

Schools Funding Working Group

Tuesday 23rd February 2010

Clarendon School

Present

Liz Williams
Laura Sharp (Minutes)
Catriona Williamson
Neil Baker
John Kimberley
John Hawkins
Phil Cooch
Colin Kay
Martin Watson

	Agenda Heading	Action
1.	Apologies Judith Finney Tristan Williams Simon Burke	
2.	Minutes of last meeting – Matters Arising <u>Controls on Surplus Balance</u> PC circulated a paper round highlighting two main issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Assignments from the previous scheme – a number of schools have retained surplus balances from 2008/09 that would not be allowable under the new criteria. It was recommended by the group that Officers should review each case and should recommend for appeal those cases where there was any concern that the carry forward should not be allowable under the new scheme;○ Unspent Standard Funds – some standards funds are paid late in the year and could affect year end balances. It was agreed that the rules within the scheme should be adhered to with schools able to appeal if they wished to make a case. <u>Climate change</u> Since the last presentation a letter for schools had been drafted and is hoped to be sent out shortly. <u>Special Schools Funding</u> EW updated the meeting on the timescales for the review of the banding moderation process and the band values. Any proposed changes would be agreed by the Autumn to be reflected in the 2011/12 budget process. EW also updated the meeting on the discussions at the SEN	

	<p>working group held on the previous day, in particular the key questions for the Briefing prior to the Schools Forum meeting.</p> <p><u>Levels of debt write off</u></p> <p>PC has raised this with corporate finance. PC awaiting information from corporate finance team.</p> <p><u>Early Years – Response from DCSF on pathfinder application.</u></p> <p>Application has been approved and the formula will be implemented for the 2010/11 budget.</p>	
3.	<p>Budget Monitoring</p> <p>EW reported that there is a projected overspend of £54,000 on the overall schools budget and that work is ongoing to bring expenditure in on target for the year.</p>	
4.	<p>Budget 2010/11 – update</p> <p>PC reported that there have been some delays in the upload of data to the DCSF – this has been a national issue not just for Wiltshire and has meant that data for the budgets has been delayed.</p> <p>Data for the numbers on roll in 2011/12 and 2012/13 has been circulated to schools with a response required by 5th March. PC reported that we now have 95% of the data and are still on target to issue budgets in mid March.</p>	
5.	<p>Audit commission Report – “Valuable Lessons”</p> <p>A report on improving economy and efficiency in schools was passed around to the group. The report highlighted the main recommendations from the Audit Commission report “Valuable Lessons” which included 6 main areas where schools could improve value for money:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering the financial implications of its plans; • Reviewing its financial surplus (or deficit); • Ensuring that the goods and services it buys represent value for money; • Using the school workforce to best effect; • Collaborating with other local schools; and • Using data and information to support better decision making. <p>It was highlighted in the discussion that the value for money element of the Ofsted inspection is to become more prominent. The impact of social deprivation on the costs of providing the curriculum was also discussed.</p>	

	<p>CK noted that the West Wilts Federation had been looking to collaborate further on purchasing but that in order to progress some support would be needed – for example support in aligning contracts to allow joint procurement. CK proposed that the West Wilts Federation could be used as a pilot for greater collaboration on procurement.</p> <p>NB raised the issue of clusters of primary schools wanting to jointly employ staff – particularly administrative and finance staff. There was a general view that schools wanted to do this but that there were barriers surrounding employment rules etc. It was recommended that a pilot could be set up with a group of primary schools with support from HR, Finance, etc to establish what protocols needed to be put in place so that the model could be rolled out more widely across the County.</p> <p>The issue of sustainable expenditure on buildings and maintenance was also raised.</p> <p>Ec</p>	
6.	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>17th June 2010 8am Clarendon</p>	

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