

Schools Forum

**Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday, 9th October, 2007 at 6.00 p.m.
at the Education Development Centre, Pelsall Lane, Rushall, Walsall**

Present: Mr. J. Baker
Miss S.M. Bradford
Mr. N. Chomyk
Mr. J.P. Clarke
Mr. E. Gee
Mr. P. Heath
Ms. M. Letts
Mrs. E. Maher
Mrs. R. Poyser
Ms. E. Stringer
Mr. M. Sweeney

In Attendance: Ms. A. Walton (Education Walsall)
Ms. D. Morris (Education Walsall)
Mr. C. Holliday, Walsall Council
Ms. C. Waite, Walsall Council
Ms. M. Judd, DCSF

		Action
1. 9.10.07	Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman Mr. N. Chomyk appointed Chairman of Forum for the next 12 months. Appointment of Vice-Chairman deferred to next meeting.	Clerk to action.
2. 9.10.07	Apologies Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Mr. M. Barton, Mr. A. Bowater, Mr. G. Crowther, Mr. A. Davies, Mr. S. Haywood and Ms. M. Harmitt.	
	Schools Forum Review The Chairman introduced Margaret Judd, DCSF Schools Funding Policy Advisor, who was attending the Forum as an observer but also to seek Forum Members views on how they felt the Forum was working. A briefing note was circulated.	

3. 9.10.07	Minutes - 11th September, 2007	Minutes approved as a correct record
4 9.10.07	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>Delegation of School Meals</p> <p>Deprivation Review</p> <p>PVI Representative</p> <p>14 - 16 Diploma Funding</p> <p>Small Group will be established to discuss issues. Concern expressed regarding representation. Clarification needed before any option is suggested regarding Partnership.</p> <p>School Funding - 5% Levy</p> <p>Distribution of Funds for Practical Learning</p>	<p>Included as an agenda item</p> <p>Included as an agenda item</p> <p>Sub Group to be established</p> <p>Agenda item at next scheduled meeting.</p> <p>Clerk to action.</p> <p>Item included on agenda</p> <p>Item included on agenda</p>
5 9.10.07	<p>Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended)</p> <p>There were no items on the agenda which the Forum considered should be dealt with in private session.</p>	
6 9.10.07	<p>Software Presentation by HCSS Education</p> <p>Nick Ratcliffe and Matt Birch from HCSS Education Ltd. were in attendance and gave a short presentation on their bespoke software management information system and responded to questions from Forum Members. The point was made that, at the present time, no arrangements had been made for Head Teachers or Bursars to view the presentation.</p>	Avril Walton/Dawn Morris to action.

	<p>Presentation noted.</p> <p>Arrangements to be made for Head Teachers and Bursars to view presentation.</p>	
<p>7.</p> <p>9.10.07</p>	<p>School Meals - Service Level Agreements</p> <p>Chris Holliday and Catherine Waite from Walsall Council were in attendance for this item.</p> <p>Chris advised the Forum that he was responsible for a number of services, including Catering.</p> <p>The current budget for Catering Services to schools was £659k which involved delivery to 101 schools at no cost to those schools. He advised that, following the focus on healthier meal options, there had been a decline in the take up of school meals borough wide.</p> <p>An investment bid for next year for primary schools had been submitted but one problem was that take up of meals is much lower than anticipated. Two years ago Catering DSO were providing 14,000 meals per day, this dropped to around 12,000 per day in 2006/2007 and summer 2007 figures suggest a further reduction to 11,000 meals per day. The reduction in revenue resulted in a year end deficit of £500k, with a similar deficit anticipated at the end of 2007/2008. In addition, new Nutrient Standards due in 2009 will also have an effect longer term.</p> <p>A number of options have been considered, namely:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no catering service offered to schools in future - cutting other Leisure & Community services; - charging for 'extras'; - charging a management fee. - closure of some kitchens <p>The views of the relevant Portfolio holders had been sought and they were adamant that they wanted to retain the Catering Service. The Catering DSO has looked at ways to address a</p>	

	<p>possible £500k shortfall by reworking the budget. It is hoped that savings of approx. £200k generated from changes to staff conditions of service and new procurement arrangements for provisions and income of £300k from a management fee to schools would reduce the deficit. While no decision has been made, a management fee charged to schools may be at the levels indicated below:</p> <table><tr><td></td><td><u>No. on</u> <u>roll</u></td><td><u>Primary</u></td><td><u>No. on</u> <u>roll</u></td><td><u>Secondary</u></td></tr><tr><td>Small</td><td>150</td><td>£500</td><td>900</td><td>£2,900</td></tr><tr><td>Medium</td><td>340</td><td>£1,100</td><td>1,100</td><td>£3,700</td></tr><tr><td>Large</td><td>530</td><td>£1,700</td><td>1,300</td><td>£4,300</td></tr></table> <p>Chris stated that for this fee, the Service would provide the Catering Service for each school, including marketing support and ensuring nutritional standards are met. The Service would also offer advice and support and health and safety co-ordination. Letters will be sent out to all schools within the next few weeks to gauge the level of buy back from schools next year. The fee would remain the same for 2 years. If the business could be built up, the reaction to healthy meals would, hopefully, wane and the management fee could be reduced.</p> <p>Following a period of questioning, it was agreed that a report be submitted to the Forum with details of the impact on schools and costs to individual schools, the report to be shared with both the Primary and Secondary Head Teacher Forums prior to submission to the Schools Forum.</p>		<u>No. on</u> <u>roll</u>	<u>Primary</u>	<u>No. on</u> <u>roll</u>	<u>Secondary</u>	Small	150	£500	900	£2,900	Medium	340	£1,100	1,100	£3,700	Large	530	£1,700	1,300	£4,300	
	<u>No. on</u> <u>roll</u>	<u>Primary</u>	<u>No. on</u> <u>roll</u>	<u>Secondary</u>																		
Small	150	£500	900	£2,900																		
Medium	340	£1,100	1,100	£3,700																		
Large	530	£1,700	1,300	£4,300																		
8. 9.10.07	<p>Schools Budget 2006 - 07 - Closedown</p> <p>Dawn Morris circulated a 2006/2007 annual statement document which showed how the budget was allocated compared to the actual expenditure on each budget line. Overall the outturn 2006/2007 DSG has an underspend of £196k, this with an additional £77k DSG provided in final calculations will be added to next years DSG.</p>	Avril Walton to action.																				
		Report noted.																				

<p>9. 9.10.07</p>	<p>Deprivation Review</p> <p>Avril Walton indicated that she had had a meeting with Tony Stainer and the authority's Childrens Services Advisor to discuss the details of the deprivation template submitted in the summer. Our CSA confirmed that additional funding must be targeted to deprivation over the next three years to meet the DCSF minimum requirements.</p> <p>In funding terms this translates to an additional £6.5 million of new funding. The CSA indicated that progression towards the funding requirement and the effective use of the funding will be monitored.</p> <p>She added that, if Walsall showed commitment, this would be supported by Government Office.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>10. 9.10.07</p>	<p>Provisional breakdown of cost pressures for the 2008/2011 multi-year period</p> <p>Dawn Morris circulated a document identifying spending pressures over the next three years and responded to questions from Forum Members.</p>	<p>Noted. To be a regular agenda item - Clerk/Avril Walton to action.</p>
<p>11. 9.10.07</p>	<p>Funding Formula - data changes across the multi-year period</p> <p>Currently, following Forum's agreement, once budgets across a multi year period have been published, the only data changes made in finalised budgets would be pupil numbers, business rates, incidence of NQT's, statementing provision and FSM numbers.</p> <p>A request has now been made in regard to changes in floor area data where projects not known at the beginning of the multi year period impact on a school.</p> <p>It was suggested that a report to the next meeting with details of how an in year adjustment may be triggered. This was agreed</p>	<p>Noted. Report to next scheduled meeting - Clerk and Avril Walton to action.</p>

<p>12. 9.10.07</p>	<p>School Funding 2008 - 2011 - Update</p> <p>A report was circulated, together with an extract from 'Teachernet' entitled 'School Revenue Balances'.</p> <p>Dawn Morris outlined the contents of the documents.</p> <p>It was agreed that the report be noted and that a further report be submitted to the next scheduled meeting of the Forum on the Redistribution of Balances.</p> <p>It was also agreed that copies of the papers circulated at today's meeting be circulated to all Forum Members.</p>	<p>Clerk and Avril Walton to action.</p> <p>Clerk to action.</p>
<p>13. 9.10.07</p>	<p>Practical Learning - Future</p> <p>Forum Members were advised that it would not be possible to progress this issue until the whole issue of the 14 - 19 Partnership had been addressed.</p> <p>Noted.</p>	<p>Item to remain on Forward Plan - Clerk to action.</p>
<p>14. 9.10.07</p>	<p>Draft School Finance (England) Regulations Draft Schools Forums (England) (Amendment) Regulations, 2007</p> <p>A report was submitted.</p> <p>The Chairman pointed out that the draft regulations may cause difficulties since there was no forum for Governors in Walsall and there may be difficulties in electing representatives to the Schools forum.</p> <p>Margaret Judd explained that it would be left to individual authorities to decide how to implement the regulations.</p> <p>Avril Walton indicated that it might be possible to increase the budget for Schools Forum to include provision for training.</p>	

