

Minutes of a Meeting of the Schools Forum

Monday 29th September 2014

Shaw House

Present:	Patricia Brims	Primary Schools	Governor	Brimpton Primary School
	Jeanette Clifford	Academies	Governor	St Bartholomew's School
	Paul Dick	Academies	Headmaster	Kennet School
	Brian Jenkins		Early Years PVI Representative	Jubilee Day Nursery
	Brendan Hanlon	Academies	Substitute	Trinity School
	Reverend Mary Harwood		Church of England Representative	Oxford Diocese
	Peter Hudson	Primary Schools	Governor	Mortimer St John's Infant School
	Sheilagh Peacock	Primary Schools	School Business Manager	The Winchcombe School
	Chris Prickett	Primary Schools	Headteacher	Streatley Primary School
	Chris Prosser	Secondary Schools	Headteacher	The Downs School
	Clive Rothwell	Secondary Schools	Governor	John O'Gaunt 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
		Carolynn Loosen		Schools' Forum Clerk
		Ian Pearson		Head of Education
		Jane Seymour		SEN Manager
		Claire White		Schools' Finance Manager

Action

1. APOLOGIES RECEIVED

Councillor David Allen		Shadow Portfolio Holder for C&YP	
Nathan Butler-Broad	Primary Schools	Headteacher	Spurcroft Primary School
Fadia Clarke		FE Representative	Newbury College
Shannon Coleman-Slaughter		CYP Finance Manager	
Kate House	Primary Schools	Headteacher	The Ilsleys Primary School
Jon Hewitt	Special Schools	Headteacher	The Castle School
Catherine Morley	Primary Schools	Headteacher	Theale Primary School
Councillor Irene Neill		Executive Portfolio for C&YP	
Derek Peuple	Academies	Headteacher	Park House School
David Ramsden	Secondary Schools	Headteacher	Little Heath School
Suzanne Taylor		Headteacher	Hungerford Nursery School
Charlotte Wilson	Academies	Headteacher	Trinity School

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING DATED 14TH JULY 2014

The minutes of the meeting on 14th July were approved.

3. ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

All the action points that were due for completion from the last meeting have been completed or are on this meeting's agenda. The report on the funding of

therapy services is due for presentation at the Forum meeting on 8th December.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Keith Watts who is the NUT representative and represents the Trade Unions on the Schools Forum declared an interest in Trade Union Facilities de-delegation.

5. MEMBERSHIP

Eileen Selsey has retired from her role as a Governor at Park House School and therefore as stated in the Forum's terms of reference Eileen's post on the Schools' Forum also comes to an end.

ACTION: Academy schools to elect a new Governor Representative.

Sarah Brinkley has resigned from her post on the Schools' Forum. Chris Prosser the Headteacher at The Downs School replaces Sarah on the Forum as a Maintained Secondary School Headteacher Representative. Sarah has agreed to be a substitute representative and attend if Chris is unable.

6. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

John Tyzack and Peter Hudson were unanimously re-elected as Chair and Vice Chair by the Schools' Forum members for one year.

7. SCHOOLS FORMULA 2015/16

Claire White presented the report on the schools formula 2015/16. The West Berkshire school formula 2015/16 consultation with schools closed on 11th September. There were 2 responses. The Ilsleys commented on their disappointment regarding the non use of the sparsity factor criteria where despite lobbying the DfE there have been no changes to the two mile distance criteria in the regulations that benefit West Berkshire's very small schools. The Willink submitted a case for funding exceptional premises costs for the leisure centre.

In order to provide schools with stability in their funding for a third year it was recommended that the formula factors remain the same as 2014/15.

The funding cap placed on schools with a per pupil increase was introduced in 2013/14 and was supposed to last two years the same duration as the minimum funding guarantee (MFG) that it was part funding. Many schools receiving the cap did not budget for it past the two years. Although the MFG will now continue it is recommended that the funding cap is removed. Some members did not understand the change of policy on the cap but did not disagree with its removal.

**Academy
Reps**

The funding rates for each formula factor are to remain the same, including the rates used for deprivation and prior attainment, and therefore more eligible pupils will result in more funding.

Once the schools block funding allocation 2015/16 is known any additional funding available will be distributed through the basic per pupil rate.

The Willink has a leisure centre on site which is run by Parkwood Leisure but the school has use of the sports hall during school hours and use of the swimming pool several times a week and the leisure centre has use of the school gym after 5pm on weekdays and at weekends and during school holidays. No charges are made to the leisure centre for the use of the gym but the school is charged £55k for its use of the facilities and its share of the utilities bill. The Willink meets the criteria for the exceptional premises factor on this basis, which if approved by the EFA will enable the school to receive support if the exceptional premises costs are in excess of 1% of the schools' budget. The situation would be reviewed every year to see if the school's costs were still in excess of 1% of their budget and affect less than 5% of schools.

The three options considered by the Heads Funding Group were:

Fund 100% of costs

Fund 50% of costs

Fund costs in excess of the 1% of school budget.

The HFG view was that funding 50% of the costs supported the school but did not remove the incentive to control costs where possible and that this reflected that most schools incur costs for the use of leisure facilities in some form. There was a heated discussion over the level of funding that The Willink should receive while it meets the exceptional premises criteria. There were questions regarding Parkwood not being charged for use of school facilities, negotiation of the contract with Parkwood Leisure and payment of energy costs.

The preferred options of funded 100% or 50% were put to a vote:

100% 6 votes

50% 5 votes

DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed by a majority vote that the exceptional premises factor would be funded at 100% and a submission be made to the EFA.

DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed to recommend to the Council Executive the formula 2015/16 as set out in the report for approval.

ACTION: Submission to be made to the EFA

ACTION: Recommendations to be reported to the Council's Executive.

C White

C White & I
Neill

8. DE-DELEGATIONS 2015/16

Ian Pearson presented the report on the de-delegations for the maintained schools 2015/16.

No responses were received on the subject of de-delegation following the consultation with the schools.

Behaviour Support

Includes support for class teachers for individual pupils or groups and training.

Primary Schools: Pool

Secondary Schools: Pool

DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed the Behaviour Support de-delegations.

Ethnic Minority Support

Includes assessment, advice and support for pupils who speak English as an additional language and those pupils with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller heritage.

Primary Schools: Pool

Secondary Schools: Pool

DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed the Ethnic Minority Support de-delegations.

ACTION: The Schools' Forum requested an update on the recruitment of a Portuguese support officer.

I Pearson

Trade Union Local Representation

This pays for the release of staff as TU representatives, including provision of advice to individual staff members.

Ian Pearson handed out copies of a letter he had received from the ATL, NAHT, NASUWT and NUT urging support for the continued de-delegation of funding.

Primary Schools: No decision

Secondary Schools: No decision

Area of contention is whether representatives are funded at actual costs or supply costs.

The Forum has been unable to make a decision on the Trade Unions de-delegation because they feel agreement is required between the Trade Unions and HR on a way forward. The trade unions have not produced a concise and properly costed proposal and the schools are unwilling to agree to de-delegation

unless they know the costs involved and the value for money of the service provided.

DECISION: Trade Union de-delegation will return to the next meeting for final consideration after the Heads Funding Group has reviewed properly costed options.

ACTION: Report to be taken to the HFG.

S Coleman-
Slaughter &
I Pearson

Contingency for Schools in Financial Difficulty

The provision of financial support to schools over and above their formula funding.

Primary Schools: Pool
Secondary Schools: Not Pool

DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed the Ethnic Minority Support de-delegations.

9. ADDITIONAL FUNDING CRITERIA 2015/16

Claire White presented the report on the additional funding criteria 2015/16.

Growth Fund

In 2013/14 £100k was set aside for the Growth Fund, but actual expenditure was £200k. In 2014/15 £250k has been top sliced from the DSG for the Growth Fund.

The 2015/16 funding requirement will only be known once the October census data is available and so it is proposed to keep the fund at £250k. The 2015/16 budget can be adjusted in the January 2015 submission to the EFA if required.

The only proposed change to the growth fund criteria is an element that supports diseconomies of scale when a new school opens but is not full. If a new school is less than 90% full then a lump sum of £1000 per percentage point below 100% capacity is made, up to a maximum of £80,000 (i.e. 20% full) and payable for the first two years only.

DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed the Growth Fund 2015/16 criteria change.

Falling Rolls Fund

The use of the falling rolls fund is restricted to schools classed as good or outstanding by Ofsted so it cannot be used to support unpopular or failing schools. It is unlikely to be used in the current year as rolls are generally rising except in schools with a poor Ofsted.

The Heads Funding Group discussed whether to leave the budget 2015/16 at £120k, reduce the budget or remove the funding. The Heads Funding Group recommended that the fund be reduced to £40k.

DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed the Falling Rolls Fund 2015/16 criteria to remain the same and the reduction of the fund to £40k.

Funding for Primary Schools in Financial Difficulty

It is proposed that the criteria remain the same for 2015/16 but with the addition of specified benchmarking data to be included in the application.

DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed the change to the criteria to include specified benchmarking data.

Additional SEN Funding

Four options for 2015/16 were discussed:

Method A

The current method where the number of high needs pupils receiving top ups is greater than 2% in primary schools and 4% in secondary schools.

Method B

As the current method but funding to be proportionate rather than based on rounded down pupil numbers.

Method C

Using the actual average percentage of high needs pupils in the local authority per primary and secondary sector plus 1%.

Method D

Funding the difference between the actual notional SEN the school has received and the actual number of SEN pupils receiving top ups x £6000.

The Heads Funding Group recommended method C which gives the most amount of funding and reflects the actual numbers of high needs pupils in each sector within West Berkshire.

Concerns have been voiced by some small schools regarding insufficient notional SEN formula when all the pupils with additional education needs below the £6k threshold are added to those high needs pupils at the school receiving top ups. Unfortunately nothing can be done through the formula to address this problem as all schools are funded on the same basis; making efficient use of the funding available is essential.

DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed to option C for 2015/16 which is regarded as the fairest way of targeting funding and produces the highest level of additional funding.

10. HIGH NEEDS PLACES AND ARRANGEMENTS 2015/16

Jane Seymour presented the report on the high needs places and arrangements 2015/16 for information.

In 2014/15 there are 666 funded places in special schools, primary and secondary school resource units, mainstream post 16, alternative provision and further education of which 640 places are currently filled.

The EFA will base 2015/16 on 2014/15 and any extra places must be applied for as an exception and are unlikely to be agreed if:

- The total number of additional places is less than 5% of the 2014/15 place allocation (33 places).
- If an institution that has more than 50 places the increase is less than 10%.
- If an institution of less than 50 places the increase are less than 5 additional places.

The deadline for exception requests to reach the EFA is 17th October 2014.

Additional places will be required for the new Secondary ASD Resource due to open in September 2015 and for the West Berkshire Training Consortium. The Primary ASD Resource is now likely to open in September 2016. It is likely that the additional places will not meet the 10% criteria and no additional funding will be received in which case place numbers across the settings will need to be reviewed.

11. DSG MONITORING 2014/15 – MONTH 5

Ian Pearson presented the DSG 2014/15 monitoring report as at 31st August 2014 for information. The forecast position as at the end of August is an under spend of £633k most of which is concentrated in the High Needs Block. The SEN funding adjustments for the primary and secondary pupil September admissions are not reflected in the month 5 report.

12. FORWARD PLAN SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2014

The Heads Funding Group and Schools' Forum Autumn term reports plan including scope of the report, author and the relevant submission deadline was presented for information.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no any other business.

Meeting closed 6.35 p.m.

Date of next meeting: Monday 8th December 2014
Time: 5pm
Venue: Shaw House