

Minutes of the Meeting of the Solihull Schools Forum held 11th October 2010

<p>Members Present Derek Smart (Chair) Jenny Godsall Anne Byrne Karen O’Keefe Alexis Elliott Antoinette Fisher Lorna Bosley Diane Newton Mike Goodwin Janet Marsh Lynda Mackay Bill Sedgwick Professor Derek Sheldon Steve Howells Ann Jones Tony Morrison Vivienne Stone-Fewings Jane Davenport Doug Gibson Cllr Joe Tildesley Cllr Nick Stephens David Lewis Gina Godwin Tracey Henshaw</p> <p>Observers Martin O’Connor Martin Maxfield</p> <p>Others Present: Cllr Norman Davies Chris Palmer Steve Fenton Stewart Crowe Cath Haslam</p>	<p>Arden Knowle CE Primary Lady Katherine Leveson CE Primary Oak Cottage School Blossomfield Infant & Nursery School Dorridge J & I Blossomfield Infant & Nursery School Yew Tree I & J Langley Primary School Sharmans Cross School Knowle CE Primary Alderbrook School Lyndon School Alderbrook School CTC Kingshurst Park Hall Tudor Grange School Reynolds Cross Reynolds Cross SMBC SMBC ATL Whitesmore Nursery Lighthall Under 5’s Pre-School</p> <p>Connexions Coppice Junior</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Education & Children’s Services Associate Strategic Adviser, Education Projects Business & Performance Manager Forum Co-ordinator Senior Adviser</p>
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Minutes taken by Sarah Arthur, Senior Forum Administrator

Item	Discussion	Action
1	<p>Ratification of appointment of Forum Chair and election of Vice Chair SC referred to the provisional appointment made at the July meeting of D Smart as Chair of Forum from September 2010 to July 2011. This appointment was duly ratified by Forum members at today’s meeting by a show of hands. Election of Vice Chair – B Sedgwick has kindly offered to remain as Vice Chair for a further term of one year and this appointment was approved by Forum members by a show of hands. DS welcomed Steve Howells, Secondary Governor at Alderbrook, Antoinette Fisher, Primary Governor at Dorridge I & J, Anne Byrne, Head Teacher at Lady Katherine Leveson CE Primary and Chris Palmer to their first Forum meeting.</p>	
2	<p>Apologies for absence Apologies were received from Louise Minter (Streetsbrook I & N), Roberta Narrowway (Valley Infant School), Charlotte Shadbolt (Heart of England School), Cllr Ken Rushen, Ian Backhouse (NAHT), Cliff Hall (Solihull College), Peter French (Church of England Diocese of Birmingham), Paul Williams (Archdiocese of Birmingham Diocesan Schools Commission) and Lesley Heale, Director for People.</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of previous meeting (12th July 2010) There were approved as an accurate record.</p>	
4	<p>Matters Arising P2 – Combined Services, multi agency activities – SF will circulate a breakdown of contributions by each agency as an attachment to these minutes.</p>	SF

<p>5</p>	<p>Cabinet Member Items</p> <p>Cllr Davies welcomed the contact he has made with many colleagues involved with children and young people and looked forward to further meetings in the future.</p> <p>Cllr Davies confirmed that the meeting called by the unions to discuss the emergence of academies took place three weeks ago, with all party leaders present and speaking to that debate. Cllr Davies reminded colleagues there are now academies both for struggling schools and those in a position of excellence and urged schools to give careful consideration to the whole debate and ensure that as wide and thorough a consultation as possible is carried out with all stakeholders if the decision is taken to follow this route.</p> <p>Chair's actions</p> <p>DS asked the meeting to discuss two items within the Cabinet Member item tonight. Firstly DS outlined that over the Summer break discussions have taken place between himself and C Palmer to progress actions brought out at the Forum meeting in July with regard to the work of the Lanchester T & F Group. It was felt that it would be appropriate and helpful to bring together the financial and management aspects of Lanchester Campus under the remit of the T & F Group as both areas are intrinsically linked. It was agreed to modify the Terms of Reference for the T & F Group to embrace strategy and vision for the Campus in support of the work of the Interim Executive Board and from that consider financial aspects and impacts. Forum were content to endorse this direction and new remit of the Lanchester T & F Group. L Mackay will continue to feed back to Forum as Chair of the T & F Group.</p> <p>DS referred to the new arrangements around the Children & Young People's Trust which continues to have Head Teacher membership who report back to Forum. Whilst Trusts are no longer a statutory body, the partnership between agencies continues to be developed and strengthened through six Outcome Groups which sit underneath the Trust Board. Five of these groups address the Every Child Matters agenda with Officers coordinating these priorities for children and young people contained in the Children & Young People's Plan. DS referred to the Enjoy & Achieve Outcome Group which has been slow to get off the ground and which over the Summer, he was asked on behalf of Forum, to lead as interim Chair. DS has secured volunteer members across head teacher and governor groups and officer involvement who are leading on the priority areas of this Outcome Group. DS is seeking Forum's endorsement of these process arrangements but stressed he intends to remain interim Chair of this Outcome Group for a short time only and asked colleagues to consider their nominations and speak to him direct. Forum members noted and approved the framework that has been in place. Members are welcome to attend the next meeting of this Outcome Group to gain a feel for Chairmanship or membership.</p>	<p>LM</p> <p>All</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Work Group activity reports to Forum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Improvement WG – Alexis Elliott <p>AE thanked C Haslam for her support of the SIG as Lead Officer and for her enormous efforts in the production of the deprivation outcomes report under discussion tonight. The forward work plan of the SIG has felt the impact of the new coalition government as work streams take different directions and there are many announcements and areas of legislation for the group to review and monitor including the White Paper.</p> <p>Single Level Tests - these have now been discontinued. Negotiations continue between the government and unions on SATS which will take place next year although science KS2 will be sampling only. The Work Group have requested Gordon Latham in HR to attend a meeting to discuss the performance management systems for single status staff. This is a varied picture from school to school in terms of progress with some governing bodies refusing to ratify this system until more information is available.</p> <p>Secondary School Membership of SIG – membership and involvement by this sector is still being sought to consider all aspects of the school improvement and curriculum agenda.</p> <p>Elective home schooling – DN confirmed this item is also being discussed by the Education & Early Years Safeguarding Group who will be receiving a report at their next meeting. DN and AE will coordinate discussions on this item.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Work Group – Mike Goodwin <p>Non delegated budget - a Task & Finish Group has been established to consider this</p>	<p>DN/ AE</p>

	<p>budget which has not been reviewed by the Group for some years and which seemed opportune in view of likely constraints in expenditure. The T & F Group will look at all areas within non delegated in terms of levels of spend, purpose and whether any require delegation to schools.</p> <p>Pupil Premium Consultation – A Finance WG sponsored T & F Group have met and produced a response on behalf of Solihull Schools Forum which has been sent to the DfE. The Cabinet Member has the opportunity to make a separate response on behalf of the Council.</p> <p>Finance Regulations 2011 – MG confirmed this is a technical piece of work with no areas of contention and will not require a T & F Group to respond to this consultation.</p> <p>JG asked MG to clarify to what stage the proposed invoice scanning project has progressed and whether consultation has taken place with schools. JG felt some schools may be reluctant to pay for the system and ongoing costs where satisfactory arrangements are already in place at school and there may be concerns that schools will lose control over some aspects of payments. MG confirmed that a working party to include primary and secondary bursar representation has been set up and capital costs will be funded for the first period through centrally held money. MG confirmed that the procurement and tendering process is still ongoing but understood that schools retained the same control over invoice checking with this a matching and scanning system to make savings on the invoice process across all schools over time.</p> <p>SF pointed out that a project at this level of cost would not warrant a full consultation with schools. The Finance WG have received a detailed business case on the basis of which was given the go ahead to proceed to the next stage. To ensure all schools receive maximum benefit from the scheme it is important that there is no opt out by individual schools. SF reiterated that the working party would consider all business processes to ensure school needs are being met. It is not possible to run this as a pilot study because of technology cost implications and SF confirmed that if the next stage discussions show this scheme is feasible and savings can be made it will be implemented.</p> <p>GG referred to the Northern Regeneration project and expressed strong concern at the delay in the new build programme for primary schools which has no confirmed start date for completion of the programme. GG pointed out that where schools have amalgamated onto one site in preparation for a new school there are now real concerns and issues around the quality of the teaching environment if this is not a temporary holding situation. There are also concerns of capacity for the predicted numbers of children should the new build schools not take place. Cllr Stephens echoed his concern that with the regeneration programme reliant on house sales with the current economic climate it was difficult to predict when the new build programme could be restarted. Cllr Stephens acknowledged the growing concerns in the community and confirmed that Cabinet were meeting this week to progress the building programme of Bishop Wilson school. This is an area that is not within Forum focus specifically and Cllr Davies will relay Forum’s concerns and comments to Cllr Reeves who is leading on the Regeneration portfolio. It was agreed that School Improvement WG should seek involvement in areas of performance due to amalgamations and delay of the new build programme but not in areas of demography and capacity.</p>	<p>ND SIG</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Feedback from Education & Early Years Safeguarding Group – Diane Newton DN confirmed the new name reflects the restructure to bring Early Years into the safeguarding group. DN referred to the serious case review of Kaira Ishak which carries a series of recommendations. Judith Anstiss is looking at issues linked directly to children being home educated and the difficulties of accessing children at home and will bring a full report to the next meeting of the safeguarding group.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Children & Young People’s Trust Board – Update to Forum Derek Smart A report following the last CYPTB meeting in September has been circulated to schools and Forum members and JG referred to the revised structure with the six Outcome Groups reporting to the Performance & Commissioning Group. JG was pleased to report that the Primary and Special School Partnership have a representative on all of the Outcome Groups. DS welcomed this support and commitment from school colleagues and the strengthening of the links between the Trust and schools with a review of Forum’s role with the Trust continuing to be under future review.</p>	

	<p>JG referred to the item on Young Offenders where the pupils mentioned are all in attendance at PRUs in the Borough but are not receiving their legal total entitlement of 25 hours FTE education each week.</p> <p>The first inspection of a rural Children's Centre based at Lady Katherine Leveson CE Primary has taken place and has gone well.</p>	
9	<p>Deprivation Funding Review – analysis of outcomes – Cath Haslam</p> <p>CH set the context for work to date with presentations already made to Forum by SF on how deprivation is funded and allocated. The other strand of work is to analyse outcomes and impacts from this funding which is the basis of today's report from CH. CH firstly asked members to understand that levels and application of funding do not directly correlate to outcomes and it is a very complex area to analyse and present as a series of outcomes.</p> <p>CH tabled two papers to update the report on historical aspects of funding and also to provide 2010 results data as latest information on which to judge the narrowing of the attainment gap. CH discussed key headlines from the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2010 data analysis shows a positive picture of the difference being made for disadvantaged pupils, with a narrowing of the gap between those pupils on free school meals (which is an indicator of deprivation) and the remainder of the pupil cohort. • CH pointed out that whilst there are higher concentrations of deprivation in the North of the Borough there are pockets in the South. Furthermore deprivation is not just applicable where a pupil has free school meals; there are other vulnerable groups. CH referred to a basket of indicators used to distribute deprivation funding through the funding formula which is effective in reflecting and identifying deprivation across the whole of the Borough. • Solihull is a high performing Borough where pupils in all key stages achieve good results. With our pupils achieving above the national average this makes the gap wider and requires even more progress by the other pupils to narrow this gap. • CH referred to the graphs showing Key stage 2 and 4 data pointing out that at the end of KS2 the gap has narrowed by 6.7% which is very positive. KS4 five A*-C the gap has closed from 33.1% to 19.8% which is a marked shift. • There is not such a marked reduction for the indicator five A*-C including English and Maths. CH stated that one of the reasons for this is an increased level of FSM eligibility whilst the remainder of the cohort continue to improve and widen the gap. <p>Starting with this latest data, CH reiterated that it is always going to be difficult to analyse this information in terms of cause and effect and this report will look at historical aspects of deprivation funding, trends in achievement where deprivation funding is applied and qualitative examples of good practice where additional funding has been put in place to address deprivation. This in itself is a complex exercise as needs will be different in every school and every school will have a variety of approaches and strategies to address an underachieving or vulnerable group. However, this report will try to exemplify examples of partnership working or good practice which have made a difference to this group of children. As qualitative judgements, CH pointed out that if Forum wished to see evidence in support of these examples of good practice, this would require a separate piece of work.</p> <p>Lastly CH referred to the "Extra Mile" detailed in the appendix. This was included in last year's report to Forum and is a detailed piece of research to identify practices across primary and secondary schools that have made a difference. These are set in a context of emphasis and weighting of resources across schools to have a positive impact on children and young people's learning and progress. CH invited questions to the report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DL asked for clarification on how deprivation funding was delivered into schools in view of the fact that certain current elements such as personalisation learning may be under review. SF confirmed that schools receive this funding through a basket of three broad measures, FSM eligibility, IDACI and Prior Attainment. These may all contain sub headings such as personalisation learning, but any additional or current money will continue to be embraced within these three broad measures whatever 	

	<p>changes may take place to sub heading elements. SF is not anticipating any change to the current funding methodology. There may be additional deprivation funding through the new Pupil Premium which is a fixed amount per child based on FSM eligibility, but with more details to follow from Government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JM noted the reduction in the gap for KS4 five A*-C but not for the indicator five A*-C including English and Maths. JM questioned if that was an impact of the number of schools now running Level 2 OCR and BTEC courses as equivalent to GCSEs and if this is then limiting the aspirations of students who may not be able to take Level 3 qualifications without Maths and English. CH confirmed that whilst secondary schools have introduced a range of qualifications and subject combinations towards KS4 as part of the personalisation agenda, these would need to be matched in terms of qualification and skills with existing key indicators to gain a true feel for the gap. • BS felt that whilst accepting a broad menu of courses could enable success for a broad range of children, pointed out that a key indicator for Ofsted inspections is the pass rate for five A*-C including English and maths and there is potentially some limitation to a student's education if Post 16 institutes require English and Maths GCSEs and equivalent qualifications are not accepted. • There was some discussion on where resources and efforts should be concentrated in the light of data analysed. Colleagues felt that the lead time to improve the gap for those achieving five A*-C including English and maths would be longer than other academic subjects. In addition this is also a harder task to achieve by KS3 and 4 and colleagues felt early intervention and support at Primary stage remained crucial. CH pointed out investment to date and the work of colleagues at Early Years has almost completely closed the gap in attainment at this education stage. It is hoped to continue to build on this through to KS4 and show progress is ongoing. • CH was asked to comment on how today's report could be used to guide our future thinking and direction, given a national agenda that is going to be subject to lots of changes over the coming months. CH felt that whilst the funding element is clearly important to enable schools to put strategies into practice, it was very important to raise awareness of all vulnerable groups within school, work in partnership between schools, the Local Authority and other stakeholders and identify and share good practice which can be shown to achieve positive results on narrowing the gap. Pupils in Solihull receiving FSM actually have a higher level of achievement for five A*-C including English and Maths than all other West Midlands authorities except for Birmingham but this, whilst applauded, should not detract everybody's focus and efforts from continuing to close this gap further. • TM requested a comparison of Solihull with statistically similar local authorities, levels of income, demography, as an interesting comparison on performance and identify any areas that require additional focus. As one of the lowest funded authorities Solihull does achieve remarkable progress and colleagues agreed data to show per pupil funding between statistically similar authorities would be helpful to show Solihull's position. • JM felt it would be helpful to obtain statistics on how many students who do not achieve five A*-C but equivalents, go on to post 16 education, vocational training, jobs or are NEETs. This would be an important analysis of where education has enabled these students to progress to. • CP pointed out that Government appear to be talking about not just A*-C including English and Maths as national indicators but potentially a Baccalaureate style to include English, Maths, Science, Humanities and a Modern Foreign Language to define even more strictly what the national standard is going to be. <p>As a general comment CP felt the Education Bill would provide the framework for reviewing the national curriculum and possibly move towards not only retaining recognised subjects but include additional core subjects as the way forward for a national standard and also examine where vocational equivalents fit with the league tables. However there is unlikely to be any significant change from current benchmarks for some time as any review will take place over a year or two.</p> <p>JG referred to the maps within the report showing where there are pockets of children</p>	<p>CH</p> <p>CH</p> <p>CH</p>
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	<p>underachieving but which do not stay the same across the various key stages of a child’s education. As the same funding is applied to the same places and areas but with very different results at key stages, JG questioned if there was an inequality of outcomes for this funding and if this should be reviewed in terms of applying best practice and identifying where this funding appears to give us best value for money in comparison with where it is less so.</p> <p>CH reiterated that funding alone does not necessarily show a narrowing in the attainment gap and there will be different outcomes at different stages for a variety of reasons which is then hard to draw comparisons against. For example some schools will have a higher concentration of FSM and schools will have a greater focus and understanding of these issues whilst this may not be as apparent to other schools. This is the key to sharing good practice and partnership between schools. DS felt it was worthwhile to make these types of distinctions such as a broader interpretation of data on children’s achieving, learning and progress clear in any future report.</p> <p>DS thanked CH for a very informative and valuable report and asked colleagues to comment on what they would like to see as next steps. Requests made today for specific information will be taken through the School Improvement WG and brought back to Forum by CH as an interim report. This will be the process for any further information requested by Forum as it is identified. It was agreed it would be helpful for CH to present an annual report to Forum along the lines of today’s paper with that year’s results and data.</p> <p>LM suggested a joint meeting of the Finance and School Improvement Work Groups to encompass the Education Bill which comes out in November and from that allow discussions on where funding should be directed to maximise outcomes.</p>	<p>CH/SIG SA/CH MG/AE /RN</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Shaping Solihull Schools – Jenny Godsall and Chris Palmer</p> <p>This was a verbal update from CP and JG. CP referred to L Heale’s presentation to Forum in July highlighting national developments and the role of the Local Authority to respond to these changes. Shaping Solihull as an initiative had preceded some of these changes but is now in a position to adapt and be able to respond and where possible lead on these changes as they become clearer. CP pointed out that Shaping Solihull whilst initially a south primary phase project is now inclusive across secondary and special schools as well. The vision and focus is for schools as a universal service at the heart of the community working collaboratively in partnership with the Local Authority, public services and other organisations providing high quality education and services to effectively meet the needs and aspirations of the Borough’s children, families and communities.</p> <p>JG confirmed the Shaping Solihull Group has received strong commitment from primary and special school colleagues at the last Partnership meeting and there are 20 representative head teachers on the group which will meet once a month for the remainder of the year. The group is carrying out an audit on provision for schools to include what services they receive, what the issues are and how they would like aspects improved. Colleagues in SIAS in the LA have also discussed these issues of provision and levels and types of service at a group meeting with LA advisory colleagues and head teachers.</p> <p>JG confirmed she will be bring a paper to the next Forum meeting on 30th November with a number of proposals from the Shaping Solihull group on the way forward as to how schools may wish to proceed. DS questioned what the group would be seeking from Forum and JG confirmed that the Shaping Solihull group is working closely with schools, governing bodies, the SGA and as such would wish to keep Forum fully informed and involved and seek their views as discussions progress. JG stressed that it is not intended to present a funding request to Forum as schools will pool resources if required.</p> <p>BS confirmed he will try and seek a secondary representative for the Shaping Solihull group and DS felt the proposed paper to Forum in November would benefit from an all sector involvement and perspective of the issues under discussion. Academy representation on the group would also be welcomed.</p>	<p>JG BS</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Lanchester Task & Finish Group – Lynda Mackay</p> <p>DS firstly referred to the original TOR for this group which raised the question of whether a standing group to consider Inclusion & Access matters was needed once more. There has</p>	

	<p>been increasing interest in this concept because of the ongoing impact of various elements of SEN. It was originally intended to bring this debate to Forum in November, but strength of feeling to begin these discussions is such that Executive Group have agreed that the I & A Work Group is reformed, initially Local Authority led, with administrative support from Forum. At the Forum meeting on 30th November a short paper will formally propose the reformation of this Work Group under the framework of Schools Forum. SC will be involved in the coordination of these arrangements and the preparation of the associated paper. Forum was content in principle with these proposals and happy to receive a paper in November for debate. BS stressed the importance of officer support for such a group as crucial to its forward work plan and what it can ultimately achieve.</p> <p>As Chair of the Lanchester T & F Group LM outlined that the remit of this group has changed to incorporate a strategic view of the future direction of Lanchester to inform discussions at the IEB. LM reported a productive meeting of the T & F Group on the 29th of September but pointed out that today's update report is purposely brief as the recommendations will not be taken to the IEB until their next meeting on the 20th of October. It would therefore not be appropriate to discuss these in detail today, but a further report will be brought to Forum on the 30th of November. The T & F Group will meet again on the 10th of November to consider the outcomes of a mock inspection at the Lanchester Campus and financial reports as they begin to feed in. LM confirmed that final TOR for this T & F Group will be circulated to the group prior to their meeting of the 10th of November and will be included in the next update report to Forum.</p>	<p>JG/AE SC</p> <p>LM</p> <p>LM</p>
12	<p>Academy membership of Forum – Stewart Crowe</p> <p>Forum was informed in March of changes to regulations which would alter the balance of places to include membership by Academies. These regulations are now in place and the paper today confirms the inclusion of CTC and Park Hall as Forum members and the impact of the conversion of Tudor Grange and Arden to Academies from the 1st of October. Based on pupil proportion numbers there are now four places for academies at Forum and it is proposed that current Forum secondary head teacher and governor members from Tudor Grange and Arden, VSF and DS, take up these two additional academy places on Solihull Schools Forum. SC referred Forum to the decisions at the end of the report noting that if additional schools change status the balance of membership at Forum will need further review. DS and VSF have agreed it is a short term pragmatic solution to move their membership places to fill the two additional academy places but it was stressed that the representation arrangements should be looked at in detail prior to the next round of elections.</p>	<p>SC</p>
13	<p>Date and time of next meeting – Tuesday 30th November 2010, 5.00 pm, Room 1 Civic Suite</p>	