

SCHOOLS FORUM
MEETING HELD ON 23rd OCTOBER 2012

PRESENT:

Primary School Headteachers: Mrs J Conway, Mr T Gittins, Mrs S Jones, and Mr G Leck

Secondary School Headteacher: Mrs J Wilson

Special School Headteacher: Mrs E Horne

Primary School Governors: Mrs A Cains, Mr H Smith and Mr C Wilson

Secondary School Governor: Mr L Wadey

Diocesan Representative: Dr P Mackie - Chair

L A Representative: Councillor Mrs C Clark

14 – 19 Representative: Mr M Clinton

Trade Union Representative: Mr D Campbell

Observer: Councillor Mrs A McCoy – Cabinet Member Children and Young People

Officials: Mrs L Brown – Head Education, Early Years and Complex Needs
 Mr D New – Senior Finance Manager
 Mrs N Fletcher – Secretary to the Forum

1. **EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

Members noted the evacuations procedures to be used to exit the building in an emergency.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Ms J Humphreys, Mr I Bartle, Mrs M Carlton and Mr J White.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Members were invited to declare any personal or business interests they may have in any item included on the agenda.

No interests were declared.

4. **MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING – 10th SEPTEMBER 2012**

RESOLVED

a) that the minutes of the meeting held on 10th September 2012 be

amended to read;

Agenda item 7 - TaMH's last sentence

"TUPE regulations may also come into force with *employees* transferring between organisations".

Title of agenda item 9 - *Updated Draft Operating Procedures*

- b) that the minutes of the meeting held on 10th September 2012, as now amended, be approved as a true record.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

5.1 Updated Draft Operating Procedures

L Wadey informed members that he did not agree that the resolutions in the agreed minutes, were a correct reflection of the discussions which had taken place with regard to the procedures for the nomination of substitutes. He considered that each representative group should have the same procedure for nomination.

J Conway suggested that each representative group put forward names of potential substitutes and then School and Governor Support could maintain a list, which they could use when required.

J Wilson suggested that due to the complex nature of the matter discussed by the Forum and that apologies for absence were often submitted at the last minute, substitutes should only be called upon to cover extended periods of absence.

L Wadey stated that this would be against the regulations; the whole point of substitutes was for them to be in attendance at meetings especially when voting was required.

Following discussion, members,

RESOLVED that each representative group would make known to the secretary, 1 or 2 names of nominated substitutes, to be used to cover members extended periods of absence.

Representative
Groups

L Wadey advised members that he had several further issues to raise with regard to the Operating Procedures in order for them to comply with regulations. As the Chair of the Forum was not a school representative he had no voting rights for funding formula vote and de-delegation limited to either primary or secondary representatives. Therefore it was questionable as to whether he would have a second casting vote, should a vote be tied.

D New advised members that this issued had been raised on the DfE's question and answer website, which suggested that it was for forums to decide at a local level whether a non school representative Chair would have a casting vote.

RESOLVED that Chair of Forum would have a casting vote, with the exception of the appointment of a Chair when the casting vote would pass to the Vice Chair of the Forum.

Members suggested that as copies of the Operating Procedures were not available to them any discussion on the procedures be deferred to the next meeting.

Following discussion, members,

RESOLVED that the Chair and Vice Chair of the Forum meet with LA Officers to review the Operating Procedures and that a paper be presented at the next meeting.

Chair / Vice
Chair & LA
Officers

6. DfE LETTER – 10th OCTOBER 2012

A letter to the Corporate Director from the DfE had been circulated with the meeting papers for members' information. D New gave a brief précis of the letter highlighting that following concerns the DfE were providing two assurances, namely:-;

- the DfE in early 2013 would be undertaking a review of the impact of the simpler local formulae;
- the Minimum Funding Guarantee will continue to operate beyond 2014/15, but with no clarification as to what level it would continue at.

Following a suggestion from D New, Members AGREED to consider agenda item 7, 8 & 9 together.

SCHOOL FUNDING REFORM CONSULTATION RESPONSES / FUNDING FORMULAE PROFORMA RETURN TO THE DfE BY 31st OCTOBER 2012 / IN PRINCIPLE DECISIONS

D New tabled a paper entitled "NRSFG – Draft 2013/14 Pro-Formas for members' information. He highlighted that the paper compared Stockton proposed formula against the average of the draft information from 9 Northern Eastern (NE) LAs. The Chair advised that with the exception of English as an Additional Language (EAL) Stockton's percentages were broadly in line with the NE LA averages.

J Conway questioned whether any of the NE LAs were using KS 1 data to allocate low cost/high incident SEN funding. D New reported that the DfE had stipulated that EYSF data had to be used in the new formula.

Members received a paper entitled "School Funding Reform Consultation Responses". D New highlighted the report was based on the 27 responses received to the consultation document; further conversations had taken place with stakeholders via telephone, e-mail and at training events. S Jones highlighted that the poor response maybe due to many Governing Body meetings not taking place until later in the term. L Wadey considered that there was some confusion as to whether Headteachers or Governing Bodies were to respond, also some questions were confusing. Members considered the response to the consultation question by question.

Q1 Do you agree the proposed methodology to delegate funding to schools

for services previously held by the Council per the final column of the table under para 20? If not, please suggest alternative methodology, explaining the rationale

The responses indicated that there was overwhelming agreement with the proposed methodology.

RESOLVED to approve the proposed methodology.

Q2 If you are a maintained primary or secondary school, do you support the continued central retention by the Local Authority of all the services identified in the table under para 20? If no, please specify which services you would wish to see retained by the LA.

The responses indicated that there was support for the central retention of LA functions. D New confirmed that 14 -16 practical learning options and School Meals / Milk must be delegated and under the draft regulations there was no option for de-delegation. Members were also informed that the allocation under Support for Schools in financial difficulty would be used for intervention work with schools. L Wadey questioned that as intervention following an OfSTED inspection was statutory; there was other funding available to fund this support. L Brown stated that currently the LA choose to allocate money to support schools, the funding under discussion would be additional funding. D Campbell drew members attention to a joint Trade Union letter which had been circulated with the meeting papers, he highlighted that all Trade Unions were in support of the de delegation of funding for Trade Union facility time, as this was considered to be a more cost effective method. L Wadey questioned whether academies would be included in this. D Campbell advised that academies were not included in this agreement; it would be for Trade Unions to get academies to sign up. L Wadey suggested that as more schools move to become academies it would be better if this was offered as buy back. S Jones questioned whether the de delegation was for 1 or 2 years. D New advised that members would be considering de delegation for the financial year 2013/14. Following votes of school members (within each sector)

RESOLVED

- a) Primary members approved the de delegation of funding as outlined in paragraph 20 of the report;
- b) Secondary members approved the de delegation of funding as outlined in paragraph 20 of the report.

Q3 Do you support the proposed new funding formula for schools? If you don't support it and would like to see variations to that proposed please provide details.

D New informed members that when undertaking financial modeling the LA had used the EAL 1 year figure rather than the EAL 3 year figure. A paper was tabled outlining the formula allocation under the two headings. Members' views were sought as to which methodology should be used.

RESOLVED that the EAL 3 year figure would be a fairer method of allocation.

Q4 Do you support the proposed use of the low attainment factor for allocating primary Individual pupil budget and adjusting for secondary top

up funding? If you don't support it and would like to see variations to that proposed please provide details

D New informed members that work was still being undertaken in order to achieve a closer correlation.

RESOLVED that the further consideration be deferred to Chair, Vice Chair and Corporate Director – CESC.

Chair, Vice
Chair and
Corporate
Director
CESC.

Q5 Do you agree with the proposal to establish a pupil growth fund to be distributed using predetermined and transparent criteria?

L Wadey questioned why a growth fund was required when the LA had advanced knowledge of pupil numbers. Also this would be unfair to schools that were always full. L Brown reported that this funding was to be used where there was no capacity in the system. D New advised members that he would be bringing proposals on criteria and how this would operate to the next meeting of the Forum.

D New

RESOLVED to approve the establishment of a pupil growth fund with the details to be agreed at a future meeting.

Councillor Mrs C Clark left the meeting.

Q6 Do you agree with the proposal to use IDACI as the basis for distribution of deprivation funding within the Early Years Single Funding Formula? If not please suggest an alternative explaining the advantages

RESOLVED to approve the use of IDACI as the basis for distribution of deprivation funding within the Early Years Single Funding Formula.

Q7 Do you agree with the principles of the proposed banding mechanism set out in para 69? If not, please suggest alternatives

D New reported that there was still a great deal of work to be undertaken in conjunction with schools regarding banding criteria and determination of values.

Q8 Are there any other comments you would like to make on the proposals contained in this consultation

School members highlighted that there was a great deal of confusion with regard to SEN funding.

In response to members' questions, D New explained the next steps in the process, the electronic toolkit from the DfE would be completed by the LA, which indicated how the proposed formula within the school block would apply across primary and secondary schools. The DfE were not asking about High Needs at present as this was by local agreement. The response had to be with the DfE by 31 October 2012, the DfE could then question LAs, with final responses expected in January 2013.

10. TaMH's

L Brown updated members on the current position, N Chilton had taken on responsibility for the management of the contract and a Steering Group had been established with representatives from both the primary and secondary sectors. Moving forward the contract with Alliance could be extended for between 4 -12 months, with cost being brought to the Forum for

consideration. Members were asked to seek the views of their representative groups regarding this proposal.

11. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

11.1 Agenda Items for Next Meeting

Members AGREED that the following items be included on the agenda of the next meeting;

- Operational Procedures
- TaMHs
- Updated Schools Formula - Information submitted to DfE
- High Needs Funding

12. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED that the next meeting would be held at 2:00pm on 11th December at the Education Centre, Junction Road, Norton.

