

## Schools Forum

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2007 at 4.00 p.m.  
at the Education Development Centre, Pelsall Lane, Rushall, Walsall

**Present:** Mr. N. Chomyk (Chairman)  
Mr. J. Baker  
Mr. M. Barton  
Miss S.M. Bradford  
Mr. A. Davies  
Mr. E. Gee  
Mr. P. Heath  
Mrs. E. Maher  
Ms. E. Stringer

Ms. F. Bibi - Observer, Black Country Learning and Skills  
Council

**In Attendance:** Mr. G. McQueen (Education Walsall)  
Ms. D. Morris (Education Walsall)  
Ms. E. McPherson-Jones (Education Walsall)  
Ms. M. Harmitt - Interim Head of Finance for Children and Young  
People (Walsall Council)

		<b>Action</b>
<b>1.</b> <b>12.6.07</b>	<b>Apologies</b>  Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Mr. A. Bowater, Mr. A.F. Cheminais, Mr. J.P. Clarke, Mr. G. Crowther, Mr. S. Haywood, Mr. F. Hodgkinson, Mr. S. Holtam, Ms. M. Letts and Mr. M. Sweeney.	
<b>2.</b> <b>12.6.07</b>	<b>Minutes - 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2007</b>	Minutes approved as a correct record
<b>2.1</b> <b>12.6.07</b>	<b>Delegation of funds for School Meals</b>  It was noted that one meeting of the Jamie Oliver Group had been held and it was looking at whether the current system was profitable or not. If there were proposals for change, officers would report back to the Forum in due course.	Item to remain on Forward Plan. Clerk to action.

<p><b>2.2</b> <b>12.6.07</b></p>	<p><b>Staff Side Associations: Request for representation on Schools Forum</b></p> <p>It was confirmed that it was constitutionally correct to amend the Constitution with immediate effect to include a staff side Association representative, in consequence of which, Ms. M. Letts had been invited to attend this meeting as a non-school member.</p>	
<p><b>2.3</b> <b>12.6.07</b></p>	<p><b>Budget 2007/08</b></p> <p>It was reported that the budget for 2007/08 had now been finalised with a shortfall of £200,000 which would be carried forward to next year.</p>	
<p><b>4.</b> <b>12.6.07</b></p>	<p><b>Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended)</b></p> <p>There were no items on the agenda which the Forum considered should be dealt with in private session.</p>	
	<p>With the approval of the Forum, Item 7 relating to 'Maintained Specialist Provision for Children and Young People in Walsall' was considered next on the agenda.</p>	
<p><b>7.</b> <b>12.6.07</b></p>	<p><b>Maintained Specialist Provision for Children and Young People in Walsall</b></p> <p>A report was submitted.</p> <p>Beth McPherson-Jones was in attendance for this item. She indicated that a formal review would be undertaken next term and the purpose of this report was to update the Forum on the current situation.</p> <p>Good progress had been made on enacting the proposals and the impact of the provision was evident. Beth briefly outlined developments in relation to Additionally Resourced Mainstream Provision, Special School Provision for Children with Complex Needs and Provision for Children</p>	

	<p>with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and then responded to questions. She indicated that the cost saving of bringing pupils back in-house rather than accommodating them extra-district needed to be quantified. However, the cost in 2004 was about £1m (based on 15 out of district placements). There were currently 17 out of district placements.</p> <p>Mr. McQueen expressed the view that he did not anticipate that those pupils currently accommodated extra-district would return in-house. The proposals would apply to any pupils identified as being in need of specialist educational provision from now on, and would prevent the use of extra-district placements.</p> <p>Beth went on to explain the proposals in more detail and indicated that the service was hoping to get into early intervention so that some pupils could eventually go back to their own schools. She did not have an indication of budget at the present time but did not anticipate an increased budget and headroom would be smaller.</p> <p>In answer to a question whether extra-district children might be brought in to Walsall to fill any vacancies, she indicated that this might be a feature and would not be discounted. By way of explanation, Mr. McQueen said that this would generate income but the intention was Walsall schools for Walsall people, any proposal to bring pupils in to Walsall would be short term only. He went on to say that the numbers of pupils proposed were 30 secondary and 25 primary. With regard to the Ruiz Centre, the proposal was to continue to use it for intensive attention and then for pupils to return to their own schools.</p> <p>Mr. McQueen referred to the proposed new secondary school site and indicated that there was a need for rapid conversation with LSC to look at the proposal regarding 14 - 19 curriculum on vocational facilities.</p> <p>It was <b>AGREED</b>:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• That the progress on enacting changes to maintained provision for pupils with special educational needs be noted;</li></ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That it be noted that there will be financial implications as a result of the changes; and</li> <li>• That consideration of the changes be added to the debate on the allocation of the ISB for the 2008 - 2011 funding period.</li> </ul>	Dawn Morris to action
5. 12.6.07	<p><b>Deprivation Review: Consultation</b></p> <p>A report was submitted, together with the formal Deprivation Funding Review consultation document.</p> <p>Mr. McQueen advised that Head Teachers should be putting this into their budgets for the future. He added that documents would be sent out by the end of the week and that funds would be effective by 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2008.</p> <p>In answer to a question regarding whether consultation would be done on-line, Mr. McQueen indicated that, due to difficulties in accessing the Education Walsall website, an executive decision had been made not to have on-line consultation. The Forum would be able to study the responses before taking any decisions affecting the budgets for the 2008 - 2011 period.</p> <p>It was <b>AGREED</b> that the report be noted.</p>	
6. 12.6.07	<p><b>Properly Assigned Projects</b></p> <p>A report was submitted.</p> <p>In answer to a question whether the Special School and Cadbury Trust projects would be included, Mr. McQueen indicated that there would be a need to identify whether the projects were classed as commitments.</p> <p>With regard to funding for children in schools, Dawn Morris indicated that there would be a 5% levy across the board next year. She went on to say that the consultation document said that this step would be introduced before the Control Balance Mechanism which indicated that, with 3 year budgets, there would be no need to keep large</p>	

	<p>budgets. She added that there was a £1.9bn underspend in school budgets which made it very difficult to ask for an increase in schools budgets. Dawn indicated that she did not know how much had been clawed back but a proforma would be sent out to schools to reflect their commitments so that a balance could be calculated and this would be reported to the Forum in September.</p> <p>It was <b>AGREED:-</b></p> <p>That a copy of the report be forwarded to the Primary Head Teachers and the Secondary Head Teachers forae.</p>	<p>Dawn Morris/ George McQueen to action</p>
<p><b>8. 12.6.07</b></p>	<p><b>Forward Plan</b></p> <p>A copy of the Forward Plan was submitted.</p> <p>It was <b>AGREED:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the following items be deleted from the Forward Plan:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extended Schools Funding</li> <li>- Potential Delegation of Maternity Pay</li> <li>- Extension of role of Schools Forum - training</li> </ul> </li> <li>• That the item relating to 'Personalised Learning' be retitled 'Practical Learning' with the note that this will be revisited when a paper has been submitted to the Secondary Heads Forum on possible ways forward</li> <li>• That the following items be added to the Forward Plan:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual Report                    } <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(September meeting) } When</li> <li>  } information</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Extended Schools -            } is</li> <li>Standard Fund Grant        } available</li> <li>  }</li> <li>- Consultation                    }</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Clerk to action</p> <p>Clerk and George McQueen to action</p> <p>Clerk to action</p>

<b>9.</b> <b>12.6.07</b>	<b>Next Meeting</b>  It was <b>NOTED</b> that the next scheduled meeting of the Forum would be at 6.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 9 <sup>th</sup> October, 2007 in the Small Hall at the Education Development Centre, Pelsall Lane, Rushall and that, should the need arise, a further meeting of the Forum would be held at 6.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 11 <sup>th</sup> September, 2007.	
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The meeting terminated at 5.17 p.m.