

SLOUGH SCHOOLS FORUM

SCHOOLS GROUP:

Maggie Waller (Chair), Julia Shepard (Vice-Chair), Maureen Ball, Christine Bamigbola, Chris Bowler, Annette Cameron, Barbara Clark, Gillian Coffey, Diane Lister, Maureen Mallinson, Jo Matthews, Paul McAteer, Charlie McGeachie, Kevin O'Driscoll, Kathy Perry, Jon Reekie, Maggie Stacey and Kate Webb

OBSERVER AND ATTENDEES

Lynda Bussley, Roy Davey, Angela Mellish and Councillor Natasa Pantelic

LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Tony Browne, Robin Crofts, Matt Espley, Annal Nayyar, Clair Pyper, Bob Garnett and Arif Dar

DATE & TIME: WEDNESDAY, 22ND SEPTEMBER, 2010 AT 8.00 AM
COMMITTEE ROOM 2, TOWN HALL, BATH ROAD, SLOUGH

AGENDA

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1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of the last meeting **(Pages 1 - 6)**
4. Job Evaluation and Harmonisation - Ann-Marie Scott **(Verbal Report)**
5. Rights, Roles and Responsibilities of Schools Forum **(Pages 7 - 16)**
6. DfE Consultation on School Funding 2011-12 **(Pages 17 - 20)**
7. Schools Support Service **(Pages 21 - 28)**

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Slough Schools Forum- Meeting held on Thursday, 8th July, 2010

Present: Julia Shepard, Beechwood Secondary School (Vice-Chair, in the Chair)
Maureen Ball, Baylis Court Secondary School
Maureen Mallinson, Westgate Secondary School
Jo Matthews, Littledown Special School
Paul McAteer, Slough and Eton Secondary School
Charlie McGeachie, Montem Primary School
Maggie Stacey, St Anthony's RC Primary School
Barbara Clark, Godolphin Junior School
Lynda Bussley, JTUC (Observer)

Observers: Lynda Bussley, JTUC

Officers: Robin Crofts, Matt Espley, Annal Nayyar, Clair Pyper and Bob Garnett

Apologies: Maggie Waller, Jon Reekie and Arif Dar

PART I

62. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

63. Minutes of the meeting held on 20th May, 2010

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20th May, 2010 were approved as a correct record.

64. Matters Arising

The Deputy Director of Finance advised the meeting that a verbal update would be provided to the Forum with respect to the items listed in Minute 60 regarding the current meeting. These were as follows:

- Primary Places and Primary Support Funding
- National Funding Context
- Building Schools for the Future

65. National Funding Context

The Deputy Director of Finance updated the Forum on the national context for Local Authority funding. With regard to the in-year financial position, Local Authorities had been made aware, via the Queen's Speech on 25th May, 2010, that significant in-year savings would be required. This would amount to savings of approximately £6 billion nationally, with Local Authorities responsible for circa £1.2 billion. Further details had been made available to Local Authorities on 10th June, 2010. A reduction to the Area Based Grant (ABG) of approximately 24% meant that SBC would be required to make £3.3m in-year savings, with £1.5m of these drawn from the Education and Children's Services Directorate. A proposed reductions/savings plan

would be submitted to Cabinet on 12th July. This included broadly £1m of savings identified across the Education and Children's Services Directorate. If agreed, these would be implemented with immediate effect.

SBC would work closely with Schools to assess the impact of the impending cuts. With regard to the immediate in-year impact, the Strategic Director of Education and Children's Services advised that the cuts to the ABG would directly impact services going into schools. The Deputy Director highlighted that the cuts to the ABG included grants that were a priority for schools, such as the School Development Grant and the Children's Fund.

The Chair requested further information on the effect on schools' budgets and the DDF explained the broad impact on schools would be approximately £400k. However longer term i.e over the next four years, Local Authorities would be required to reduce expenditure by 25 – 40 % of their total budgets. Exact details would be provided to Local Authorities by 20th October, 2010 following up with a provisional settlement in late nov /early Dec , however, Members of the Forum were advised that Schools should plan for a circa 10-12% reduction in their budgets over this period. SBC would endeavour to limit the impact on schools, as had been done previously and any decisions would be made in line with the Council's priorities. A Member of the Forum enquired whether the Council was examining different ways of delivering services. The Strategic Director advised that SBC was exploring a variety of options including shared management structures, common services and partnerships that would benefit Slough.

The Chair suggested that it would be important for the Forum to be absolutely clear about its rights, role and responsibilities and in particular about the extent to which the Forum can be involved in decision making. It was agreed that a report be brought to the next meeting of the Forum regarding this. The Assistant Director of Inclusion suggested that with regard to the next four years, the Senior Management Team and schools would have to agree on how to move forward and that the appropriate forum for these discussions would have to be identified.

Resolved: -

- (a) That the verbal update regarding the national funding context be noted
- (b) That a report be submitted to the Forum at its next meeting regarding the rights, role and responsibilities of the Schools Forum.

66. Building Schools for the Future

The Deputy Director of Finance informed the meeting that all schools had been/would be briefed with regard to the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) initiative. The Forum was advised that the Council was in a strong position to take advantage of the less bureaucratic system currently in place. Not all of the Council's aims could be achieved through this, but neither could they have been fully realised under the BSF programme.

Resolved: - That the update be noted.

67. Primary Places and Primary Support Funding

The Strategic Director of Education and Children's Services outlined the current situation with regard to primary school places but emphasised that the position changed daily, with the movement of families into and out of the borough. A report was submitted to Cabinet on 14th June detailing the actions taken to accommodate the 2010 and 2011 intake and identifying those schools that would undergo expansion to meet the needs of the borough. The first stage of this process had been to assess where places were needed and where this coincided with the capacity of the school site. However, there had been a significant increase in demand for school places in years Reception, 1 and 2 which had prompted further urgent action. The new Willow School would open in September 2010 and intake would include both Reception and Year 1 pupils. Planned expansions of Castleview School and Priory School would be brought forward, with modular buildings to be used in the interim. The Assistant Director of Inclusion highlighted that the Council was looking at a variety of further options including the refurbishment of the old Town Hall for use as a primary school.

The Strategic Director emphasised that whilst the current demand was particularly high for primary school places, this would feed through the system to impact Slough's secondary schools. A report would be submitted to Cabinet in the near future, outlining the current pressure on Slough's schools in the context of the removal of the BSF programme and with particular reference to the impending impact on Slough's secondary schools.

A Member of the Forum noted that both Castleview and Priory School were Foundation Schools, responsible for their own Admissions Policy, and queried whether this would influence the intake of the school in the context of the high demand for places. The Strategic Director advised that Foundation Schools had been included in the assessment of the borough's capacity because of where demand was concentrated. It was intended that primary school children be allocated a place as close to their homes as possible. In addition, it was expected that there would be some internal movement between schools as a result of the expansion of Castleview and Priory schools.

The Deputy Director of Finance advised that there was a 1 child variance of the budget provision of £50,000. This sum would therefore be added to next year's budget.

Resolved: - That the update on primary school places and primary support funding be noted.

68. Governance Support to Schools - Verbal Update

The Deputy Director of Finance advised that a debate regarding governance support to schools had been initiated and the feedback received so far was that the timescales employed had been inappropriate. Several sources of training had been identified but Officers were continuing to search for more suitable options for September, 2010.

Resolved: - That the update be noted.

69. Schools Outturn for the Financial Year 2009 - 10

The Principal Accountant – Schools presented a report to the Forum detailing the balances held by Slough Schools at the end of the 2009/10 financial year. The unadjusted balances held by schools were £10,699,878, of which £9,388,030 was revenue and £1,311,878 was Capital. This was an increase of £1,137,821 or 12% on the same figure for 2008-9. Adjustments were made to these balances to better reflect the current position. As schools received funding for the academic year, not the financial year, schools were asked to identify any sums held at the end of the 2009-10 financial year where contractual commitments had been entered into for which they had not yet incurred any expenditure or the amount of grant funding being held. The adjusted revenue balance held by schools was £7,085,687, a reduction of £2.4 million from the unadjusted figure of £9,388,030.

In a comparison of the individual projections of schools at the 3rd quarter, ending 31st December, 2009, with the adjusted balances for the 2009-10 financial year, 14 schools were identified as falling within £15,000. Of these, a further 6 schools fell within £15,000 of their projections in 2008-09 financial year. A Member of the Forum suggested that efforts should be made to ensure that such projections were more accurate in the future.

Resolved: -

- (a) That the outturn across 2009-10 based upon year end returns from schools be noted.
- (b) That the comparison between balances held at the end of the financial year and those returned by schools as part of the budget monitoring for the 3rd quarter, ending 31st December 2009, be noted.

70. Balance Control Mechanism 2009 - 2010

A report was presented to the Forum by the Principal Accountant – Schools examining the application of the Balance Control Mechanism (BCM), following the closure of the accounts for 2009-10. The BCM applied where a school's adjusted balance was greater than the thresholds set out in Slough's Scheme for Financing Schools, namely 5% for Secondary Schools and 8% for all other schools. The report identified 19 schools that held adjusted revenue balances in excess of the thresholds permitted, amounting to a total of £2,908,660. However, as each school had assigned the total surplus, in line with the uses allowed within the BCM, no redistribution of surplus funds was required. Several of these schools were undergoing significant work on their premises for refurbishment and expansion purposes. The regulations governing the BCM did not permit schools to automatically retain funds beyond the period set out in their submission and in most cases balances would be expected to be used in 2010-11. An assessment of these plans would be undertaken at the end of the financial year.

A Member of the Forum queried how the impending 10-12% cuts to schools' budgets, referred to in the National Funding Context item, would impact those schools that were able to carry forward in excess of the thresholds. The Deputy Director of Finance advised that Central Government would take this into consideration, particularly where balances were high. However, until more information was made available regarding local authority funding, it would be difficult to speculate further. The Chair queried the method used by Central Government to

assess the Schools' balances. The Deputy Director advised that an average would be taken by examining the balance at the last settlement and then by looking at the 3 year balances using the Section 52 Statement.

Resolved: - That the results of the analysis of the application of the Balance Control Mechanism, following the closure of the accounts for 2009-10, be noted.

71. School Budgets 2010 - 11

The Principal Accountant – Schools outlined a report to the Forum detailing the budgets presented by Schools for the financial year 2010-11 and comparing these to the outturn for 2009-10. The budget plans submitted indicated that the school balances would reduce by 66% to £3.6 million. This was primarily the result of significant increases in expenditure. The Forum was advised that there was a substantial expectation for schools to plan for decreases in budgets and for deficits to be carefully managed. The authority would be contacting those schools with balances in excess of the thresholds to ensure that they were on track to spend the money as indicated.

Resolved: - That the overall financial position reflected in the budget plans for Slough Schools be noted.

72. Date of the Next Meeting

The dates of future meetings, as detailed on the agenda, were noted.

(Note: The Meeting opened at 8.00 am and closed at 9.14 am)

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**SLOUGH SCHOOLS FORUM
22 September 2010**

**Schools Forum – Rights, Roles & Responsibilities
(Director of Education & Children’s Services)**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Following a request from Schools forum to remind Schools Forum of it’s roles and responsibilities

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Schools Forum note the content of the report.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Schools Forum to clearly understand its rights, roles and responsibilities.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Not applicable.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 Schools Forums were set up under the Schools’ Forums (England) Regulations 2002. These regulations required each Local Education Authority to establish a Schools Forum in their area by mid-January 2003.

- 5.2 Over the past 8 years these regulations have been updated periodically and the latest version has been included in Annex A

- 5.2.1 The regulation set out five main areas where Schools Forum has a role.

- Changes to the Fair Funding Formula
- Contracts
- Financial Issues relating to various specific budgets
- Breaches of the Central Expenditure Limit
- Application of the Minimum Funding Guarantee

- 5.2.2 Schools’ Forum also formally has a role to play in their own administration for example determining their membership and the voting arrangements. These issues are specifically addressed in the Schools’ Forum Terms of Reference which were reviewed in November 2009.

5.3 Changes to the Fair Funding Formula

5.3.1 Schools' Forum must be consulted on any changes to the Fair Funding Formula. It is no longer a requirement for local authorities to consult with all schools however in line with best practice Slough continues to do so. The establishment of Task & Finish Groups has helped ensure that consultations are effective.

5.4 Contracts

5.4.1 Local Authorities must consult with Schools Forum on the terms and conditions of any contracts over £156,000 in value which are being funded from the authorities retain schools budget share.

5.5 Budgets

5.5.1 Local Authorities must consult with Schools Forum on financial issues relating to the following:

- Pupils with SEN
- Pupil Referral Units and Education Otherwise than at School (EOTAS)
- Early Years
- Insurance
- The allocation of central government grants
- Free School Meals

5.5.2 This is primarily done through the agreement of the annual budgets between January and March each year. Other aspects are brought to schools forums attention when necessary.

5.5.3 Schools Forum is expected to give a view on the above items and to ensure that governing bodies are made aware of the consultation and the decisions made.

5.6 Central Expenditure Limit and Minimum Funding Guarantee

5.6.1 Where a local authority requires funds which would mean that the Central Expenditure Limit is exceeded or proposes making local amendments on how the Minimum Funding Guarantee operates then it is required to seek the agreement of Schools' Forum. Where agreement cannot be reached then the matter should be referred to the Secretary of State for Education for adjudication.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

6.1 The relevant legal provisions are contained within the main body of this report.

Section 151 Officer – Strategic Director of Resources

- 6.2 The financial implications of the report are outlined in the supporting information.

Access Implications

- 6.3 There are no access implications.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 None.

Method of Consultation

- 7.2 Not applicable.

Representations Received

- 7.3 Not applicable.

Background Papers

Annex A – Schools' Forum (England) Regulations 2010.

Contact for further information

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2010 No. 344

EDUCATION, ENGLAND

The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2010

Made - - - - *15th February 2010*

Laid before Parliament *23rd February 2010*

Coming into force - - *1st April 2010*

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The Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families makes the following Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 47A and 138(7) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998(1):

Citation, commencement, application and interpretation

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2010 and come into force on 1st April 2010.

(1) These Regulations apply only in relation to England.

(2) In these Regulations—

“the Act” means the School Standards and Framework Act 1998;

(1) 1998 c.31. Section 47A was inserted by section 43 of the Education Act 2002 (c.32) and has been amended by section 101 of, and paragraph 7 of Schedule 16 to, the Education Act 2005 (c.18); sections 57 and 184 of, and paragraphs 2(1), (3) and (4) of Schedule 5 and Part 6 of Schedule 18, to the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (c.40) and by sections 165 and 169 of and Schedule 2 to the Education and Skills Act 2008 (c.25). For the meaning of “prescribed” and “regulations” see section 142(1) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

“Academy” means an independent school in England to which an agreement under section 482 of the Education Act 1996(2) relates;

“Academies member” means a member who represents the governing bodies of the Academies situated in the authority’s area;

“authority” means the local authority in whose area the schools forum is established but, until such time as a section 162(1)(a) order comes into force, “local authority” means “local education authority”;

“early years providers” means—

(a) persons who are registered as early years childminders or other early years providers under Chapter 2 of Part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006(3) (which provides for the compulsory registration of persons providing early years provision) or are exempt from compulsory registration by order of the Secretary of State under section 33(2) or 34(3) of that Act;

(b) independent schools; and

(c) non-maintained special schools,
who provide early years provision;

“early years provision” has the meaning given by section 20 of the Childcare Act 2006;

“executive member” means any elected member of the authority appointed to the executive of that authority;

“governor” includes any interim executive member of an interim executive board;

“head teacher’s representative” means a senior member of staff representing a head teacher;

“interim executive board” is to be construed in accordance with paragraph 2 of Schedule 6 to the Education and Inspections Act 2006(4);

“local authority 14-19 partnership” means the arrangements described in section 85(2) and (3) of the Education and Skills Act 2008(5);

“nursery school” means a nursery school maintained by the authority;

“primary school” means a primary school maintained by the authority;

“relevant officer” means—

(a) the director of children’s services of the authority; or

(b) any officer employed or engaged to work under the management of the director of children’s services, other than—

(i) one who directly provides education to children or who manages such a person; or

(ii) a school improvement partner;

“representative” means either a head teacher or head teacher’s representative or a governor of a school maintained by the authority;

“school” means a school maintained by the authority;

“school category” means one of the following categories of school—

(a) community schools,

(b) foundation schools,

(c) voluntary aided schools,

(d) voluntary controlled schools,

as described in Chapter 1 of Part 2 of the Act;

“section 162(1)(a) order” means an order under subsection (1) of section 162 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006(6) containing provision made by virtue of paragraph (a) of that

(2) Section 482 of the Education Act 1996 was substituted by section 65 of the Education Act 2002 (c.32).

(3) 2006 c.21.

(4) 2006 c.40.

(5) 2008 c.25.

subsection (power to replace statutory references to local education authorities with references to local authorities);

“school improvement partner” means a person appointed by the authority under section 5 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006;

“secondary school” means a secondary school maintained by the authority;

“senior member of staff” means a principal, deputy head teacher, bursar or other person responsible for the financial management of the school;

“special school” means a community special school or a foundation special school.

(3) In these Regulations, a reference to a governing body does not include a reference to the temporary governing body of a new school and a reference to a governor does not include a reference to a member of the temporary governing body of a new school, where “new school” has the meaning given by section 72(3) of the Act(7).

Revocations

2. The following Regulations are revoked—

- (a) the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2002(8);
- (b) the Schools Forums (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2004(9);
- (c) the Schools Forums (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005(10); and
- (d) the Schools Forums (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008(11).

Constitution of schools forum

3. Every authority must ensure that the schools forum for their area is constituted in accordance with regulations 4 to 7 by 1st September 2010.

Membership: general

4.—(2) Subject to the following paragraphs of this regulation, an authority may determine the size and composition of their schools forum and the forum members’ terms of office.

(1) Subject to paragraph (3), a forum must consist of at least 15 members, comprising—

- (a) schools members elected in accordance with regulation 5;
- (b) if there are any Academies in the authority’s area, at least one Academies member elected or selected in accordance with regulation 6; and
- (c) non-schools members appointed in accordance with regulation 7.

(2) If, for any reason, an election for a schools member under regulation 5(1) or an Academies member under regulation 6(1) does not take place by any date set by the authority or any such election results in a tie between two or more candidates, the authority must appoint the schools member or Academies member to their schools forum instead.

(3) Schools members and Academies members must together comprise at least two thirds of the membership of the forum.

(4) Subject to paragraphs (6) to (8), primary schools, secondary schools and Academies must be broadly proportionately represented on the forum, having regard to the total number of pupils registered at them.

(5) Where the authority maintain one or more special schools, at least one schools member must be a representative of a special school.

(6) 2006 c. 40.

(7) Section 72(3) was amended by section 215(1) of, and paragraph 106 of Schedule 21 to, the Education Act 2002.

(8) S.I. 2002/2114.

(9) S.I. 2004/447.

(10) S.I. 2005/3209.

(11) S.I. 2008/47.

(6) Where the authority maintain one or more nursery schools, at least one schools member must be a representative of a nursery school.

(7) An authority may determine that the number of members representing schools in a particular school category must be broadly proportionate to the total number of schools in that category when compared with the total number of schools maintained by the authority.

(8) A forum member remains in office until—

- (a) the member's term of office expires;
- (b) the member ceases to hold the office by virtue of which the member became eligible for election, selection or appointment to the forum;
- (c) the member resigns from the forum by giving notice in writing to the authority; or
- (d) in the case of a non-schools member, the member is replaced by the authority, at the request of the body which the member represents, by another person nominated by that body,

whichever comes first.

(9) The authority must maintain a written record of the composition of their forum, to include—

- (a) the numbers of schools members and by which group or sub-group they were elected;
- (b) the number of Academies members; and
- (c) the number of non-schools members, their terms of office, how they were chosen and whom they represent.

Schools members

5.—(3) Schools members must be elected to the schools forum by the members of the relevant group, or sub-group in the authority's area.

(1) The groups are—

- (a) representatives of nursery schools, where there are any such schools in the authority's area;
- (b) representatives of primary schools other than nursery schools;
- (c) representatives of secondary schools; and
- (d) representatives of special schools, where there are any such schools in the authority's area.

(2) Each group referred to in paragraph (2) may consist of one or more of the following sub-groups—

- (a) where the authority exercises its discretion under paragraph (4)(a), representatives of head teachers of schools in each group;
- (b) where the authority exercises its discretion under paragraph (4)(b), representatives of governors of schools in each group;
- (c) where the authority exercises its discretion under paragraph 4(c), representatives of head teachers and governors of schools in each group;
- (d) where the authority exercises its discretion under regulation 4(8), representatives of the particular school category.

(3) The authority may determine that a certain number of representatives of each group must be—

- (a) head teachers or head teachers' representatives;
- (b) governors; or
- (c) head teachers or head teachers' representatives and governors.

Academies members

6.—(4) Subject to paragraph (2), Academies members must be elected to the schools forum by the governing bodies of the Academies in the authority's area.

(1) Where there is only one Academy in the authority's area, the governing body of the Academy must select the person who will represent them on the schools forum.

Non-schools members

7.—(5) The authority must appoint non-schools members to their schools forum comprising—

- (a) one or more persons to represent the local authority 14-19 partnership; and
- (b) one or more persons to represent early years providers.

(2) Subject to paragraph (3), the authority may appoint additional non-schools members to their forum to represent the interests of other bodies.

(3) Prior to making any appointment under paragraph (2), the authority must consider whether the following bodies should be represented on their forum—

- (a) the Diocesan Board of Education for any diocese any part of which is situated in the authority's area;
- (b) the Bishop of any Roman Catholic Diocese any part of which is situated in the authority's area;
- (c) where there are any schools or Academies within the authority's area that are designated under section 69(3) of the Act(12) as having a religious character (other than Church of England or Roman Catholic schools), the appropriate faith group in respect of any such school or Academy.

(4) The authority may not appoint any executive member or relevant officer of the authority to their forum as a non-schools member.

(5) Within one month of the appointment of any non-schools member, the authority must inform the governing bodies of schools maintained by them and of Academies within their area of the name of the member and the name of the body that member represents.

Meetings and proceedings of schools forum

8.—(6) The schools forum must meet at least four times a year and are quorate if at least two fifths of the total membership is present at a meeting.

(1) Any elected member or officer of the authority who is not a member of the forum may attend and speak at meetings of the forum.

(2) Subject to paragraph (4), the members of the forum must elect a person as chair from among their number and determine the chair's term of office.

(3) The members of the forum may not elect as chair any member of the forum who is an elected member or officer of the authority.

(4) Subject to paragraph (7), the members of the forum may determine their own voting procedures.

(5) The proceedings of the forum are not invalidated by—

- (a) any vacancy among their number;
- (b) any defect in the election or appointment of any member; or
- (c) any defect in the election of the chair.

(6) The authority must make arrangements to enable substitutes to attend and vote at meetings of the forum on behalf of schools members, Academies members and non-schools members, in consultation with members of the forum.

(12) Section 69(3) also applies to independent schools (which includes Academies) by virtue of section 124B, which was inserted by regulations 2 and 3 of S.I. 2003/2037.

Consultation on contracts

9. The authority must consult the schools forum on the terms of any proposed contract for supplies or services (being a contract paid or to be paid out of the authority's schools budget where the estimated value of the proposed contract is not less than the threshold which applies to the authority for that proposed contract pursuant to regulation 8 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006⁽¹³⁾) at least one month prior to the issue of invitations to tender.

Consultation on financial issues

10.—(7) The authority must consult the schools forum annually in respect of the authority's functions relating to the schools budget, in connection with the following—

- (a) arrangements for the education of pupils with special educational needs;
- (b) arrangements for the use of pupil referral units and the education of children otherwise than at school;
- (c) arrangements for early years provision;
- (d) arrangements for insurance;
- (e) administrative arrangements for the allocation of central government grants paid to schools via the authority;
- (f) arrangements for free school meals.

(2) The authority may consult the forum on such other matters concerning the funding of schools as they see fit.

Information about consultations

11. The schools forum must inform the governing bodies of schools maintained by the authority of any consultation carried out by the authority under regulation 9 or 10, as soon as it reasonably can.

Charging of schools forum's expenses

12. The authority must pay the expenses of the schools forum and charge those expenses to the schools budget.

Members' expenses

13. The authority must reimburse all reasonable expenses of members in connection with their attendance at meetings of the forum and charge those expenses to the schools budget.

Vernon Coaker
Minister of State

15th February 2010

Department for Children, Schools and Families

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations revoke and replace the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2002 and the Regulations which amended those Regulations.

Regulations 3 to 8 provide for the constitution of a schools forum in every local authority in England, including the election of schools members, the election or selection of Academies members and the appointment of non-schools members to the schools forum, their meetings and

⁽¹³⁾ S.I. 2006/5.

proceedings. The requirements to elect or select Academies members and to appoint non-schools members are new.

Regulations 9 to 11 require the authority to consult their schools forum before entering into certain types of contract and annually in relation to a range of financial issues and the governing bodies of schools maintained by them to be informed of any such consultation.

Regulations 12 and 13 require the authority to pay the expenses of their schools forum out of the schools budget and the reasonable expenses of its members.

A full regulatory impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as no impact on the private or voluntary sectors is foreseen.

**SLOUGH SCHOOLS FORUM
22 September 2010**

**Department for Education Consultation on School Funding 2011-12
(Director of Education & Children's Services)**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek to establish a Task & Finish Group to prepare a response to the Department for Education (DfE) consultation on School Funding including the creation of a pupil premium for disadvantaged pupils.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Schools Forum establishes a Task & Finish Group to work with officers in order to prepare a response to the Consultation on School Funding 2011-12
- 2.2 That Schools Forum authorises the Task & Finish Group to prepare a response before the consultation closes on 18th October 2010.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is appropriate for Schools Forum to make a considered response to the consultation.
- 3.2 The deadline for responses to the consultation is Monday 18th October 2010 which is two weeks before the next Schools Forum.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Not applicable.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1.1 On 26th July 2010 the DfE published a consultation on the operation of a pupil premium and the distribution of the Dedicated Schools Grant to local authorities for 2011-12. The consultation is seeking views on the overall funding methodology and puts forward options of how elements of the pupil premium should operate and the full consultation document is included as Appendix A. The closing date for the consultation is Monday 18th October 2010.

- 5.1.2 The consultation addresses two main areas:

- Introduction of a Pupil Premium for disadvantaged children

- Amending the methodology used to calculate the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2011-12.

5.2 The full consultation can be found at <http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1723&external=no&menu=1>

5.3 It is proposed that a Task & Finish Group be established from Schools Forum members and meets on **Monday 4th October** or **Thursday 7th October** to formulate a joint response with the local authority as the deadline for responding is before the next Schools Forum. It is proposed that the draft response be distributed to all Schools Forum members for comment before being submitted to the DfE. A full report will be presented at the next meeting of Schools Forum.

5.4 It would also be hoped that by the next meeting of Schools Forum a clearer idea of the outcomes of the consultation may be available and could be shared with Schools Forum.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

6.1 The relevant legal provisions are contained within the main body of this report.

Section 151 Officer – Strategic Director of Resources

6.2 The financial implications of the report are outlined in the supporting information.

Access Implications

6.3 There are no access implications.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

7.1 None.

Method of Consultation

7.2 Not applicable.

Representations Received

7.3 Not applicable.

Background Papers

Not applicable

Contact for further information

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**SLOUGH SCHOOLS FORUM
22 September 2010**

**School Support Services
(Director of Education & Children's Services)**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Schools Forum on the delivery of the Schools Support Service agreed in May 2010.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Schools Forum notes the report
2.2 That Schools Forum endorses the proposed contract with Reading Borough Council to deliver a range of Governor Support Services.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is appropriate for Schools Forum to be aware of the progress made in delivering the School Support Service

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Not applicable.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 In May 2010 Schools Forum delegated £150,000 to the Deputy Director for Finance to establish a Schools Support Service to meet any potential shortfall in school needs and to complement where appropriate current service delivery. This stemmed from concerns that had been raised following a significant number of schools failing the FMSiS assessment.
- 5.2 Schools Forum will recall that three levels of support were identified and ranging from individual school support to broader support to all schools. Annex A represents an extract from the May 2010 report which outlines the three levels.
- 5.3 Officers are pleased to inform Schools Forum that significant steps have been made in addressing two key areas where concerns were raised in May 2010.
- 5.4 Finance Support**

5.4.1 Schools Forum will recall that in 2009-10 a number of schools failed to meet the standards necessary to receive accreditation under the Financial Management Standard in Schools. The standard assesses schools against five key areas:

- Leadership & Governance
- People Management
- Policy & Strategy
- Partnership & Resources
- Processes

5.4.2 The issues that arose for those schools that failed to meet the standard in 2009-10 included the following areas

- Governors not understanding of their roles and responsibilities (39 recommendations)
- Staff Management, including effective performance management and training (14 recommendations)
- Poor financial process relating governors decisions making role (21 recommendations)
- Specific financial processes (21 recommendations)
- Benchmarking and linking the School Development Plan to finances (5 recommendations)

5.4.3 In order to support schools auditors from Deloitte have been appointed to provide FMSiS support to schools. This is currently operating in two ways.

5.4.4 The first has involved undertaking an initial review with the school over a 2 day period for those schools that are scheduled to be assessed for the standard in 2010-11. Where necessary recommendations are made to the school on what action would be needed to meet the standard. A final meeting is then held at a later date to evaluate whether the school have taken the appropriate action and is now meeting the required standard. Written reports are provided at both stages outlining what action needs to be done.

5.4.5 The second way will be to review with those schools who did not meet the standard in 2009-10 the recommendations made at that time and establish what subsequent progress has been made towards meeting the standard.

5.4.6 Where a school has been identified as causing concern then this support will be tailored to meet both their needs and those of the authority.

5.4.7 Both types of support outlined above will allow heads and governors to be aware of any issues prior to the formal FMSiS assessment and will provide an opportunity to address any concerns raised. It will also

allow the authority to made aware of any issues at an earlier date and when combined with a broader knowledge of the school offer appropriate support.

5.5 Governor Support

5.5.1 The role of School Governors is crucial to ensuring the success of schools and following the training in May 2010 with Headteachers and Chair of Governors it became apparent that there were weaknesses in the support provided by Slough Borough Council.

5.5.2 In order to address these weaknesses and to meet the needs of both the schools and the authority at the strategic level, quotations were sought from a number of organisations to deliver support at the three levels outlined in May 2010. This included support to individual schools that had not met the FMSiS standard or were causing concern as well as broader support to specific groups of schools. Annex B provides the specification issued to potential providers.

5.5.3 Following that process Reading Borough Council is being put forward as the preferred supplier to deliver a range of Governor Support Services. This will include:

- Bespoke Training for schools requiring Level 1 support
- Individual coaching sessions for Chairs of Governors
- Bespoke training for schools requiring level 2 support for example
- Simple and straight-forward guidance on the roles and responsibilities of school governors
- A range of training sessions available to all schools

5.5.4 Final details on the exact content of the support are still being negotiated as this report is being prepared but it is expected that the service will become available from 1st October 2010. Information will be issued to all schools when available.

5.5.5 Schools Forum is asked to endorse this proposal in order that the needs of schools may be met at the earliest opportunity.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

6.1 The relevant legal provisions are contained within the main body of this report.

Section 151 Officer – Strategic Director of Resources

- 6.2 The financial implications of the report are outlined in the supporting information.

Access Implications

- 6.3 There are no access implications.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 None.

Method of Consultation

- 7.2 Not applicable.

Representations Received

- 7.3 Not applicable.

Background Papers

Annex A – Levels of Support

Annex B – Outline Specification for Governor Support Services

Contact for further information

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Annex A –Levels of Support

The first level would be targeted support to individual schools, for example where they met the criteria set out in the policy on schools in financial difficulty or causing concern. This would enable individual schools to address the issues raised through the challenge and support process. For example, where a school has not passed the FMSiS assessment, it may require dedicated support for both governors and finance staff in order to embed the required standard.

The second level of support would be available to specific groups of schools and would provide a broader range of support. For example further analysis of the recommendations in recent audits may indicate that training on the roles and responsibilities for governor would be of benefit to specific schools but it would provide better value for money if a single training session was provided. Alternatively, it could include a pre-FMSiS assessment for schools expecting to be assessed during the year so that they were aware of the work necessary to meet the standard.

The third level would be support across all schools. Examples include the development and delivery of a comprehensive induction programme for new headteachers or the coordination of procurement opportunities in schools for energy supplies.

Annex B – Specification Outline

Level 1

10 schools are deemed to require level 1 support.

The table below is an analysis of the recommendations made following the assessment for FMSiS, where applicable.

School	Leadership & Governance	People Management	Policy & Strategy	Partnership & Resources	Processes	Total
A	4				4	8
B	9	4	2	2	8	25
C	4			1	4	9
D	5	5	2	2	5	19
E	3		1		13	17
F	8	4	3	2	7	24
G	7	1	2	1	4	15
Total	40	14	10	8	45	

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Please describe the support that you would provide for these schools. This should include individually tailored support as well as access to a generic support service if appropriate.

It is expected that this support would be provided between September 2010 and December 2010, with ongoing support until March 2011

Level 2

Level 2 support, whilst potentially targeted at individual schools, is to provide more 'preventative' support. Please describe how individual schools would be identified and how support to governors would be delivered. This should include individually tailored support as well as broader access to support services if appropriate.

It is expected that this support would be provided between September 2010 and March 2011.

Level 3

Please describe the support you could provide to meet the level 3 needs of governing bodies, identifying any specific areas that you think currently relevant to governing bodies.

It is expected that this support would be provided between September 2010 and March 2011.

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