

## **Slough Schools Forum- Meeting held on Tuesday, 10th January, 2017**

**Present:** Maggie Waller, Holy Family Primary School (Chair)  
John Constable, Langley Grammar School (Vice-Chair)  
Gillian Coffey, Lynch Hill Primary School  
Sally Eaton, Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) providers - Early Years  
Philip Gregory, Baylis Court Nursery School  
Kathleen Higgins, Beechwood Secondary School  
Helen Huntley, Haybrook College / PRU  
Jo Matthews, Littledown School / PRU  
Paul McAteer, Slough and Eton C of E Business and Enterprise College  
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:** Kathleen Higgins, Beechwood Secondary School

**Officers:** George Grant, Robert Hardy, Johnny Kyriacou, Nabila Malik, Coral Miller and Jo Moxon

### **PART I**

#### **535. Apologies**

Rachel Cartwright

#### **536. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations were made.

#### **537. Minutes and Matters Arising from previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of the Slough Schools Forum held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2016 were approved as a correct record.

##### Matters arising

Item 513 –SBC staffing issues – Neil Wilcox reported that the recently appointed schools' accountant has resigned. Finance team will be assisting in filling this vacancy.

Item 524 – PFI Update: Neil Wilcox reported the Council's revenue budget position and the savings options under consideration to close the budget gap.

A wide range of potential savings were under consideration across the Council, including the £500,000 contribution to the affordability gap relating to schools PFI. Neil Wilcox stated that the Council was seeking to be open and transparent in flagging this matter. He confirmed that the SBC request for DSG to fund the PFI affordability gap has been deferred and SBC will pick up the £500k affordability gap cost in 2017-18 and may present new proposals for 2018-19. He provided assurances that there would be full consultation and clear information provided on the impact on schools and academies before any decisions. He also indicated that the Council would be looking at other options at potential savings.

Item 525 – High Needs Block and SEN Update: Nicky Willis asked for more information on health contribution information; this was clarified by Robert Hardy as related to the Clinical Commissioning Group.

Item 530 - 2017-18 Growth Fund Criteria: it was noted that this will now be on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 2017 Schools Forum agenda.

### **538. ESG De-delegation**

Slough Borough Council presented an ESG paper in light of updated guidance by the DfE in December 2016. The requirement was for a justification of spending that would only be for Maintained schools. This would then require approval by Maintained school members of the forum. The Council presented a paper on centrally retained items that was approved in December 2016 by the Schools Forum. This paper represented a justification of spend to complement the previous paper. The amount being justified was approximately £45,000 (see appendix). There would be no increase in spending from the previous paper on centrally retained items but this paper made clear what the differences were and how money would be used specifically for maintained schools. The paper was voted on and approved by both primary and secondary Maintained schools' members of the Schools Forum present.

### **539. School block and update on changes with draft budget.**

Coral Miller reported that Slough Borough Council have, for a number of years, had increasing pressure from growth in the High Needs block provision without any corresponding additional budget to cope with these pressures from the DfE.

Robert Hardy has explored other options from Slough Children Trust. It was confirmed that the request for the top slice was a one-off and not a permanent move of the £300k to the High Needs Block but no assurances could be given that future requests may not be made.

Paul McAteer had written to Edward Timpson, Minister of State for Vulnerable Children and Families regarding High Needs funding in Slough but had received no response at this time.

Schools Forum understands the pressures on the High Needs Block but was concerned about the unevenness of the impact on individual schools and concerned regarding ongoing reductions and the impact on standards.

The financial implications of the report are outlined in the supporting information that has been provided.

It was noted that the LA is not proposing any changes to the local funding formula for 2017 /18. However, there are changes at national level that have considerable adverse effects on schools' and academies' budgets. There was considerable discussion about the impact of the DfE changes to both IDACI and prior low attainment funding and the impact of new school places being funded from the DSG from the start, meaning over 350 places not funded by the DfE but top sliced from all schools.

It was noted that more schools are in Minimum Funding Guarantee which masks the impact of any losses but year on year this has real impact with some schools now in the fifth year of losing under MFG.

Angela Mellish asked that the LA make very clear to governors and schools how the top slices necessary have been calculated and clarifies the definition of the MFG.

The Task Group (5-6 formula) is to look at the budget implications in more detail.

It was suggested that there may be a business case to be put by SBC to ask for more funding for new school places as an LA with such a high growth rate.

Jo Rockall suggested that a letter should be submitted from the Schools Forum to the Secretary of State, Lord Nash, Ms Fiona McTaggart outlining the impact of the budget. Maggie Waller and John Constable will proceed with this letter.

Coral Miller will report at the next additional Schools Forum meeting which will be held on Thursday 9th February 2017 Venue is TBC

It was noted that Phase 2 of the National Funding Formula consultation had been published by the DfE and Schools Forum members stressed the importance of a full response and for all schools to respond individually in addition. The March Schools Forum would focus on this response and share its response with all schools.

#### **540. Budget timeline for 2017 - 18**

Coral Miller informed the Schools Forum of the budget process for 2017-18 and the DSG block allocation, setting out the total schools' budget for Slough and when Maintained schools should expect their 17-18 budget share.

Coral miller informed the Schools Forum:  
Schools Block budget allocation of £123.79m - this is fixed  
Early Years Block budget of £15.20m - this is provisional  
High Needs Block budget of £22.13m

The report outlined the significant dates for the budget process. The budget timeline is similar to previous years, with indicative school budgets to be published around 23rd February 2017.

#### **541. Resource Base Review update**

The report was an information item requested at the December meeting of Schools Forum.

Robert Hardy reported that in November 2016, the DfE required information to be submitted as part of their Place Change Notification process. This related only to Resource Bases at Academies and Free Schools and to Post 16 places at GFE Colleges. The numbers were submitted by Slough for Resource Bases for September 2017. There is no guarantee that the DfE will agree to these proposals. The response is expected before the end of January 2017.

Robert reported that contractual agreements and admissions arrangements for all Resource Bases will be finalised with schools by the end of this term so that they are implemented from the start of the new financial year.

It was agreed that a report will come to Schools Forum in October each year regarding commissioned places.

Phil Gregory asked about Early Years places and it was confirmed that the recent review only looked at statutory provision and not Early Years.

#### **542. School Improvement update on centrally retained items (Verbal)**

Slough Borough Council reported back that all School Improvement services from Cambridge Education had come back under Council control from December 1<sup>st</sup> 2016. The system of Autumn Term Visits was inherited from Cambridge Education and would continue in the same format for this academic year. There are plans to change it for next year and this will be done in consultation with schools. The Council is drafting a School Improvement policy which will also go out for consultation to all schools. The Council is setting about recruiting the posts identified in the Schools Forum paper (centrally retained items) from December 2016.

Carol Pearce asked a question regarding school improvement and the government's expectations going forward that schools would be responsible for their own school improvement. Johnny Kyriacou responded that the Council was looking to embrace a different approach to school improvement more in line with the vision and expectations from the Regional Schools Commissioner and the DfE. This would involve developing and supporting the Slough Teaching Schools Alliance and school to school support. The Council would be looking to work with the STSA as active partners and wishes to use local leaders

John Constable confirmed that the role of the Teaching School is to link and not provide directly and there is a funding implication for schools to release staff hence the agreed £150k over two years to facilitate this.

#### **543. Update from Task Groups: 5-16, HNB and Early Years (verbal)**

5 – 16 formula Task Group to meet following Schools Forum meeting.

High Needs Group scheduled for 26th January

There has been no Early Years Task Group but there will be an item on the March Schools Forum meeting for proposals.

#### 544. Schools Forum Membership update

Maggie Waller reported the analysis of membership carried out following the October census which showed 64% of pupils in Academies and 36% in Maintained schools. Further conversions in December 2017 have moved this figure to 71% Academies, 29% in Maintained schools.

The overall Forum membership to be maintained at 20, with 11 Academy members and 4 Maintained representatives; the two current maintained vacancies to be deleted, and two new members to be recruited from Academies.

It was agreed that the nominations for Academy members would be sought through the normal election procedure involving writing to academy proprietors. John Constable will take this forward.

Terms of office of some members end in summer 2017 and early 2018. A proposal was made and agreed to extend terms for a further 2-3 years where those members are willing to continue – this would require agreement of CoGs and Academy proprietors. John Constable will take this forward.

#### 545. Academies Update (Verbal)

Johnny Kyriacou reported St Joseph's, St Anthony's and St Ethelbert's had converted to academies on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2016.

The LA was not aware of any further conversions ongoing.

It was noted that there are now 11 Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) across Slough. The map of the Academies and MATs in Slough to be updated by the LA and circulated.

#### 546. 2016-17 Forward Agenda Plan and Key Decisions Log

The Key Decisions Log was noted and the Forward Plan was circulated hard copy and is to be added to the Schools Forum papers on the SBC website.

**Next meeting: Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2017, 8.00am at Beechwood Conference Centre**

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> February	TBC	TBC
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> March 2017	8am	Beechwood Conference Centre
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> May 2017	8am	Beechwood Conference Centre
Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2017	8am	Beechwood Conference Centre

(Note: The Meeting opened at Time Not Specified and closed at Time Not Specified)