

## **DUDLEY SCHOOLS FORUM**

**Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2013 at 6.00 pm**  
**at Saltwells Education Development Centre,**  
**Bowling Green Road, Netherton, Dudley**

### **PRESENT:-**

Mr Ridley – Chair

Mr Patterson – Vice-Chair

Mrs J Belcher, Mr J Conway, Mr I Dallaway, Mr C Derham, Mr B Jones, Mr J Kelleher, Mr P Nesbitt, Mr B Patterson, Mr L Ridley, Ms P Rogers and Mr B Warren.

Person(s) not a member of the Forum but having an entitlement to attend meetings and speak

The Director of Children's Services

### **Officers**

Children's Services Finance Manager, Senior Principal Accountant and the Assistant Democratic Services Officer

#### **1. INTRODUCTIONS BY THE CHAIR**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and informed Members that the Dudley Schools Forum meeting that was scheduled to be held on 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2013, had now been cancelled due to lack of items for consideration.

#### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Mrs A Garratt, Mrs A Hannaway, Mr P Harris, Mr S Hudson, Mr P Jones, Mr D Kirk, Ms T Pearce, Mrs A Richards, Mr N Shaw, Mr M Weaver, Mrs G Withers and Councillor Crumpton.

At this juncture, the Vice-Chair expressed his disappointment at the lack of attendance by Members at the meeting and considered it to be unacceptable. The Chair agreed to address this situation.

#### **3. APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBER**

It was noted that Mr B Jones had been appointed as a substitute member for Mr S Hudson, for this meeting of the forum only.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That, the minutes of the meeting of the Schools Forum held on 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2013, be approved as a correct record and signed.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

No items were raised under this agenda item.

6. CONSULTATION ON SCHOOL FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS AND CHANGES FOR 2014/15

A report of the Director of Children's Services was submitted to provide consultation feedback and to obtain the views from members of the forum in relation to the proposed changes to the school funding arrangements for mainstream schools for the 2014/15 financial year, prior to implementation.

As the closing date for the consultation exercise was 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2013, after the agenda was distributed to members, an updated Table 1 and Appendix A to the report were submitted, indicating all comments made, to members at the meeting.

The Senior Principal Accountant explained the voting procedure for those members present and as prescribed in the Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2012, stated that only School members and Early Year representatives would be eligible to vote in relation to the formulae to be used by the local authority to determine the amounts to be allocated.

The Senior Principal Accountant referred to each question of the consultation individually and members expressed their views and voted on their preferred proposal option as follows:

Question 1    Proposal: Both the quantum and funding methodology for deprivation will be reviewed during 2014/15

Decision: The majority of members present at the meeting agreed with the proposal.

Question 2    Proposal: To fund lump sum for Primary schools at £130K and Secondary schools at £100K with re-allocation of funding released to pupils in KS3 and KS4 through the basic per pupil funding. (*Option 2*)

Decision: All members present at the meeting agreed with the proposal

Question 3 Proposal: To implement the proposed funding methodology in order to identify schools that receive insufficient funding to cover the first £6,000 of costs for High Needs pupils from April 2014.

Decision: The majority of members present at the meeting agreed with the proposal

At this juncture it was requested and agreed by the Director of Children's Services that the wording of the proposal for question 4 be amended so that it read the same as what was stated in the detail column for question 4.

Question 4 Revised Proposal: To fund 50% of the MFG in 2014/15 from a claw back of gains and 50% from all Schools.

Decision: All members present at the meeting agreed with the revised proposal.

With regard to question 5 – De-delegation of funding for services, it was stated that this would not be considered at this meeting and would be discussed further at agenda item 7.

#### RESOLVED

- (1) That the information contained in report submitted and as circulated at the meeting in relation to the school funding arrangements and changes for 2014/15, be noted.
- (2) That the views and comments of the forum members made at the meeting and the revision of the wording of the proposal for question 4, be taken into consideration by the Director of Children's Services when implementing the school funding arrangements for mainstream schools for the 2014/15 financial year.

#### 7. SCHOOL FUNDING REFORMS – DE-DELEGATIONS 2014/15

A report of the Director of Children's Services was submitted to provide consultation feedback in respect of those services eligible for de-delegation in the 2014/15 financial year.

The Children's Services Finance Manager presented the report and in doing so stated that a further report would be submitted to the Forum in December, at which point members would be requested to make their decision and vote on the de-delegation of services for the 2014/15 financial year and emphasised which members would and would not be eligible to vote on this item.

She referred to table 1 and table 4 of the report submitted, which outlined the de-delegated services for 2013/14 and the proposed de-delegations for 2014/15 and stated that a full and frank discussion would need to be had at the Headteachers Budget Working Group highlighting the potential impact on services if they were not to be de-delegated.

Arising from a question raised by the Vice-Chair, the Children's Services Finance Manager confirmed that Union facility time was included in the services that were currently de-delegated, but as additional schools had now transferred to Academy status, the funding for this service in 2014/15 could potentially diminish. The Director of Children's Services stated that a national consultation was currently taking place with regard to Union facility time and feedback from this would be available in the New Year.

The Vice-Chair also requested that the eligibility criteria as to who could and could not vote on this item at the meeting in December be made clear to all members of the forum.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted in relation to School Funding Reforms De-Delegations 2014/15, be noted.

8. LOCAL AUTHORITY FUNDING REFORM PRO-FORMA

A report of the Director of Children's Services was submitted on Dudley's submission of the Local Authority Funding Reform Pro-forma for 2014/15 to the Education Funding Agency (EFA).

As referred to in the report submitted, the completed pro-forma was circulated to members at the meeting.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted and circulated at the meeting, in relation to the Local Authority's funding reform pro-forma, be noted.

9. SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP – UPDATE

A report of the Director of Children's Services was submitted on the current position in relation to new appointments and vacancies to the Schools Forum membership.

The Children's Services Finance Manager presented the report and in doing so referred to the previous meeting where the revised constitution was discussed and which, subject to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning approval, would be implemented from January 2014 to comply with statutory regulations.

Arising from a question raised in relation to the election process for Academy School nominations, it was confirmed that this process would be carried out by the Governors Support Team on behalf of the Director of Children's Services.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted, in relation to Schools Forum Membership, be noted.

10. UPDATE ON THE SCHOOLS FORUM WEBSITE

The Children's Services Finance Manager gave a verbal update on the development of the Dudley Schools Forum website and confirmed that discussions with ICT had progressed and it was anticipated that a draft site would be available from mid November. It was also confirmed that the new webpage would be situated within the dudley.gov website under the Community Forums sections and a demonstration would be provided at the next meeting.

The Vice-Chair asked if Members could be notified when the site would be 'live', if it was prior to the meeting in December.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the verbal update on the development of the Dudley Schools Forum website, be noted.
- (2) That all members of the forum be notified when the new website would be live, if this date was to be prior to the next meeting in December.

10. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of future meetings be noted.

The meeting ended at 6.45 pm.

CHAIR