

Leicestershire Schools' Forum

Notes of the meeting held on Wednesday 18 September 2013, 2.30 pm at Beaumanor Hall

Present:

Tim Moralee Alex Green Sonia Singleton	Secondary Academy Headteachers
John Bassford	Maintained Secondary Governor
Jean Lewis Julie Kennedy	Primary Academy Headteachers
David Lloyd Karen Allen	Primary Maintained Headteachers
David Thomas Tony Gelsthorpe	Primary Maintained Governors
Sue Horn	Academy Representative - Special
Jason Brookes	Maintained Representative - Special
Andy Reeve	Trade Union Representative
Ian Sharpe	CE Representative
Tim Moralee	PRU Representative

In attendance:

Lesley Hagger, Interim Director of Children and Young People's Service
Gill Weston, Interim Assistant Director of Children and Young People's Service
Jenny Lawrence, CYPS Finance Business Partner
Charlie Palmer, Head of Strategy, Education of Vulnerable Groups
David Heyes, Assistant Business Partner (CYPS)
Dave Green, Business Manager, Woodbrook Vale High School
Andy Winter, Business Manager, Wreake Valley Community College
Tina Hudson-Goater, Business Manager, Limehurst Academy

Observers

D Cornes, Hind Leys Community College
M Fenner, Guthlaxton Community College
Lisa Fish, Charnwood College
S Whiting, John Cleveland College
Jane Ripley, Beauchamp College
Claire Hersey, Lutterworth College

1.	Election of Chair	
	Mr Tim Moralee was elected Chair of the Schools' Forum for the ensuing	

	<p>year.</p> <p>Mr Tony Gelsthorpe was elected Vice-Chair of the Schools' Forum for the ensuing year.</p> <p>The Forum representatives asked Jenny Lawrence to write, on their behalf, to Mr John Herbert to convey their thanks for all his support and work over the years.</p>	JL
2.	<p>Membership Update</p> <p>Tim Moralee referred to the previously circulated membership list. The Forum noted there were currently 4 vacancies in the academy secondary group and it was agreed that the membership should be split equally between headteachers and governors. Academy members were asked to seek nominations via their respective groups.</p> <p>Jenny reported that the two vacancies for an early years member and post 16 provider were currently being sought. The maintained primary heads would progress their vacancy in order for the vacancy to be filled.</p>	
3.	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies were received from Mr Ould CC, Heather Sewell, Brian Myatt and Brenda Carson.</p>	
4.	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting and matters arising</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 20 June 2013 were agreed as a true record.</p> <p>Karen Allen expressed her disappointment and for it to be minuted at the way primary behaviour partnerships were represented at the last meeting and how the LA could have evaluated the comment made which under-valued their role.</p>	
5.	<p>2012/13 School Balances</p> <p><u>Purpose</u></p> <p>To set out the position in regard to school balances for all schools that were maintained by the Local Authority on 31 March 2013 and the 2012/13 financial year.</p> <p><u>Issues Raised</u></p> <p>Jenny Lawrence reported that this report presented the annual position on school balances identifying individual schools. Jenny added that the number of schools in deficit was decreasing as schools convert to academies. The analysis of school balances is shown in Appendix 1. The figures include all schools maintained between 1 April 2012 and 31 March 2013. Schools who converted on 1 April are shown as those balances remaining with the Local Authority until conversion and would be included within the nationally reported school balances.</p>	

Jenny said that most discussions had been on the level of school balances and should the control mechanism be inactive. There is no control mechanism as Schools' Forum chose to remove this.

David Thomas asked if those schools in deficit had an agreed deficit plan. Jenny explained that the vast majority have agreed deficit plans and were working with some schools to define their deficit plan or the LA was actively working with them.

David Thomas asked what the impact was of schools remaining in deficit. Jenny said that if the school converts to a sponsorship academy that deficit rests with the Local Authority. Jenny added that £2.5M worth of DSG was available should the Local Authority pick up any deficits.

Jenny said that we still see some schools with high balances and there is a need to question why they are like that. Karen Allen asked if the money was claw backed where would it go. Jenny said that it had to be used for the same purpose as DSG.

Decision
The Schools' Forum noted this paper.

6. School Funding Formula 2014/15 and Funding Age Range Changes

Purpose

The report presents the outcomes of the school funding formula working group commissioned by the Schools' Forum to review the 2013/14 school funding formula and the approach to funding age range changes in academies and maintained schools.

Issues Raised

Jenny Lawrence introduced Dave Green from Woodbrook Vale High School, Andy Winter from Wreake Valley and Tina Hudson-Goater from Limehurst Academy who had been invited to the Schools' Forum as representatives of the working group who worked with the Local Authority to review the 2013/14 school funding formula and the approach to funding age range changes in academies and maintained schools.

Jenny explained the working group looked at the following issues:-

- Is there a rationale for a change?
- Note there will be changes in 2015/16
- Whether we should change the underlining data to deprivation
- The introduction of the sparsity factor

Jenny said that the working party looked at the sparsity factor and discussed the impact of this and the movement of deprivation funding. The proposal was that no changes are made to the formula for 2014/15 and this was supported by the working party.

On funding age range changes Jenny said that the Local Authority

needed to respond to individual changes and have challenged the EFA considerably and the initial consultation had been around timelines. The Local Authority was not aware until 8 July that the EFA could take money away from the Authority to expanding academies.

Schools' Forum have discussed this twice on the 20 June 2013 and 8 July 2013 and at that meeting it was agreed with the Local Authority that the implications of doing nothing were not acceptable. Jenny summarised the proposal as outlined in the paper to be submitted to the EFA by 30 September in order to fund maintained schools and academies for the impact of age range changes.

Two additional papers were circulated 'Leicestershire Age Range Changes – EFA Position Statement' which had been received by the LA the previous day and 'Financial Implications of Changes to School Age Range' tabled by Andy Winter. Andy Winter gave a verbal summary of the working group's findings and concerns and stated that observations were not driven by their own interests.

Points being made by Schools' Forum:

- Tony Gelsthorpe asked for clarification regarding a request to change pupil numbers, is it in fact the Local Authority's decision and not the Schools' Forum. Jenny confirmed it was a County Council decision but the information was brought to the Schools' Forum as a major stakeholder.
- Tony Gelsthorpe asked what happens as a result of age range change with a rising roll that is to be fully funded. Is there sufficient headroom with regard to the DSG settlement to fund fully? Jenny said that all DSG is not for schools. Jenny added that the LA's requirement all the schools block of DSG to be delegated and is the case. The headroom is within the high needs block, because there were uncertainties around the changes to post 16 and SEN. Funding not delegated to schools. Now things are more certain the risks are reduced, this will transfer money to schools to fund this proposal. It has a risk with growing concern regarding SEN.
- Is this a non-sustainable model? Jenny commented that it will be sustainable and have a hierarchy of where it came from. Analysis of formula our cap on gains on – very generous – schools will see a gain in the formula but not as quickly. JL there is a possibility deprivation data changes in the formula result in changes to AWPU values
- With rising rolls there would be schools with falling numbers – can you confirm that actually protection would be to the level of one year i.e. 80%. David Heyes said that falling school numbers hit by age ranges in the first year for 2014/15 would be eligible for protection.
- Would this be covered by any forward planning? The way to balance of finding schools losing because of age range changes and would miss out on one year's full of funding. Jenny stated that the Local Authority has no role in additional money for academies secured for age range for 2013/14 – this was a discussion between the academies and EFA. The proposed change to the Minimum Fund Guarantee(MFG) is a separate issue to pupil numbers David Heyes said that the MFG is a separate issue to pupil numbers and needed to ensure schools with Key Stage 4 pupils for the first time would look

	<p>like a huge gainer –the working group’s proposal restores a balance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - David Thomas commented that the EFA chose to fund age ranges and this needed to be a sustainable decision. Gainers gained in full. Should the gainers not gain in full? EFA can step in and pull out money unless we make that stance. How much do we need to support the losing schools by? We are being dragged along by this. Is that the general feeling? - Jenny Lawrence – 80% or 60% figure – for this first year of change – no time for schools to plan – schools may need higher level of protection – schools from now in their future budgets - Academies – the EFA - the EFA will say you will have only funded 80% - create a situation that is manageable. - Sonia Singleton commented that it seems we are picking up the bill for changes being made. Timing is 30 September for headteachers to debate this and give a full response. Different areas are affected differently and difficult to know the number of schools affected. Schools expand because they are popular and not because of age range. This is not a decision we all feel comfortable with. - Jenny reiterated that the timeline was not known to the Local Authority until June. - John Bassford felt this was an unreasonable demand and is a complex situation. Is it not reasonable to say to we do not agree. - Alex Green asked if we did not agree with this proposal what would the politicians do. The politicians would make a decision. - Jenny said that one of the questions asked was what LA’s have been in similar situations. There are authorities that have done what Leicestershire are doing. Some authorities have moved from two tier to one tier. <p><u>Decisions</u></p> <p>Tim Moralee concluded that the working group failed to reach a consensus view but asked for the Forum to vote on whether to support the recommendation.</p> <p>Three agreed, two did not and 9 abstained.</p> <p>As a result the Schools’ Forum asked Jenny to invite David McVean and Keith Howkins from the Education Funding Agency to meet with them on funding age range changes before 30 September.</p>	
7.	<p>Draft Work Programme</p> <p><u>Purpose</u></p> <p>To agree the items contained the draft work programme and to add any further suggested agenda items.</p> <p><u>Decision</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To add County Council budget as an agenda item to the February meeting. - To add membership to the February meeting. 	

<p>8.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Tony commended an EFA document on Schools' Forum powers and responsibilities which was supported by Schools' Forum as a practice document. Jenny agreed to circulate as a link with the minutes.</p> <p>http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/financialmanagement/schoolsrevenuefunding/schoolsforums/a0070290/guidance-for-schools'-forums-on-their-role</p>	<p>JL</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Next Meetings</p> <p>The next meetings were agreed as:</p> <p>Tuesday 26 November 2013, 2.00 – 4.00 pm Thursday 13 February 2014, 2.00 – 4.00 pm Monday 16 June 2014, 2.00 – 4.00 pm Thursday 18 September 2014, 2.00 – 4.00 pm</p> <p>Venue for all at Beaumanor Hall.</p>	