

Minutes of a meeting of the Leicestershire Schools' Forum held at Beaumanor Hall on Thursday, 21 February 2013.

Present

In the chair

Tim Moralee Secondary Academies Headteacher / PRU

Karen Allen Primary Maintained Headteacher

John Bassford Secondary Maintained Governor

Graham Bett Secondary Academies Headteacher

John Herbert Secondary Academies Governor

Julie Kennedy Primary Academies Governor

Jean Lewis Primary Maintained Governor

Kathryn McGovern Primary Academies Headteacher

Brian Myatt Secondary Academies Headteacher

Andy Reeve Joint Consultative Committee

Heather Sewell Primary Maintained Headteacher

Sonia Singleton Secondary Academies Headteacher

David Thomas Primary Maintained Governor

In attendance

Lesley Hagger Assistant Director - CYPS, Strategic Initiatives

1. Apologies for absence/Substitutions.

Apologies were received from:

Andrew Munro, David Lloyd, JoAnne Rees, Sue Horn, Tony Gelsthorpe

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th December 2012 (previously circulated) and matters arising.

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 2012 were agreed with the following amendments:

Page 2 - LA previously able to make adjustment but no longer able

Page 3 – Funding Union Facilities Time – from the Headteacher’s briefing, as a result of the decision made that Union reps are to be made redundant therefore have we made a wrong decision? A summary of the list of consequences could have made a difference of opinion. LH reported that the original had been discussed prior to the meeting. TM replied that they had discussed opinions before decisions were made and debated alternatives.

3. Early Years Single Funding Formula

Michelle Nicholls and Jane Norman attended for this item. MN gave a brief outline of the paper and the following recommendation made:

To approve the implementation of Option 2 of the report.

No one voted against the recommendation, 15 approved and there was 1 abstention.

4. 2013-14 Schools Budget

JL lead the meeting through the paper and the following were noted:-

- There would be significant changes from April 2013.
- Paragraph 11, item 1 – this had already been decided on 20 September.
- Paragraph 11, item2 – the proposed budget makes no provision in the new budget.
- Paragraph 11, item 3 – historic commitments are as per the paper.
- Paragraph 11, item 5 – School Forum have to approve Early Years expenditure re eligibility of pupils for an early years place and/or free school meals.
- Question – School Improvement Service, where does this budget go now as it was a commissioning budget? This will remain a commissioning budget for intervention and considered by the EEB. There is no capital settlement for 2013/14 yet and the expectation that current method of funding basic need will continue.
- Paragraphs 12 – 16 recaps the background. The DfE are expecting turbulence and the desire is to move to a new system. All changes being implemented in 2012/13 and the Leicestershire review will need to take into account the new DfE review.
- Paragraph 17 – settlement is now schools, high needs and early years. The high needs block now includes post 16.
- Paragraph 22 – final settlement detailed NQT induction transfer from LA to schools. The 2013/14 budget introduces two new financial risks. i) provision for 2 year olds in September; ii) 16-24 year olds transfer.

Question – how do we organise sharing the budget with FE sector? Answer – bring the process together to see what it looks like and note there is no request for it to sit with Forum. This is LA commissioning budget and there is no role for FE to participate in Forum.

Question – how do you estimate the high needs of people? Answer – there is lots of data to identify high needs budget but we won't know until September therefore some flexibility is built into it.

- Dedicated Schools Grant Reserve – There are changes to the position reported in June 2012, now reporting an underspend in SEN. The Academy conversion rate is estimated. £1.5m has been set aside for broadband contract but we are over prudent. £75k set aside to fund schools unable to deal with maternity cover but only used £14k. One Academy refusing to be responsible for deficit on school budget so provision for academy deficits is increased. There is a delay in the action plan for locality support services. There are significant issues around the PRU budget. £35k needs to be made available to fund the remaining LA commitments on a NQT induction contract.

TM – The behaviour partnerships are in early stages of discussion and want to include benefits to for primaries and the PRU. A resolution is required.

LH – is keen to talk about this and move quickly with schools across all stages. SLF (Supporting Leicestershire Families) to be brought into discussions too.

A discussion is to take place outside of this meeting as to where is the capacity for the above.

J Bassford – endorses and supports all of the above as there is a need to put money and resource into young please early on in life.

J Brooks – agrees support for younger students, special school and support outreach.

BM – a strategy is required as being reactive before being proactive. More money to be put into the PRU as there are more long stay pupils now.

JL – funding proposed for the PRU is transitional in order to address the changes as a result of school funding reform and is not long term.

- Paragraphs 33-45 – working with schools re transitional funding. JL to clarify the basic amount paid for any child and additional needs to come from the school budget. Have annually a notional SEN budget calculation with a percentage of deprivation funding and other factors spent on special needs. JL explained the information is taken from the teaching and learning hours for a child which produced a schedule to the school re how much funding there is for a specific child. There are no enhanced packages any more as the above replaces it. High needs budget information will be available in a couple of weeks.
- Paragraph 46 – see appendix 3. Clarity is required re copyright licences. DT – the figures on appendix 3 are different to what was sent out in February. JL explained that the ceiling for MFG (minimum funding guarantee) has been adjusted to 4% as there have lots of changes and pupil data changes when pupil numbers change. This has moved from 1.5% to 1.4%.
- Paragraphs 54-57 – the LA has no authority over this.
- Paragraph 58 – some funding has moved to the Dedicated Schools Grant.
- Paragraph 62-64 – the child is identified by their post code.
- Paragraphs 65-70 – LACSEG Grant – in September 2013 this will be replaced by the Education Services Grant paid to Academies and the LA. Councillor Ould reported that we face extremely difficult times as we are the lowest funded authority.
- Paragraphs 71-75 – conclusions – this is a challenging budget; feedback to groups re the changes is required; there is no certainty what is happening in 2014.

Proposal to accept the recommendations x 12

Opposition to the paper – none

Abstention to the paper – none.

The Chair thanked JL for producing the paper.

5. Review of 2013-14 School funding arrangements

JL asked for any comments to be forward to her by the end of next week and the response date to submit the form is 26th March.

6. Any other business.

i) KMcG –change of age range funding arrangements i.e. 10+ schools; EFA; bringing Year 6 back. JL is meeting with the EFA next Tuesday. The funding issue is one for the EFA to resolve

Can the LA or EFA change this dispute – this is now the LA.

It would be useful to JL to receive information before the meeting on Tuesday.

David Atterbury and JL are pursuing a solution.

- ii) Councillor Ivan Ould was disappointed that he had not received any hard examples of schools with financial difficulties to take to London. Some members of Forum were not aware that they had to do this and it was agreed to take the matter back to LPH, LSH and LSSH.
- iii) Excellence Partnership – there is fantastic progress and the partnership is working well.
- iv) Academy process – It is noted that they have to make accounts public and show the highest paid staff and adhere to all accounting and disclosure requirements.

7. Date of next meeting.

20th June at 1.30pm at Beaumanor Hall

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