



Schools' Members

Ellenor Beighton (Headteacher, De Aston, Market Rasen), Terl Bryant (Governor, Stamford Queen Eleanor), William Bush (Headteacher, The Phoenix, Grantham), Professor Ken Durrands CBE (Governor, The Kings, Grantham), Michael Follows MBE (Governor, Boston John Fielding Community Special), Tony Gaskell (Governor, Lincoln Manor Leas Infant), Anne Grief (Headteacher, Long Sutton Primary), Roger Hale (Headteacher, Caistor Grammar), Simon Hardy (Faith Groups), Jonathan Maddox (Headteacher, Bourne Grammar School), Julie Marshall (Private, Voluntary and Independent Early Year's Providers of the free entitlement to early years education), Heather Steed (Headteacher, Boston Nursery School), Jennifer Wheeldon (Headteacher, Ellison Boulters Primary, Scothern) and Ian Wilkinson (Headteacher, Deeping St James' Primary).

Apologies for absence were received from:- Richard Hardesty (Governor, North Cockerington C of E Primary), Dominic Loyd (Headteacher, Boston Tower Road Primary), Jeremy Newnham (Headteacher, Caistor Yarborough) and Councillor Patricia Bradwell (Executive Councillor for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning).

Officials

Children's Directorate – Debbie Barnes (Interim Director of Children's Services), Meredith Teasdale (Interim Assistant Director of Children's Services); Charlotte Gray (Commissioning and Development Officer) and Julie Grindley (Principal Practitioner - Childcare/FIS); Resources Directorate – Tony Warnock (Head of Finance – Children's & Specialist Services); Performance and Governance Directorate – Steve Blagg (Democratic Services Officer).

Observers (with speaking rights)

John Beswick (Governor, Louth Cordeaux)
Councillor David Brailsford (Support Councillor for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning).

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Terl Bryant be elected Chairman of the Forum for the ensuing municipal year.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Michael Follows MBE be elected Vice-Chairman of the Forum for the ensuing municipal year.

3. JOHN BESWICK – MEMBERSHIP OF THE SCHOOLS' FORUM

It was noted that John Beswick had resigned from the Governing Body of the Cordeaux School, Louth and had become a Governor of a primary school which meant that he could no longer remain as member of the Forum as he had been elected as a secondary school Governor.

The Chairman stated that he wished to co-opt John Beswick on to the Forum's ICT Sub Group because of his expertise in the IT area.

RESOLVED

That John Beswick be co-opted on to the Forum's ICT Sub Group.

4. ANNE GRIEF – RETIREMENT FROM THE FORUM

Anne Grief informed the meeting that this was her last meeting of the Forum because she was retiring from teaching. The Forum placed on record their appreciation for her work on the Forum and wished her health and happiness in her retirement.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 25 APRIL 2012

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 April 2012 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the following amendments:-

- (a) page 3 – minute 35 – penultimate bullet point – replace “welcomed” by “supported”.
- (b) page 3 – minute 35 – last bullet point – replace “suggested” by “requested”.
- (c) page 3 – minute 35 – resolution to be amended to read – “that the report be noted and a report be submitted in six months time”.
- (d) page 4 – minute 36 – second paragraph – replace “sufficiency” by “provision”.

6. THE RAISING OF THE PARTICIPATION AGE IN POST – 16 LEARNING
(minute 34, Schools' Forum, 25 April 2012)

A report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Forum on the plans in place to address the number of 16-18 year olds where it was not known if they were in employment, education or training in Lincolnshire.

7. DfE CONSULTATION ON IMPROVING THE ASSURANCE SYSTEM FOR FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN LOCAL AUTHORITY MAINTAINED SCHOOLS (minute 38, Forum, 25 April 2012)

It was agreed that any response from the DfE to the consultation on improving the assurance system for financial management in local authority maintained schools should be reported to the Forum. The Forum also requested information on the financial control of Academies.

8. CURRENT SCHOOLS' FORUM MEMBERSHIP

Details of the current membership of the Schools' Forum were presented.

In view of the draft regulations on Schools' Forums recently issued by the DfE the membership of the Forum would need to be examined so that it reflected all schools and there was also a need for the Forum to consider whether its membership was reviewed every year to reflect the number of Academies being created.

Officers agreed to raise the profile of the Forum at meetings of Headteachers to encourage a wider representation on the Forum.

RESOLVED

- (a) That officers examine the membership of the Forum to reflect the finalised regulations.
- (b) That whether the membership of the Forum should be reviewed annually be considered at the next meeting.

9. ACADEMIES UPDATE

Meredith Teesdale gave an update of the number of Academies and the breakdown of the number of pupils in each sector. (See appendix to the minutes).

Meredith Teasdale agreed to provide details of any Sponsored Academies in Lincolnshire.

In response to an enquiry she stated that the LA were under some pressure from the DfE for a small number of schools to convert to an Academy through a sponsor.

RESOLVED

That a written report on the Academies update be submitted to meetings in the future.

10. REVISED SCHOOLS' BUDGET 2012/13

Tony Warnock presented a report on the revised Schools' Budget for 2012/13 and sought support for the proposed use of the under spending from 2011/12.

Comments made by the Forum included:-

1. Was the under spend in 2011/12 on schools' contingency applicable to Academies and Maintained schools?
2. What were the reasons for allocating the balance of the 2011/12 under spend via Devolved Formula Capital?
3. An enquiry about the payment of VAT on capital projects by Voluntary Aided schools.
4. Was it more preferable to reallocate the under spend via the normal formula?
5. The effects of the proposals on Nursery schools.
6. The spending on English as a Second Language in the 2011/12 Schools Contingency had increased by 25%. Was Boston responsible?
7. There was a need for the Forum to see details of the proposed developments in Appendix 4 of the report, including costs and details of schools involved.
8. The local authority should consider appointing three graduates to work over three years instead of two graduates over a longer period, to implement the work quicker.
9. A member stated that the return from investment in photovoltaic panels at her school had exceeded expectations.

Tony Warnock responded:-

1. The under spend in 2011/12 on the schools contingency applied to both Academies and Maintained schools as the DSG funded both sectors. A revised mechanism was due to be issued by the Education Funding Agency.
2. While it was not possible to insist that the balance to schools of the 2011/12 total under spend should be via the Devolved Formula Capital there were good reasons for this proposal which were detailed in the report.
3. The distribution of funding to Voluntary Aided schools would be considered carefully to take account of the VAT issue.
4. There had been a big decline in Devolved Capital funding over the last eighteen months and the proposal to allocate the balance to this area was that it was universal and would help schools to address repairs and maintenance.
5. Nursery schools would be included in the proposals in a fair way.
6. Increased spending on English as a Second Language in the Boston area was caused by demography.

The Forum thanked Tony Warnock for a clear and well planned report and requested that Councillor David Brailsford, Executive Support Councillor to Councillor Patricia Bradwell, should pass on the Forum's appreciation to Tony Warnock, via the local authority.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That the proposals for use of the 2011/12 under spending be supported with clarification on funding for nursery schools and VAT for Voluntary Aided schools.
- (c) That the proposal for the treatment of the 2012/13 under spending arising from the estimating error be supported.
- (d) That, in connection with "proposed developments" in Appendix 4, (1) the Forum receive a report at its next meeting on the total plan of "proposed developments" including costs and details of participating schools and (2)

the Forum request the appointment of three graduates over three years instead of two graduates over a longer period, should be investigated.

11. SCHOOL FUNDING REFORM: NEXT STEPS TOWARDS A FAIRER SYSTEM

Tony Warnock presented a report on the Government's announcements for school funding reform; the principles that the local authority was minded to adopt when responding to the reforms and sought the Forum's views on the local authority's provisional ideas for dealing with – (a) the local authority's core formula factors, in light of the twelve that would be permitted next year; (b) the in-year adjustments that might be retained within the Schools' Contingency budget; (c) centrally held budgets; (d) Higher Needs and (e) Early Years.

Tony Warnock stated that funding reform was still changing and that there was a need to consult all schools on the proposals.

Comments by the Forum included:-

1. The Minimum Funding Guarantee provided protection for two years but the position was uncertain for subsequent years.
2. Future uncertainty and turbulence caused by the proposals.
3. Schools with 6th forms were facing pressures due to the change in 6th form funding which were outside of these proposals.
4. The effects of the continued need to send pupils to Stamford Endowed Schools.
5. The effect of changes in the relationship between commissioning and schools in connection with the funding of Special schools.
6. The current provision provided by Alternative Provision and Pupil Referral Units.
7. The effect of the rateable value of school buildings needed to be reflected in funding.
8. The effect of SEN.
9. The effect of EAL funding in Boston.
10. The effects of the moving of LACSEG to a national level.
11. The monitoring of the effectiveness of Trade Union activity.

Tony Warnock responded:-

1. The Minimum Funding Guarantee had been maintained.
2. Funding for the DSG could be affected in the future by any Comprehensive Spending Review which could have implications for schools.
3. The arrangements for Stamford Endowed Schools had arisen from a legacy but this was now subject to a tapered reduction in the number of places purchased at the school each year.
4. Work was on going in connection with Special Needs and the main emphasis was on stability of funding. A meeting would be arranged with Special schools in September to further discuss this matter.
5. The arrangements in connection with excluded pupils were complex and being examined and the number of Pupil Referral Units had been reduced from four to one.

6. The funding system did not recognise the rateable value of school buildings although rate bills covered the size and age of the building but there was an opportunity to change that in the new arrangements.
7. It was accepted that rateable values for Nursery schools was an issue.
8. The funding of Academies and local authorities on different financial years created complications and there might be a need to make a joint reference to the Education Funding Agency about this matter.
9. Protection was likely to be needed for the local authority if LACSEG was moved to a national level.
10. There was uncertainty about the protection for non DSG services when funding was removed from the local authority which made planning difficult.
11. The purpose of the budget for Trade Union representatives was explained.

Tony Warnock stated that because of the tight timetable the report to today's meeting would be emailed to all schools before the end of the term to forewarn them that they would be consulted and to give them an opportunity to arrange a meeting of their Governing Body to discuss a response to the consultation.

The Forum urged all Governors and Head teachers to respond to the consultation.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That the comments made by the Forum, together and any further issues that they wished to raise due to the lateness of the report being distributed, be reported to the finance team in July and August, and be taken into consideration in any final response to the consultation.
- (c) That it be noted that the report will be sent to all schools before the end of term to warn them that the local authority will be consulting them about the proposals and to provide them with an opportunity to convene a meeting of their Governing Body.
- (d) That the Forum urges all Governors and Headteachers to respond to the consultation.

12. EDUCATION FUNDING AGENCY CONSULTATION ON DRAFT SCHOOLS FORUM (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2012

Tony Warnock presented a report seeking the views of the Forum on the Schools' Forums (England) Regulations 2012 to pass to the Education Funding Agency.

Comments by the Forum included:-

1. Some paragraphs had been omitted from the Regulations.
2. A substitute or named representative should be allowed on the Forum for voting purposes.
3. The oversight of contracts, to date, by the Forum had never happened with the exception of the contract for Broadband
4. The effect of Free Schools.

Tony Warnock stated that the local authority would consult the Forum if schools were subject to any contracts appropriate to its area and that Free Schools were not included in the Regulations.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That the comments made by the local authority in response to the consultation be supported.
- (c) That the comments made by the Forum be considered in any response to the consultation.

13. WORK PROGRAMME

The Forum considered its work programme.

RESOLVED

That the work programme be noted and updated.

14. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday 10 October 2012

Wednesday 23 January 2013

Wednesday 24 April 2013

Wednesday 26 June 2013 (agm)

15. INFORMATION PACK

The items in the Information Pack were noted subject to further information being reported to the next meeting of the Forum on the number of pupils involved in connection with the report on "update on raising the participation age progress and employable issues", in particular to explore the extent to which the Pupil Premium was being deployed to support achievement in English and Mathematics.

Following an enquiry Tony Warnock explained the different rates received by Childminders and Private, Voluntary and Independent Early Years' Providers of the Free Entitlement to Early Years Education under the Early Years funding arrangements.

Meredith Teasdale in response to an enquiry stated that a letter had gone out to schools to assess what was being spent on the Schools' Collaboration Fund.

Tony Warnock stated that he would speak to Douglas Robinson, the local authority's officer with responsibility for sustainability and climate change, about the need for the report in the Information Pack on SCORE to reflect Appendix 4 of the report detailed in minute 10.

Michael Follows MBE referred to the ICT Sub Group and CYPSP whose minutes from the latest meetings would normally have been included in the Information Pack specifically referred to a number of ICT problems in schools which were being resolved. He stated that there had been issues raised at the CYPSP about the Team

Around the Child processes (TAC) and questions had been asked about the inordinate length of time spent by Teachers attending TAC meetings and the ensuing cost.

Debbie Barnes stated that TACs had been evaluated and when the report was ready it would be shared with the Forum. She emphasised the importance of all agencies and individuals taking responsibility for the welfare of a child.

The meeting closed at 5.00pm.