

**ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS FORUM
FRIDAY, 8TH APRIL, 2011**

Present:- Roger Burman, Ms. A Burtoft, Bev Clubley, S. Clayton, Jane Fearnley, Margaret Hague, Angela Heald, Donna Humphries, John Henderson, Geoff Jackson, Geoff Gillard, Mrs K. Jessop, Councillor Paul Lakin, Helen McLaughlin, L. Parker, A. Pepper, David Sylvester, S. Warner, Nick Whitaker and S. Wilson.

Officers in attendance: Joyce Thacker, David Hill, Karen Borthwick, Joanne Robertson, Vera Njegic and Sue Wilson.

Apologies for absence were received from: John Day, David Pridding, Peter Hawkridge, Ruth Johnson, Val Broomhead and Dorothy Smith.

169. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN OF THE ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS FORUM

Agreed:- That Mr. David Sylvester be appointed Chair of the Rotherham Schools Forum for 2011/12.

(Mr. Sylvester in the Chair)

170. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS FORUM

Agreed:- That Mr. Geoffrey Jackson be appointed Vice-Chair of the Rotherham Schools Forum for 2011/12.

171. MINUTES OF AND ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Agreed:- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18th March, 2011, be approved as a correct record.

172. CONSTITUTION OF THE ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS FORUM

Discussion took place on the proposed new constitution of the Rotherham Schools Forum. The following salient issues were raised:-

- i) ensuring that school governors are represented on the Schools Forum;
- ii) ensuring that Elected Members and officials of the local authority are able to attend the Schools Forum in an ex officio or advisory capacity;
- iii) deputies/substitutes may attend meetings of the Schools Forum if the nominated representative is unable to attend;
- iv) representatives shall be appointed for a period of three years;
- v) a chair and vice-chair shall be appointed annually;
- vi) the quorum for meetings of the Schools Forum shall be 40 per cent of the

total membership;

vii) the membership of the Schools Forum shall include representation from the Church Dioceses;

viii) the minutes of meetings of the Schools Forum shall be made available to schools and to the learning communities;

ix) the venue for meetings shall be the Rockingham Teachers' Centre (this issue will be reviewed by the Schools Forum from time to time);

x) there shall be Sub-Groups of the Schools Forum, who shall appoint their own chairs and vice-chairs and shall draw their membership from schools' representatives beyond the membership of the Schools Forum; however, each Sub-Group shall include a number of current members of the Schools Forum, to ensure a continuous link between the Sub-Groups and the Schools Forum.

xi) the agenda and reports/papers shall be distributed to members of the Schools Forum one week before meetings; ordinarily, there shall be no distribution of late papers at meetings, unless this is specifically agreed by the Chair and the Vice-Chair;

xii) the powers and responsibilities of the Rotherham Schools Forum, as now submitted to this meeting, shall be agreed and there shall be further consideration of the possible need for delegation arrangements.

Agreed:- (1) That the new constitution, as now discussed, shall be submitted to the next meeting for approval by the Rotherham Schools Forum.

(2) That the issue of expenses for attendance at meetings of the Schools Forum and its Sub-Groups shall be considered further at the next meeting of the Schools Forum.

173. Y & H GRID FOR LEARNING - FUNDING FOR 2011/12

Further to Minute No. 164 of the meeting of the Rotherham Schools Forum held on 18th March, 2011, consideration was given to a report presented by the Performance and Quality Manager concerning the Yorkshire and Humber Grid for Learning (YHGfL), a not-for-profit organisation owned and funded by twelve of the local authorities in the region. Established in 2000, YHGfL commissioned and maintains a regional grid which connects local authority networks with 'Janet', the national broadband network for public services around the country. A new grid will begin in April 2011, which will provide high-bandwidth and high-reliability connectivity around the region. This network is for educational use and does not suffer from the high levels of contention provided by commercial providers.

For many years Rotherham has been part of the Yorkshire and Humber Grid for Learning. The funding for this has historically come from the Broadband for Schools Capital Grant and more recently the Harnessing Technology Grant (25% centrally held). The original request was in relation to continued membership and a contribution of £100,000 from the Dedicated Schools Grant towards membership costs.

Discussion also took place on the Rotherham Grid for Learning, which did not appear to be serving the needs of the schools' community.

Agreed:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That this issue shall be considered further at the next meeting of the Rotherham Schools Forum, to be held on Friday 13th May, 2011.

174. DSG BUDGET - CENTRAL SPEND 2011/12

Consideration was given to the Schools Budget 2011/12 (budgeted expenditure for centrally managed services), presented by the Finance Manager.

It was noted that the budget out-turn report for the 2010/2011 financial year shall be submitted to an early meeting of the Rotherham Schools Forum.

Reference was also made to the utilisation of the budgets not yet allocated.

Agreed:- (1) That the report on budgeted expenditure for centrally managed services 2011/12, as now submitted, be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the budget shall be considered further at the next meeting of the Rotherham Schools Forum, to be held on Friday 13th May, 2011.

(3) That budget monitoring reports for Children and Young People's Services be submitted to meetings of the Rotherham Schools Forum at quarterly intervals.

175. DFE CONSULTATION ON SCHOOL FINANCIAL VALUE STANDARD (SFVS)

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Principal Accountant (Schools) concerning the Financial Management Standard in Schools (FMSiS), which was withdrawn by the Secretary of State for Education with effect from 15th November 2010. Consequently, local authorities' Chief Finance Officers (Section 151 officers) will not be required to give any assurance in relation to the attainment by schools of FMSiS during the financial year 2010 2011.

A new standard, provisionally named the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS), will be introduced in the Summer Term 2011 and will become operational from September 2011. The Department for Education is currently consulting on the provisional standard (the consultation period lasting from 10th March 2011 until 30th April 2011). The Department for Education has requested responses to a series of questions relating to the new standard. Details of the consultation are also available on the Department for Education website at the following address: www.education.gov.uk/SFVSconsultation.

Agreed:- That Members of the Schools Forum shall note the contents of this report and are encouraged to respond to the consultation either individually or by group to the Department for Education at this email address, no later than 30 April 2011: financial.management@education.gsi.gov.uk

176. TRANSFER OF SERVICES

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Strategic Director for Children and Young People's Services concerning the provision of services to schools. It was noted that schools were entitled to procure services either from the local authority or from alternative providers and suppliers. However, due regard needed to be paid to legal and human resources issues (eg: TUPE).

Discussion took place on the need to ensure that value for money was obtained from the provision of services.

Agreed:- That the information be noted.

177. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- (1) That a special meeting of the Rotherham Schools Forum be held at the Rockingham Teachers' Centre on Friday, 13th May, 2011, commencing at 8.30 a.m., to consider the Dedicated Schools Grant and centrally-retained grants.

(2) That the next ordinary meeting of the Rotherham Schools Forum be held at the Rockingham Teachers' Centre on Friday, 24th June, 2011, commencing at 8.30 a.m.