

Meeting Action Form (draft)
Meeting of the Oxfordshire Schools Forum
9 January 2018
1000
Unipart Conference Centre, Unipart House, Cowley, Oxford OX4 2PG

Present:

Maintained Primary School Headteacher Reps	Sue Tomkys ST Maureen Thompson MT
Maintained Primary School Governor Reps	Kevin Moyes KM Brenda Williams BW Kerrie Blaker KB
Academy Primary School Headteacher Rep	Breda Bowles BB (from Item 5)
Academy Secondary School Governor Rep	Michael Dennison MD Carole Thomson CT (CHAIR)
Special School Headteacher Rep	Sean O'Sullivan SO
Special School Governor Rep	Laura Reineke LR
PVI Rep	Sarah Steel SSt
PRU Rep	Nicola Partridge NP
COTO Rep	Ian Jones IJ
Oxfordshire County Council Officers	Jo Moxon JM Sarah Fogden SFo Janet Johnson JJ Nick Baggett NB Margaret Whitaker MWh
Clerk	Kit Howells KHo
Observers	Cllr Michael Waine MW , Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee Jo Clarke JC , Primary School Business Manager

	Item Discussed	Action	Due Date
1.	<p>Apologies, Introductions, Housekeeping and Declarations of Interests</p> <p>CT welcomed all Forum Members, newly-appointed Interim Deputy Director Jo Moxon JM, and Observers MW and JC.</p> <p>Apologies were received from: Tristan Arnison TA, Lorna Baxter LBa, Lucy Butler LB, Catharine Darnton CD, Kathy Ethelston KE, Cllr Hilary Hibbert-Biles HHB, Rebecca Saunders RS and Simon Spiers SS.</p> <p>Kathy Haig KH, has resigned. There are therefore currently two Secondary Academy Headteacher representative vacancies to fill (SS will stand down when a replacement is identified).</p> <p>There were no declarations of Interests.</p> <p>There was no Notice of urgent business.</p>		
2.	Minutes of Meeting held on 22 November 2017		

	<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November were agreed.</p> <p>Matters Arising from Minutes 22 November, <u>where not actioned or not otherwise on the Agenda</u></p> <p>(a) Forum membership (Item 2a) CD had followed up interest received in filling one of the Academy Secondary Headteacher representative vacancies. Further steps are dependent upon decisions made at this meeting on Forum Constitutional issues.</p> <p>(b) Schools & High Needs Committee next meeting (Item 2b) The next meeting of this Committee had been re-scheduled and will be held on 27 February at 1000.</p> <p>(c) Early Years Working Group outstanding issues (Item 2c) KHo had asked Georgina Newbould (GN) to relay concerns that the 'postcards' sent from Health to Early Years settings do not contain meaningful information. GN had confirmed that this feedback had been passed on at the partnership meeting with health.</p> <p>(d) Early Years Working Group outstanding issues (Item 2c) Neil Darlington had now issued written guidance for nursery and primary schools on dealing with late/deferred entry into Foundation and Year 1 (via issue 5.12.17 of <i>Schools News</i>).</p> <p>(e) Early Years Working Group outstanding issues (Item 2c) Early Years Funding Formula will come to Forum for discussion and decision at the 7 February meeting.</p> <p>(f) National Funding Formula – funding concerns (Item 3) CD had continued to lobby MPs regarding the inequities, to explain the issues of concern. CD is one of several Oxfordshire Secondary Heads who highlighted issues to the Treasury, received an inadequate response and written again to press for answers. This has resulted in a group of Headteachers being invited to appear before the Education Select Committee this month. Councillors are also lobbying MPs.</p> <p>(g) National Funding Formula - funding concerns (Item 3) Forum supported the suggestion that CT might put herself forward to join the F40 Executive: CT's extensive knowledge and long experience would be helpful in supporting F40's efforts to challenge the Government on funding issues for Oxfordshire. This requires LA approval and JM will raise it with the Director LB and HHB.</p> <p>(h) National Funding Formula – High Needs funding Forum emphasised the need for the LA to ensure complete</p>	<p>JM with LB & HHB</p>	<p>Asap</p>
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	<p>transparency and clarity in relation to what High Needs funding is provided for and spent on with the County. This issue will be further discussed at Schools & High Needs Committee on 27 February.</p> <p>(i) De-delegated Functions: Union Facilities (Item 5) No response from the Maintained Secondary Sector (3 schools in County, but expected to reduce to 1 within current year). Forum agreed that the Forum Chair (as is allowed by the Forum Rules) should take the casting vote on behalf of this Sector. CT voted on behalf of Maintained Secondary Schools that the Union Facilities Duties budget for 2018-19 should be de-delegated.</p> <p>Information had been disseminated to all schools via email and <i>Schools News</i>. Positive responses regarding buying in had been received and NB and IJ will continue to follow up to ensure buy in so that a 'pool' to share costs of obtaining an established wealth of expertise is available. NB will also follow up with Special Schools and Nursery Schools.</p> <p>(k) Growth Fund 2018-19 (Item 6) Support for schools with falling rolls and need for expanded provision in some existing secondary schools will both be issues considered by the Schools & High Needs Committee at its meeting on 27 February.</p>	<p>Sch & High Nds Comm</p> <p>NB/IJ follow up</p> <p>NB to contact Special, Nursery & Academy Schools</p> <p>NB for Sch & High Nds Comm</p>	<p>27.2.18</p> <p>Asap</p> <p>27.2.18</p>
3.	<p>Schools Forum Constitution – eligibility for membership from Schools (for Decision)</p> <p>The Constitution had been reviewed by CT and SFo, with the purpose of encouraging full membership. The Forum Regulations allow the LA in consultation with the Forum to change its Constitution; this had been verified by OCC Legal Department.</p> <p>Forum noted the long established guidance that Forum members representing schools do not have to be Headteachers, but it has been the considered view of Forum that they must have the authority and strategic oversight and decision-making responsibility of Headteachers, and be able to represent a wide variety of settings within their areas so as to take account of settings that are different from their own when Forum decisions are being made.</p> <p>Forum agreed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To maintain the current split between Academy and Maintained schools as this broadly fits the pupil numbers in each category, with exception of the Maintained Secondary sector. - Given the limited number of pupils in remaining Maintained Secondary schools, to move to having one representative (Headteacher or Governor) for maintained Secondary 		

	<p>Schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To retain the Primary and Secondary sub-groups of the Academy Sector to maintain efficient working practices already achieved. - In view of the difficulty of having a clear and transparent process for the selection of Forum members, that OCC should write to the proprietor bodies of Academy Primaries and Secondaries through the Chair of their Trust Board to explain that Forum wishes to retain its current working practice to elect Academy representation with the following addition for the Headteacher group that it should be a 'Headteacher or other suitably qualified leader within a MAT'. Comments or confirmation to be requested by email with timeline for response; if no response received they will be assumed to assent to the proposal. - That OCC will write to proprietor bodies of Oxfordshire Special School Academies along similar lines to ask if they will endorse the current efficient working practice of having one Special School Headteacher (elected through OASSH) and one Governor representative election from all Special Schools Governing Board acting on behalf of all Oxfordshire Special Schools. <p>SFo will bring back revised Constitution to the 21 June Forum meeting for final approval.</p> <p>For short term expediency, it was agreed that Forum supported the appointment of Lisa Hughes (LH), the volunteer from the River Learning Trust who has applied to become an Academy Secondary representative to fill one of the current vacancies in that Sector. Subject to support from OSSHTA LH will be invited to join Forum and would not be asked to stand down in the event that the proposed changes to the constitution failed to endorse the proposed changes.</p>	<p>SFo</p> <p>SFo to bring revised Constitution to Forum for final approval</p> <p>CD report to OSSHTA and obtain approval for appointment</p>	<p>21 June Forum meeting</p> <p>asap</p>
4.	<p>Forum's and OCC's responses to Government Consultation on Eligibility for free schools meals and EYPPG under Universal Credit (for decision)</p> <p>OCC's response to the Consultation was noted. Forum agreed to also respond.</p> <p>Members discussed CT's draft response on behalf of Forum and agreed the following responses to the Consultation questions, which CT will submit:</p> <p><i>Question 1: Do you agree with our proposed net earnings threshold to determine eligibility for free school meals and the Early Years pupil premium under Universal Credit?</i> Leave Yes/No blank.</p> <p>The methodology seems reasonable but it is difficult to comment on the proposed net earnings threshold because there is no impact assessment.</p>	<p>CT to submit Forum's response</p>	

Forum believes that it is absolutely essential that new money is provided to fully fund all of the additional children that will be entitled to Free School Meals (FSM), to pay for increased Pupil Premium and to fund the higher numbers in the funding formulae across all DSG Blocks.

Although paragraph 5.10 of the Consultation gives assurance over the impact on Schools from the increase in eligibility, as there is no detail of the financial support proposed it is difficult to comment on this. Again, it is essential that new money is provided to fund this.

Question 2: Do you agree with our intention to protect those pupils who would otherwise lose their entitlement to free school meals, and those children who would otherwise lose their entitlement to the early years pupil premium, under the new eligibility criteria? Yes. Provided it is funded with new money.

Question 3: Do you feel that the proposals in this consultation may adversely affect any children who share one or more of the relevant protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010? No.

Question 4: Do you have any views on the proposed management of the changes to the disadvantage measures or on the metrics we publish for the measurement of disadvantaged pupils' performance? Yes.

Paragraph 5.1 refers to updating the checking system. This is a wholly inadequate response to the long-standing and overly bureaucratic and burdensome issue for schools trying to identify all eligible pupils whilst also trying to develop good relationships with vulnerable parents.

The Government should be informing Schools and LAs of their entitlement as it holds all the necessary data.

In July 2015's *THE PUPIL PREMIUM Next Steps* published by the Sutton Trust and Education Endowment Foundation it was stated that "The Government should consider introducing a data sharing system so that schools are automatically informed when pupils are entitled to free school meals and, therefore, pupil premium funding."

In March 2016 the DfE advised that "The Department is continuing to explore ways of increasing registration rates further." [*Hansard answer to written question 29996 7th March 2016 Answered 11th March 2016 by Sam Gyimah as Parliamentary under-secretary of State for Childcare and Education (DfE)*].

Forum is extremely concerned about the impact on the comparative Data that the change to Universal Credit is already having. Forum does not believe that the proposals in Paragraph 5.14 are sufficient. Forum does not believe that comparative data at school level should be published during the transition period as some schools will inevitably be judged unfairly whatever caveats are noted in the small print. Of course schools' leaders, including their Governing Boards, should continue to robustly interrogate the data at school level but in the full knowledge of the constraints

	on the available data. Forum requests that DfE publishes appropriate guidance for school leaders.		
5.	<p>School Funding Formula 2018-19: Authority Proforma Tool (for decision)</p> <p>The LA believes it can implement the National Funding Formula against the funding allocated by the Government. This aligns with Forum's recommendation at its November 2017 meeting to move immediately to the National Funding Formula.</p> <p>Officers are checking individual schools' outcomes with implementation of Formula; thus far, there appear to be no anomalies. If any do arise, it would be possible to amend the Area Cost Adjustment slightly if required to ensure the funding fits the Formula. Officers will continue to check schools' figures for any anomalies until the date of submission (19 January).</p> <p>Forum noted that limited information on cost of Rates for academies had been received from DfE but no detail as to any changes was provided, which is very unsatisfactory as this affects funding levels. However, there is some leeway to adjust for these and the LA has provisionally used these figures in its APT modelling. The DfE has been contacted to confirm that the provided figures are to be used in the APT, what should be done for academies where no figure has been provided and what supporting paperwork is available. Forum agreed that OCC should request Academies to let Officers know the cost of their Rates bills to aid checking.</p> <p>Schools' budget timescales should remain as usual and budgets will be issued as soon as the APT has been approved by the DfE (official deadline for budget publication is 28 February). It is noted that figures will have changed since the initial issue of the Funding Formula due to October census changes to absolute number of pupils. However, individual schools are already aware of reducing pupil numbers and should already be planning for the consequent reduction in their allocations.</p> <p>Once the APT is approved, the LA will inform each school individually including the factors used. The EFSA will inform Academies of their funding.</p> <p>The SEND figures are being drawn up and will be reported to the Schools & High Needs Committee meeting on 27 February. Forum remains seriously concerned about the high cost of, and increasing number of, pupils with high needs and funding for SEN pupils whose needs cost less than £10K pa and for whom support has to be found within schools' budgets. This will also be the subject of discussion</p>	<p>NB</p> <p>SFo/NB</p> <p>JJ/SFo to SHN Committee</p>	<p>For 27 Feb SHN meeting</p>

	<p>at that Committee meeting. The high cost of resourcing support for SEN pupils particularly affects Primaries and is also an issue in Secondaries (although more manageable in those settings).</p> <p>Schools Forum agreed as follows:</p> <p>-Having been presented with proposed unit rates for the Formula at Annex 1 of Paper 5 and noting that the summary at Annex 1 implements the transitional National Funding Formula (NFF) for 2018-19 as closely as possible within the constraints of overall funding and that Annex 2 of Paper 5 shows the NFF unit rates before and after the application of the Area Cost Adjustment (ACA) for Oxfordshire, Schools Forum endorsed the unit rates in principle for the Formula, noting that further checks are being undertaken at individual school level prior to submission by 19 January and that a response on Rates is still required from the DfE.</p> <p>-Schools Forum endorsed the proposal to adjust the Area Cost Adjustment by percentage points if required to move the Formula factors to an affordable level where adjustments are identified, with the proviso that, if there is a significant variation, this will be brought to the 7 February Forum meeting for information and further discussion so that Forum can make a further recommendation to the LA.</p> <p>-Schools Forum noted that the School and Early Years Finance Regulations for 2018-19 have not yet been released, and these underpin the APT guidance. CT will write to the DfE on behalf of Forum to complain about the invidious position in which Officers have been placed by the unacceptably short timescale.</p> <p>-Schools Forum noted that school budget shares will be published for Schools as promptly as possible following approval of the APT by the DfE. (The official deadline for publication is 28 February 2018, but schools' budgets have been released considerably earlier than this in Oxfordshire).</p> <p>The final APT will be brought to 7 February Forum meeting (for information/update, but potentially for decision should there be any significant variations to consider).</p>	<p>SFo for 7 Feb SF meeting</p> <p>CT write to DfE re short timescale and lack of guidance</p> <p>SFo bring back to Forum</p>	<p>7 Feb SF meeting</p> <p>SF meeting on 7 Feb</p>
6.	Any other business - None.		
7.	Confirmation of Date of Next Meeting <u>Tuesday 7 February 2018</u> - 10 am–3 pm at Holiday Inn Hotel, Pear Tree Interchange, Oxford		
8.	Strategic Schools Partnership Board - Annual Report 2017 (for information) No discussion.		