

SCHOOL FORUM

At a meeting of the School Forum on Tuesday, 16 October 2012 at The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes

Present: E. Cargill – Primary Schools Representative
J Woodroffe, Secondary Community Governor - Chair
L Bowles, Ditton Early Years Centre
S Broxton, 1 Form Entry Representative
M Constantine, Special Schools
L Feakes, School with Nursery Unit
A Jones, Financial Management
A. Jones, Democratic Services
A Keeley, St Chad's High - Secondary School with a Sixth Form
A. McIntyre, Children & Enterprise
D Moran, Primary Academy Representative
H Mullaney, The Heath Specialist Technology College
J. Rigby, Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy
N Shafiq, Financial Management
D Stanley, The Grange Comprehensive - All Through School Representative
P Towey, Our Lady of Perpetual Succour - VA School Representative
C Owen, Secondary Community Schools Representative

Action

SCF15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Simon Clough, Clare Dawes and Jackie Coughlan.

The Chairman took the opportunity to welcome two new members to the Forum, Carole Owen from The Bankfield School and Dianne Moran from Palacefields Academy.

SCF16 MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 July 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

An update was provided on the Contingency, referred to in Minute SCF10. It was reported that due to the exceptional case submitted by the authority the EFA would not abate the contingency for the teaching and non-teaching redundancy at Wade Deacon, this sum could therefore be paid from the contingency sum.

SCF17 MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Ann McIntyre presented the School and PVI (Private Voluntary and Independent) Membership update following the recent changes in regulations to the School Forum. These were noted as follows:

Name		Representing
John Woodroffe (Chairman)	-	Secondary School Representative
Ellen Cargill (Vice Chair)	-	Primary School Representative
Jackie Coughlan	-	Primary School Representative
Clare Dawes	-	Primary School Representative
Paul Towey	-	Primary School Representative
Syd Broxton	-	Primary School Representative
Lesley Feakes	-	Primary School Representative
Carole Owen	-	Secondary School Representative
David Stanley	-	All Through School Representative
Andrew Keeley	-	Secondary School Representative
Marjorie Constantine	-	Special Schools Representative
Linda Bowles	-	Nursery Schools Representative
Joanne Galloway	-	PVI Representative
Heather Mullaney	-	Secondary Academy Representative
John Rigby	-	Secondary Academy Representative
Dianne Moran	-	Primary Academy Representative

RESOLVED: That school and PVI membership of the School Forum be noted.

SCF18 SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA

The Forum was presented with a report which informed them of the decisions required for the new School Funding Formula as per the Department for Education requirements. The Forum was required to agree the funding factors to be used in the budget allocation process for 2012-14.

The Forum was advised that there was a requirement to change the School Funding Formula to meet the new funding arrangements as a prelude to a National Funding Formula. It was reported that the number of funding factors had reduced from the current 37 to 12. Out of these 12 factors, officers recommended using seven, as the other five

did not apply to Halton, for reasons stated in the report. The factors recommended were as follows:

1. Basic per-pupil entitlement factor;
2. Deprivation factor;
3. Low cost, high incidence Special Educational Needs factor;
4. Looked After Children factor;
5. Lump Sum;
6. Rates; and
7. Private Finance Initiatives

The Forum noted the situation with The Grange All Through School in that it may be funded as a re-organised school and be eligible for a lump sum from the schools contingency fund for 2013/14.

The factors for distributing the mainstream funding formula listed above was agreed by the School Forum.

The recommendations made by officers were approved with the exception of number 14, which would be amended. It was agreed that the Lump Sum cash balances for Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy and St Chads would be reworked using the FSM and IDACI model in a 50-50 split. Provided the figures were reasonable both schools would agree, if not this would need to be looked at again, and any further changes to the formula which impacted and changed the level of funding to other secondary schools would need to be discussed and agreed between the schools. It was highlighted that this must be within the timeframe required by officers so that a response could be submitted to the EFA by 31 October 2012.

RESOLVED: That School Forum

- 1) Agree the mapping of current funding factors to the most appropriate funding factor;
- 2) Agree the use of seven funding factors;
- 3) Agree that funding is kept as much as possible within that funding factor;
- 4) Agree the funding of the equivalent of the lump sum value to The Grange for 2013-14 as a re-organising school;
- 5) Agree the calculation of the unit values for the basic per pupil funding factor;
- 6) Agree that for the deprivation funding factor we target funding using Free School Meals Ever 6 and IDACI on a 50/50 split;
- 7) Agree to the use of the Low Cost, High Incidence

- Special Educational Needs funding factor;
- 8) Agree that for the above funding factor, we use the EYFSP threshold set at 73 points and below;
 - 9) Agree to use the Looked after Children funding factor;
 - 10) Agree to use the Primary unit value;
 - 11) Agree that any Looked after Children cash balance for the secondary schools is allocated using the Low Cost, High Incidence Special Educational Needs funding factor;
 - 12) Agree to use the Lump Sum funding factor;
 - 13) Agree to use the Primary unit value as the Lump Sum unit value;
 - 14) Agree that any Lump Sum cash balance for the secondary schools could be allocated using the FSM and IDSCI model on a 50/50 basis provided Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy and St Chads were satisfied with the revised calculations. Any further changes would need the agreement of any secondary school affected.
 - 15) Agree to continue allocating funding to schools for Local Authority Rates on the same basis as at present;
 - 16) Agree to fund the Private Finance Initiative costs at The Grange at the previously agreed rate of £75.00 per pupil;
 - 17) Agree that we do not use the English as an Additional Language funding factor;
 - 18) Agree that we do not use the Pupil Mobility funding factor;
 - 19) Agree that we do not use the Split Sites funding factor; and
 - 20) Recognised that we are unable to use the London Fringe and Post-16 funding factors.

SCF19 HIGH NEEDS

A report was presented to the Forum which provided a summary of the reform of funding for high needs pupils and students. It outlined the approach taken in Halton to address these changes.

It was reported that from April 2013 there would be a financial threshold prior to any additional funding being allocated. This threshold was intended to eradicate the perverse incentive assessment linked to additional funding.

It was reported that education funding for high needs pupils and students across Special Educational Needs (SEN), Learning Difficulties or Disabilities (LDD) and Alternative Provision (AP) sectors would be combined into a

High Needs Block.

RESOLVED: That School Forum note the changes required and requests at future report on progress.

SCF20 CENTRAL SERVICES

A report was presented which provided a summary of the delegation requirements for the budgets for services which were currently centrally retained. The Forum was asked to consider which of the allowable factors could be used for those budgets which must be delegated, agree whether any budgets should be de-delegated and confirm those budgets which would continue to remain centrally held.

It was reported to the Forum that the DfE aimed to maximise the delegation to schools and give headteachers, principals and governors more control over how funding for previously centrally retained services was spent. There were therefore a number of budgets that had to be delegated to schools that could not be de-delegated but that schools could buy into the service, if provided by the Council. It was noted that the following budgets had already been delegated to schools in previous years, so no action was required:

- Threshold and performance pay;
- 14-16 practical learning options;
- Primary/special school meals; and
- Extended services

It was noted that only in a limited number of cases could funding be held centrally. These were exceptions where maintained schools agreed that a service should be provided centrally, historic commitments and statutory functions of the local authority. Three exceptions were provided in detail in the report.

RESOLVED: That School Forum:

- 1) Agree to de-delegate free school meals eligibility, staff costs/supply cover, contingency and support for ethnic minority pupils;
- 2) Agree that the factor used for the delegation of contingency, staff costs/supply cover, ethnic minority pupils and contingency is per pupil, and the factor for distributing the school meals eligibility is Free School Meals;

- 3) Confirm the central retention of the budgets listed in paragraph 3.7 and the budget allocations for 2013/2014; and
- 4) Agree to the central retention of funding for pupil growth, equal pay, back pay and placed in independent schools for non-SEN pupils.

SCF21 SCHOOL FUNDING REGULATIONS

The Forum was advised of the changes to the School Forum Finance Regulations for 2013 onwards.

It was reported that the Education Funding Agency (EFA) issued consultation on the Schools Finance Regulations 2013 and additional grant conditions for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) on 19 July. These regulatory changes gave effect to the decisions set out in the school funding reform announcements on 26 March and 28 June. The draft School and Early Year Finance (England) Regulations 2013 for the most part reflected the decisions already made, including decisions on formula factors, maximum delegation, central expenditure and the Minimum Funding Guarantee.

Forum Members were referred to the new features in the School Finance Regulations 2013 listed in the report.

It was noted that amendments to the DSG grant conditions were necessary to recognise that the DSG funded most academies and non-maintained high needs providers. The additional grant conditions were listed in Appendix A. These regulations would come into force by 1 January 2013.

RESOLVED: That Schools Forum note the proposed changes to the school finance regulations.

SCF22 CARBON REDUCTION FUNDING

The Forum received a report which provided them with details of the Schools' Carbon Footprint for 2011-12. They were requested to note the financial contribution made in 2011/12 for the schools element of the Carbon Reduction Commitment and a request was made for provision for funding for 2012/13.

The views of the Forum were also sought on whether they would fund the delivery of a Low Carbon Schools

Service which would aim to reduce energy bills in schools and the financial impact of the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) in future years.

The members were reminded that in October 2011 the Forum received a report which explained the operations of the Carbon Reduction Commitment and the financial implications for schools. The scheme required the local authority to submit an annual report in July which outlined our carbon emissions for the previous year. It was noted that carbon allowances must be purchased to cover the emissions from the previous year at a current cost of £12 per tonne.

An annual report covering local authority and school emissions was submitted in July 2012 which indicated that the total emissions for the year 2011/12 were 13,179 tonnes of Co2. The split between corporate and schools buildings was detailed in the report and it was noted that the cost of the schools element was £80,808.85. The figure for academies had been included in the corporate figure and would be recharged separately.

The report presented further information on Halton's carbon emissions since the Council started to collate data in 2006. Corporate emissions had shown a reduction year on year however school emissions had fluctuated but were generally on the increase.

The Forum was advised the Council had developed a 'Low Carbon Schools Service' in conjunction with the *Carbon Trust*, which aimed to build capacity schools and provide tools to enable schools to take more control over their lighting, ICT, electricity equipment and heating. The service would provide a two-tier service as explained in detail in the report. It was reported that that 10 schools would participate in the programme for a period of one year, and would be a mixture of Primary and Secondary schools. It was estimated that the service could achieve annual savings of between £15,000 and £20,000 per annum on energy bills and additional £1,500 on CRC liabilities.

It was estimated that the delivery of this programme would require the support of an officer for two days per week, totalling £10,000 per annum.

Following debate the Forum agreed to fund this amount from the Dedicated Schools Grant, and agreed to a provision of £85,000 from the Dedicated Schools Grant for the Carbon Reduction commitment for 2012/13.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) Schools Forum note the financial contribution of £80,808.85 from the 2011/12 Dedicated Schools Grant to fund the Carbon Reduction commitment;
- 2) Provision be made of £85,000 from the Dedicated Schools Grant 2012/13 to fund the Carbon Reduction commitment; and
- 3) Schools Forum agree to fund the Low Carbon Schools Service from the Dedicated Schools Grant.

SCF23 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Contingency Budget – A revised budget was tabled at the meeting for the information and approval of Forum members. All agreed with the revised allocations and balance.

SCF24 ITEM FOR INFORMATION

Letter from the Education Funding Agency - School Forum Regional Contacts – A copy was provided for reference.

Meeting ended at 7.25 p.m.