

## Schools Forum

**Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2008 at 400 p.m.  
at the Alumwell Business and Enterprise College, Primley Avenue, Walsall**

**Present:** Mr. A.F. Cheminais  
Mr. J. Baker  
Mrs. E. Maher  
Mr. G. Crowther  
Mr. J.P. Clarke  
Mrs. E. Stringer  
Mr. E. Gee  
Mr. M. Barton  
Mr. F. Hodgkinson  
Mr. M. Sweeney  
Ms. M. Letts  
Mrs. K. Delaney

**Observers:** Mr. A. Bowater, Director of Finance, City Academy  
Mr. H. Seaton, Black Country LSC

**In Attendance:** Ms. D. Morris (Education Walsall)  
Ms. A. Walton (Education Walsall)  
Mr. S. Read (Education Walsall)  
Mr. D. Taylor (Education Walsall)  
Ms. J. Latham-Bennett (Education Walsall)

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, Mr. Joe Baker took the Chair.

		Action
<b>1. 11.3.08</b>	<b>Apologies</b>  Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Mr. P. Heath, Miss S.M. Bradford and Mr. N. Chomyk.	
<b>2. 11.3.08</b>	<b>Minutes - 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2008</b>  Various inaccuracies in the minutes of the meeting held on 22 <sup>nd</sup> January, 2008 were raised:-  <u>Page 1</u>  List of persons present - delete Ms. S. Lupton and Ms. A. Walton.	

	<p>List of persons in attendance - add Ms. S. Lupton and Ms. A. Walton - delete Ms. S. Edwards and insert Ms. S. Wedgewood.</p> <p><u>Page 2 - Item 4</u></p> <p>Delete 'Funding for E2L' and insert 'EMAg'.</p> <p><u>Page 6 - Item 6</u></p> <p>Delete Sue 'Edward' and insert 'Wedgewood'.</p> <p><u>Page 6 - Item 7</u></p> <p>Delete text and insert:-</p> <p>Avril Walton explained there is a small amount of ring fenced grant funding, to supplement the cost of diplomas for two secondary schools, in 2008/09.</p> <p>Guidance issued for the 14 - 19 Reforms included a requirement to consider how, locally, schools and partners will work to deliver entitlement. These considerations must include agreement on the routing and management of funds. Three options are available:-</p> <p>Option 1 - The insurance model (preferred DCSF option). Funds held by 14 - 19 Partnership. All payments to providers arranged and made centrally. Audit requirements and financial risk with Local Authority.</p> <p>Option 2 - Halfway House - Grant held and paid centrally with schools contributing from their budget share.</p> <p>Option 3 - Schools receive any grant to add to their contribution from budget share. Payment for provision will be made directly by schools to providers. Audit requirement and financial risk with school.</p> <p>Avril asked Forum to consider the options available. Secondary schools had been</p>	
--	--	--

	<p>consulted, but only 4 replies had been received, the consensus being to start with Option 1 and move to Option 3.</p> <p>She pointed out that it was not necessary to make a decision on this item at the meeting, it was therefore <b>AGREED</b> to defer the item to the next meeting.</p> <p><u>Page 8 - Termination of meeting</u></p> <p>Delete 7.10 p.m. and insert 8.10 p.m.</p>	Subject to amendments - minutes approved as a correct record
<p><b>3</b> <b>11.3.08</b></p>	<p><b>Matters arising</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
<p><b>4</b> <b>11.3.08</b></p>	<p><b>Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended)</b></p> <p>The Forum <b>AGREED</b> to discuss the item relating to Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAg) in Private Session.</p>	
<p><b>5</b> <b>11.3.08</b></p>	<p><b>Key points and dates for schools for budget planning</b></p> <p>A report was submitted and outlined by Dawn Morris.</p> <p>The report was <b>NOTED</b>.</p>	Dawn Morris to action
<p><b>6.</b> <b>11.3.08</b></p>	<p><b>School Organisation</b></p> <p><b>(a) Academies</b></p> <p>A report was submitted and outlined by Avril Walton, who expressed apologies from Education Walsall for the late despatch of the report.</p> <p>The report was <b>NOTED</b>.</p> <p><b>(b) Funding of Early Years Provision</b></p> <p>A report was submitted and outlined by Avril Walton</p>	<p>Avril Walton to action</p> <p>Avril Walton to</p>

	<p>who responded to questions.</p> <p>Elaine Stringer asked to be informed of any meetings on this issue which she might attend in her capacity as a member of the Early Years Sub-Group. Dawn Morris undertook to let her have details of the Network meetings she was attending and also the National Funding Conference in May.</p>	<p>action</p> <p>Dawn Morris to action</p>
<p><b>7.</b></p> <p><b>11.3.08</b></p>	<p><b>Funding Mechanism for 14 - 19 and Diplomas</b></p> <p>A report was submitted and outlined by Dawn Morris who indicated that she now attended a Finance Officers Network where options had been discussed and where the general view was that the business element was causing concern that schools were not fully cogniscent of what might happen if Option 3 was chosen.</p> <p>Gary Crowther indicated that this had also been discussed at Secondary Heads Forum where the responsibilities had been fully understood. He suggested that this would send out the wrong message if the Forum did not listen to the results of the consultation exercise. It was subsequently <b>AGREED</b> unanimously that Option 3 be adopted with delegation to participating schools, procuring and paying providers, and undertaking reconciliations.</p> <p>Mr. H. Seaton, from the Black Country Learning and Skills Council, was invited to address the Forum and indicated that diplomas would be fully introduced by 2013 and the ideal model would be one offered in partnership. He indicated that there would be incremental introduction of diplomas between 2008-13 and anyone across the Borough would be able to go into any stream of learning. Underpinning this was a demand lead formula model. He went on to say that 14 - 16 was OK but 16 - 19 was more complicated and that there would be some difficult discussions taking place about how they will work in partnership and where the money would be divided up. He concluded by saying that by 2015, learners would be staying on at school until age 18.</p> <p>Mr. A. Bowater, from the City Academy, indicated that he was not able to provide any clarity on this issue and that he had reservations. He referred to</p>	<p>Dawn Morris to action</p>



	<p>(c) <u>Computers for Pupils</u></p> <p>A report was submitted and outlined by Steven Read.</p> <p>It was subsequently <b>AGREED</b> unanimously that the proposed distribution method outlined in the report be adopted.</p> <p>(d) <u>Post LIG Transition funding</u></p> <p>A report was submitted. Dawn Morris outlined the report and responded to questions.</p> <p>The Forum then voted on each of the Options as follows:-</p> <table> <tr> <td>Option 1</td> <td>-</td> <td>no one in favour</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Option 2</td> <td>-</td> <td>2 Members in favour</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Option 3</td> <td>-</td> <td>8 Members in favour</td> </tr> </table> <p>The Forum subsequently <b>AGREED</b> Option 3, namely to make no further allocations of transitional funding and to distribute the grant across all schools, as their preferred option for the distribution of Post LIG Transition funding.</p>	Option 1	-	no one in favour	Option 2	-	2 Members in favour	Option 3	-	8 Members in favour	Dawn Morris to action
Option 1	-	no one in favour									
Option 2	-	2 Members in favour									
Option 3	-	8 Members in favour									
10. 11.3.08	<p><b>Dedicated Schools Grant Formula</b></p> <p>A report was submitted.</p> <p>It was <b>NOTED</b> that a review is to take place by the DCSF of the distribution formula for the DSG.</p> <p>The Forum <b>AGREED</b> to follow its progress, assessing the impact that results could have on the funding of Walsall Schools.</p>	Avril Walton to action									
11. 11.3.08	<p><b>Schools Forum Membership - Terms of Office</b></p> <p>A report was submitted.</p> <p>It was subsequently <b>AGREED</b> that, to maintain continuity of experienced Forum Members, the terms of office of the following be extended until 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2011:-</p>										

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1 Special School Head Teacher (Heather Lomas)</li> <li>- 1 Nursery Head Teacher (Elaine Stringer)</li> <li>- 1 Early Years Development Childcare Partnership (Rhoda Poyser)</li> <li>- 1 Catholic Diocese representative (Steve Haywood)</li> <li>- 1 Staff Side representative (Marion Letts)</li> <li>- 2 Primary Head Teachers</li> <li>- 2 Secondary Head Teachers</li> <li>- 2 Primary Governors</li> <li>- 2 Secondary Governors</li> </ul> <p>It was further <b>AGREED</b> that the Primary and Secondary Head Teachers be identified through their respective Forums and that the Primary and Secondary Governors be identified by way of consultation direct with all Governors.</p>	<p>Avril Walton to action</p> <p>Clerk to action</p>
<p><b>12. 11.3.08</b></p>	<p><b>Schools Forum (England) (Amendment) Regulations, 2008</b></p> <p>A report was submitted.</p> <p>It was subsequently <b>AGREED:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) That it be <b>NOTED</b> that Kim Delaney is the PVI representative on the Forum and that representation is being sought from the 14 - 19 Partnership;</li> <li>(b) That it be <b>NOTED</b> that the Forum is currently operating on a ratio of 5:1 for schools; non schools Members and that the Forum is of the view that there should be no change in this ratio;</li> <li>(c) That the option for Head Teachers to be represented at Forum meetings by senior schools staff be <b>NOTED</b>;</li> </ul>	<p>Avril Walton/Clerk to action</p>

	<p>(d) That with regard to substitute Members for Schools Members on the Forum, the respective organisations be requested to identify named substitutes for their Members;</p> <p>(e) That the option to include faith body representatives other than Church of England or Roman Catholic Church, on the Forum, depending on the proportion of pupils represented by those bodies, be <b>NOTED</b>.</p>	Avril Walton/Clerk to action
<p><b>13.</b></p> <p><b>11.3.08</b></p>	<p><b>Dates for future meetings</b></p> <p>A report was submitted.</p> <p>Members felt that Room TR1 at the Beechdale Lifelong Learning Centre, Stephenson Square, Beechdale, would be a more suitable venue than the Alumwell Business and Enterprise College.</p> <p>It was subsequently <b>AGREED</b> that future meetings of the Forum be held on the dates shown and at the venues indicated, if available:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2008 at 4.00 p.m. at Blakenall Village Centre, Thames Road, Blakenall, Walsall</li> <li>- Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2008 at 6.00 p.m. at Blakenall Village Centre, Thames Road, Blakenall, Walsall</li> <li>- Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2008 at 4.00 p.m. Room TR1 at Beechdale Lifelong Learning Centre, Stephenson Square, Beechdale</li> <li>- Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2009 at 6.00 p.m. Room TR1 at Beechdale Lifelong Learning Centre, Stephenson Square, Beechdale</li> <li>- Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2009 at 4.00 p.m. at Blakenall Village Centre, Thames Road, Blakenall, Walsall</li> </ul>	Clerk to action



	<p>It was further <b>AGREED</b> that in the event of additional meetings proving necessary, dates and venues be provisionally agreed as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2008 at 6.00 p.m. Room TR1 at Beechdale Lifelong Learning Centre, Stephenson Square, Beechdale</li> <li>- Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 at 6.00 p.m. at Blakenall Village Centre, Thames Road, Blakenall, Walsall</li> </ul>	Clerk to action
14. 11.3.08	<p><b>Forward Plan</b></p> <p>A copy of the Forward Plan was submitted.</p> <p>It was <b>AGREED</b> that:-</p> <p>(a) The following items be deleted:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extension of role of Schools Forum - training</li> <li>- Cost Pressures - 2008 to 2011 statementing growth</li> <li>- Benchmarking - response from Primary and Secondary Heads Forums</li> </ul> <p>(b) Deprivation Review - the Sub-Group be delegated power to make minor amendments and this item be subsequently deleted from the Forward Plan.</p> <p>(c) That the Forward Plan be amended as follows:-</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><u>Delete:</u> 'Funding for E2L' Substitute 'EMAg'</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><u>Add:</u> Early Years</p>	<p>Clerk to action</p> <p>Clerk to action</p> <p>Clerk to action</p>

<p><b>15.</b> <b>11.3.08</b></p>	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <p>A letter from the Department for Children, Schools and Families regarding the School Finance (England) Regulations, 2008 was received and <b>NOTED</b>.</p>	
<p><b>16.</b> <b>11.3.08</b></p>	<p><b>Date, time and venue for next meeting</b></p> <p>It was <b>AGREED</b> that the next meeting of the Forum would be held at 4.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2008 at the Blakenall Village Centre, Thames Road, Blakenall.</p>	
	<p><b>Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended)</b></p> <p>It was <b>AGREED</b> that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item under Section 100A of the Local Government Act, 1972.</p>	
<p><b>9.</b> <b>11.3.08</b></p>	<p>(e) <b>Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAg)</b></p> <p>A report was submitted.</p> <p>David Taylor (Education Walsall) was in attendance. He outlined the report and responded to questions.</p> <p>The point was made that a lot of people had not responded on the proposals but the general feedback was that schools were concerned that both the 15% retained and the threshold were too high. More clarification was needed about the use of the money and possible outcomes in respect of Model 1.</p> <p>With regard to commissioning, Mr. Taylor indicated that he would want to have a Steering Group to look at commissioning. He had used this approach previously and found it to be very effective. This approach was endorsed by other Forum Members. Members felt that there was a need for clarity of the use of centrally retained funds and this was still a concern. Mr. Taylor indicated that he was happy to provide more detailed information and that he would want a Steering Group to look at this and possible</p>	<p>David Taylor/Avril Walton to action</p>

	<p>staging of the threshold increase.</p> <p>It was <b>AGREED</b> accordingly.</p> <p>(Exempt information under Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972) (as amended)</p>	
--	---	--

The meeting terminated at 6.20 p.m.