Slough Schools Forum- Meeting held on Wednesday, 9th December, 2015

Present: Maggie Waller, Holy Family Primary School (Chair)

John Constable, Langley Grammar School (Vice-Chair)

Eddie Neighbour, Upton Court Grammar School Philip Gregory, Baylis Court Nursery School Kathleen Higgins, Beechwood Secondary School

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 Jon Reekie, James Elliman Primary School

Debbie Richards, Arbour Vale School Jo Rockall, Herschel Grammar School Nicky Willis, Cippenham Primary School

Sally Eaton, Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) providers - Early

Yearst

Observers: Dawn Bailey

Cambridge

Robin Crofts, Cambridge Education

Education:

Local Coral Miller, Nandita Sirker, Paul Wilson, Tony Madden and Stephen

Authority: Bowen (Clerk)

Apologies: Jo Matthews, Virginia Barrett, Helen Huntley and Krutika Pau

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447. Apologies

Apologies were received from Jo Mathews, Virginia Barrett, Helen Huntley and Krutika Pau.

Maggie Waller welcomed Stephen Bowen, who was clerking the meeting and Jo Matthews (in her absence), Jon Reekie and Eddie Neighbour as full members.

448. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

449. Minutes from Previous Meeting on 6th October 2015

Item 439: A useful meeting took place between Krutika Pau, Maggie Waller and Nicola Clemo, the Chief Executive of Slough Children's Services Trust, to discuss future Trust involvement with Slough Schools Forum.

John Constable had written to academy proprietors proposing nominations for academy members of Schools Forum and Jo Matthews, Jon Reekie and Eddie Neighbour had been elected as full members.

It was noted that Hardeep Singh has resigned from Schools Forum as he is no longer a Governor of Khalsa Primary School. It was agreed that membership will be reviewed in early 2016 to take into account updated pupil census data and likely academy conversions.

Item 440: Maggie Waller had submitted a joint response to the DFE Consultation on School Funding 2016-17 on behalf of Schools Forum. Coral Miller to circulate SBC response for information.

Item 441: Paul Wilson fed back on the appointment of a suitable person to carry out the School Improvement options piece of work to start in the new year. Interviews are to take place week commencing 14th December and Paul would like Headteachers to be involved in the interviewing process; he will contact Headteachers.

It was noted that Nicky Willis had produced a paper regarding the KS2 projects and that this item had been deferred until January Schools Forum. Nicky Willis voiced concerns about this postponement regarding additional support in Key Stage 2 Maths which has adverse implications for progress in Maths when next assessed in May 2016.

It was also noted that further ideas regarding teacher recruitment would be brought to the January meeting. The research commissioned by secondary schools had already commenced.

It was confirmed that the £190,000 to be transferred to the High Needs Block was a one off transfer from under spend, not a permanent arrangement.

450. Highlights from Spending Review

Coral Miller prepared a summary page of headlines on the Comprehensive Spending Review. The paper posed many unanswered questions and demonstrated the complexity and future risks of 2017-18 education funding changes.

It was noted that the LA would need to look at the detail to know what the potential impact will be across the LA and for schools.

The paper referred to a report from ISOS regarding the possible approach to High Needs funding which can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/funding-for-young-people-with-special-educational-needs

It was noted that, as there was no time for consultation, no changes would be made to the Early Years formula for 2016/17. It was noted that Early Years moves to the Slough Children's Services Trust in September 2016 and the process will move forward then. Cambridge Education and the LA are looking at data and aiming to feed into the Early Years Task Group in February 2016. Maggie Waller is to circulate the Task Group membership lists to all and to invite Nicola Clemo, the

Chief Executive of Slough Children's Services Trust, to be part of the Early Years Task Group.

451. School Funding Consultation: responses received and consultation with Schools Forum

Coral Miller reported that the consultation had gone out and she had had a 35% response rate thus far with comments. The deadline had been extended to 18th December 2015. A report would come to the January Schools Forum for final consultation.

She explained that the consultation proposed three options and had arisen from the Tribal report which had been circulated, with option 3 favoured by the Council.

George Grant apologised for the way the consultation went out and stated that the LA wanted to get to a consensus position that all can agree despite differences in views.

Schools Forum had submitted a formal joint response to the consultation to the LA. This did not comment on the specific proposed options but focused on the consultation process and the wider national context which had changed significantly since the consultation was drafted and sent to schools. In particular, Schools Forum asked that:

- any decision made by the Council about 2016/17 changes should be made in the context of the pace and size of imminent change through the national funding formula across all blocks and all phases; it should not ignore the potential turbulence in funding
- any such decision should be communicated to all schools with an explanation about how this will fit in with the national changes ahead
- future consultations are more timely and done in genuine partnership with both the Task Groups and Schools Forum itself

Individual members of Schools Forum raised a number of points, voicing individual opinions, including:

- There was a change to the formula two years ago; what evaluation of the impact of the resulting funding transfer on educational standards has been carried out?
- ➤ The research in the Tribal report was, of its own volition, flawed; it was asked if the raw data could be circulated.
- > The methodology used to apply the findings of the Tribal report to the local formula was flawed.
- How does the proposed change improve the quality and standards of service to young people in Slough with local turbulence and short lead in times? There must be a genuine understanding of the impact across all schools of any proposed change and proper lead in time.
- Limited modelling had been done on this occasion compared to previous big changes and further evidence based models from the Tribal report were requested and refused.
- There are known pressure on the High Needs Block over the next few years.

- > There are already academies and maintained schools in Slough ruining deficit budgets.
- > In the proposed options not all school are losers.
- Whilst accepting the pace of change and the CSR, this is an opportunity to look across the board at the formula and it is right to take notice of the Tribal report.
- Changes to the 5-16 formula need to be holistic and take account of all the imminent changes in funding that may affect schools - for early years, post 16, high needs block and Education Support Grant – all vulnerable currently.

George Grant said that the CSR was a 'pause for thought' for SBC and there had not yet been discussion about what would happen now. He mentioned that the Schools Forum response and that of individual schools was timely and would be fed back to members and the decision made by January hopefully. He confirmed that the formula changes will require member approval at Cabinet.

452. Growth Fund Update 2015-16: estimated requirement for 16-17

Coral Miller presented a report to inform the Slough Schools Forum of the 2016-17 Growth Fund requirements: £1.1 million, an increase of £250,000 from the current year as there had been a need for 3 emergency bulge classes in November 2015, using the contingency.

The proposal is for the Growth Fund criteria to include providing an additional 2 places above 30 to accommodate new arrivals, therefore reducing the need for future bulge classes in Key Stages 1 and 2.

Tony Madden explained SBC have encountered a 35% increase in applications. A 'plus 2 places per class' approach will benefit Slough by reducing the need for bulge classes and offer school places throughout the borough and not just at one or two schools which could accommodate additional bulge classes.

Nicky Willis asked if SBC would be intending to direct schools to take the extra 2 and Tony Madden said that SBC was not intending to (and could only do so for maintained schools in any case). It was clarified that it is possible, in exceptional circumstances, to go beyond 30 in a class at KS1.

It was noted that there are schools in Slough seeking to reduce their PAN as they are undersubscribed.

It was noted that the LA is also asking secondary schools to take above PAN and that the Growth Fund was established to meet needs in both phases although, to date, this has been in the primary phase only.

Schools Forum agreed in principle to the £1.1m.

There was discussion about the AWPU value used in modelling the 2016-17 requirements for the Growth Fund. It was suggested that the 2015-16 AWPU value may be appropriate for 2016-17, possibly at full value for the bulge classes, but that this would need to be revisited as part of the January Schools Forum discussion and decision.

The revised criteria for accessing the Growth Fund is to be brought to the January Schools Forum for approval, including secondary places above PAN where they have been requested by the LA. Revised figures also to be brought to the Schools Forum in January.

The under spend of £170k from this year was agreed to be used to be carried forward; this sum is expected to decrease significantly due to use in-year to fund the +2 places per class policy.

It was agreed that John Constable and Maggie Waller would follow up with Fiona Mactaggart regarding the lack of proper funding of all children from arrival in school.

453. Centrally retained items Schools Block approval

Each year Schools Forum needs to agree the Schools Block centrally held budgets within the DSG. The report recommended that the centrally held budgets for 2016-17 continue as in 2015-16 budget.

Appendix A set out the proposed spend for Cambridge Education of £932,905 to fulfil requirements of the contract i.e. early support, monitoring, challenge and intervention and commissioned work. As the contract ends on 30th September 2016, spend will be pro-rata.

The report requested continuation of the current funding of £1.2m and it was agreed that the balance between this figure and the amount specified by Cambridge Education for use would be discussed in January at Schools Forum.

Nicky Willis asked why Headteachers have been asked to formally propose KS2 projects for school improvement in a separate report coming to the Schools Forum in January and asked why this could not be part of the Cambridge Education proposal.

The £932,905 was agreed with decision about the balance to be made at the January meeting.

Kathleen Higgins noted that there has frequently been underspend in this area and that Schools Forum should take account of this in January and consider returning funding to school budgets.

Appendix B

Schools Forum agreed the Schools Forum (£53k) and CERA (£149k) budget lines but requested clarification of the £28,400 for School Improvement and whether this should be returned to schools or transferred to Cambridge Education. It was questioned whether it was permissible to hold a contingency and it was agreed that the £10,479 to be moved back into the Schools Budget. Coral Miller to report back to Schools Forum in January with clarification regarding the £28,400 school improvement and raising standards budget which may then be returned to the Schools Budget if appropriate.

454. De-delegated items 2016/17

Coral Miller presented the report to inform Schools Forum of the 2016-17 dedelegation requirements and to seek the approval from mainstream primary and secondary representatives.

The report recommended that the Trades Union service and Behaviour Support Service (SEBDOS) budgets be approved for de-delegation.

It was noted that seven schools are in the process of becoming academies; if a school becomes an academy its de-delegated amount is refunded.

De-delegation of Behaviour Support Costs (SEBDOS) at £293,439 were agreed by the primary and the secondary maintained schools' members of Schools Forum.

Trades Union cover costs for Primary are £5,385 and Secondary £930. It was agreed that Paul Wilson would contact the Headteacher at Montem Primary school to confirm if Lynda Bussley was still being released to carry out Trades Union duties as Schools Forum had previously agreed this de-delegation in order to support that cost at the school. Maggie Waller mentioned that the regional secretary of the NUT had written to her about trades union facility time and she had referred this to the LA.

The Trades Union budget de-delegation decision was deferred pending further clarification from the LA.

455. Review of SEBD Outreach Funding Methodology

Maggie Waller presented a paper to Schools Forum on behalf of Jo Matthews. The paper examined the methodology behind the SEBD Outreach Service (SEBDOS) budget for all schools against the targeted pupils' relative need.

The current methodology is based upon two formulaic elements comprising the number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and the number of Low Attainment Pupils, these being the proxy indicators of children that will be more likely to require support from SEBDOS.

A cash value is assigned to each phase. Under the proposed methodology it is suggested that the cash allocations across FSM and Low Attainment remain as they are but that the per pupil allocations are calculated globally rather than per phase and therefore produce parity in terms of the per pupil allocations in each phase.

The paper proposed implementing this change with effect from the 2016/17 financial year.

Schools Forum supported the proposal to change the methodology as set out in the paper.

456. Split site criteria review

Schools Forum was consulted on the proposed enhanced split site criteria and the following was agreed:

- ➤ The sites need to be at least 500 metres apart from each other (distance measured in a straight line), not in adjacent streets and not connected by a footpath.
- ➤ The additional site does not qualify for an individual school budget share.
- > At least 20% of the pupils are taught on each site on a daily basis.

It was noted that there was no proposal to change the lump sum allocation for this factor (£34,300) and that two schools will now each be eligible to receive the £34k: Claycotts and Langley Hall Primary Academy.

457. Update from Task Groups: 5-16, SENSOG and Early Years (verbal)

It was noted that the 5-16 formula Task Group had met once.

The High Needs Task Group (currently part of SENSOG) had met and the next meeting in January will be an extended meeting to look at Post 16 special needs provision of places.

The Early Years Group had been cancelled and is to be re-scheduled.

458. Cambridge Education (verbal)

None

459. Academies update (verbal)

None

460. 2015-16 Forward Agenda Plan and Key Decisions Log

Both were noted. It was noted that the papers for the January Schools Forum will come out the week before but may be slightly later due to the time of the year.

461. Any Other Business

Robin Crofts left the meeting before the end, to attend a meeting with Ofsted, which precluded two update items being dealt with: Cambridge Education and Academies.

Current information about schools and academy status can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-academies-and-academy-projects-in-development

Maggie Waller thanked Nandita Sirker for her contribution to Schools Forum as this was to be her last Slough Schools Forum meeting.

(Note: The Meeting opened at 8.00 am and closed at 10.00 am)