



f40 Executive Committee Meeting

Monday, 15 October 2018 at LGA Conference Centre, Westminster

1. Attendance and apologies

Present: Cllr James McInnes (Chair); Cllr Ivan Ould (Leics CC); Doug Allan, (Secretary); Margaret Judd, (Dorset CC); Cllr Michael Appleyard (Bucks CC); Cllr Peter Downes (Cambs Schools Forum); Carole Thomson, (Oxfordshire Schools Forum); Gillian Allcroft,(NGA); Gillian Hayward (Gloucs); Julia Harnden (ASCL); Sara Harding (Head, Regency High School, Worcs); Jon Pearsall, (Regency High School Gov, Worcs) and Karen Westcott (DTW).

Apologies: Gary Streeter MP (Vice Chair); Cllr Roger Gough (Kent CC); Cllr Nicole Meardon (Chester & Cheshire West); Cllr Gordon Jones (Suffolk CC); Cllr Hilary Hibbert-Biles (Oxfordshire CC); Bernadette Hunter, (Staffs Headteacher); Caroline Brand (Worcs); Bob Standley (East Sussex CC); Edwina Grant (Education Consultant); Joe Jefferies (Nottinghamshire); Chris Chapman (Cheshire governor rep); Richard Soper (Worcester Community Trust); Sue Alexander (Worcs CC); Christine Atkinson (ERYC).

2. Minutes of the meeting held 18 July 2018

The minutes of were **APPROVED** as a correct record of the meeting. DA reported that there was no news as yet about a new Labour Vice Chair. The following matters were raised but are dealt with elsewhere on the agenda: Meeting with Robert Halfon MP, Chair of the Education Select Committee and progress on f40 Secretary succession arrangements.

3. Chairmanship

Cllr Ivan Ould stepped down as Chair of the group after 10 years in the post. DA spoke about his long service with the group and thanked him for his tireless effort in seeking a fairer funding system. IO will remain as an Executive Committee member and agreed to continue to support the campaign and to assist the new Chair in any way he is able. Cllr James McInnes formally accepted the position of Chair. He thanked IO and welcomed his offer of continuing support. He again thanked the committee for showing confidence in him and he spoke about his hopes and aspirations for the future of the campaign. The new chair suggested that it might be sensible to appoint a deputy chair from within the Executive. DA to report at the next meeting. **AGREED**

Two long-serving members of the Executive Committee – Gillian Hayward and Gillian Allcroft - attending their final meeting were thanked for their excellent and tireless service over many years.

4. Matters to be Noted

- Notes of the second meeting of the Collaboration Group held on 21 September had previously been circulated. PD stated that paragraph 4 contained incorrect information and suggested that the real reason the government had not adopted an activity-led arrangement in 2002 was because they couldn't face the political consequences of redistribution. It was pointed out that NEA should read NEU. **Noted**

- Notes of a meeting of FMRT held on 24 September had been previously circulated. **Noted**

5. f40 School Funding Paper/Update on Modelling

MJ explained that the previous "long" version of a Briefing Paper had been condensed to four sides of A4 and was now in circulation. In particular, it is with MPs ready for the MPs' Briefing later today. It has also been circulated to the media along with a news release explaining f40's position on the NFF. She then went through the main points listed in the paper and also spoke about the updated modelling that she and Sian Dobson (financial consultant) have undertaken, based on the updated

datasets received from the DfE. In essence, the modelling shows a £2billion Schools Block shortfall in funding in 2018-19 and a potential shortfall of £3.7billion in 2019-20, plus a £1.5billion shortfall in High Needs this year.

There was a general discussion with members expressing concern about the size of the shortfalls and the impact that this is having on schools, LAs and children. Particular concerns were raised about the increases in the pipeline for pensions. JH suggested that the DfE has said that pension increases will be fully funded, but there is no confirmation of this. IO suggested that LAs will also be concerned about other LA funding and the overall impact on budgets. PD suggested that the £3.7billion was in line with IFS figures that produce an 8% shortfall. GH referred to the difficulties faced by schools that expected a £4,800 funding level but subsequently found that this figure was reduced by LAs to support High Needs. JH said that she understood the DfE acknowledges the pressures schools are under and the higher expectations for them to deliver – but they haven't got the detailed evidence to quantify these things.

DA referred to a selection of statistics that the Collaboration group are currently using, including:

- An 8% real terms cut to school budgets since 2010 (Source: Institute for Fiscal Studies)
- A 20% real terms cut to post 16 budgets since 2010 (Source: Institute for Fiscal Studies)
- There are well over half a million more pupils in schools since 2010 (Source: Department for Education)
- Compared to last year, we have 2,800 fewer Teaching Assistants in our schools. (Source: DfE statistical release "Schools workforce Nov 2017")
- Compared to last year, we have 5,400 fewer teachers in our schools (Source: DfE statistical release "Schools workforce Nov 2017")
- Compared to last year, we have 2,600 fewer support staff in our schools (Source: DfE statistical release "Schools workforce Nov 2017").

CT suggested that the protection of frontline services can risk undermining the basic fabric of school buildings, which if ignored could be a substantial risk for the future.

IO stated that the DfE has increased responsibilities without providing the funding. There has to be a stop to this process and it is important MPs understand the impact on schools within their authorities, he said.

MA referred to major issues in Buckinghamshire, including the importing pupils and the subsequent pressure on schools, the fact that individual schools will undertake projects but are not prepared to invest in sharing with other schools, leaving it to the LA to undertake on their behalf. He also suggested that any claims made by f40 should always be backed up by evidence (i.e. don't just say there is increasing pressure, state facts and figures!)

PD expressed concern at recent media reports about statistics and statements used by the DfE. He suggested that trust in the DfE had been damaged and that it is essential that the department changes its public statements. JH said that the statements were not "lies" but rather information used out of context. Anyone concerned about what is published should challenge them. When asked if ASCL had produced any alternative figures leaving out private education and university fees, JH said they had not, nor did she know of anyone else that might have. CT stated that the important message is the shortfall in funding, not where the UK stands in the international education league. JMCI said it is important that the DfE produces statistics that are honest and reliable.

In terms of High Needs there was considerable concern expressed about the fact that severity of need and demand for service has gone through the roof and is proving extremely difficult to finance. The system is in crisis and in need of immediate cash injection. Because of increased media attention

regarding mental health, parents are also more anxious about achieving the services they need for their child/ren. Better off and informed parents are scrambling to get the level of service they are entitled to. Medical advances have lengthened life spans of many people...but the cost of their education is often prohibitive and an enormous pressure on service delivery.

There was general agreement that Schools Forums and local flexibility are invaluable elements of the management of school funding and that f40 should be fighting for their continuance when a hard formula is introduced.

JMcl thanked MJ and DA (and FMRT) for their work on the Briefing Paper and Modelling. He said he would be circulating the Briefing Paper to all Devon county councillors and he encouraged others to do the same in their own LA.

6. Future meeting with DfE funding team

DA stated that he had already approached Tony Foot at the DfE about setting a date for a meeting to discuss the updated modelling and f40's latest stance on fair funding. Once a date is agreed DA will look for a team of six – JMcl/MJ/DA/JH/SH and one other selected from FMRT membership. **AGREED**

7. Proposed meeting with Robert Halfon MP, Chair of the Education Select Committee

F40 has previously made submissions to the committee following calls for evidence re Schools Block and High Needs enquiries earlier this year. At the last meeting of the Executive Committee IO had suggested that our new VC should be asked to seek a meeting with Mr Halfon to discuss f40's position. DA reported that GS has made an approach though no date has yet been suggested. He will report further in due course. It was **AGREED** that up to six f40 representatives should attend any meeting arranged.

8. MPs' Briefing – 5pm 15 October 2018

DA reported on the arrangements for the Briefing session in Committee Room 10 at the House of Commons. Most Executive Committee members at today's meeting have indicated a willingness to attend. Around 30 MPs have accepted our invitation to attend, or be represented, and it is anticipated more will simply arrive at the time.

The presentation, which was only completed late Sunday evening, will be circulated to all Executive Committee members and MPs as soon as possible.

9. Funding League Table

DA and MJ reminded members of the work that has been underway to find an acceptable way of presenting a league table in the post-NFF era. Under the old GUFs system it was relatively simple to show the positions of all 150 LAs, but it's not as straight forward now there are four funding Blocks. There was some concern about why we should need a league table. It is the differential from the top funded to the bottom funded that is more important than a ranking number. Ranking does not show that the difference between one LA and another could be minimal or significant. There should be a differential, but it should be of the right size. We should be cautious about introducing the league table and it was **AGREED** to put this to one side for the present.

10. Expansion of Membership

Work on the league table has helped identify the LAs that should be in membership of f40. It was **AGREED** that DA should draft letters, to be signed by the Chair, to be sent to potential new members.

11. MATs

DA reminded members about the suggestion that f40 should encourage further involvement of academies/MATs in the fair funding campaign. At the last meeting he indicated that it had proven difficult to get a listing of all MATs in f40 authority areas, and that instead it had been agreed to ask each LA to supply two MAT contacts on their patch. The database is now virtually complete and can be used to make initial contact. **AGREED** that DA should email these contacts to invite them to be a conduit for information to MATs in their LA area, and in any case to receive f40 communications. In time it is hoped that a couple of MAT representatives may join the Executive Committee. **AGREED**

12. LGA Annual Conference, Bournemouth – 2 to 4 July 2019

DA reported on the results of his enquiries at the LGA. After a short debate it was **AGREED** that DA should make further enquiries to establish the cost of staging a fringe meeting, perhaps with an inquiry desk/exhibition for one day only, and maybe in partnership with other organisations campaigning for fair funding e.g. ASCL, NAHT, NGA, and report back.

13. Succession Planning – Secretary

DA reminded members of his decision to stand down on 31 March 2019 (subject to satisfactory arrangements being in place for his replacement). At the last meeting DA had suggested that DTW was willing to supply a replacement to take on the role and maintain continuity of service. Members had expressed some concern that the group could be found wanting if it failed to follow procurement procedures so IO had agreed to seek advice. He reported that he had sought advice from several people (Leicestershire CC lawyers, the LGA and Derbyshire CC – our finance holders) but no definitive decision on procurement had yet materialised.

DA pointed out that if quotations are sought he, as an employee of DTW, and presuming they made a bid for the contract, would be barred from being involved in the process.

DTW's Karen Westcott, who would take over from DA if DTW are allowed to continue the contract, was introduced to the committee.

AGREED that we will await the outcome of IO's enquiries with Derbyshire and report back as soon as possible.

14. Membership Report & Financial Update

DA reported that the number of fully paid up members in 2018-19 is currently 41. Members have been charged a reduced fee of £500 this financial year. DA had previously circulated a full financial statement to committee members attending today's meeting.

15. Date of future Executive Committee meetings

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 16 January 2019 at the LGA offices in London.

Proposed dates for meetings in 2019-20 are 17 April 2019; 17 July 2019; 16 October 2019 and 22 January 2020. Members are asked to ensure that these dates are in their diary. DA to ensure that accommodation at LGA is available.

16. Any Other Business

JMCI referred to the proposed visit of The Secretary of State to Devon, hopefully in November. The visit will involve Gary Streeter and other Devon MPs. Many of the important issues raised today will be on the agenda.