

Schools Forum

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday, 13th March, 2012 at 4.00 p.m. at Blakenall Village Centre, Thames Road, Blakenall, Walsall

Present:- Mrs. M. Sheehy
Mr. D. Brownsword
Mr. R.C. Yeomans
Mr. G. Crowther
Dame M. Brennan
Mr. J.P. Clarke
Ms. H. Lomas
Mrs. J. Ward
Ms. P. Hunt
Mr. E. Gee
Mr. F. Hodgkinson
Mr. J. Murray
Mr. D. Clough

In Attendance:- Ms. J. Taylor (Walsall Children's Services - Serco)
Mr. D. Mortiboys - Walsall MBC
Ms. L. Hughes - Walsall MBC
Mr. Barry Fielding - Transition Team, Walsall MBC
Ms. Christine Breese - HR, Walsall MBC

		Action
	<p>In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, nominations were requested for Chairman for the duration of the meeting.</p> <p>Resolved</p> <p>That Mr. Crowther be appointed Chairman for the duration of the meeting.</p>	
1. 13.3.12	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Mr. S. Flynn, Mrs. M. Yates, Mrs. M. Woodcock and Mrs. M. Robinson.</p>	
2. 13.3.12	<p>Minutes - 28th February, 2012</p>	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 28th February, 2012 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.</p>

3. 13.3.12	<p>Matters arising from the minutes</p> <p>Mrs. Taylor indicated that the Forum may wish to re-visit the balance control mechanism when the new funding framework, including Academies, was received.</p>	
4. 13.3.12	<p>Late items to be introduced by the Chairman</p> <p>There were no late items for introduction by the Chairman.</p>	
5. 13.3.12	<p>Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended)</p> <p>There were no items for consideration in the private session.</p>	
6. 13.3.12	<p>Transition of Education Services - Phase 1 (Schools Finance Services)</p> <p>A briefing note was submitted.</p> <p>Louise Hughes introduced Barry Fielding, Exit Manager and Christine Breese, HR - TUPE transfers. Mr. Fielding outlined his role in the run up to the transfer of the Serco contract to the Council.</p> <p>Ms. Breese outlined the present position regarding the transfer of staff from Serco to the Council and the negotiations that had taken place with staff and Trade Unions.</p> <p>Ms. Hughes informed the Forum that an induction process for staff was being put in place and they would be asked whether there were any issues eight weeks after taking up the transferred posts. Staff from Serco would transfer to the appropriate team within the Council and not all would take up posts in Children's Services.</p> <p>Ms. Hughes drew the Forum's attention to the briefing notes circulated with the papers that could be found on the Council's website.</p>	

	<p>Resolved</p> <p>That the briefing notes and the information provided on the transition of Education Services - Phase 1 be noted.</p>	
<p>7. 13.3.12</p>	<p>New Relationship with Walsall Schools - Local Authority Role and implementation of learning pilots (financial support)</p> <p>A PowerPoint presentation was given to the Forum by Ms. L. Hughes. Members stressed the need for accurate information to be used in the evaluation process.</p> <p>Mr. Crowther asked that information be available at the next meeting of both the Secondary and Primary Heads Forum in order that discussions can take place on the way forward on any expression of interest.</p> <p>Resolved</p> <p>That the presentation be noted.</p>	
<p>8. 13.3.12</p>	<p>Technical Updates to the Scheme for Financing Schools and the School Finance Regulations 2012</p> <p>A report was submitted.</p> <p>Ms. Taylor highlighted the amendments to the scheme contained in the report. The scheme no longer included references to best value but referred to efficiency and value for money for schools. There was, therefore, no longer a need for schools to submit a best value statement with their budget to the Authority. Financial management in schools was now replaced with Schools Financial Value Standards (SFVS) with effect from 2013. The new scheme would be published on "The Well".</p> <p>Resolved</p> <p>That the content of the report and the updated scheme for financing schools to come into effect on 1st April 2012 be noted. The 2012 scheme for financing schools would also be published on "The</p>	

	Well”.	
9.13.3.12	<p>2012-13 Central Expenditure Limit (CEL) and formula</p> <p>A report was submitted.</p> <p>The Forum was advised that the music service was a traded service for schools to buy into. Members requested information on the steps taken by the music service to make necessary adjustments over the last two years as had been agreed when the last funding agreement had been made.</p> <p>Mr. Mortiboys referred to the breach in the Central Expenditure Limit (CEL) as part of the budget this year and confirmed that any breaches of the CEL required the approval of Schools Forum. The breach was a technical issue as when an Academy converted it took a percentage of the funding which led to the breach in CEL. He drew Members’ attention to the content of the report and undertook to provide up-to-date information on Sneyd School balances.</p> <p>With regard to pressures in 2013, additional children had become eligible for free school meals for which no additional funding was available.</p> <p>Mr. Mortiboys confirmed that the disability assessment service was part of Serco and would revert back to the Council from 1st April, 2012. The recommendation requested that schools allow up to £150,000 to fund 30% of the service which was relevant to education. A further report on this matter would be submitted to the Forum in the Autumn.</p> <p>After discussion it was,</p> <p>Resolved</p> <p>(1) That Schools Forum approve, unanimously, the technical breach in the Central Expenditure Limit (CEL) for 2012/13. Further information around the breach to be provided at future meetings;</p>	

	<p>(2) That Schools Forum note the surplus of 2011/12 CEL and the significantly reduced budget for 2012/13 CEL;</p> <p>(3) That Schools Forum agree in principle (unanimously) the use of £1 million of surplus from Sneyd balances and CEL 2011/12 surplus to support CEL in 2012/13 which reduced the figure;</p> <p>(4) That Schools Forum endorse (unanimously) the use of £1 million of surplus to support ISB in 2012/13;</p> <p>(5) That Schools Forum endorse (unanimously) a 10% increase in FSM eligibility rate within the formula for 2012/13;</p> <p>(6) That the support to the music support service be deferred to a special meeting of the Forum to be held on 27th March, 2012 to enable additional information to be provided relating to the use of the funding and why this had not been budgeted for in the previous funds set aside;</p> <p>(7) That the Forum reject (unanimously) £152,584 of CEL on line 1.2.8 contribution to combined budgets and that a report be submitted to the Forum in the Autumn.</p>	
<p>10. 13.3.12</p>	<p>Forward Plan</p> <p>The Forward Plan was submitted.</p> <p>It was agreed that the equal pay/single status item be withdrawn.</p>	
<p>11. 13.3.12</p>	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>None received.</p>	

12. 13.3.12	Date and time of next meeting It was NOTED that the next meeting of Schools Forum would be held on Tuesday, 27 th March, 2012 at 4.00 p.m. at Blakenall Village Centre, Thames Road, Blakenall, Walsall.	
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The meeting terminated at 6.15 p.m.