

MINUTES OF MEETING

Meeting title: Nottinghamshire Schools Forum
Date and time: 05 February 2015, 2pm to 12 noon
Location: Rufford Mill, NG22 9DG

Membership

'A' denotes absence

	Ms L Regan	Maintained Primary Head Teacher (Ashfield)
	Ms S Bates	Maintained Primary Head Teacher (Broxtowe) - (Chair)
	Mr M Elliot	Maintained Primary Head Teacher (Bassetlaw)
	Mr J Wilson	Maintained Primary Head Teacher (Gedling)
	Mrs H Atkins	Maintained Primary Head Teacher (Mansfield)
A	Ms H Richardson	Maintained Primary Head Teacher (Newark)
A	Mr M Kennard	Maintained Primary Head Teacher (Rushcliffe)
A	Mr C James	Maintained Secondary Head Teacher
A	Mr D Vasey	Academy Head Teacher
	Mr D Cotton	Academy Head Teacher
	Mr C Weaver	Academy Head Teacher (substitute Kate Packham)
	Mr J McGeachie	Academy Head Teacher
	Ms D Trusler	Academy Head Teacher (substitute Robert Gladwin)
A	Ms K McIntyre	Special school Head Teacher
A	Mr R McCrossen	Special school Head Teacher
	Ms V Holland	Governor - maintained primary
A	Mr S Hunt	Governor - maintained primary
	Mr T Colton	Governor - maintained secondary
A	Mr M Quigley	Governor – academy
	Ms K O'Connell	PVI - Early Years Consultation Group Chair
	Ms C Walton	PVI - Early Years Consultation Group Member
	Mr C Cuomo	Diocesan representative - Head teacher – (Vice Chair)
	Ms C Meese	Diocesan representative
	Mr J Jefferies	Trades union representative - NASUWT
	Ms H Allister	Trades union representative – UNISON

In attendance:

Mr J Slater	Service Director, Education Standards & Inclusion, CFCS
Mr N Robinson	Group Manager – Financial Management
Mr D Higton	Temporary Deputy Corporate Director CFCS
Mrs S Summerscale	Acting Senior Finance Business Partner
Ms J Gibling	Group Manager Early Years & Early Intervention
Ms M Clay	Group Manager Support to Schools Service
Mr C Savage	Acting Group Manager SEND Policy & Provision
Mrs C Anderson	Observer – Operations Director, Christ the King Academy
Ms A Hall	Observer – NASBM
Mrs T Gardner	Assistant Accountant

		ACTION
1.	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Carlo Cuomo welcomed the members to the meeting and informed the group that with Sally Bates currently running late as vice chair he would stand in until she arrived.</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies were received from Helen Richardson, Dick Vasey, Donna Trusler (who sent a substitute Mr Robert Gladwin), and Mike Quigley</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meetings</p> <p>Ordinary meeting 1st December 2014 – no amendments were required, minutes accepted as a true record.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Slater advised that an annual report is sent to committee included is information on the work carried out by the forum. The annual report is due to be sent out next week and John Slater asked if the members would like to receive this for information. Forum members agreed, report to be circulated to all members 	JS
4a.	<p>Trade Union – verbal update</p> <p>Joe Jefferies update the members and advised the working party had met twice, on January 8th and February 2nd HR and finance officers had joined on both occasions.</p> <p>The meetings explored academies attitude to the trade union facilities fund (TUF), the legislative framework requiring paid time off for trade union duties was established as was the list of what constitutes ‘duties’.</p> <p>A template was suggested to show fairness and transparency by listing how much TUF funding is allocated to what schools, for what reps and for how much release time. It was agreed that no school or academy could benefit from the fund unless they had paid into it. The per-pupil amount would be reduced to a minimum to encourage greater participation. Any non-payers would have to allow their school reps paid time off to be trained and accredited to do the work currently undertaken by existing external reps. As this would need to be done for each union many schools would find it less costly to pay a contribution to buy the ‘insurance’ of unlimited trade union representation that the TUF fund provides.</p> <p>Louise Regan requested</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarification on the template and what this shows A request of who had paid into the fund Clarification on what the funds can be used for 	

Joe Jefferies explained that the template was one used by NUT, and it lists duties, names, where and how much time had been allocated.

Duties were listed as

- Negotiating policies
- Condition of services
- Capability issues
- Discipline

With regards to payers, there is currently an issue as academies cannot be contacted directly, and in the long term a joint letter will be sent indicating how much to pay and how to pay as there was some confusion around this.

James McGeachie put forward some questions from the Rushcliffe schools.

- Had the different unions considered increasing the subscription fees?

Joe Jefferies advised that subscriptions are increased every year; however this was a national question / decision.

- Rushcliffe academies were trying to arrange direct agreement with trade unions, was this possible?

Carlo Cuomo suggested that if the answers were not known, it should be looked into and brought back to the forum.

Hazel Allister was aware that this question had been asked.

- There was a dis-incentive to join the group as it didn't get access to HR policies.

John Slater commented that to access HR full policies schools/academies would have to buy the HR package and that paying into the trade union fund alone would not give automatic access to HR policies.

4b. Small schools review

Marion Clay presented the paper and pointed out that this was not a review, there was no agenda or sub agenda for officers and there was no time line.

Marion Clay confirming that there was no political will of marginalising small schools, and the places provided by small schools are very important to the Local Authority.

Officers and small schools are working together, looking at good practises and investigating where collaboration is working well.

Mark Elliot felt that the meetings had been very positive. A gentle nudge on working in different ways going forward.

Helen Atkins asked if this was going to the trust board and had the diocese been involved. Claire Meese confirmed that the diocese had been involved and that she had liaised with Marion Clay.

Claire Meese was pleased the difficulties small schools were experiencing was being looked at and requested the forum be mindful when considering the lump sum for future years. Claire Meese asked what the lump sum included. John Slater explained it was work carried out by Zoe Maxey when consulting for the 2013-14 budgets and following guidance it included leadership, caretaker and some admin support. The cost was £89,000 approximately, at that time the forum requested it be increased to £100,000.

John Slater explained an increase in the lump sum has significant impact on schools, and with the permissible different lump sums between primary and secondary sector there is a greater hit on the primaries. For future years the responsibility will again lie with this group to decide the lump sum amount.

Marion Clay explained that governors and chairs of governors are being encouraged to look beyond the financial models, to reflect and think about different options.

Sally Bates summarised that Nottinghamshire's was a very rural authority the importance of small schools. That the funding issue will not be going away something Sally Bates is sure will be looked at every year, and to be mindful of our small schools. The need to continue looking at systems that can be adopted and that the diocese has an important role to play.

4c SEND funding: longer-term changes

Charles Savage presented the paper and explained that it was a Local Authority response and that schools could submit their own responses. Charles Savage explained that the High Needs Block came directly from the DfE and this was based on what the authority was spending back in 2012, historically disadvantaged for good practise.

Helen Atkins explained that the behaviour partnerships are all working differently and questioned a paragraph within the 'Education Standards and Inclusion' document.

"It Is intended that schools should seek an allocation of resources from the relevant partnership prior to submitting a request for HLN funding" Charles Savage advised the document refers to his second paper however was happy to discuss at this point.

Charles Savage explained that the document is a year old and is in the process of being re-written for 2015-16 and that particular sentence in the updated document will read as follows:-

“Different partnerships are responsible for designing and implementing mechanisms for allocating and monitoring the use of partnership funding. With the growth of partnership working, including the allocation of devolved funding, there are an increasing number of cases where funding for a young person’s provision may come from **both** the partnership and SEND services. When requests are made for funding, it is important for the sake of transparency that any commitment already made to fund the provision is made explicit.”

Charles Savage expressed that there are two different sources and neither should be used at the expense of the other, any misunderstanding between HLN and AFN funding needs to be more transparent something that will be addressed. More inclusive schools should see the benefit of any money not being used in more expensive alternative provision.

Louise Regan commented that there is a view that SBAPS have “loads” of money, a ‘slush’ fund. There must be a clear understanding on what it is for and how it is accessed.

Carlo Cuomo asked if the guide lines on how the funds are used and accessed should be brought to the Forum.

Charles Savage advised that there is not enough money, fair and transparent decisions must be made and funding for one child must not be at the expense of another.

Sally Bates concluded that the message needs to be clear, the document is being updated, and confidence that this message will be relayed to all.

4d Refinement to AFN funding

Charles Savage presented the paper.

Sally Bates asked if this would impact the schools in 2015-16. Charles Savage explained that there would be no impact to schools in 2015-16 as the 2% required for a shortfall between the notional SEND element within their school budget and the numbers of identified High Needs pupils will be met from the extra funding the Local Authority have received within their High Needs Block.

John Slater confirmed that this decision was for 2015-16 only and for 2016-17 this would need to be incorporated into the autumn consultation process.

James McGeachie requested clarification on whether it would be 2% of the AFN/FNF/HLN budget each year or total cost to cover shortfall. Charles Savage confirmed it would be 2% of the AFN/FNF/HLN budget each year.

Recommendation/s

- 1) Approves recommendations i) – iv)

- (i) The notional SEND element of each school's budget is defined as the sum of three of the factors which are used to determine the school's overall budget, namely Prior attainment, Deprivation, and Looked After Children (LAC)
- (ii) The number of High Needs pupils attending the school is calculated as the number of pupils for whom either HLN or AFN funding has been agreed, with the level of AFN funding being no lower than £2,000 per annum. The number of pupils for whom this is the case will be determined from the returns sent by schools to SEND Policy & Provision by each February.
- (iii) Funding is provided as an additional annual allocation directly to those schools where there is a shortfall between the notional SEND element of their school budget and the number of identified High Needs pupils multiplied by £6,000. This additional funding would be provided by the end of the summer term once the calculations have been made, and would not be affected by any movement of pupils between schools mid-year.
- (iv) This additional funding is provided from the increase in the High Needs allocation made to the Local Authority for the 2015-16 financial year, thereby increasing the size of the AFN/FNF/HLN budgets. In subsequent years, the funding of this facility is provided from a top-slice to the AFN/FNF/HLN budgets before allocations are made to schools and Families of Schools at the beginning of the financial year.

<i>Votes for</i>	<i>Votes against</i>	<i>Abstentions</i>
12	-	-

4e F40 Proposal for a new funding formula

Sue Summerscale presented the paper and gave an overview of what the F40 group is.

Joe Jefferies who is part of the F40 group expressed that though they are being told there will be a fair funding system, the F40 are not as confident as there is no mention of fairer funding within any election manifestos.

Nottinghamshire received a small amount of minimum funding level (MFL) in 2015-16, asking whether this will continue, the forum were advised it is normally difficult for government to take money away once allocated however there was no clear message that it would in fact carry on.

Forum members were appreciative of all the work that the F40 group are doing on their behalf.

Notes from a meeting between F40 and minster to be circulated to the forum members

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Chris Walton asked what political sway the F40 group had. John Slater advised there was very little movement for government to change funding as to gain others would lose. Indication suggest school funding will remaining at the same level throughout the next parliament which would still mean that schools will be worse off by around 10% approximately as there will be no inflation taken into account.

Pupil premium does seem to be a move to allocate more money.

4f Early Years Funding

Justin Gibling presented the paper to the forum, gave a brief overview of the statutory duties required by the Local Authority.

Karen O’Connell supports the paper presented adding that there were historic payments that need reviewing. A lot of voluntary settings were closing due to the rates remaining the same since 2009/10.

Chris Walton also supports the paper presented adding there was a lot of work being done nationally on the funding gap, and the difficulties been experienced by small settings in particular.

Helen Atkins agreed that the review was long overdue. This would impact on schools therefore any review bought back to the forum would have to show impact on an individual school level.

Justine Gibling suggested a small group including forum members be formed to carry out the review. It will be coordinate by Justine Gibling, John Slater requested that the group have financial representation and support.

Recommendation/s

- Notes the content of the report;
- Supports the need to undertake a detailed review of current funding arrangements which will seek to increase the hourly rate for 2, 3 and 4 year old children to be brought to the next Schools Forum in June 2015.
- To consider the possibility for back dating any agreed amendments for the PVI Sector from April 2015.

<i>Votes for</i>	<i>Votes against</i>	<i>Abstentions</i>
10	-	-

Louise Regan, Ann Hall and Dave Cotton had left the meeting

4g Scheduling of next round of meeting

It was agreed to hold the meetings in the afternoon.

Date	Venue	Time
Thursday 4 th June 2015	Holme Pierrepont	2pm-4pm
Tuesday 22 nd September	Holme Pierrepont	2pm-4pm

It was agreed we would book dates for December and February at the June meeting.

5 Any Other Business

Helen Atkins would like the cost recovery mechanism (CRM) bringing back to the forum.

The primary CRM was discussed and agreed at the Schools forum on 13th June 2014, the secondary one was before this. In order to review the process in a fair and transparent way, we would need the following information backdated to June 2013 for both primaries and secondaries (including academies):

- Age/year group/date of permanent exclusion
- District (e.g. Mansfield/Gedling etc.)
- Length of time child was 'out of education'
- Provision put in place for the child – who, total cost, dates
- Who organised the provision – e.g. partnerships/LA
- Date child was admitted back in to a school, and which district
- Provision put in place to support reintegration, cost and who organised it and paid for it e.g. partnership/ LA
- Total cost recovered from excluding school, date it was recovered

Carlo Cuomo second this request and felt there were large loop holes within the system that need addressing. There was a need for more transparent data from the Local Authority.

John Slater advised that there were less pupils being excluded which is a positive move; if transparency was an issue then further work was required in this area.

6. Confidentiality

It was confirmed that there were no issues of confidentiality.

7. Resignation

Simon Hunt has resigned from the school forum with immediate effect; he held the position of maintained primary governor.

8. Date and time of next meeting(s)

Thursday 4 th June 2015	2-4pm National Watersports Centre (Ordinary)
Tuesday 22 nd Sept 2015	2-4pm National Watersports Centre (Ordinary)