



Schools' Members

John Beaven (Headteacher, Scampton Pollyplatt Community Primary), Ellenor Beighton (Headteacher, De Aston, Market Rasen), David Bennett (Governor, Horncastle Queen Elizabeth's Grammar), John Beswick (Governor, Stickney Church of England Primary), Teri Bryant (Governor, Stamford Queen Eleanor), Graham Burks (Headteacher, Kesteven & Grantham Girls'), Vicky Cook (Headteacher, Welbourn Church of England School) Professor Ken Durrands CBE (Governor, The Kings, Grantham), Claire Flavell (14 – 19 Partnerships), Michael Follows MBE (Governor, Boston John Fielding Community Special), Richard Thomson (Headteacher, Rauceby Primary), Simon Hardy (Faith Groups), Jonathan Maddox (Headteacher, Bourne Grammar School), Jeremy Newnham (Headteacher, Caistor Yarborough), Joanne Noble (Head Teacher, Gainsborough Nursery School), Bridget Robson (Head Teacher, Lincoln The Fortuna Primary), Chris Rolph (Headteacher, Monks' Dyke Tennyson College), Patricia Ruff (Headteacher, Dunholme St Chad's Primary), Nigel Ryan (Headteacher, Spalding Grammar), Jennifer Wheeldon (Headteacher, Ellison Boulters Primary, Scothern) and Ian Wilkinson (Headteacher, Deeping St James' Primary).

No apologies for absence were received.

Officials

Children's Directorate – Debbie Barnes (Executive Director of Children's Services), Meredith Teasdale (Interim Assistant Director of Children's Services); Resources Directorate – Tony Warnock (Head of Finance – Children's & Specialist Services); Performance and Governance Directorate – Catherine Wilman (Democratic Services Officer).

Observers (with speaking rights)

Roger Hale (ASCL)
Heather Steed (Headteacher, Boston Nursery School)
Councillor Patricia Bradwell (Executive Councillor for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning).
Di Bentley (Education Funding Agency)

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

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

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Michael Follows MBE and John Beswick be elected Vice-Chairmen of the Forum for the ensuing municipal year.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 10 JULY 2012

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 July 2012 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. SCHOOLS FORUM (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2012

Tony Warnock reported that the Schools' Forum (England) Regulations 2012 came into force on 1 October 2012.

The new regulations gave the EFA (Education Funding Agency) the right to attend and observe Forum meetings and Di Bentley from the EFA was welcomed by the Chairman.

Use of the word 'proprietors' in relation to academies was queried as it was not a term academy members were familiar with. It was requested that Di Bentley take note of this to feed back.

Of the changes introduced by the new regulations, the ones which would make the most impact were:

- Only schools members would be able to vote on issues relating to funding formulae and;
- Members were allowed substitutes, and it was suggested that either each member nominate their own substitute or each group select a substitute to represent them all. Following a discussion on the issue, the Chairman took it to a vote with the following result:

AGREED

That each member of the forum nominate a personal substitute to attend in their absence: Democratic Services to arrange for nomination of substitutes.

Other issues discussed were as follows:

- The Chairman would be elected on an annual basis;
- Membership would be for four years;
- With the constant conversion of maintained schools to academies, the proportionality of the Forum would need to be altered to reflect this. It would

require the creation of more academy places and a reduction of places for maintained schools as conversion occurred;

- The Chairman would be allowed a casting vote, if necessary, for a decision in which he was not in a position to take part.

AGREED

That legal advice be sought on the membership remaining broadly proportionate through the period of academy conversion.

4. ACADEMIES UPDATE

Meredith Teasdale gave an update of the number of academies and the breakdown of the number of pupils in each sector.

It was noted that special schools had not been included in the report.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

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

Tony Warnock presented a report which consulted the Forum on the Local Authority's proposals for the funding of schools from April 2013. It was noted that the proposals in the report were largely in line with other authorities.

Following its airing at the Forum, the report would be seen by the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee before being submitted to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning for approval, and then to the EFA on 31 October 2012.

The Forum went through the consultation questions and responses as set out in the report on the main formula factors for primary and secondary schools.

The recommendations in the report required the Forum to approve the Authority's proposals for the future funding of schools. It was noted that this recommendation should be amended to read: to 'approve the Local Authority's proposals for the future funding of schools as detailed in this report.'

The representatives of the **maintained primary schools** were asked to approve the authority's proposals relating to:

RESOLVED

That existing funding for exceptional unforeseen costs in primary schools be delegated to the primary sector and the current budget for these purposes be retained (Question 19);

RESOLVED

That the existing funding for Equality for Minority Communities service (EMC) be delegated to schools and that the amount of the current budget permitted under DfE regulations be retained (Question 20);

RESOLVED

That the LA should retain funding for Criminal Records Bureau checks (Question 21¹);

RESOLVED

That the LA should retain funding for Union activities (Question 21²)

RESOLVED

That the LA use the DfE regulations to develop legitimate plans for retaining sufficient funds for 'schools in financial difficulties' to help deal with financial problems caused by redundancy costs arising in maintained primary schools (Question 22);

The representatives of the **maintained secondary schools** were asked to approve the authority's proposals relating to:

RESOLVED

That the existing funding for Equality for Minority Communities service (EMC) be delegated to schools and that the amount of the current budget permitted under DfE regulations be retained (Question 20);

RESOLVED

That the LA should retain funding for Criminal Records Bureau checks (Question 21¹);

QUESTION 21²

Following consideration that the LA should retain funding for Union activities, the motion, upon being put to the vote was lost;

6. SCHOOL CARRY FORWARDS (2011/12)

Tony Warnock presented a report which provided information regarding Lincolnshire school carry forwards at 31 March 2012 and explained the reasons for the significant underspend over the past year.

The Forum supported the LA's approach of not clawing back excessive underspends from schools this year, as the LA was honouring a commitment given locally.

Discussion took place regarding school budgets and it was felt that financial information for all schools, including academies, should be made available as an issue of transparency. The EFA collated such information, however it was not clear how much of it was in the public domain. Alternatively, with help from the EFA, Academies could provide the information themselves. Before this could be taken any further, a decision would have to be made on what information was required.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

7. 2012/13 SECTION 251 BENCHMARKING INFORMATION

A report was presented which shared the latest Section 251 benchmarking data with the Forum. The information had been published by the DfE in September 2012. The report provided the benchmarking data for Upper Tier Authorities.

Lincolnshire is the fourth largest rural county in the country, producing high transport costs, but received one of the lowest amounts of funding from the DfE. This discrepancy had been reported to government in the past and would be again. The Forum agreed to allow the Chairman to speak on its behalf regarding this issue.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

8. SCHOOLS FINANCIAL VALUE STANDARD (SFVS)

This report provided the Forum with an update on the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS). The SFVS had replaced the Financial Management Standard in Schools (FMSiS), however unlike FMSiS, the Standard would not be externally assessed.

Academies were not required to apply the SFVS although the Authority would continue to communicate with them on this issue.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

9. SCHOOLS' FORUM WORK PROGRAMME

It was noted that 'Team around the child' be added to the Work Programme for the January meeting.

RESOLVED

That the work programme and all changes made therein be noted.

The meeting closed at 5.20pm.