

Schools' Members

Terl Bryant (Governor, Stamford Queen Eleanor) (Chairman)

John Beswick (Governor, Louth Cordeaux), William Bush (Headteacher, The Phoenix, Grantham), Michael Follows MBE (Governor, Boston John Fielding Community Special) (Vice Chairman), Tony Gaskell (Governor, Lincoln Manor Leas Infant), Anne Grief (Headteacher, Long Sutton Primary), Roger Hale (Headteacher, Caistor Grammar), Dominic Loyd (Headteacher Boston Tower Road Primary), Jonathan Maddox (Headteacher, Bourne Grammar School), Jeremy Newnham (Headteacher, Caistor Yarborough), Heather Steed (Headteacher, Boston Nursery School), Jennifer Wheeldon (Headteacher, Scothern, Ellison Boulters Primary), Simon Hardy (Faith Groups), Julie Marshall (representative of Private, Voluntary and Independent Early Year's Providers of the free entitlement to early years education),

Apologies received from:- Sharron Close (Headteacher, Gainsborough White's Wood Lane Junior), Professor K Durrands CBE (Governor, Grantham, The Kings), Richard Hardesty (Governor, North Cockerington C of E Primary), Nigel Henry (representative of Staff Trade Unions), Ian Wilkinson (Headteacher, Deeping St James' Primary),

Officials

Children's Directorate – Debbie Barnes (Assistant Director),
Resources Directorate – Tony Warnock (Head of Finance),
Performance and Governance Directorate – Catherine Wilman (Democratic Services Officer);

Other Officers Present

Helen Brough (St Helena's C of E Primary School), Mark Harvey (Senior Procurement Manager), Matthew Hird (Procurement Advisor), Alan Whitaker (Service Manager)

24. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 4 OCTOBER 2011 AND 12 OCTOBER 2011

The Chairman welcomed Nigel Ryan from Spalding Grammar School who was present to observe the proceedings.

4 October 2011

Following the Forum's response to the Government's consultation: *A Consultation on School Funding Reform: Proposals for a Fairer System*, it was reported that announcements would be made in the summer of 2012. The new funding method

could be introduced from April 2013, however it may be delayed until after the general election.

12 October 2012

The minutes from the meeting held on 12 October 2012 were discussed and the following points were noted:

- Minute 16 referred to a unanimous decision taken by the Forum not to support the development of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). A letter from Peter Duxbury to the Chairman of the Forum was circulated which explained the decision of the Children's Services Departmental Management Team (DMT) and the Executive Councillor for Children's Services and Adult Learning, to support the EBacc's development against the Forum's judgement;
- The Forum discussed the decision made by the DMT and Executive Councillor and was disappointed not to have received a response from the Executive Councillor direct, either in writing or in person.
- They also felt that the minute covering the item (Minute 16) did not convey the Forum's opposition to the EBacc strongly enough. Alternative wording for point 2 of the resolution was composed as follows:
 2. That proposals for use of the 2010/11 DSG underspending, which included the allocation of c.£10m to help finance transitional arrangements arising from the proposed redistribution of mainstreamed grants, be supported, and; the proposals in Appendix 4 are not supported;
- The Forum requested that a business case explaining the proposals and expected benefits as well as details on milestones and targets (volume and outcome measures) be presented to the next meeting of the Forum;
- It was noted that the opinions of the Forum with regards the DMT's decision on the EBacc would be relayed to Cllr M Hill and Cllr Mrs Bradwell.

RESOLVED:

1. That the minutes from the meeting held on 4 October 2011 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman;
2. That the minutes from the meeting held on 12 October 2011 be agreed and signed by the Chairman subject to the alteration of Resolution 2 to Minute 16.

25. EARLY YEARS SINGLE FUNDING FORMULA (EYSFF) – NURSERY SCHOOLS

The Forum considered a report outlining the proposed changes to the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) following implementation in April 2011.

Following an officer review of the EYSFF, it was identified that a Special Educational Needs Allowance and Teaching and Learning Responsibility payment would need incorporating into the Nursery Schools hourly rate to support the requirements of the schools.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

26. PROCUREMENT PRACTICE IN SCHOOLS

Matthew Hird and Mark Harvey from Procurement Lincolnshire attended to present their report which provided information on how schools could improve their procurement practices and the support which was available to enable them to do so.

Two Schools Working Groups had been established to determine what measures could be put in place to support schools in their procurement practice. Membership of the group was mainly comprised of School Business Managers.

During discussion, the following points were noted:

- There was not a great awareness of the Council's contract procedure rules amongst schools or knowledge that Procurement Lincolnshire could help with purchasing;
- It was suggested a one-day event showcasing procurement provision in association with ESPO (the Council's purchasing agent) could help to raise awareness;
- More work was to be done on procurement in schools and the suggestions from the working party would be returning to a future meeting of the Schools' Forum;

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

27. MAINSTREAMING OF GRANTS

Consideration was given to a report which sought the views of the Schools' Forum on proposals for changes to the schools funding formula in 2012/13. The proposals followed the Government's decision in the autumn of 2010 to mainstream grants in to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

A working group was formed made up of volunteers from the Forum and other members selected from all sectors of education to try to provide a balanced representation. The working group had met in September 2011 and again in November 2011. At the latter meeting conclusions were formed which had influenced the proposals set out in the report.

The views of the Forum would be considered by the Departmental Management Team (DMT) and the Executive Councillor for Children's Services and Adult

Learning, before formal decisions would be made by the Executive Councillor in early February 2012.

During discussion of the report, the following points were noted:

- Post 16 students had not been included in the figures;
- The results of the work would make a big difference to schools with low budgets;
- The work had been completed using figures from the last complete financial year, which was 2010/2011;
- Tony Warnock would send a letter to schools to give a flavour of the report, to ensure they were aware of the changes;
- It was anticipated that the changes to the funding would be introduced in April 2012, with appropriate protection arrangements put in place.

The members of the Forum who had been part of the Working Group, expressed their admiration for the way in which the group had been managed and chaired. The meetings had been illuminating and they felt that good work had been undertaken. It was suggested the findings of the Group be signposted.

RESOLVED

1. That the report be noted and comments made by the Schools' Forum be forwarded to the DMT and Executive Councillor for Children's Services and Adult Learning for consideration;
2. That the proposals be accepted unanimously.

28. SCHOOL FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS 2012/13

Consideration was given to a report which sought the Schools' Forum's views on school funding arrangements for 2012/13.

On 14 December 2011, the Department for Education announced a number of important decisions relating to Local Authority and School Funding, which were outlined in the report.

Once central budgets had been set and schools had received their Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG), the Local Authority proposed to use the remaining funds to address three strategic priorities:

- Creating collaborative partnerships in the primary sector;
- Providing additional support to small and medium sized secondary schools;
- Increasing the funding for Special Educational Needs (SEN) across the primary and secondary sectors.

During discussion of these priorities, the following points were noted:

- The survival of small schools providing good quality education was important, and could be achieved through collaborations;

- Small, rural schools were vulnerable at this time and this may help keep them open;
- The detail of the priorities had to be worked through, and were currently being considered in principle only;
- All schools were entitled to the DSG savings, however increasing the funding for SEN across primary and secondary would only affect a certain number of schools. A fairer approach would be to divide the savings among all schools, unless there was evidence that SEN was in need of further funding.

RESOLVED

1. That the report be noted;
2. That the following strategic priorities be supported:
 - Creating collaborative partnerships in the primary sector;
 - Providing additional support to small and medium sized secondary schools;
3. That the following strategic priority not be supported without further evidence:
 - Increasing the funding for Special Education Needs across primary and secondary sectors.

29. UPDATE ON THE SPECIAL SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA

A report was considered which provided the Forum with an update on Developments since the introduction of the new special schools funding formula in April 2011. There were some adjustments to be made to the formula.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

30. WORK PROGRAMME

The Forum considered its work programme for forthcoming meetings. Following a discussion, it was agreed to bring a report on pension provision for academies to the next meeting.

31. emPSN – SCHOOL BROADBAND

A report was considered which updated the Forum on progress made with broadband provision for schools. Kcom had been announced as the winning integrated provider in November 2011.

The new arrangements would have Lincolnshire County Council as the founder member which would enable all schools and academies to purchase their broadband from the framework. Schools would need to have an individual contract and direct relationship with the provider, but the Council would pay for each schools' service, and the school would receive a dummy invoice.

With the emPSN broadband service, schools would have a secure online environment and technical support. Schools would have a risk of £1 if they bought in to the service, however they would have to be contracted to it for four years. The Council were required to sign up for seven years.

There were opportunities if other public sector providers wished to join this network.

If schools did not wish to use this service, they would be given an allowance for their broadband to spend either on this contract or to find their own. If their own stand-alone service cost more than their allowance, they would have to find the extra from their own budget. It was felt that this should be made clear to all schools;

All schools would be informed of the new arrangements by letter shortly.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 5.00pm