

SCHOOLS FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held 24th November 2011

Present:

Primary School Head Teachers: Patrick Foley and Yvonne Marsh

Secondary Head Teachers: Nick Ware

Primary Governors: Geoff Boyd, Angela Chapman and Norrine Redfern

Secondary Governors: Andrew Downes (Chairman), Janet Bell and Christopher Davies.

Special Head Teacher/Governor Non-School Representatives: Denise James-Mason

David Bridger (Vice-Chairman (Church of England), Anna Bosher (Catholic) and Neil Proudfoot (Joint Teacher Liaison Committee)

Alison Regester

Early Years:

Also present

David Bradshaw (Head of CYP Finance)
Mandy Russell (CYP Finance Group)
Helen Long (Democratic Services)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Hilary Ryder, Karen Raven and Sue Meckiff. Meryl Davies had resigned as Head teacher at Cator Park so was no longer eligible to sit on the Forum.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Alison Regester declared an interest as a pre-school provider.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 19th May 2011 AND 22ND SEPTEMBER AND MATTERS ARISING.

19th May 2011 – Matters arising

It had been agreed that the principles of standards fund final distribution for 2010/11 would be considered at the next meeting of the forum. As this had not been on the agenda for the 22nd September meeting it was agreed that this would be considered at the next meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th May 2011 were agreed subject to the addition of Andrew Downes to the list of apologies received and Geoff Boyd to the list of attendees.

22nd September 2011 – Matters arising

Minute 4. Final DSG budget 2011/12 – It was agreed that members would register any comments on how to use the under spend and ideas would be considered at the next meeting. As this had not been included on the agenda it was agreed it would be considered at the next meeting.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 19th May and 22nd September are agreed.

4. REPORT BACK ON THE CONSITUTION (VERBAL UPDATE)

Officers had circulated the report that had been present to the Portfolio Holder and the pupil numbers on which the Forum Membership had been calculated.

The Forum was concerned that there was disparity in the numbers of Maintained Primary Heads and Academy Heads on the represented on the Forum compared with the numbers of Secondary Heads on the Forum. Officers explained that this was based purely on the numbers of pupils in each sector. However the Primary representatives maintained that they felt that Primary Academies were over represented. In addition they were concerned that the Primary Schools that were now Academies were larger schools and so it also meant that smaller Primaries were underrepresented.

The Chairman pointed out that this make up had been approved by councillors and it was not within the power of the Forum to change this. No doubt the points made would be noted by officers for when the make up of schools' membership of the Forum was next considered using later pupil numbers

One member pointed out that membership on the forum was not for each representative to protect their sectorial interests but to work as a group for the interests of all children in education settings.

Members highlighted the point that in the past the views of the Forum had been sort BEFORE decisions were made but this had not happened in this case.

Officers then highlighted the nominations that had been received in each sector. There were two sectors where an election would be needed and this would be arranged by the clerk. There were complaints that the circular had not been received by some members of the Forum so therefore they had missed the opportunity to apply. One of these areas was for a Maintained Secondary Governor or Head Teacher. However as this post was vacant the members were told to apply. It was proposed that the letter written by the Chair to Councillor Noad on this matter dated 26 October 2011 expressing concerns on the Authority's attitude to proper consultation should be endorsed by the whole School Forum and that this letter and Councillor

Noad's reply of 4 November 2011 should be appended to the minutes of this meeting of the Schools Forum. This proposal was adopted unanimously.

RESOLVED that the report is noted.

5. REPORT BACK ON THE CONSULTATION ON SCHOOLS FUNDING REFORM (VERBAL UPDATE)

The Chairman explained that, as agreed at the last meeting, he had received 4 or 5 responses. He and the vice-chair had put these together as comments on the consultation and had asked if Bromley would submit them jointly with the comments made by Bromley as tabled at the last Forum's meeting. This request was refused. The comments were then forwarded by Bromley officers to the maintained schools who raised concerns. The Chairman asked for a copy of these responses and the request was refused.

The comments as put together by the Chair and Vice-Chair were accordingly submitted separately to the Department of Education.

There were a number of detailed responses received from the academies. When the consolidated responses were submitted it was made clear that both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman were governors of academies. They were careful not to say that the views expressed were those of the Forum as a whole.

6. RENEWAL OF LONG TERM SICKNESS SCHEME

Members considered a report which provided details of the proposal to renew the Long term Sickness Scheme for another 3 years.

Officers reported that there had been 46 positive responses to the consultation but they felt that was a good indication that the scheme would be accepted.

RESOLVED that the report is noted.

7. SCHOOLS FINANCIAL VALUE STANDARD (SFVS)

Members considered a report which provided details of the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) which had been introduced by the DfE as a replacement for the Financial Management Standard in Schools (FMiS)

Officers explained that schools would need to go through a self assessment but there would be no follow up external assessment. This would need to be undertaken by March 2013 but schools were advised to start considering the process from March 2012 as they may need to do some groundwork in advance of the 2013 deadline.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

9. DATES OF NEXT MEETING

All meetings will be at the EDC unless highlighted below:

Thursday 12th January 2012

Thursday 9th February 2012

Thursday 15th March 2012

Chairman

The meeting started at 4:30 pm and finished at 5.45pm