

SCHOOLS' FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held at 4.30 pm on 24 April 2014

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
Patrick Foley	Primary Maintained School Head Teacher
Neil Proudfoot	Non-School Representative (Joint Teacher Liaison Committee)
Karen Raven	Secondary Academy Head Teacher
Keith Seed	Special Head Teacher/Governor
David Wilcox	Secondary Academy Governor

Also Present:

David Bradshaw	Head of Education and Care Services Finance
Helen Long	Democratic Services Officer

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Aydin Onac, Jane Bailey, Sam Parrett and Mandy Russell.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 CONSULTATION - FAIRER SCHOOLS FUNDING IN 2015-16

Members considered the details of the consultation on the Fairer Schools Funding in 2015/16 and the proposed response from the Local Authority. Members of the Forum agreed that a joint response from the Forum and the authority would be the best way to proceed. Responses to the consultation had to be returned to the DfE by 30th April.

The DfE had recently released an important announcement regarding the next phase of school funding reform for 5 to 16 year olds, which would begin to address the unfairness of the current funding system and provide some help to authorities that were the least fairly funded. It was planned to allocate an additional £350m funding to schools in 2015-16 to distribute this funding to local authorities most in need. The DfE would maintain a minimum funding level for every pupil and every school which meant that no local authority's and no school's level of funding per pupil will fall as a result of this proposal.

As a floor-funded authority, Bromley had anticipated for a number of years that it would benefit from the proposed funding changes and the consultation document supported this. The consultation document showed indicative minimum funding levels under the new proposals which indicated that Bromley could benefit from an increase of around £19m additional funding, being the highest increase in percentage terms. In view of this, the LA felt it was extremely important to share this information with the Schools Forum at the earliest opportunity to allow Forum Members to contribute to the proposed consultation response and it was hoped that the additional meeting would also allow members to comment.

It was important to note that the DfE clearly stated that these proposals did not represent implementation of a national funding formula, but would put the government in a stronger position to contribute to the forward planning of any detailed modelling to be carried out during the summer term to implement a national funding formula when the time was right. It was also important to note that this proposal related to 2015-16 only – beyond then the allocation of funding between local authorities would be a matter for the next spending review.

Members considered how the funding had been calculated and the consultation response they made the following comments:

Question one

- That the final line from “ without disadvantaging...” should be removed.
- Could a request be made for retrospective compensation for at least 2014/15?

Question two

- Agreed but with a caveat that the Local Authority and the Schools' Forum have the ability to influence its own formula and the ability to drive this forward at a local level.

Question three

A to G all agreed. Add an additional comment that provided the entire £19m is allocated that the authority and School Forum have the ability to set a local formula.

Question four

Add a comment that the outer London rate is too low and should be increased. Bromley attracts a large number of inner London pupils but is unable to offer the same salaries as inner London Schools. Bromley house prices are high and the salaries do not reflect this. The differential needed to be lowered.

Question 5

Agreed as response but needs updating on a regular basis.

Question 6

Not applicable

Question seven

Not applicable to Bromley Schools

Question eight

Agreed with response

Question nine

No comments.

RESOLVED that the report is noted.

4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was agreed that a working party needed to be convened to consider how the funding would be spent, agree a timetable and set some modelling parameters.

5 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting would be on Thursday 26th June 2014 at the College. The clerk would circulate to all the Forum members who were not in attendance. The meeting scheduled for 15th May 2014 was cancelled.

The Meeting ended at 5.38 pm

Chairman