

**MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING
THURSDAY 14 July 2022 AT 4pm**

School Members		
Headteachers		
Special (1)	*Martin Doyle (Riverside)	
Nursery Schools (1)	*Sian McDermott	
Primary (7)	Mary Gardiner (West Green)	Michelle Randles - maternity leave Substitute member *Grant Bright (Rokesly Infants & Nursery)
	(A) Stephen McNicholas (St John Vianney)	Paul Murphy (Lancasterian)
	Ian Scotchbrook (South Haringey)	(A) Linda Sarr (Risley Avenue)
	Will Wawn (Bounds Green)	
Secondary (2)	(A) Andy Webster (Park View)	Tony Hartney (Gladesmore)
Primary Academy (1)	*Simon Knowles (LDBS Academies Trust)	
Secondary Academies (3)	Michael McKenzie (Alexandra Park)	Vacancy
	*Elen Roberts (Heartlands High)	
Alternative Provision (1)	Gerry Robinson	
Governors		
Special (1)	*Jean Brown (The Vale)	
Nursery School (1)	Melian Mansfield (Pembury)	
Primary Maintained (7)	*Hannah D'Aguiar (Chestnuts Primary)	John Keever (Seven Sisters)
	*Jenny Thomas (Lordship Lane)	Alex MacAskill (West Green Primary)
	Dan Salem (Muswell Hill Primary)	(A) Andrew Willett (Willow Primary)
	Helen Froggatt (St Aidan's Primary)	
Secondary Maintained (3)	(A) Laurence Penn (Highgate Wood)	
	Sylvia Dobie (Park View)	
Primary Academy (1)	Vacancy	
Secondary Academies (3)	*Noreen Graham (Woodside)	Vacancy
	Vacancy	
Alternative Provision (1)	Laura Butterfield	
Non-School Members		
Non-Executive Councillor	*Cllr Sarah Williams	
Trade Union Representative	*Paul Renny	
Professional Association Representative	*Ed Harlow	
Faith Schools	*Geraldine Gallagher	
14-19 Partnership	*Kurt Hintz	
Early Years Providers	Susan Tudor-Hart	
Observers		
None		
Cabinet Member for CYPS		
Cllr Zena Brabazon		
Also Attending		
LBH Director of Children's Services	Ann Graham	
Chief Executive of Haringey Education Partnership (HEP)	James Page	
LBH Assistant Director, Schools & Learning	Eveleen Riordan	
LBH Assistant Director, Finance	Thomas Skeen	
LBH Head of Finance	Josephine Lyseight	
LBH Head of Service, Integrated SEND	Mary Jarrett	
LBH Head of Strategic Commissioning, Early Help & Culture	Ngozi Anuforo sabbatical leave Substitute member Julia Bleet (Early Help commissioning)	
LBH Assistant Director Commissioning	*Charlotte Pomery	
LBH Interim Schools Finance Manager	Brian Smith	

LBH Finance Business Partner (Schools & Learning)	Muhammad Ali
LBH Finance CIPFA trainee	Lewis Antony
LBH Service Improvement & Children's Services	*Karen Oellermann
Lead for Governor Services (HEP)/Clerk (Minutes)	Corinne David & Carol O'Brien
LBH Asst Director Early Help, Prevention and SEND Division	*Jackie Difolco
LBH Head of Admissions and School Organisation	*Carlo Kodsi
LBH Head of Audit and Risk Management	(A) Minesh Jani – represented by Vanessa Bateman
LBH Head of Haringey HR	Chidi Okwesiliszs

(A) = Apologies given

* = Asterisk denotes absence

Tony Hartney (in the capacity of outgoing Chair) opened the meeting, welcomed everyone and provided thanks to all members for their support during his tenure as Chair.

1. ELECTION OF THE CHAIR

- 1.1 Carol O'Brien informed members that Will Wawn had indicated he was willing to become Chair of the Schools Forum. No other nomination had been received. The nomination was unanimously supported.

UNANIMOUSLY AGREED Will Wawn was elected Chair for 2022/23.

2. ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIR

- 2.1 Carol O'Brien informed members that Laura Butterfield had expressed an interest in becoming Vice-Chair of the Schools Forum. No other nomination had been received. The nomination was unanimously supported.

UNANIMOUSLY AGREED Laura Butterfield was elected Vice-Chair for 2022/23.

The Clerk handed the meeting over to the Chair.

3. CHAIR'S WELCOME

- 3.1 The Chair formally welcomed everyone to the meeting, and thanked Laura Butterfield for continuing as Vice-Chair. The Chair, on behalf of members, provided thanks to Tony Hartney for his work with the Schools Forum. Eveleen Riordan, on behalf of Haringey officers also offered thanks to Tony Hartney for his work and contributions.

4. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

- 4.1 The Clerk confirmed that apologies had been received from:

- Andy Webster
- Stephen McNicholas
- Laurence Penn
- Andrew Willett
- Minesh Jani
- Linda Sarr

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 5.1 No declaration of interest were made in respect of any of the agenda items.

6. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 24 February 2022

- 6.1 The minutes of the Schools Forum meeting held on 24 February were AGREED and RATIFIED as a correct record. There were no matters of accuracy noted.

7. MATTERS ARISING

- 7.1 Item 1.6.4 Raise the outcome of the School Improvement Grant Brokering grant consultation with the two Haringey MPs

ACTION Eveleen Riordan to review this action outside of the meeting and provide feedback to reflect an accurate account; before the end of term.

8. FORUM MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

8.1 Carol O'Brien provided the Forum with an overview of the membership; noting that it was an annual requirement. There had been some changes in regards to pupil numbers, however these had not been significant. **The Chair proposed and members UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED:**

- a) **The allocation of Schools Forum places based on the proportion of pupil places in schools at the January 2022 Census for 2022/23 remains the same as 2021/22.**
- b) **The existing Terms of Reference was adopted for the 2022/23 academic year.**

8.2 *Q: Are the proportion of places based on the numbers of pupils in the primary and secondary sectors?*

A: Yes, as is outlined within table A in the paper titled Schools Forum Membership and Terms of Reference. Noted that the pupils in the primary sector are reducing, but the forum will retain the same proportion, as the percentages have remained similar.

9A. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2021-22 PROVISIONAL OUTTURN AND FINANCE UPDATE

9a.1 Brian Smith provided the Forum with an update, taking members through the paper titled DSG 2021/22 DSG Outturn and Finance Update. The paper was for noting and for information. The outturn was provisional as the Council has yet to be audited, however the expectation is for the outturn to stand.

9a.2 DSG allocation. Slight decrease in DSG funding for the schools block, due to a reduction in pupil numbers. Central services block has reduced by 2% each year. The High Needs Block (HNB) has seen an increase in funding as well as an increase in the number of pupils funded. However, there is a lag in funding; the increased demand and the actual cost of per pupil expenditure currently exceeds the available budget. Early Years (EY) block has a slight increase from 2021/22.

9a.3 Schools balances. All schools reserve balances at the start of 2020/21 was £11,332,065, close of 2021/22 this stood at £8,880,395 a reduction of £2,451,670. Noted that the nursery schools balances had been adjusted to take account of the overpayment of the 2YO grant.

9a.4 Growth fund. £1.1m was set aside the previous year. Previously agreed that unused funds would be returned back to all schools through the LA formula before end of the fiscal year.

9a.5 DSG closing position.

The in-year DSG outturn deficit position was noted at £3.7m, with the cumulative DSG deficit at £20.7m. The EY movement follows the notification by the DfE of the EY recoupment relating to 2020/21 and the final in-year position, the EY closing balance was £879k surplus.

9a.6 *Q: There was a bounce back for EY this financial year, can you please explain that?*

A: The Council has funding set by DfE, this was based on lower numbers from the census due to Covid, however pupil numbers are now increasing. The grant that is awarded at beginning of the year was lower, but there was an increase as an adjustment was confirmed in November.

9a.7 *Q: £0.9m surplus for the Early Years Block seems to have been used to reduce the overall DSG deficit from £4.6 million to £3.7 million? But in section 3.15 it states that this surplus will be carried forward to spend in 2022/23? The EYB Working Group has reviewed areas for the allocation of this money. Can you please explain what will happen with this money?*

A: Yes, the Council is aware of those discussions. For accounting purposes there are 4 different blocks and rules on how spending against those blocks is governed. The deficit within the HNB, is one element and the surplus in the EY is another element. The LA can't state what the Government will direct the LA to do. The Council doesn't have any plans to offset one against the other. It's an accounting treatment to show the close the position. The Council has to recognise that £900k in the year it was confirmed. Therefore, it is showing as an underspend in the EY block. It is not off-setting the HNB deficit of the DSG.

- 9a.8 The Chair noted that the LA EYS team and finance officers were notified of the confirmed £0.9 million positive adjustment to the Early Years Block in November, and **recommended** that processes be put in place in future to ensure the Early Years Block and Forum were informed promptly in such a scenario so that resulting expenditure could be planned and spent prior to end of financial year. This would ensure there would not be a need for any clawback/ direction from DfE or other agencies that underspend would be used to subsume an overall deficit position in the DSG. **LA officers agreed the recommendation.** Noted that those conversation have been taking place through the EYB working group. The EYB working group wasn't informed until March that the £900k was still available, so no discussions were held until April. The Chair noted that this information had not been provided to Forum in papers provided at the last meeting in February where it should have done so. Officers took on board recommendations that information/decisions could have come back to Schools Forum sooner.
- 9a.9 Melian Mansfield noted that there had been over payment on 2YO to 12 settings including all 3 Nursery schools. The current understanding was that until the overpayments are repaid, the £900k won't be available for spending. However, it had been understood that it would be available from September 2022.
- 9a.10 *Q: What is the timeline / deadline for any pre-agreements for spending?*
- A: AG commented that this was dependent on advice from the DfE. Safety Valve conversation, the LA has been advised to submit a paper by September. Decisions to spend the money will need to be resolved ASAP. Noted that the LA is working with the DfE on the Safety Valve. The LA isn't in a position to discuss this topic today.
- 9a.11 *Q: A proposal had been made, which has been sent to the Directors' group. What has happened to this?*
- A: Noted that the money is from the DSG, and as per previous answer the LA is not in a position to confirm this topic today. Officers are working outside of the meeting to conclude the 2YO issue.
- 9a.12 The Chair recommended that a decision on the EYB surplus be provided as soon as possible at the beginning of the September, and relayed to the EYB Working Group. The Chair recommended that LA officers work with 2YO settings to come to a mutual agreement to resolve the 2YO overspend as promptly as possible.

ACTION: **LA officers to confirm the decision on the EYB surplus and communicate to EYB Working Group in September.**
LA officers to liaise with 2YO settings and come to mutual agreement to resolve 2YO overspend.
LA officers to note the recommendation (and actions required in future) within 9a.8

9B. National Funding Formula update (verbal)

- 9b.1 Brian Smith provided the Forum with a verbal update. National consultation on the funding formula opened on 7 June closing on 9 September; which includes the summer holiday period. The LA will review individual questions and identify any issues for Haringey and schools. The LA will consult with HEP, Local Government Association, London Councils, Schools Forum Working Group Chairs, lead members and other agencies. Current timeline is to have a response drafted by 7 September, ready for submission by 9 September.
- 9b.2 Overall more money will be distributed school on the principles of levelling up. This doesn't advantage metropolitan city councils; London as a whole will get below the national average increase.
- 9b.3 The LA encourage all Headteachers and Chairs to respond to the consultation.

9b.4 First consultation focused on the principles of moving to a direct national funding formula and that transition. This consultation provides further details of that transition, with a move within the next 5 years. Further consultations will be forthcoming about different blocks.

9b.5 The Forum recommended that the Chair of the Forum emails all schools about the consultation, urging them to respond.

ACTION **Chair to email all schools urging them to respond to the national funding formula consultation.**

9C. Schools in financial difficulties update

9c.1 Lewis Antony provided the Forum with an update, taking members through the paper titled Schools in Financial Difficulty Update. The highlights were:

- For all school settings balances have decreased by 6%. During the same period primary school balances have decreased by 26% (£1.8m) and secondary school balances have increased by 87% (£0.9m).
- 17 school have a licenced deficit in 2021/22.
- Common factors affecting school's budgets include:
 - Falling pupil numbers.
 - Reduced income from school activities.
 - Number of SEN/EHCP pupils increasing.
 - Rising food and utility costs.
 - Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and staff salary costs.

9c.2 *Q: How can schools seek support for utilities and inflection costs increases?*

A: It is a universal situation for everyone. There are procurement collective frameworks which help to reduce costs. Crown Commercial Services has some energy framework for schools. The LA hosted a training session for Headteachers and SBM to introduce some of those services. There are options to join a diocese framework. Advice is to review the market, no just renew with the same supplier.

9c.3 *Q: Will the training for SBMs be done in conjunction with the SEND team where SEND is the majority contributing factor to the school deficit?*

A: It is recognised, however not easy to deal with. The schools block transfer and the SEND contingency will be made available to the school under the same distribution method used previously. For those schools taking disproportional number of SEND pupils, there is a 45% increase in contingency; however, it is recognised that this doesn't match the £6k of each EHCP that schools are expected to fund.

Paul Murphy leaves at 5:25pm.

10. AUDIT – ANNUAL REPORT ON SCHOOLS

10.1 Vanessa Bateman took the Forum through the paper titled Annual Report on Schools. The highlights were noted as:

- No schools in 2021/22 were assigned a “nil” assurance.
- A programme of follow up for all 2020/21 audits was completed in 2021/22 by Mazars and outcomes were positive.
- 13 out of 16 schools completed received “adequate” or above assurance rating.

10.2 *Q: Will there be training for school in the audit window?*

A: There will be short briefing, governor training and for those schools within the window there will be informal discussions and training.

11. WORKPLAN

11.1 Will Wawn provided an overview of the current vacancies on Schools Forum. The following was noted:

- Tony Hartney position had been filled by Kuljit Rahelu.
- Secondary Academy: Angelia Wallace (Woodside High)
- 1 Primary Academy Governor vacancy.
- 2 Secondary Governor/trustee vacancies.

ACTION a) All members to email Corinne David or Will Wawn if their circumstances had changed and were unable to continue on Schools Forum.

b) HEP to continuing to email all Governors regarding the current vacancies.

11.2 Members noted the work plan.

12. UPDATES FROM WORKING PARTIES

12A. Early years

12a.1 See items 9.5 to 9.12

12B. High needs block discussion

12b.1 Brian Smith provided the Forum with an update on the High Needs Block Recovery Plan. The reasons for the reduction in the deficit were noted as:

- Reclassification work between HNB and general fund codes (£1.0m).
- Alternative HNB funding sources for pupil placements (£0.5m).
- HNB in-year demand lower than forecasted (£0.6m).
- Commitment to bring the HNB into a balanced position over the next 5-year period.

12b.2 Expansion of the Safety Valve intervention programme. If a Local Authority can demonstrate that their management plan creates lasting sustainability, are effective and can reach an in-year balance, the DfE will enter into an agreement. £300m is available over 3 years for a further 20 LAs in 2022/23: Haringey has been selected to take part in round one of the two programmes. The LA continues to work with the DfE to ensure plans are acceptable and workable.

12b.3 Progress reports will continue to be reported to the Schools Forum to ensure shared ownership in managing risks, mitigation and implementation of the programme. Cabinet approval will be required to engage with the Safety Valve programme.

12b.4 *Q: What does the term de-delegation of Schools Block mean in this context?*

A: This is a DfE use of the word, but means transfer of monies.

12b.5 *Q: £300m to 20 different Authorities, would the DfE contribute monies to reduce the deficit?*

A: There are two different programmes, Haringey has been invited to participate in the first wave. No guarantee that the proposal will receive final approval, as the Council is still in negotiation, with final approval required at Minister level. Final submission will be in early autumn term; outcome provided at the end of the year. It is a tough negotiation. The LA has to demonstrate that the management plan is effective in reducing the spend on the HNB and DSG with payment by results moving forward. Officers will formulate the plan, cabinet approves the final plan, with the secretary of state having final approval.

12b.6 *Q: Government setting targets to Haringey; are they achievable or are they part of the negotiation?*

A: It is part of the negotiation. The Council won't agree to anything it can't deliver. The Government won't sign off something that won't provide a balance budget in future years.

12b.7 Noted that the forum doesn't have any decision-making powers but recommended an update on the Safety Valve were received at the next meeting.

ACTION Safety Valve update to be an agenda items at the next meeting.

- 12b.8 Mary Jarrett provided the Forum with an update on the strategy and actions taken to address the overspend of the HNB. The highlights were noted as:
- Remodelling of financial support to mainstream schools for children with SEND using monies from HNB. Members were invited to attend future workshops.
 - Increase SEND sufficiency in borough to drive down external placement costs via schools' buildings Masterplan Project. Noted that in-borough provision had increased for SEMH /ASD places for September.
 - Improve preparation for adulthood services and pathway via SEND Strategy.
 - Improve pathways and services for children and young people with SEMH needs via Model For Change programme.
 - An overview of other key areas identified but not included within DSG management plan was provided. The development of Strategic Action plan for the SLC offer. Development of hubs for 0-19.

13. PROPOSED MEETING DATES FOR 2022-2023

13.1 The dates for the next academic year were noted as:

- Thursday 13th October 2022 4PM – Aim for this meeting to be a face to face/in person
- Thursday 1st December 2022 4PM.
- Thursday 12th January 2023 4PM.
- Thursday 9th February 2023 4PM.
- Thursday 13th July 2023 4PM.

The Chair outlined his intention for the clerk to survey forum members and officers in September with regard to SF meetings being either all in person or a mixed model with some meetings virtual. There would not be the option of hybrid meetings.

ACTION **Chair and clerk to organise survey of Forum members and officers re. 22/23 meetings in September.**

13.2 Members discussed the length of time between meetings from February to July.

ACTION **Will Wawn, Laura Butterfield and officers to discuss the possibility of scheduling an additional meeting during spring 2 / summer 1 terms.**

14. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

14.1 Tony Hartney thanked all members for their support during his tenure as Chair. Will Wawn, Ann Graham, Zena Brabazon, members and attendees at the meeting provided their thanks for Tony Hartney for all his work and commitment to Haringey during his time at Gladesmore and on the Schools Forum.

The Chair thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 6pm.

SUMMARY OF AGREED ACTIONS TO BE CARRIED OUT FOR 13 OCTOBER 2022 MEETING

ITEM	ACTION	FOLLOW UP
7.1	Raise the outcome of the School Improvement Brokering Grant consultation with the two Haringey MPs.	AG/ER
9a.12	LA officers to confirm the decision on the EYB surplus and communicate to EYB Working Group in September. LA officers to liaise with 2YO settings and come to mutual agreement to resolve 2YO overspend. LA officers to note the recommendation (and actions required in future) within 9a.8.	AG/ER AG/ER JL/BS
9b.5	Chair to email all schools about responding to the national funding consultation.	WW
11.1	All members to email Corinne David or Will Wawn if their circumstances had changed and were unable to continue on Schools Forum.	All
11.1	HEP to continue to email all Governors regarding vacancies on Schools Forum.	HEP
12b.7	Safety Valve update to be an agenda item at the next meeting.	Clerk/BS
13.1	Chair and clerk to organise survey of Forum members and officers re. 22/23 meetings.	WW/Clerk
13.2	Will Wawn, Laura Butterfield and officers to discuss the possibility of scheduling an additional meeting during spring 2 / summer 1 terms.	WW/LB & Officers