

EAST SUSSEX SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES of a meeting of the East Sussex Schools Forum held at Wellhurst Golf and Country Club on 28 September 2018.

PRESENT

Richard Thomas (Pevensey & Westham Primary)
Richard Blakeley (Parkside Primary)L
Lizzie Field (Park Mead Primary)
Vicky Richards (St Mark's CE Primary)
Caroline Tucker Representing Hugh Hennebry (Uckfield College)
Janine Slade Representing Helen Key (Chailey)
Emily Beer (Willingdon Community)
Monica Whitehead (Claverham Community College)
James Freeston (King Offa Primary Academy)
Phil Matthews (Hailsham Community College Academy Trust)
Sarah Pringle (Seahaven Academy)
Lesley Brown (Early Years) Did not attend
Phil Clarke (Trade Union Representative)
Joanna Sanchez (Diocese of Arundel and Brighton)
Stuart Gallimore (Director Children's Services)
Cllr Bob Standley (Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability)
Fiona Wright (Assistant Director Education & ISEND)
Nathan Caine (Head of ISEND)
Edward Beale (Schools Funding Manager)
Mark Whiffin (Head of Finance)
Sarah Rice (Finance Manager – Schools)
Kirsten Coe (BSD Finance)
Beth Armstrong (Deputy Head of ISEND & Strategic Lead for Education)
Amanda Altenhoven (Clerk)

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1.1 James chaired the meeting in Hugh's absence. He welcomed all and thanked everyone for their attendance. He confirmed the meeting was quorate, recognising there had been a number of apologies. He noted that an alternative date had been offered, however fewer people could confirm attendance for the alternative date so the original meeting date was confirmed.

1.1 Apologies received from:

- Debbie Gilbert
- Kate Owbridge
- Geoffry Lucas
- Hugh Hennebry (Caroline Tucker attended as a substitute)
- Anna Robinson
- Frank Stanford
- Richard Preece

- Mike Hopkins
- Helen Key (Janine Slade attended as a substitute)
- Mandy Watson
- Julie Fahy
- Jane Johnson

2 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

2.1 Hugh had indicated he was happy to continue as Chair. The Clerk to Governors (Amanda) asked the Forum members to confirm they were happy with Hugh to be elected as Chair.

For Hugh to be elected to Chair there were 10 For, 0 Against and 0 abstentions. Therefore Hugh has been elected as Chair.

2.2 There was also a vacancy for Vice Chair. Nominations were requested. James had indicated that, if no other nominations, he would stand for vice chair. There were no further nominations, so Clerk to Governors (Amanda) asked Forum members to vote on James becoming Vice Chair.

For James to be Vice-Chair there were 11 For (as Sarah Pringle joined the meeting between votes) 0 Against and 0 abstentions.

2.3 Therefore James has been elected as vice-chair, and continued to chair the meeting in Hugh's absence.

3 SCHOOLS FORUM MINUTES 6 JULY 2018

3.1 The Minutes for 6 July were signed off by the Chair as a true record.

4 MATTERS ARISING AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

4.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4.2 Despite requests for nominations, there is still a vacancy for a Primary Phase Academy representative and a Secondary Phase Academy representative. A letter has been drafted that will be sent to academy trusts highlighting that there are vacancies. James gave a brief update on this and advised if the Forum knew of anyone with an expression of interest, to put them forward.

5 DE DELEGATED ITEMS

5.1 Ed Beale went through the paper and gave an update to the Forum on the progress made by the FFWG (Funding Formula Working Group) and the proposal that is being put forward for consultation to schools and academies.

5.2 Ed advised that the group met in May to look at the formula for the 2019/20 financial year. Here they looked at the aims and objectives with a view to moving towards the national funding formula and explored how to avoid any undue turbulence. The group looked at the whole picture for 2019/20 which initially looked at three areas of review: the lump sum, the sparsity factor and the deprivation factor. Ed went on to give a further update on the paper and the points discussed at the meeting in May. The group also held a July meeting, after LA reps had met with the DfE, to see how the group could better support schools and academies. Adding in the lump sum and sparsity elements discussed at the May meeting, the group also

looked at additional factors such as a minimum amount per pupil whilst continuing to look at affordability.

5.3 Ed asked the group to consider the paper looking at both primary and secondary phases. He updated the group explaining the figures within the spreadsheet and explained what the columns showed.

5.4 A comment was raised which asked where individual schools would be able to ask specific queries relating to their school with regards the consultation. Ed advised that they could speak with him directly or via the email on the consultation document. Ed also advised that the spreadsheet would be available via AVCO and there would be communication sent out via the virtual school bag and email.

A query was asked regarding the secondary phase, indicating that wider discussion regarding the impact to secondary schools may be required and it was commented that the figures should be discussed at the secondary meeting next week. It was also asked if there would be a breakfast briefing to explain the figures further to Business Managers. Ed and Sarah advised that there were bursar / business manager meetings coming up during October where it will be raised.

5.5 James thanked the funding formula working group for their work. Ed advised that the consultation document would be sent out 8th October and they would collate any comments and outcomes.

6 FUNDING FORMULA WORKING GROUP UPDATE AND ESCC FUNDING FORMULA PROPOSAL 2019/20

6.1 Sarah Rice gave a verbal update on the recent information that has been received regarding the Teachers' Pay Award.

6.2 Sarah confirmed that the Schools Finance team would be sending out detailed guidance to all maintained schools later that day regarding how to estimate how the pay award will affect individual school budget plans, if the pay award were accepted in full across all pay scales. Sarah advised that any individual queries around calculating this should be directed to the Schools Finance team. She advised that overall there should not be too much concern regarding the impact of the pay award - it is not expected that schools budget plans as they stand will be negatively impacted. Tools issued to maintained schools earlier this year advised an assumption of a 2% pay award due to some uncertainty and therefore budgets set should be adequate once the additional grant payment is factored in. Once September payroll figures are complete as a baseline, the schools finance team will perform a high level indicative review to assess the potential impact across all maintained schools and distribute this for further information.

6.3 A comment was raised regarding the grant beyond 19/20 as schools have only been informed for part year effect for 18/19 and then full for 19/20. Sarah advised that the government have not advised anything past the financial year 19/20.

6.4 A comment was raised regarding the Teachers' pensions. Sarah confirmed that there is a pension increase coming through, but that the figure has not yet been confirmed.

6.5 The pay award funding should arrive by November - the government had advised Autumn but a specific date has not been given to the LA.

7 TEACHERS PAY RISE AND FUNDING UPDATE

Any other business

7.1 It was noted that this paper relates to the Local Authority asking for School Forum approval for a number of services to be de-delegated for 2019/20. The voting relates to 'School' Members only and specifically maintained schools only.

7.2 Sarah gave an introduction to the 5 items which are referred to within the paper. Sarah spoke about the 3 services below in more detail referring to the paper presented. Maintained schools representatives only, from respective phases were asked to vote whether to de-delegate the 3 items. The voting outcomes were:

	Primary Phase		Secondary Phase	
	Number that have voted "Yes"	Number that have voted "No"	Number that have voted "Yes"	Number that have voted "No"
Contingency	4	0	4	0
Admin of FSM	4	0	4	0
Jury Service and Union business	4	0	4	0

For clarity, School Members present were:

Primary Phase: Richard Thomas, Richard Blakeley, Vicky Richards and Lizzie Field

Secondary Phase: Emily Beer, Caroline Tucker, Monica Whitehead and Janine Slade

7.3 Beth gave an update on EALS, going through the paper and also referencing the presentation given at the last Schools' Forum. This included the fact that 21 Syrian refugees were supported by the service in the last academic year and 95% of pupils supported by EALS showed accelerated progress in English Language levels following the intervention from EALS. Beth went on to deliver an overview of the different benefits of the service and the positive feedback from parent and school evaluations. Beth stressed that EALS is not an SEN and that pupils with EAL are often high achievers when the right support is given. Beth went on to explain the de-delegation system and how the feedback around fair contribution to the formula has been fed back in to the new funding formula and how the premiums work. Schools now contribute an amount that better reflects their cohort in terms of EAL pupils. Beth explained that the service from EALS is not available elsewhere in the county, for example settling of refugees and the fact that specialist teachers in the service are able to understand the wider educational context of individual schools. There are some other translation services available, however they are more expensive to schools.

7.4 Beth then led the update on ESBAS by going through the paper and referencing the presentation given at the last Schools' Forum, and gave an update on the recent service offer developments. She explained the impact of developing the capacity of the universal offer within schools and how this has supported schools to find alternatives to exclusion.

7.5 Nathan then gave an update on the wider issues including the relationship between the decision today and HNB expenditure and explained that compared with other counties ESCC is in a very strong position with regard to the pressure on this budget. This is because, in part, we have support services which work with schools to keep children in mainstream schools and reduce unnecessary demand.

Nathan explained that the EALS service would most likely have to close should the de-delegation not be agreed.

7.6 A comment was raised regarding the number of voters within Schools Forum today and that the representation was very small. Nathan went on to explain should the service close what

the consequences of this would be. Fiona expanded on this and advised that we weren't in a position to postpone a decision, as if de-delegation is not approved we would need to manage a staff consultation process with possible redundancies. At this stage the LA could not look at a different avenue, i.e. a different funding model. She stressed that the decision to de-delegate would be irreversible.

7.7 It was commented that should the service close this would be a tragedy and the impact and effect would be on all schools and academies.

7.8 Nathan went on to explain that, should de-delegation be agreed for a further year, a different funding model could be explored for both EAL and BSS. This was on the back of comments from academies who wanted to explore a 'pooled budget' that operated in a similar way to de-delegation, but is open to academies as well as maintained schools. It would be possible to explore what a future core offer and model could potentially look like from 2019 onwards, should the service continue for another year.

7.9 It was commented that heads and colleagues from all schools have spoken about this and there was a significant response. Emily stated that Schools Forum members were representing other schools and this vote for a potential service closure was a great responsibility. Emily asked if the cost of EALS and BSS was higher for maintained schools, compared to academies. Nathan confirmed that the de-delegated funding model secures a more favourable position for maintained schools, and that academies pay more.

7.10 Ed then gave an update on the EALS funding within the schools budget. Nathan gave a further update on the de delegated models and referred to additional costing information. This shows that the only service that is available in the private sector is a translation service, which is also significantly more costly than that provided by EALS. Unlike EALS this service does not provide support for schools which have to integrate children at very short notice (like Syrian refugee children). Stuart raised the point that the number of refugee children would not decrease due to the location of East Sussex and location of the ports and airports; those children would be subsidised by the LA not the Government, the Government do not fund these services.

7.11 Reps voted and the outcomes are as below:

	Primary Phase		Secondary Phase	
	Number that have voted "Yes"	Number that have voted "No"	Number that have voted "Yes"	Number that have voted "No"
EALs	4	0	0	4
Behaviour Support Service	4	0	0	4

7.12 Fiona commented on the outcome of the vote and that the LA will need to consider whether there was any option for offering part of the service by phase as it would not be viable in the current form. Sarah Pringle asked if she could be involved in looking at how the service could be saved or looking at other funding models. Fiona stated that we will undertake to look at other options but commented that if we cannot secure sufficient revenue up front, the EAL service would close.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Ed informed the Forum that the DfE have issued updated School Forum guidance and that this will be uploaded on to the ESCC website for reference.

8.2 Meeting concluded at 9.40 am

Next meeting - Friday, 23 November 2018, at 0830 hours at Wellshurst Golf Club

8.3 Draft items for next meeting

Growth Funding and Falling Rolls 19/20 approval

CSSB 19/20 Approval

Funding Formula Consultation Update