

**Minutes of a meeting of the Medway Schools' Forum
held 6 July 2015 - 3.30pm
Staff Resource Centre Brompton Academy Marlborough Road
Gillingham ME7 5HT**

Members present:

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|---------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Chair | | Peter Martin (PM) |
| Primary | Headteacher | Karen White (KW) |
| Secondary (Academy) | Principal | Kim Gunn (KG) |
| Church of England Diocese | Headteacher | Paul Gabbett (PB) |
| Roman Catholic Diocese | Headteacher | Kathy Sexton (KS) |
| Teacher Associations | | Julia Harris (JH) |
| | | Suzanne Piggott (SP) |
| Early Years | | Clive Mailing (CM) |
| Secondary LA Maintained | Governor | Martin Daniels (MD) |
| Primary | Governor | Karen Joy (KJ) |
| Special School | Headteacher | Karen Bennett (KB) |
| Will Adams | Headteacher | |

In Attendance: Pauline Maddison (Interim Assistant Director) (PM), Maria Beaney (Finance Business Partner – Education Finance) (MB), Jacqui Moore (Head of School Services Commissioning) (JM) Chris Mckenzie (Head of Performance and Strategic Planning) (CMcK), Rose Gardner (Note Taker)

Apologies received from Judy Rider, Ian Chappell, Barbara Peacock, Cllr Mike O'Brien, Liz Caldwell, Kim Parnell, Simon Decker, Jane Spurgen

7. Expansion of Abbey Court Special School – Update

It was agreed that this Agenda Item be taken first so that Chris McKenzie could then leave the meeting.

Paper previously circulated with the Agenda.

CMcK updated the Schools' Forum as outlined in the paper and the following was noted:-

- The project has received funding from a number of sources including £2m from the Schools' Forum. Total funding received was £12.3m.
- There have been some challenges with the project and the current contractor has stated it will need an extra £2m to deliver the scheme. The contractor has not been taken forward to build the scheme.
- The Council have had a request to complete the project by September 2016 approved by the EFA
- Tenders have gone out for a new contractor and are due back by July 2015. Eight contractors have expressed an interest and CMcK

is confident we will get another contractor.

- Paperwork is with our legal dept on whether there is a case to claim back loss of time expenses from previous contractor.

CMcK confirmed that SEN Provision has been expanded in recent years, including additional capacity at Bradfields. Danecourt will have 40 additional places this September and there will be additional capacity for Rivermead at the Abbey Court site in Rainham, following completion of the Abbey Court project.

This will make a possible total of 150 additional places.

KJ wanted it on record that Abbey Court have reluctantly agreed the design as there are a couple of aspects that the school would have liked to be included that the project will not deliver ie, training facilities. Chris responded that training facilities do not form part of the standard accommodation guidelines produced by the DFE, and as such is not an essential requirement.

KJ stated that she is in discussions regarding where children will go in both September this year and September 2016 if the project will not be completed until September 2016. The likelihood is that there will be temporary provision at New Horizons, where there is spare accommodation currently.

KJ stated that an additional £8m will need to be identified to relocate the secondary provision from the current Strood site.

1. Minutes of meeting held on the 8 October 2014 and matters arising

The Schools' Forum agreed the minutes and the Chair signed them off.

Elect a Vice Chair

Karen White's name was put forward to be Vice-Chair

Proposed by Kim Gunn

Seconded by Kathy Sexton

Karen White was duly appointed as Vice-Chair

2. DSG 2014/2015 Final Expenditure Report

Paper previously circulated with the Agenda.

MB outlined the paper. MB confirmed that there are no schools eligible for claw back this year and that MB is working with schools on their reserves.

MB confirmed that the High Needs Block is the next block that the EFA are looking at and that Academies and Maintained schools are treated the same.

The Schools' Forum noted the final DSG outturn for 2014-2015 and the

position on schools' balances for 2014-2015.

3. Schools Block 2014/2015 Centrally Retained Final Expenditure Report

Paper previously circulated with the Agenda.

MB outlined the paper. The Schools' Forum agreed for the LA to retain centrally certain funding from the Schools Block. The report explained the final spend for 2014-2015.

The Schools' Forum duly noted the report and noted that the Schools Block overspend of £345,079 will be carried forward to the Schools Block for re-distribution in 2016-2017. The reasons for the overspend were outlined in the report and this information was duly noted by the Schools' Forum.

MB explained the calculation for the Carbon Reduction Commitment of £210,000 and why it was paid for by the Schools Block and was not reported to the Schools' Forum earlier.

4. School Funding 2016-2017

Paper previously circulated with the Agenda.

MB outlined the paper and the Schools' Forum noted the information outlined in the paper.

5. DSG Reserves Updates

Paper previously circulated with the Agenda.

MB outlined the paper which provided an update on the:

- 2012-13 DSG reserves
- 2013-14 DSG reserves, which have been taken into account when preparing DSG budget for 2015-2016
- 2014-15 DSG reserves, which will be taken into account when preparing DSG budget for 2016-17.

KB stated that she believed that the Fair Access (new pupils on roll of Will Adams) amount should read £68,000 and not £76,000 and KB will confirm this amount to MB.

Post meeting note: MB confirms the funding agreed was £68,000 and MB will update the paperwork accordingly.

It was agreed that the Will Adams VFM report will be sent to the Chair to see next week and that this should be agreed in principle.

The Schools' Forum noted the information in the paper.

PM stated that some traded services will not be able to continue in the future. Some are underpinned by the DSG and not income generating enough. It was agreed that clarity will need to be given to Headteachers as to which services will no longer be available.

6 The Key – Online Support for School Leaders and Governors

Paper previously circulated with the Agenda.

JM outlined the paper.

The following was noted:

- Total cost for the financial year 2015/16 is £76,179.
- 20 Academies have purchased the service, resulting in a sum of £15,135 towards the cost

It is proposed that the sum of £61,044 is charged to the DSG Reserves and the remaining £15,135 is funded from the income from the academy purchases.

It is proposed that The Key for School Leaders and The Key for School governors are offered as Traded Services for the financial year 2016/2017 and that the serviced is dependent on sufficient income to cover the costs of the annual contract.

It was agreed that JM would look into whether a consortium could buy into The Key as a group, rather than individual schools.

JM will provide usage figures to be sent out with the minutes.

MB will look into whether funding for The Key could be top sliced.

Staff Counselling figures were requested and if possible these will be provided.

Post Meeting: Staff Counselling figures below:-

October 2012 – September 2013 = 179 contacts

October 2013 – September 2014 = 285 contacts

October 2014 – June 2015 = 315 contacts

Post Meeting: Information on usage of The Key for School Leaders and The Key for School Governors between 01 April 2014 and 31 March 2015 below:-

The Key for School Leaders:

151 new Medway school leaders became members of The Key for School Leaders. At the end of March 2015, 726 Medway school leaders were

members of The Key for School Leaders.

Medway school leaders read 2523 articles over 9,300 times last year. The top ten most popular articles were:

- The SEND Code of Practice (2014): a summary
- Publishing information online: requirements
- Assessment without levels: how are primary schools responding?
- Assessment without levels: what does it mean for schools?
- Special educational needs (SEN) policies
- Statutory policies and documents
- Assessment without levels: local authority responses
- Lesson observation: proformas and guidance
- Interview questions: school business manager
- Expected progress for Key Stages 1 and 2

The Key for School Governors:

At the end of March 2015, there were 431 Medway school governors who were members of The Key for School Governors.

Medway school governors read 1206 articles 6210 times between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2015. The top ten most popular articles were:

- In the news this week
- Skills audits for governors
- Governors' year planner
- Changes in education in 2014/15
- Governing body: model terms of reference
- Developing an annual work plan for the governing body
- Schedule of monitoring for governors
- Promoting British values in schools
- Pupil premium: reports for governors
- Changing the culture of the governing body

8. OFSTED Inspection of the local authority's arrangements for school improvement

Paper and Ofsted Letter previously circulated with the Agenda.

PM outlined the paper.

PM confirmed that the Schools' Forum was considered a strength and thanked both the Chair and the Forum for their support.

PM confirmed that there were a number of areas for improvement particularly in the primary sector and spoke about data collection and the 16-19 strategy.

PM confirmed that more work is being done on the School Improvement Strategy and its targets.

PM confirmed that she will be appointing an officer on a fixed term contract to focus on Recruitment and Retention.

It is proposed to bring the refreshed School Improvement Strategy and the action plans with success criteria to the Autumn meeting of the Schools' Forum and to bring a report to the Schools' Forum in September 2016, when provisional results, are known on the progress of the strategy, expenditure on allocated resource and value added of the activities.

9. **Any Other Business**

MB stated that the LA will be going out to consultation regarding changes to the "Medway Scheme for Finance in Schools" during the summer break.

10. **Next Meeting**

RG to look at future dates and circulate to the Schools' Forum.

Post Meeting: Future dates set as below -

7 September 2015 – 3.30pm – 5.30pm – Training Room Warren Wood Primary Academy Arethusa Road Rochester

5 October 2015 – 3.30pm – 5.30pm – Training Room Warren Wood Primary Academy Arethusa Road Rochester

13 January 2016 – 3.30pm – 5.30pm – Training Room Warren Wood Primary Academy Arethusa Road Rochester

4 July 2016 – 3.30pm – 5.30pm – Training Room Warren Wood Primary Academy Arethusa Road Rochester