

**MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM
THURSDAY, 25TH FEBRUARY 2010**

School Members HEADTEACHERS:
*G. Hill, *V. Bucket, *A.Wickham, *M. Pattison, *C. Witham, S. Easton,
*C. Shaw, J. Flynn, *H.Chawdhry, ^A. Atherton, *T. Hartney, *P. Cozier,
^J. Jarrett

GOVERNORS:
*W.Smith, Dr N. Oparaeche, *M. Mansfield, *V. Cann, L. Fisher, *L.
Butterfield, *I. Pennell, *S. Miller

Non School Members ^Cllr. T. Mallett, *T. Brockman (Chair), *P. Forward, *J. O’Neil, ^S.
Tudor-Hart, *M. Rowland

Observer: *Cllr L. Reith, *R. Whittaker, P. Sutton

Officers *S. Worth, *N. Murton, *I. Bailey, ^P. Lewis, *J. Smosarski, *K. Bartle

*Present ^A Apologies

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTION BY
1.	CHAIR’S WELCOME	
1.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He hoped that members would be able to stay on for the public meeting launching the findings of the KPMG report into fair funding for Haringey children.	
1.2	The Chair reported that this was to be Vicky Cann’s last meeting as she has resigned from the forum. He congratulated her on her new job with the TUC and thanked her for the very active role she has played on the forum – in particular her contribution to the ACA working party.	
1.3	The Chair further reported that Louise Palmer has resigned from the forum. He thanked her for her contribution to the Schools Forum.	
1.4	At a recent HGA meeting the following governors were appointed to the Forum. Vic Seeborun (The Vale School) will become the governor representative for Special Schools. Janet Barter (Alexandra Park Secondary School) and Maria Jennings (Northumberland Park Community School) will become secondary governor representatives.	
2.	APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS	
	Apologies were received from June Jarrett, Alex Atherton and Toni Mallett. Substitute Members – Bill Barker substituting for June Jarrett.	
3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
	Neville Murton (NM) explained that as part of bringing Schools Forum meetings into a similar format to other council meetings the declaration of interests would become a standing agenda item. He stressed that members would only be asked to declare any specific, personal items of	

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	pecuniary interest There were no declarations of interest.	
4	MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28th JANUARY 2010	
4.1	Imogen Pennell (IP) had sent apologies for absence for the last meeting.	
4.2	AGREED The minutes of the meeting held on 28 th January 2010 were agreed and signed as a true record.	
5	MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 28th JANUARY 2010	
5.1	Minute 4.1.2 – The Chair asked if there had been any progress on the drawing up of a borough policy for Early Years. Ian Bailey (IB) reported that an Early Years strategy was being developed and a first draft should be available in April. This will then be taken to The Project Board for Early Years Single Funding (EYSF). Andrew Wickham (AW) asked whether the strategy would include a discussion on the number of full time places in Nurseries. IB replied that the strategy would set out the framework within which the decision would be made.	
5.2	Minute 4.4 – the letter written by the Chair relating to the notification of funding for post 16 provision was included in the agenda papers. The reply from Peter Lauener, YPLA Chief Executive Designate was tabled. The reply indicated that a final version of the funding agreement for the period of April to July 2010 would be sent out by the end of March and information on funding for the academic year 2010-11 would be sent to Local Authorities in June 2010. Jane O’ Neil (JO’N) informed members that draft information on budget shares up to July had been received by Sixth Form Colleges and that the allocation was significantly reduced. Post 16 funding at CHENEL was reduced by £½ million. (The adult education budget had been reduced by a further £2million.	
5.3	Minute 8.1 – following discussions about the Forum work plan for 2010 - 11 a new plan has been drawn up and was tabled. The date of the next meeting will now be 13th May 2010. Forum members were asked to note the proposed dates of meetings. The additional post 16 items requested will be included in the work plan.	
6	2010-11 BUDGET STRATEGY - Steve Worth (SW)	
6.1	The report gave an update of the position reported in December 2009. At that time it was anticipated that after meeting all identified budget pressure there would have been headroom in the region of £832,000. At the January meeting it was reported that the cost of statements of SEN was greater than anticipated. The sum set aside for covering the cost of statements in 2009-10 was £6.5 million – an additional £375,000 is required to balance the costs. Appendix 1 shows the original budget per school for 2009-10 (col 1) – the actual cost for 2009-10 (col 2) and the initial budget for 2010-11 (col3) Costs shown in column 3 are calculated with no inflationary increase applied – to have included this would have cost an additional £150,000. This has had a very significant impact on	

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<p>6.2</p> <p>6.3</p> <p>6.4</p> <p>6.5</p>	<p>the headroom now available and this now is in the region of £300,000</p> <p>AW asked why the overspend had occurred. SW replied that there were more new statements than anticipated,. One factor was the increasing number of students with statements of SEN staying in full time education now that the Sixth form College is open.</p> <p>Members were concerned that the increased costs for statemented pupils impacted on the funding available for distribution on the AEN/SEN factors Members had the opportunity of putting questions to Phil DiLeo (PD) Head of Services to Children and Young people with Additional Needs who was in attendance at the meeting to speak to agenda item 7</p> <p>PD explained that within the borough the number of new statements was actually in decline. Statements within in Haringey were now used only for those children with complex needs and 40 fewer statements had been issued this year. However this was masked by the continuing number of children moving into the borough with existing statements that had to be met. There was an increase in children with autistic disorders being statemented and this was a national rather than a local issue. This year 500 children were diagnosed with autism compared to 300 the year before. Within Haringey there was now an effective Early Support Programme and this meant that children with complex needs were known about at a very early age resulting in statutory assessments being completed by the time children were 5-6 years of age. PD explained that she would be meeting with SENCO's in March to look at the ways in which support was used.</p> <p>PD agreed to produce a paper for members setting out the data in more detail.</p> <p>NOTED – The report was noted</p>	<p><u>PD</u></p>
<p>7</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p>	<p>NEW PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES</p> <p>PD reported that work on the new provision for children with complex needs including autism is nearing completion. The secondary provision combining and extending the existing provision William C. Harvey and Moselle is due to open in 2011 and the primary provision in 2012. The fully inclusive campuses are to be based at Woodside High and Broadwater Farm Primary Schools. In addition the secondary provision for autistic pupils to be based at Heartlands High School will open in 2011. This should reduce pressure on children being placed in out of borough provision, which is very costly.</p> <p>NOTED – The report was noted</p>	
<p>8</p> <p>8.1</p>	<p>SCHOOL LUNCH GRANT (SLG)</p> <p>The purpose of the SLG was to lower the price of school meals. The Forum had previously strongly recommended that the SLG should be used for this purpose and that in this way there would be a standardised cost for a school meal across the borough. However as shown in appendix 1 this is not happening in a number of primary schools. The report proposed that schools will only receive the SLG if they have</p>	

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<p>8.2</p> <p>8.3</p> <p>8.4</p>	<p>lowered the price of a school meal to the recommended level.</p> <p>Haringey's Schools Funding Formula has a factor for the cost of free school meals, based on numbers of meals taken at the PLASC date. The formula also provides a subsidy of 22p per meal for the estimated number of paid meals taken by primary age pupils. The primary element of the SLG will be used to provide a further subsidy of 12p per paid meal, enabling schools to charge parents the recommended price of £1.90 per meal.</p> <p>Members discussed the reasons why schools charge more for a school meal. It was contended that schools spend a significant amount of money on school meals and that the service is not cost neutral to schools and that it was unlikely that any school was actually making a profit from school meals. Bad debt was also an issue for a number of schools – with uncollectible debt being a charge against a schools budget. Some schools charged more per meal in order to cover the costs of providing meals for vulnerable groups of children who were not getting free school meals. Levels of free school meal funding were fixed by the PLASC data with no account being taken of rising, or falling, numbers within a school during the course of the year. Gerald Hill (GH) pointed out that special schools were in a difficult position, as they had to charge for meals at the price set by their host schools. In addition they incurred additional costs, as they had to provide specialist equipment in order to feed children. However it was acknowledged that parents were often angered and confused when schools close to each other were charging different prices for a school meal. Even slight differences impacted when parents had several children within a school. Cllr. Reith pointed out that the Local Authority had a Child Poverty Strategy and the practice of charging in excess of the recommended £1.90 a meal undermined the objectives of the strategy. She acknowledged that there might be a need for some kind of hardship fund to meet the costs of meals for vulnerable children in special circumstances. Ian Bailey (IB) agreed that there might be a need for a hardship fund and that there were special issues for special schools.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the administration of the Primary & Special Schools devolved element of the funding is changed to strengthen the incentive for schools to keep prices to the recommended level. The SLG should be centrally retained and reimbursed to schools at year end where schools adopt the recommended price, as shown in Appendix 2 • That schools should be informed in advance of the financial year (as now) of their allocation should they meet the condition set out in 1 above. A contingency should be held back to ensure that schools that are successful in raising meal take-up are compensated by additional school lunch grant. • That secondary schools continue to receive the SLG based on the existing formula (AEN). Since secondary schools operate cash cafeterias it would be difficult to administer the grant in the same way as the value of the meal varies significantly unlike Primary and Special Schools where they tend to be fixed at £2.25 a meal. • Any SLG not allocated to schools at year-end due to schools 	
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	<p>charging more than the recommended price will be used <i>to meet specific school circumstances</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the SLG is allocated broadly on the same basis as in 2009-10 therefore giving a 3% proportional increase across each element for 2010-11 but with a small allowance for contingency as set out in the table in the report. <p>AGREED The recommendations as amended (<i>italics</i>) were agreed</p>	
9	RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE EARLY YEARS SINGLE FUNDING FORMULA (EYSFF) – Neville Murton	
9.1	The report updates the Forum on the responses received from the recent EYSFF consultation. The response to the consultation exercise was low totalling 8 responses and attendance at the ‘road shows’ was disappointing.	
9.2	The Forum discussed the reasons for the low level of responses received. Weather conditions may have impacted on attendance at the road shows. It was also agreed that the issue is extremely complex and the consultation paper was difficult to both understand and respond to.	
9.3	The next round of consultation will need to take these issues into consideration and should be more ‘user friendly’. The Chair felt that there would be more clarity once the Early Years Strategy has been drawn up. He suggested that those being consulted should be extended to include not just providers but to the parent organisations. Cllr Reith pointed out that the issue is very complex and Forum members could be instrumental in encouraging more engagement from colleagues. AW reported that primary heads had discussed the consultation and found it difficult to respond to the questions. He also felt that here were some very basic questions that had not been asked which might have drawn out more responses – specifically whether increases in funding to the PVI sector should be implemented at a cost to the maintained sector.	
9.4	NOTED – The report was noted	
10	UPDATE FROM WORKING PARTIES (STANDING ITEM)	
10.1	Best Value WP – Bill Barker will join the working party	
10.2	NOTED – The report was noted	
11	APPRAISAL OF SCHOOLS FORUM	
11.1	The Chair asked members to complete their evaluation forms and return them to the Clerk before they leave the meeting.	
12	ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS	
12.1	Val Buckett (VB) asked for an update on the reported increase in incidences of fraud involving school cheques. A number of school cheques have been intercepted, altered and cashed. NM reported that the issue is under investigation. Schools are being advised not to use internal mail when sending cheques and to post cheques in plain, unmarked envelopes. The problem is a London wide issue and a	

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	<p>decision has been taken to re-open the audit programme. Any school requiring further advice or information should contact Brian Gonzales at audit. AW asked whether schools would be liable to cover the costs of fraudulent activity. NM replied that the council maintained some insurance but that schools would have to demonstrate that they had not been negligent and had followed procedures diligently. Banks also carried some liability if they were proved to have been negligent. AW requested advice as to what was meant by 'diligence' and it was agreed that this would be sent out.</p>	<u>NM</u>
11	<p>DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The next meeting is scheduled for the 13th May and NOT the 29th April as previously indicated.</p>	
	<p>The Chair thanked everyone for attending. The meeting closed at 6.35pm</p>	

TONY BROCKMAN

Chair