

SCHOOLS' FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held at 4.35 pm on 18 October 2012

Present:

Andrew Downes (Chairman)	Secondary Academy Governor
David Bridger (Vice-Chairman)	Non-School Representative (Church of England)
Colin Ashford	Primary Academy Governor
Geoff Boyd	Primary Maintained Governor
Nick Cross	Secondary Academy Head Teacher
Patrick Foley	Primary Maintained School Head Teacher
Karen Raven	Secondary Academy Head Teacher
Alison Regester	Non-School Representative (Early Years)
Keith Seed	Special Head Teacher/Governor

Also Present:

Dr Tessa Moore	Assistant Director for Education
David Bradshaw	Head of ECS Finance
Amanda Russell	Head of Schools Finance Support
Gillian Bratley	Senior Finance Officer
Lauren Wallis	Democratic Services Officer

14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Anna Boshier, Angela Chapman, Neil Proudfoot, Richard Sammonds, and David Wilcox.

An apology for absence was also received from Cllr. Wells Portfolio Holder for Education.

Beverley Pennekett from the Education Funding Agency had sent her apologies for being late.

The Chairman introduced the meeting by welcoming Don King from the Education Funding Agency and he also acknowledged the presence of representatives from the Borough's schools.

15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A declaration of interest was made Alison Regester in that she represented the Early Years and Childcare Sector and she also managed a private nursery.

16 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20TH SEPTEMBER

2012

The Vice-Chairman advised that the third paragraph under "Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th July 2012" which read "The Vice-Chairman noted that the Schools' Forum working party would be meeting shortly..." should read "The Vice-Chairman noted that the Schools' Forum working party had not yet met.....".

The Vice-Chairman advised that, in relation to the third paragraph of Minute 4, he had met with Mandy Russell and was now satisfied and his misunderstanding had been clarified and he had no further interest in pursuing this matter.

RESOLVED that, subject to the correction set out above, the minutes of the meeting held on 20th September 2012 be agreed and that matters arising be noted.

17 2013/14 Funding Review - Outcome of Consultation with Schools

Report No. ED12052

As agreed by the Schools' Forum held on 20th September 2012, the London Borough of Bromley had released the four funding models to all schools as part of the consultation on the proposed funding formula for 2013/14. The four models were based on the following principles:

Version 6

73 points at EYFSP for Primary Attainment

Lump Sum of £150,000

Allocations for EAL/Attainment/Deprivation based on current funding blocks

Version 8

73 points at EYFSP for Primary Attainment

Lump Sum of £150,000

Allocations for EAL/Attainment/Deprivation based on fixed amount for all pupils

Version 10

73 points at EYFSP for Primary Attainment

Lump Sum of £180,000

Allocations for EAL/Attainment/Deprivation based on current funding blocks

Version 12

73 points at EYFSP for Primary Attainment

Lump Sum of £180,000

Allocations for EAL/Attainment/Deprivation based on fixed amount for all pupils

The schools had also been consulted again on de-delegation for maintained primary schools.

Mandy Russell advised that 38 consultation responses had been received, being 33 from Primary Schools, 1 from a Special School and 4 from Secondary Schools.

However, included within the Primary responses were 6 individual responses from 1 school and 3 from another school. In order to ensure that the results were considered on a fair and equitable basis, only two responses had been included from each school. Whilst there had been a slightly higher number of responses from 1fe schools, there was a fair representation of responses from all sizes of schools. Within the responses, a number of schools had not answered particular questions, or ticked both boxes for some questions, or ticked a particular version that did not correlate to their earlier answers. Details of the consultation responses could be seen at appendix 1 of the report.

On relation to question 1 of the consultation, Mandy Russell advised that all models were based on 73 points or below at Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the schools had been asked to endorse this detail. A positive response had been received so all models would be based on 73 points. Question 2 asked schools to choose between lump sums of £150,000 or £180,000. Question 3 gave different amounts for funding for attainment, deprivation and EAL. The models endeavored to bring about a formula for schools funding that was clear and transparent. As previously mentioned the answers for question 4 did not always correlate with the answers to the 3 previous questions. The answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 should have led schools to the answer for question 4 but this had not always been the case. Version 10 appeared to be the most popular, but did not relate to the answers indicated in the previous questions and therefore the Assistant Director for Education was recommending Option 12 which did relate back to the previous options..

A question was raised about limiting the gains some schools might receive from the funding formulas and had the working group considered capping these gains. In response Mandy Russell drew the Forum's attention to the Minimum Funding Guarantee which was designed to limit any losses to 1.5% and worked in the same way to cap excessive gains. Details of the Minimum Funding Guarantee had been in the first paper from the Department for Education (DfE). The Vice Chairman commented that there was little point in discussing the Minimum Funding Guarantee as it was a Government requirement and Bromley had no option but to accept it even though he considered it to be restrictive. Following further discussion on the possible losses and gains of the models the Forum noted that a great deal of time had been spent on the figures and all that hard work had concluded with four models.

Concern was expressed that sixth form pupils were not included in the calculations for the models that only included pupils up to 16 years of age. Previously calculations had included pupils up to the age of 18 years.. Mandy Russell gave an explanation of how this was taken into account in the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and that Government Regulations set out the rules. Beverley Pennekett of the Education Funding Agency confirmed that the DSG would not be available to subsidise sixth form funding and the post 16 funding would continue to be distributed by the EFA.

With the permission of the Chairman, an observer addressed the meeting commenting that the school he represented stood to lose a third of its funding under the new proposals and that the process would be inherently unfair to sixth

form pupils. Mandy Russell responded that the Minimum Funding Guarantee would prevent this scale of loss.

Moving on to the subject of the Lump Sum, at the last meeting of the Forum it has been advised that a Lump Sum of £150,000 might be better than a Lump Sum of £180,000 as more would lose out but it would be fairer and smaller schools would be better protected. The Chairman advised that the consultation results showed a preference for the £180,000 Lump Sum.

Concern was expressed that not many secondary schools had responded to the consultation. The consultation period was very tight due to the timeframe laid down by the EFA and it was felt that this was the reason for the poor response. Therefore there was concern that the consultation had not been robust and was therefore not as statistically relevant as it should be. The Chairman noted that the Forum was not bound by the results of the consultation but it was part of the process and would provide a view of the best way forward. Mandy Russell explained that the initial modelling had included the original EFA ceiling and the modelling had started at £150,000. The goalposts were then moved to £200,000 resulting in the Lump Sum of £180,000 being included in the modelling. A number of other factors were also considered including standards grants, a large number of which had a lump sum element, premises and building related funding and formulas not related to pupil numbers. The proposed Lump Sums took all these factors into consideration. However this was only a snapshot of current circumstances. The Forum also noted that the difference between Version 10 and Version 12. For Version 10 in relation to deprivation for primary and secondary schools the figures were £1,237 and £1,318 respectively. For attainment it was £2,042, for primary £3,567, for secondary and EAL £379 and £2,158. For Version 12 the figures for deprivation, attainment and EAL were flat rates of £2,500, £1,500 and £1,000 respectively. These differences had been caused by a different method of calculation as instructed by the Government. The Forum members debated moving forward with differential levels of funding for primary and secondary schools compared to having one set figure for both sectors. In conclusion of this part of the debate the Chairman drew the Forum's attention to a letter from the DfE dated 10th October 2012 and in particular three points. The first being the Government's undertaking of the effectiveness of the Minimum Funding Guarantee. The second point was the Government's promise of a careful review in early 2013 of the impact of the simpler funding formulae, exploring with local authorities the effect of different factors such as the lump sum and deprivation factors. The third point was the Government's assurance that the Minimum Funding Guarantee would continue to operate beyond 2014-15.

The Chairman proposed to put the three principles contained in the report to the vote after acknowledging that the Vice-Chairman was the only member of the Forum present who was unable to vote on this issue. The Forum voted for the following:

- (i) the 73 points at EYFSP for Primary Attainment
- (ii) the Lump Sum of £150,000

- (c) the allocations for EAL/Attainment/Deprivation be based on a fixed amount for all pupils

be recommended to the London Borough of Bromley for inclusion in the funding formula.

The Chairman continued that based on the above agreed decisions Version 8 was the Version which should be chosen, The Chairman put this to the vote and the vote was lost.

Following further discussion the Forum came to the conclusion that, other than the Lump Sum, the principles supported by the Forum would lead to Version 12. As a result the recommendation of Version 12 to the London Borough of Bromley was put to the vote as the Version as per the results of the consultation.

With regard to de-delegation, Mandy Russell explained that relevant members of the Forum were asked to vote on behalf of the maintained primary schools. With regard to the two areas where schools appeared not be in favour of de-delegation, the Schools' Forum were reminded that as part of the initial consultation, this funding had been included in the current models and that the Ethnic minority funding had been delegated to school 100% through the EAL factor and that the Behaviour Service funding had been allocated 10% AWPU, 45% deprivation and 45% attainment. It was recommended that schools be reminded of this and advised that they would not see a separate allocation as part of the funding formula. For areas where de-delegation was agreed, the Local Authority must be able to clearly demonstrate how the funding would be de-delegated.

The Chairman noted that there were two members of the Forum who were representatives of the primary sector and these representatives were able to vote on this subject. The Forum was informed that head teachers had discussed this question and had come to an agreement in line with the recommendation contained in the report. To clarify, the Chairman stated that the Forum members able to vote on this issue would be voting for items 1, 2 and 3 on appendix B of the report to be de-delegated and items 4 and 5 to not be de-delegated.

RESOLVED that it be recommended to the London Borough of Bromley:

- (a) that the principles behind Version 12 should be used in the 2013/14 funding formula; and**
- (b) that items 1, 2 and 3 on appendix B of the report be de-delegated and item 4 and 5 not be de-delegated.**

18 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Karen Raven advised that her Business Manager had attended a conference where it had been learned PFI would come within the lines of additional factors that schools could use. However, Harris (previously Kelsey Park) was due to be demolished and completely rebuilt using PFI. Was the Local Authority aware of this and would it have any impact on Local Authority funding? David Bradshaw

confirmed the news about Harris and the fact that the new build would be PFI funded. He had spoken to the PFA on how any funding gap in the PFI would be dealt with in the funding formula and he agreed that the effect of funding to other schools with PFI needed to be clarified. He continued that when the build was completed and operational that was when the funding mechanism would start and that any gap would be caused by revenue costs.

Karen Raven requested her outrage be recorded.

The Vice-Chairman suggested that that issue be discussed at a future meeting of the Forum. He also advised that the Forum had previously approved a formula that did not include PFI. He further noted that schools should have made arrangements for PFI that would not affect other schools.

Don King from the Education Funding Agency advised that one of the crucial things was that when PFI started the Priority Building Programme there was no commitment as to when the building would start and a rolling programme could be spread over a number of years. He undertook to investigate how gaps in the PFI would be funded and would find out the building programme for Harris Academy. He would send this information to the Forum as soon as possible.

On another subject the proportionality of representation for secondary schools head teachers and governors on the Schools' Forum was raised. The proportionality was calculated using the number of pupils in each sector. The Vice-Chairman advised that the proposed schools membership was 13 members represented by 52% of primary school pupils and 48% of secondary school pupils this proportionally equated to 6 places for primary schools and 5 places for secondary schools. The 13 members also had to include a representative of the Grant Maintained sector and a PRU representative.

19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

All meetings would be held at the Education Development Centre and would commence at 4.30pm:

Thursday, 22nd November 2012

Thursday, 13th December 2012

Thursday, 10th January 2013

Thursday, 7th February 2013

Thursday, 14th March 2013

The Meeting ended at 6.10 pm

Chairman