



REPORT REFERENCE: **4.0**
 LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS' FORUM
 21 APRIL 2010

**PRESENT: TERL BRYANT (CHAIRMAN), (GOVERNOR, STAMFORD QUEEN
 ELEANOR TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE)**

Schools' Members

Ellenor Beighton (Headteacher, Market Rasen, De Aston), John Beswick (Governor, Louth Cordeaux), St John Burkett (Headteacher, Deeping St James Linchfield Primary), Bill Bush (Headteacher, Grantham, The Phoenix School), Stephen Douglas (Headteacher, Cranwell Primary), Professor Ken Durrands CBE (Governor, Grantham, The Kings), Michael Follows MBE (Governor, Boston John Fielding Community Special), Anne Grief (Headteacher, Long Sutton Primary), Roger Hale (Headteacher, Caistor Grammar), Simon Hardy (Faith Groups), Linda Hayes (Governor, Ruskington Chestnut Street C of E Primary), Paul Hopkins (Governor, Lincoln Monks Abbey Primary), Sarah Jelley (Governor, Nettleham Primary), Jonathan Maddox (Headteacher, Bourne Grammar), Jeremy Newnham (Headteacher, Caistor Yarborough), Barbara Peck (Staff Trade Unions), Malcolm Shore (Headteacher, Grantham St Anne's C of E Primary) and Heather Steed (Headteacher, Boston Nursery).

Observer (with speaking rights)

Councillor Mrs P A Bradwell (Executive Councillor for Children's Services including Post 16 Education).

Officials

Children's Services Directorate:- Peter Duxbury (Director), Debbie Barnes (Assistant Director), Chris Harris (Director, 14-19 Partnership), Rob Mayall (Outcome Lead – Economic Development), Penny Richardson, (Interim Head of Service) and Tony Warnock (Head of Finance).

Chief Executive's Office – Steve Blagg (Democratic Services Officer).

In attendance: Keith Sands - Mouchel

Apologies for absence

Tim Bright (Headteacher, Bourne Westfield Primary), Martin Connor (Headteacher, North Hykeham, North Kesteven School), Jennifer Wheeldon (Headteacher, Scothern, Ellison Boulters C of E Primary) and Julie Marshall (Private, Voluntary and Independent Early Years Providers of the Free Entitlement to Early Years Education).

51. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meetings of the Forum held on 27 January and 9 February 2010 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

52. ACTIONS ARISING SINCE THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Forum received a paper outlining actions taken since the previous meeting on 27 January 2010.

The following was noted:-

1. Minute 40 - NHS Joint Commissioning on Shared Services - a report would be submitted to the Forum in April 2011. A scoping exercise was currently being undertaken, on behalf of the CYPSP, on the current needs of, amongst others, Children Looked After and Children with Mental Health. When the scoping details had been agreed Debbie Barnes would report to the Forum.
2. Minute 41 - Virtual Learning Environment – Project Updates - agreed that a letter should be sent to Jez Bailey, Head of IT in Children's Services, on behalf of the Forum thanking him for the work he had done with schools on this matter.
3. Minute 47- CYPSP Minutes, to December 2009 - there were not any safeguarding or welfare issues in connection with the twenty five closed cases, that new arrangements were in place with the Council's strategic partners and details would be circulated with the minutes of this meeting.

53. MOUCHEL'S AMBITIONS FOR SCHOOL SERVICES

The Forum received a presentation from Mr Keith Sands, Interim Partnership Director, Mouchel, in connection with Mouchel's ambitions for services to schools.

Comments by Mr Sands included:-

1. The ongoing talks with schools in connection with delivery, quality, cost and communication.
2. Improvements to customer care.
3. Requested that Forum members should ask colleagues to participate in improvements to customer service.
4. More transparency needed in connection with costs.
5. The importance of Mouchel acting as a partner with schools.
6. Service Level Agreements for delivery of school services were being examined with the need for a clearer understanding of responsibilities.
7. A new model for the delivery of services would be given to Children's Services in Autumn 2010 with expected delivery in Spring 2011.
8. There was much work to do and any assistance from the Forum was welcomed.

Comments by the Forum included:-

1. The need for schools to contact Mouchel if they had any problems.

2. The need for the school's link with Mouchel to be able to speak with authority and to have knowledge of service requirements, e.g. the Bursar.
3. Knowing who did what at Mouchel was important.

The involvement of the Forum was welcomed and the encouragement of schools to work with Mouchel, in particular, on the various groups, e.g. human resources and finance. Simon Hardy and Anne Grief volunteered to assist Mouchel.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the presentation by Mr Keith Sands, Mouchel, be noted.
- (2) That schools be asked by Mouchel how improvements can be made to school services and that Simon Hardy and Anne Grief be thanked for volunteering to help in this process.

54. CHILDREN'S TRUST ARRANGEMENTS

The Forum received a report from Clive Yates, Business Manager Children and Young People Strategic Partnership, about the new statutory guidance on co-operation arrangements, including the Children's Trust Board and the Children and Young People's Plan, which came into effect in April 2010 and which confirmed school's, including Academies, to be statutory partners of Children's Trust with an associated duty to co-operate.

Michael Follows MBE tabled a letter, dated 11 April 2010, to the Director of Children's Services ("Request for Schools' Forum to be represented on the Executive Committee of the CYPSP").

The Chairman thanked Michael Follows MBE and John Beswick for their work on the report.

Officers comments included:-

1. The CYPSP was currently reviewing its governance structure and the Forum was a consultee on the review.
2. The need for transparent arrangements on the appointment of school representatives on the Trust Board.
3. It was proposed that the Forum should be represented on the Trust's Investment Group which had, amongst others, important responsibilities for identifying priorities and the pooling of resources.
4. Schools were now central to the Trust.
5. Partnership was important and would continue whoever was elected after 6 May.

Comments made by the Forum included:-

1. The need to examine changes following the publication of the guidance.
2. The Forum's status had not changed and it was not a statutory partner. The Forum had a statutory role of overseeing the DSG and contracts.
3. Should it be the wish that the Forum should become a member of the Trust then it was important to know where the Forum fitted into the structure. The Forum's proposed involvement in strategy and finance was welcomed.

4. Schools would be a relevant partner and it was important that the election of school members was transparent.
5. It was important that any proposals for funding by the Trust should have the approval of schools.
6. The consultation response should be completed by officers, on behalf of the Forum, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen before being emailed to Head Teachers and Chairmen of Governors.

RESOLVED

- (1) That if the Forum becomes part of the Children's Trust Board before any action by the Board affecting schools takes place all schools be informed by email to seek their comments.
- (2) That officers, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen, complete the consultation response and a copy be sent to Forum members before being returned to the DCSF.

(POST MEETING NOTE

An abbreviated response to the Trust arrangements has now been sent to the schools)

55. ADDITIONAL NEEDS – UPDATE (Minute 50, Forum, 9 February 2010)

The Forum received a report from Penny Richardson on progress of the implementation of changes in connection with Additional Needs.

Comments made by the Forum included the need for an action plan and an explanation of the ground rules to the next meeting of the Forum, the need to inform schools if changes were made, the need to send any training details to schools and the need for the information to be sent to schools as soon as possible to allow them to make the necessary arrangements.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That a report, including details of an action plan and an explanation of the ground rules, accountability and monitoring arrangements, be submitted to the next meeting of the Forum.
- (3) That all schools be informed well in advance of details of the training package.

56. STAMFORD EDUCATION ALLIANCE

(NOTE:- The Chairman and Jonathan Maddox declared both declared a personal non prejudicial interest as the ex-Chairman of Governors and Chairman of the Finance Sub-Committee at Stamford Queen Eleanor School, and having a child at Stamford Endowed School and Headteacher of a school directly affected, respectively).

The Forum received a report from Rob Mayall on collaborative arrangements for the development of 11-19 learning in Stamford.

Jonathan Maddox comments included:-

1. Support for anything that improved educational provision at Stamford Queen Eleanor School.
2. Sixth form provision was abundant in the area.
3. His school and other schools in the area would welcome the affected pupils.
4. Stamford Endowed School would welcome the extra income from the Council.
5. Fairness to all pupils was needed and the proposed arrangements by the Council were unfair.

Comments by the Forum included:-

1. Examples given of the distance travelled by 14-19 year olds to other schools in the county.
2. Potential redundancies of teaching staff in the maintained sector.
3. Proposals by Rutland County Council to provide sixth form education in Rutland could affect the viability of the Queen Eleanor school.
4. This was a complex issue and secondary Head Teachers had concerns about the proposals.

Officers stated that fairness meant meeting the needs of all children; the cost was small; agreed that the proposals of Rutland County Council could affect the viability of the Queen Eleanor school; the need to avoid being dogmatic about public and private provision. What worked for the child was important and to protect the future of the Queen Eleanor school.

Councillor Mrs P A Bradwell stated that while the Council worked in cooperation with Rutland County Council Rutland on this occasion had not informed the Council of their proposals.

RESOLVED

That the collaborative arrangements in Stamford be supported together with the arrangements for the funding of Post 16 learning in Stamford Endowed School.

57. POST-16 LEARNER ALLOCATIONS 2010-11 – UPDATE (Minute 47, Forum, 27 January 2010)

The Forum received a report from Chris Harris on the latest situation in connection with Post-16 Learner allocations 2010-11. While the responsibility for commissioning Post-16 education and training passed to local authorities from 1 April 2010, the allocations for the academic year 2010-11 had been made by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and were now the responsibility of its successor organisation the Young Peoples Learning Agency (YPLA). There were outstanding issues for a small number of providers that were still being pursued by the LSC with the YPLA and this might alter slightly the final position.

It was noted that “9.4%” in the second paragraph, page 2, should be “11.84%”.

The Forum stated that transparency was needed in the transfer of funds from the YPLA and the need to consider the effects of the raising of the school leaving age to 18 years in 2015.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

58. LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHOOL CARRY FORWARD POLICY

The Forum received a report from Tony Warnock seeking the Forum's views on the guidance for local authorities published by the DCSF, on 15 March 2010, on managing school surplus balances.

Comments made by the Forum included that the additional monies in the budget share could mean schools losing their flexibility; concern that schools could keep money in reserve because of the economic climate and the need for schools to have flexibility to carry forward monies when money was received late in the financial year.

Officers stated that the new funding arrangements (minute 61 refers) could mean some grants being absorbed into the DSG which might affect flexibility and agreed that there was a need to make an allowance for unforeseen circumstances and to allow carry overs in such circumstances.

Officers would accept representations from schools on the DCSF guidance.

RESOLVED

(1) That the DCSF guidance be noted.

(2) That no major change be made to the local authority's Carry Forward Policy be supported.

59. CHARGING POLICY FOR EARLY YEARS' PLACES WITHIN THE MAINTAINED SECTOR

The Forum received a report from Debbie Barnes in connection with a proposed change of policy to enable the maintained sector to make a charge for places over and above the fifteen hours statutory provision for early years' places. The report also proposed that the DSG should no longer support the cost of full time provision.

It was noted that the cost per hour per child for 2010/11 was £3.93 a hour (not £3.99 an hour detailed in the report).

Comments made by the Forum included:-

1. An appreciation of the support given by officers in meetings with nursery Head Teachers in which concerns had been expressed about the possibility of the DCSF responding to say that no charge should be imposed, concerns of parents who would have problems paying £3.93 a hour, access to funding and the need for reassurance about accessing funding particularly for less fortunate families, the need for training so that parents could access funding, charge of £3.93 a hour would not cover the cost of salaries of teaching staff and a wish to review the situation in the future.
2. The need for reassurance that schools would be funded to cover the 15 hours.
3. The single funding formula would ensure equity.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the charging policy be supported.
- (2) That the discontinuation of the funding of full time places from September 2011 by the local authority be supported.

60. 2009/10 SECTION 52 BENCHMARKING

The Forum received a report from Tony Warnock on the latest Section 52 benchmarking data published by the DCSF.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Forum on the Section 52 budget statement.

61. DCSF CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL FUNDING

The Forum received a report from Tony Warnock on a DCSF consultation document setting out proposals for school funding arrangements from 2011/12.

The Forum agreed that a simplified version of the responses should be sent to all schools and governing bodies for their comments before a response was sent to the DCSF.

RESOLVED

- (1) That simplified responses to the consultation questions be sent to schools and governing bodies for comment.
- (2) That Tony Warnock be thanked for his work in preparing the consultation responses.

62. WORK PROGRAMME

The Forum received its work programme.

RESOLVED

That the work programme be updated and submitted to the next meeting of the Forum.

63. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

2:00 pm on Wednesday 30 June 2010 at the County Offices.

64. LINDA HAYES – LAST MEETING

The Chairman stated that this was Linda Hayes's last meeting and that she had been a member of the Forum since its inception.

RESOLVED

That the Forum place on record its appreciation to the service of Linda Hayes and wish her a happy and healthy retirement.

64. SPECIAL SCHOOL FUNDING

It was noted that the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen would represent the Forum on the Special Schools Funding Group.

The meeting closed at 5:40 pm.