUDGET AND FUNDING PROPOSALS 2014/15

Ian Pearson presented the report on the PRU budget and funding proposals 2014/15.

A meeting was recently held between Stacey Williams, Jacquie Davies, Cathy Burnham, Charlotte Wilson (Secondary) and Nathan Butler-Broad (Primary) to discuss PRU funding arrangements for 2014/15.

A proposal was presented for primary schools and secondary schools.

Primary Schools

The LA continues to meet the full cost of the permanent exclusions and the relevant AWPU is repaid to the LA by the excluding school.

For all other placements the schools only pay 50% of the lowest funding band and the balance is paid by the LA from the High Needs Block. This is at a fixed daily rate set by the Reintegration Service but with a cap set at 12 weeks (approximately £2,250, although this is based on 2013/14 rates). Schools will be advised by the PRUs of the 2014/15 rates in due course. If a pupil is not ready to reintegrate after 12 weeks (as decided jointly between the school and LA with advice from other professionals) then all further costs of placement is met in full by the LA from the High Needs Block to prevent need for permanent exclusion.

Secondary Schools

The LA continues to meet the full cost of the permanent exclusions and the relevant AWPU is repaid to the LA by the excluding school. For all other placements:

Alternative Curriculum

The report proposes that schools pay £1000 per term towards the cost of the placement for a maximum of two years, however the Schools' Forum were of the opinion that as the school retains the AWPU for the pupil the payment should be closer to the AWPU value and therefore that the payment should be £1500 per term (£4500 per year). The balance is paid by the LA from the High Needs Blocks.

In the report in 3.3 the sentence "The pupil will then be on dual roll with the PRU" should read "The pupil will until then be on dual role with the PRU".

Reintegration Service

The schools only pay the lowest funding band and the balance is paid by the LA from the High Needs Block. This is at a fixed daily rate but with a cap set at 6 weeks (approximately £2,250, although this is based on 2013/14 rates). The funding of a continued place beyond 6 weeks will be met in full by the LA. Schools

will be advised by the PRUs of the 2014/15 rates in due course.

DECISION: The Schools' Forum approved the 2014/15 High Needs budget as set out in the table in section 2.1.

DECISION: All phases represented by the Schools' Forum agreed that the 2014/15 funding arrangement for the Alternative Curriculum payable by schools will be £1500 per term pro rata except where the school has not received AWPU funding and in this case the payment will be met from the High Needs Block. In addition it was also agreed that this arrangement will be subject to a mid-year review.

ACTION: Mid-year review of the PRU funding arrangements to be added to the work programme.

C Burnham

9. OVERALL DSG BUDGET PROPOSAL 2014/15

Claire White presented a report on the overall DSG budget for 2014/15.

The Schools Block budget was agreed at the Schools' Forum meeting on 20th January. There is an over spend of £27k due to the licence charges being notified by the DfE after the budget was set and submitted to the EFA.

The table in 2.1 should read Early Years Block DSG Funding £7,952k budget estimate £7,952k, which gives total DSG funding of £121,656k and budget estimate of £120,437. The headroom remains unchanged at £1,219k.

The final allocation of the High Needs Block is due at the end of March. However there is concern that the in year funding is not covering the actual costs, which is being topped up by carry forward of under spend from 2013/14.

The under spend is one off funding which it is recommended remain within the High Needs block due to the volatility of demands on this budget, however if it is passed on to schools it cannot be utilised until budget 2015/16 so this will need reviewing at the January 2015 meeting of the Schools' Forum.

DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed the DSG budget proposals for 2014/15.

10. DSG BUDGET MONITORING MONTH 10

Shannon Coleman-Slaughter presented the report on the DSG budget monitoring as at 31st January 2014.

The DSG forecast outturn as at 31st January 2014 is an under spend of £1,891k, £1,518k of which relates to the High Needs Block.

The HNB top up funding cost centres are forecasting a pressure of £127k and the HNB contingency is forecasting an under spend of £939k.

The Non-LA Special Schools cost centre is forecasting an under spend of £342k, there is a £70k pressure on home tuition and there is income of £400k relating to recoupment income for 2012-13.

The under spend on special schools in other local authorities is the result of the initiative to invest in specialist provision in West Berkshire.

11. WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15

The work programme for 2014/15 was agreed.

ACTION: All members to put the meetings in their diary.

All

12. UPDATE FROM CAPITA SCHOOL FUNDING CONFERENCE (verbal)

The Capita School Funding Conference on 28th January was attended by Patricia Brims, John Tyzack, Ian Pearson and Claire White. One of the highlights was a presentation by Susan Fielden, the Somerset County Council Strategic Manager for C&YP, who presented an informative presentation on Making the Most of Local Funding Formula Flexibility particularly their model for small schools which is based on 1.5 classes and the Headteacher teaching three days a week as well as the impact of the sparsity issue on their LA.

ACTION: The course material will be emailed to all members of the Schools' Forum with the minutes from this meeting.

C Loosen

13. UPDATE ON MEETING WITH DFE ON SMALL SCHOOLS FUNDING (verbal)

Ian Pearson, Irene Neill, Claire White and Richard Benyon MP attended a meeting with DfE regarding the impact of the funding formula on small schools. The issues regarding the sparsity factor were discussed and proposals were put forward for a formula taper.

14. TRADE UNION FACILITY TIME – SCHOOLS FORUM ROLE (verbal)

The DfE has recently issued advice on trade union facilities time, where TU representatives are released from their teaching duties for union work. Facilities time is a LA statutory duty but the guidelines only say that there should be reasonable release time and that use of TU facility time funding should be accountable.

DECISION: As this funding is part of the DSG an annual report on the use of the funding is required by the Schools Forum.

ACTION: Trade Union Facility Time report to be added to the Schools' Forum work programme.

C Loosen

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

EDUCATION CONSULTATIVE MEETING

Among the items discussed at the consultative meeting was the trade union facility for schools and the issue of how the funding available from maintained school de-delegations and the academies that buy back should be split across the trade unions. In addition there are issues regarding the mismatch of funding and the expectation and time available. One of the West Berkshire employees is also a national executive member of the NASUWT so this involves additional responsibility, time and funding approximately £15k (one third of salary plus on costs). The funding for 2014/15 has been finalised so if the quantum needs to be increased the unions would need to make a proposal to the Schools Forum for the 2015/16 budget process.

ACTION: Report back to Schools' Forum in the Summer Term.

**K Watts & J
Milone (HR)**

SCHOOLS FORUM REGULATIONS 2012 (UPDATED)

The Schools' Forum regulations 2012 update has recently been issued by the DfE.

ACTION: The document will be emailed to all members of the Schools' Forum with the minutes from this meeting.

C Loosen

Meeting closed 6.45 p.m.

Date of next meeting: Monday 9th June 2014

Time: 5pm

Venue: Shaw House