

## **SLOUGH SCHOOLS FORUM**

### **SCHOOLS GROUP:**

Maggie Waller (Chair), Holy Family Primary School  
John Constable (Vice-Chair), Langley Grammar School  
Virginia Barrett, East Berkshire College  
Gillian Coffey, Lynch Hill School Primary Academy  
Kathleen Higgins, Beechwood Secondary School  
Helen Huntley, Haybrook College  
Paul McAteer, Slough and Eton C & E Business and Enterprise College  
Navroop Mehat, Wexham Court Primary School  
Carole Pearce, Penn Wood Primary School  
Debbie Richards, Arbour Vale School  
Jo Rockall, Herschel Grammar School  
Nicky Willis, Cippenham Primary School  
Sally Eaton, Wellingtons for Langley Hall (PVI)

### **APOLOGIES:**

Angela Mellish, Krutika Pau, Paul Wilson and Philip Gregory

### **ATTENDEES:**

Eddie Neighbour and Jon Reekie

### **LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY:**

Nandita Sirker, Coral Miller and Rajpreet Johal (Clerk)  
Robin Crofts (Cambridge Education)

**DATE & TIME: TUESDAY, 6TH OCTOBER, 2015 AT 8.00 AM**  
**BEECHWOOD RESEARCH AND CONFERENCE CENTRE, LONG**  
**READINGS LANE, SLOUGH, BERKSHIRE, SL2 1QE**

## AGENDA

### Page

#### **437. Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies noted from Angela Mellish, Krutika Pau, Paul Wilson and Philip Gregory.

Maggie Waller welcomed Rajpreet Johal (Clerk) to the meeting after returning from maternity leave.

#### **438. Declarations of Interest**

None

#### **439. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising**

##### Page 2

Maggie Waller reported that the December Schools Forum meeting will have a report on SEBDOS funding.

Interim feedback from the Cost of Provision Review was to be presented by Paul Scaife at the end of this meeting.

##### Page 3

Maggie Waller advised that a meeting is to be arranged with Krutika Pau, Maggie Waller, John Constable and Nicola Clemo, CE of the Slough Children's Services Trust, regarding Schools Forum.

##### Page 5

Paul McAteer noted that in the minutes of the last meeting Krutika Pau stated that although PFI was capital, she was referring to School Improvement. Maggie to check this comment as it may have been related to under spend on School Improvement.

It was noted that two paragraphs were repeated in error on page 5 of these minutes.

John Constable provided a 'Headlines' summary sheet of 23<sup>rd</sup> September Schools Forum meeting. John will be writing this document as the Vice Chair of the Forum after each meeting. Members were happy with the format of the summary sheet. Members agreed it would be useful, after each meeting, for this paper to go to: SASH and the SPHA via Jo Rockall and Nicky Willis; chairs of governors, academy proprietors, Schools Forum members and attending officers.

Schools Forum Self Assessment Review and Updated Constitution report - Sarah Forsyth had confirmed that no further LA approval of the Schools Forum Constitution document was needed. This document is now formally agreed.

John Constable has written to academy proprietors regarding vacancies for academy members on the Schools Forum and the deadline for responses is 6th November 2015.

Page 6:

Review of Scheme for Financing Schools will be on the December Schools Forum meeting.

**440. Current DfE Consultations/Changes on School Funding 2016/17**

Coral Miller reported on a consultation on the Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations 2015 which is being conducted by the Department for Education (DfE). Coral went through the four main recommendations applicable to schools, as set out in the report.

It was also noted that the change regarding falling rolls could become relevant to Slough in the future.

Coral was asked to clarify the proposed change regarding the use of non-schools education budgets for up to 25 year olds.

There was some discussion about the impact of place based funding for 2 year olds. Nandita Sirker noted that, in the future there will be budget pressures to support increased participation and this should be included in the LA response. Also noted were the pressures arising from Early Years SEN and the pressures this creates on the High Needs Block.

Clarification was sought regarding what happens to any deficit where a school amalgamation takes place. Coral Miller agreed to clarify, but thought that the deficit did pass across.

The Local Authority and Cambridge Education will draft a response to the consultation. Nandita Sirker, Rachel Cartwright and Robin Crofts will provide input for the response regarding 2 year olds.

It was agreed that, once the LA response was drafted, it would be sent to Maggie Waller by October half term. She will then circulate to members of the Forum and seek further comments so that a separate Schools Forum response can be submitted to the DfE.

It was noted that the consultation ends on the 13<sup>th</sup> November.

**441. Cambridge Education centrally retained/school improvement under spend (issue from 23/09 meeting)**

The report presented by Nandita Sirker was to update Schools Forum following the 23rd September discussion regarding the School Improvement 2015/16 underspend of £308k.

In addition, there was discussion regarding the additional £210,000 2014/15 Cambridge Education underspend that was identified at the last meeting.

The report proposed the use of £20,000 to support a piece of work commissioned by the LA to identify the options for School Improvement delivery after the end of the Cambridge Education contract (October 2016). It was noted that schools would be heavily involved in shaping this. It was noted that the commissioned work would take place over the current term. This issue would be added to the Schools Forum agenda for January 2016.

It was noted that the appendix to the report set out the basis of the current LA requirements for Cambridge Education.

Paul McAteer asked what was done before procuring the contract with Cambridge Education and it was confirmed that a bigger piece of work was done to support that process. Nandita Sinker clarified that the proposed piece of work is to look at options and that a detailed specification would then be worked out at a later stage.

Concern was expressed about the tight timetable and it was clarified that, following the options piece of work, procurement would then follow in the New Year.

Kathleen Higgins asked for clarification about the process to date relating to the decision being made to end the Cambridge Education contract within the context of there now being a request for underspend funding to be allocated so a consultant can be employed to work up a strategy for service provision and delivery post the CEA contract ending/CEA involvement. It was explained that, because of changes coming about through the introduction of the Children's Services Trust, it has brought into question any extension of the Cambridge Education contract beyond the initial three year period. This is because the introduction of the Trust will lead to a re-configuring of services and provision to ensure that children are securely safeguarded. No decisions have yet been made about the future delivery of services. This will be a process pursued over the next twelve months. With regard to education services, some will remain or return to the Local Authority; some will be transferred to the Trust; some will possibly be procured through a new provider or re-procured through Cambridge Education.

The request for the £20,000 is to look at options for delivery. It was noted that the budget for School Improvement is now estimated at approximately £800,000.

Jo Rockall asked if there was a need to tender if the service was taken back in-house and it was confirmed that this would not be necessary but that the LA would only do that if there was a clear evidence base to show that was preferable.

Robin Crofts stated that it was timely to review what School Improvement is and does and that Cambridge Education is only providing the LA statutory requirements of monitoring, early support for schools in difficulty, challenge

and intervention, while this area of work also has a wider brief of development and support.

There was discussion about the piece of work to be commissioned. Nandita Sinker said that it was possible to commission through specialist agencies but they would need to have a good understanding of Slough.

Helen Huntley stated that it would be sensible to ensure that both headteachers and governors were involved.

It was agreed to support the LA proposal for an allocation of £20,000 to fund the piece of work to scope out future school improvement options. This would be funded from the £210,000 Cambridge Education School Improvement underspend for 2014-15.

Nicky Willis reported on two primary phase school improvement proposals for funding, focused on mathematics. Work is being undertaken with Rising Stars on a project focussed on boosting performance for Year 6 pupils, related to the new maths testing requirements. It is a 2 year long term project. Nicky Willis was looking for agreement for this to be funded out of the £210,000.

£35,000 was agreed to support the project with Rising Stars. It was agreed that Robin Crofts will hold this amount within Cambridge Education and work with headteachers and Julian King-Harris to progress the project. It would provide support for seven schools which Cambridge Education would identify based on outcomes related to attainment and progress. Paul McAteer asked if the project would be for maintained schools and academies and this was confirmed.

Further proposals for the remaining £155,000 balance of the Cambridge Education 2014/15 underspend will be brought to Schools Forum in December. This may include a second project identified to do with the 'Mastery' curriculum which would support 10 schools at a total cost of around £100,000. This will come to the December meeting with more detail and Nicky Willis is to circulate more information.

**Balance of £308,000 of the underspend on the centrally retained school improvement budget 2015/16 (£203,000):**

It was noted that there was an error in the minutes and that 2.1.3 of report should be amended: delete "after £70k approved".

John Constable gave an update on the possible use of the £70,000 allocated for teacher recruitment at the September School Forum meeting. This could fund a dedicated website, attendance by headteachers at recruitment fairs, some marketing and administrative support. The paper tabled by John Constable will be circulated with the minutes.

A request was made for a further £13,000 to offset the £26,000 commitment of secondary headteachers to recruitment research. This was agreed.

It was agreed that the remaining £190,000 would be transferred to the High Needs Block to contribute to the easing of anticipated pressures on expenditure.

**442. 2016/17 Budget Timetable**

5-16 Formula Timetable was provided to Schools Forum and noted.

It was noted that consultation with all schools regarding any formula changes for 2016/17 would take place in November immediately after the Task Group, which has been confirmed.

**443. Cambridge Education**

Robin Crofts reported Cambridge Education is now initiating the exit strategy whilst making sure there is no compromising of issues regarding improvement of schools.

**444. Academies Update**

Robin Crofts reported that there is a meeting planned with Cambridge Education, the LA and the Regional Schools Commissioner in November.

**445. 2015/16 Forward Agenda Plan and Key Decisions Log**

Key Decisions Log and Forward Agenda Plan attached for information.

**446. After main meeting - Feedback on Cost of Provision Review**

Following the full meeting, Paul Scaife attended to provide the Schools Forum with initial feedback on the work to date on the Cost of Provision Review.