

SCHOOLS FORUM

MEETING, 8th MARCH, 2013

Representing Secondary School Governors

Joanne Murphy	Westhoughton High School
David Kay	Sharples Science College
Renee Mellis	Westhoughton High School
Paul McCarthy	Harper Green School

Representing Primary School Head teachers

Sandra Kelly	Sunning Hill School
Janet Coysh	Chorley New Road School
Mike Tonge	Prestolee Primary

Representing Primary School Governors

Mike Doyle	Pikes Lane Primary School
Neville Speakes	St Peters and Pauls RC Primary
Lynne Kay	Sharples Primary
Janet Whitehouse	Church Road Primary School
Olive Fairhurst	Lord Street Primary School

Representing Secondary Head teachers

Tony Purcell	Rivington and Blackrod
Phil Hart	Westhoughton High School
John Porteous	Turton School

Representing Non-School Members

Malcolm Fullerton	Joint Unions
Jackie Winstanley	Unison

Representing Church of England Diocese

Tania Lewyckyj	St. James's CE Secondary
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Representing Nursery Schools

Ann Macleod	Susan Isaacs Nursery School
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Representing Special Schools

Maureen Morrissy

Thomasson Memorial School

Representing 14-19 Partnership

Jonathan Steele

Firwood Special School

Representing Academies

David Mole

Essa Academy

Also in Attendance

Kevin McKeon

Bolton MBC

John Livesey

Children's Services

David Smith

Children's Services

Claire Binks

Children's Services

Julie Edwards

Children's Services

Jan Robinson

Children's Services

Charlotte Walsh

Children's Services Work Experience0

Ian D Mulholland

Democratic Services

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Diane Bohan and Jo Briggs.

Mr. M. Doyle, Chairman.

61. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Schools Forum held on 25th January, 2013 were submitted.

Resolved- That the minutes of the last meeting be signed as a correct record.

62. CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Charlotte Walsh from Bolton University, who was undertaking work experience in the Children's Services Department.

He also made mention of the system of nominating and electing Governors onto this Forum whose term of office was due to expire. It was indicated that information concerning the next elections in this regard would need to be circulated before Easter.

Resolved – That the Chairman's comments be noted.

63. CONSULTATION ON SCHOOL FUNDING REFORM – NEXT STEPS TOWARDS A FAIRER SYSTEM

(a) The Director of Children's Services and the Director of Corporate Resources submitted a joint report which outlined the headlines relating to the High Needs Block within the School funding Reform.

By way of background information, the report explained that the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) would be split into three blocks. These were, the Schools Block, the Early Needs Block and the High Needs Block. Those blocks were not ring fenced, however DSG would continue to be ring fenced as a whole.

The Forum was advised that the aim was for a set of funding arrangements for pupils and students with high needs that was responsive to the needs of individuals and supported by clear information in the form of a local offer about high needs provision available in schools, colleagues and other providers.

The new funding approach aimed –

- to be responsive to individual pupil needs;
- for all providers to be funded on an equivalent basis;
- to bring pre 16 and post 16 provision together; and
- to provide clear information about available provision.

The report went on to set out the position in respect of maintained schools and academies, special schools, post 16, inter-authority payments and increased demand on the high needs block.

Members in their discussions referred to –

- the possibility as to whether the table regarding support could also be written for use by main stream schools;
- in section five of the report the chart should refer to, severe learning difficulties and not specific learning difficulties;
- matters around some children who were statemented did not attract funding and there was a need for this to be looked at;
- top up funding that goes to independent providers; and
- increased demand on the high needs block.

Resolved – (i) That the contents of the report be noted.

(ii) That the Formula Review Group be asked to look at the issue of statemented children who did not attract funding and the outcome be brought back to a future meeting of this Forum.

(iii) That the matter of top up funding that goes to independent providers be considered at the next meeting of Special Heads.

(b) The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which informed the Forum of changes in Early Years Funding and the impact and changes necessary to the formula funding, including the introduction of two year places from September, 2013.

By way of background information, the report advised the Forum that in April, 2010 the Authority introduced a formula for supporting the three and four year old free early education. The formula supported the provision of early education for 15 hours per week for 38 weeks in maintained schools, nurseries, private, voluntary and independent settings.

The forum was further advised that in the current year, HM Government had been looking at all the funding provided to schools with many changes being made. Furthermore, in relation to early years. Because the formula was still very young HM Government was not making major changes but this paper informed the Forum of the changes that were being and had been introduced.

The Forum was advised of the changes relating to –

- 3 and 4 year old free early education;
- Changes to the funding formula for 3 and 4 year old free entitlement; and
- Two year free early education.

Jan Robinson and Claire Binks also gave an accompanying presentation which highlighted the focus on early intervention. The presentation also highlighted the following-

- a statutory duty now to provide free places for 2 year olds;
- eligibility criteria approved in June, 2012 which affected phase one in 2013 and phase two in 2014;
- the funding allocations were announced in December, 2012;
- in 2012/13 the funding was £623,904;
- in 2013/14 there was £2,412,773 for places and £947,189 for trajectory building; and
- the formula was currently being developed for 2 year olds but £4.85 was being looked at.

Members in their deliberations referred to –

- the sufficiency of places and matters around this;
- identifying eligible children; and
- the next steps before September, 2013.

Resolved – (i) That the Deputy Leader of the Council be notified that this Forum recommends the introduction of a two year old formula at the rate of £4.85 per child per hour for 15 hours a week over 38 weeks.

(ii) That the Deputy Leader of the Council be notified that this Forum recommends the amendments to the Early Years Funding Formula for 2013/14, as set out in the report.

(iii) that the further changes that will be necessary in 2013/14 with regards to the development of a formula for two year olds and the supplementary for children with special educational needs be noted.

(c) The Forum also received a presentation which looked at the issue of pro-forma comparisons in the north west.

The presentation compared Bolton with other authorities in terms of –

- basic entitlement;
- Deprivation- 12 authorities used FSM and 12 used FSM6, IDACI was not used in some authorities and there were relatively low values compared to FSM;
- looked after children – 5 authorities did not use the LAC factor, 11 authorities used if a pupil was ever a LAC and 7 authorities used if pupil was LAC for 6 months ;
- low cost high incidence SEN – 11 authorities used 78 points for EYFSP and 11 authorities used 73 points and one authority did not use;
- EAL- 3 authorities did not use;
- lump sum; and
- capping / scaling – 4 authorities had no capping / scaling, 17 authorities capped and 3 authorities applied scaling.

It was also highlighted that only six authorities used mobility which Bolton had not used. Also only two authorities had protected sixth forms which included Bolton. In terms of split site, many authorities were reviewing.

A schedule of comparative statistics was also tabled.

Members in their discussions referred to the following –

- the need for deprivation measured against a median and not a mean;
- extra information regarding authorities protecting sixth forms;
- matters around the turbulence of the choices made by the Forum and the need to ensure there was fair funding. It was also the role of the Formula funding Group to look at this and challenge; and
- the retain for growth items listed on the tabled schedule.

Resolved – (i) That the detail of the presentation be noted.

(ii) That updated impact graphs be circulated at the next meeting in order to look at the rationale behind the discrepancies.

(d) The Director of Children's Services also submitted a report which outlined the Department for Education's response to how the 2013/14 reforms had been implemented and considered the changes in 2014/15.

By way of background information, the report explained that the aim was for a funding system which –

- was up to date and reflected the current demographics of pupils across the country;
- targeted additional money to pupils who needed extra support to achieve;
- was consistent and pupil-led so that, wherever a pupil went to school, he or she would attract similar levels of funding;
- was transparent so that parents, head teachers, governors and tax payers could see clearly how funding had been distributed and why; and
- gave pupils genuine choice about which school they attended.

The report went on to explain in detail the changes that had been made, matters around the minimum funding guarantee, national consistency issues, options for adjusting high needs funding in 2014/15 and beyond and matters around the operation of School Forums.

Resolved – That members of the Forum be invited to submit comments on the consultation to the Children’s Services Department by 18th March, 2013 and then the response will be agreed at a meeting of the Formula Review Group.

(e) The minutes of the meeting of the Formula Review Group held on 27th February, 2013 were tabled.

It was highlighted that conversations were being held regarding the fees for school meals.

Resolved – That the minutes be noted.

64. SCHEME FOR FINANCING SCHOOLS, APRIL, 2014

Resolved – That this item be deferred due to the fact that further guidance from the Department for Education is awaited.

65. CONSTITUTION SUB GROUP FEEDBACK

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st March, 2013 were tabled.

Resolved - (i) That the minutes be noted.

(ii) That the new constitution be submitted to the next meeting.

(The meeting started at 2.00 p.m. and finished at 3.55pm)