

Slough Schools Forum- Meeting held on Wednesday, 6th December, 2017

Present: Maggie Waller, Holy Family Primary School (Chair)
John Constable, Langley Grammar School (Vice-Chair)
Gillian Coffey, Lynch Hill Primary School
Philip Gregory, Baylis Court Nursery School
Valerie Harffey, Ryvers Primary School
Kathleen Higgins, Beechwood Secondary School
Helen Huntley, Haybrook College / PRU
Jo Matthews, Littledown School / PRU
Navroop Mehat, Wexham Court Primary School
Angela Mellish, St Bernard's Grammar School
Eddie Neighbour, Upton Court Grammar School
Carol Pearce, Penn Wood Primary School
Jon Reekie, Baylis Court Trust MAT / Godolphin Infant School
Jo Rockall, Herschel Grammar School
Nicky Willis, Cippenham Primary School

Observers: Peter Collins, Slough & Eton School

Officers: Catherine Cochran, Domenico Barani, George Grant, Johnny Kyriacou and John Voytal

Apologies: Tracey Bradshaw, Sally Eaton, Cate Duffy and Michael Jarrett and Susan Woodland

PART I

601. Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from Tracey Bradshaw, Cate Duffy, Sally Eaton, Michael Jarrett and Susan Woodland.

The Chair welcomed Peter Collins, Headteacher of Slough & Eton School as an observer. It was noted that Peter Collins had been nominated as a member of the Forum and that the closing date for nominations was Friday 8 December.

602. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

It was noted that items 8 and 9 were supported by one report and items 10 and 11 would be taken together.

603. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 9 November 2017

The minutes of the Slough Schools Forum meeting held on 9 November 2017 were approved as a correct record.

Matters Arising from the Minutes of 9 November 2017:

Minute 581: It was confirmed that George Grant had responded to Helen Huntley concerning the High Needs funding queries and this was being followed up.

Minute 598: The revised Schools Forum Constitution was to be approved by the Council and Johnny Kyriacou was asked to follow this up with Cate Duffy.

604. Budget timetable for 2018/19 (including draft report)

The report set out the budget timetable in preparation for 2018/19.

The Proposed Formula Changes report and supporting information were tabled and apologies were given for tabling this at the meeting. Members were given time to read the information presented.

Work on the options for the formula changes had been ongoing to ensure there was minimal turbulence for schools in the lead up to the implementation of the National Funding Formula (NFF) from 2020. The 5 - 16 Task Group had met three times since the last meeting of the Schools Forum. George Grant thanked all those who had been involved in the process.

The Task Group had formed an overview, taking feedback from other networks into consideration. Members acknowledged the need to prepare for the inevitable introduction of the NFF while being aware of the impact on individual schools.

It had been agreed to draw up models for three scenarios and the circulated report and information set out those options: retaining the Status Quo, moving half-way to the NFF or to full implementation of NFF. It was pointed out that the figures quoted were approximations, based on the October 2016 census numbers and did not include final data from the DfE which was due in early January.

A formal consultation was to be sent to schools as soon as possible, recommending Option 2, requesting responses by Friday 5 January 2018. After that date, the final census and DfE data would be used with the results of the consultation for presentation at the next Schools Forum meeting, prior to final Council sign-off.

The Task Group acknowledged that schools in Slough were well funded but there were also high levels of deprivation, an area under review by the DfE as part of the NFF.

It was proposed the closing date for consultation should be moved to allow schools additional time following the festive break and it was agreed it should be moved to Tuesday 9 January 2018.

It was queried whether the cap of 3% was temporary and noted that a number of schools had received MFG for a number of years. George Grant acknowledged that the removal of MFG would create a severe impact across schools nationally.

It was suggested further information should be given in the consultation document regarding Option 2 as it appeared some schools were losing whilst others were gaining large amounts: an explanation would assist those who had not attended Task Group meetings. George Grant would aim to include this background. The Task Group had considered all types of schools and it was noted that pupils in resource bases were now included in the figures circulated.

A request was made of the SBC finance team that an indication of when schools would receive their budgets would be useful and that special schools should be included.

Schools Forum supported Option 2, based on the work completed by the Task Group and welcomed the agreement to extend the closing date of the consultation. Task Group members thanked the SBC finance team for all their hard work.

605. Draft Schools Block 2018/19 and Proposed Formula Changes

This item had been covered under the previous minute.

606. Scheme for Financing Schools

The circulated report detailed the outcome of the recent consultation held with maintained schools. The Scheme was now available via <http://www.slough.gov.uk/downloads/Scheme-for-financing-schools-2017-18.pdf> and maintained schools were advised to make themselves aware of the content. It was suggested the link should be sent directly to School Bursars via Gatekeeper. In addition, John Voytal and George Grant agreed to draw up, and would append a supporting glossary.

Maintained school representatives at the meeting **APPROVED** the Scheme.

607. Update from Task Groups: 5-16, High Needs Block and Early Years (verbal)

5-16 Task Group: this item had already been covered.

Early Years Task Group: it was reported that the Early Years Task Group had met and reviewed options. A supporting report would be presented at the next meeting of Schools Forum.

High Needs Block Task Group: this item would be covered under the next two agenda items.

608. Report on Resource Base Task Group Proposal

A report had been circulated regarding High Needs places for 2018/19, along with a proposal regarding a review of banding for the financial year 2019/20. Vikram Hansrani explained that since bandings had been introduced in 2013 there had been two commissioned reviews of SEND, both of which had recommended a review of banding. It was confirmed that Schools Forum supported the review of banding.

Schools Forum supported the proposal of a review and a request was made for a group of members to conduct that review, comprising a range of schools e.g. mainstream, mainstream with Resource Bases, special schools and possibly business support. SENCos would also be encouraged to join. Those members at the meeting expressing an interest in forming the group were noted.

It was added that there was also a need for a resource place review for 2019/20 and a need to look at post-16 provision. It was suggested that a further conversation about PRUs and financial viability could be incorporated in discussions and the

SEND strategy would also need to be taken into consideration. It was confirmed the Task Group would also be reporting into the SEND Partnership.

It was pointed out there might be a loss of 'good will' in the period up until 2019/20, with a number of children currently being given lower bandings.

It was proposed that nurseries be included in the review.

Members noted the information about commissioned places. Members were informed that the commissioned places for the previous year had not been accurate and it was believed there was no information available for the prior year. The attached appendix 'Places SEN/AP 2018/19' gave a summary of changes and it was confirmed that the list of schools had been provided by the ESFA. It was suggested the list was incomplete which could have financial implications. There was also concern that the DfE had sent a schedule of inaccurate earlier information.

Vikram Hansrani confirmed that the team had contacted all Resource Bases in Slough but they might not appear on the report. The complete list was to be followed up.

It was noted that places had been increased at Marish following observations, and at Haybrook and Littledown further to an earlier report. At £10,000 per head the increase from 92 to 112 places, for example, equated to £100,000.

It was noted that there was a need to review Resource Bases and to ensure they were used to full capacity. It was confirmed that resource provision for those with a Sixth form would also form part of the review and it was agreed there was a need for the College to be involved.

Linda Calverley stressed that only children with a named resource base in their plan should use the facility, those with a band 3 should remain in mainstream, with support.

Linda Calverley explained there would be feedback in March from Education Health Care Plans (EHCP) and National High Needs Funding Formula (NHNFF), pointing out that it was acknowledged nationally there was an identified overspend on High Needs.

Members stated that it was critical that numbers were correct.

At a previous meeting the commitment had been made by Cate Duffy not to transfer money from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.

It was noted that work was ongoing to ensure Health and Social Care input in discussions.

609. High Needs Commissioning Places 2018/19

This item had been covered under the previous minute.

610. High Needs Centrally Retained Clarification (Budget Codes and Descriptors)

Amended detail of the main focus of the work undertaken by the High Needs Task Group was circulated at the meeting. Descriptors had been clarified for each

budget line of the centrally retained High Needs Block to improve clarity and transparency.

It was explained that details of staffing and services provided would be made available for the next High Needs Task Group meeting. The budget had been examined line by line and detail of the proportions of spend to date would be made available for the next meeting of Schools Forum.

Members of the High Needs Block Task Group and LA representatives were thanked for all the work they had undertaken to date.

611. Centrally Retained Budgets 2017/18

This item had been covered under the previous minute.

612. Academies Update

There was nothing to report at this meeting.

613. 2017/18 Forward Agenda Plan and Key Decisions Log

The 2017/18 Forward Agenda Plan and Key Decisions Log were noted and would be updated by the Chair and Clerk.

614. Dates of Next Meetings

The dates of the meetings of the Slough Schools Forum, having previously been agreed, were noted:

Wednesday 17 January 2018 (*new date: changed to allow for DfE budget timetable*)
Tuesday 6 March 2018
Wednesday 16 May 2018
Thursday 5 July 2018

All meetings to be held at 8.00am for 8.15am start at Beechwood School.

(Note: The Meeting opened at 8.15 am and closed at 9.35 am)