

**MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING
THURSDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2017**

Schools Members:

Headteachers:

Special (1)

*Martin Doyle (Riverside)

Nursery Schools (1)

*Peter Catling (Woodlands Park)

Primary (7)

*Angela McNicholas (OLM)

(A) Cal Shaw (Chestnuts)

*Dawn Ferdinand, (The Willow)

*Fran Hargrove (St Mary's CE)

*Julie D'Abreu (Devonshire Hill)

* Emma Murray (Seven Sisters)

*Will Wawn (Bounds Green)

*Andy Webster (Park View)

*Tony Hartney (Gladesmore)

Secondary (2)

Primary Academy (1)

(A) Sharon Easton (St Paul's and All Hallows)

Secondary Academies (2)

*Arthur Barzey (Woodside)

*Michael McKenzie (Alexandra Park)

Alternative Provision

Kaz Birk

Governors:

Special (1)

*Jean Brown (The Vale)

Nursery Schools (1)

*Melian Mansfield (Pembury)

Primary (7)

*Asher Jacobsberg (Welbourne)

(A)Andreas Adamides (Stamford Hill)

*John Keever (Seven Sisters)

Michael Cunningham (Muswell Hill)

*Laura Butterfield (Coldfall)

*Lorna Walker (Rokesly Infants)

*Zena Brabazon (Seven Sisters)

Secondary (3)

(A)Imogen Pennell (Highgate Wood)

*Johanna Hinshelwood (Hornsey Girls)

Primary Academy (1)

(A)Natasha Lewis (St Ann's)

Secondary Academies (2)

*Marianne McCarthy (Heartlands)

Non School Members:-

Non – Executive Councillor

(A)Cllr Ann Waters

Professional Association Representative

*Ed Harlow

Trade Union Representative

*Pat Forward

14-19 Partnership

*Russ Lawrence

Early Years Providers

*Susan Tudor-Hart

Faith Schools

*Geraldine Gallagher

Pupil Referral Unit

(A)Angela Ryan

Observers: -

Cabinet Member for CYPs

*Cllr Elin Weston

Also attending:

LBH Director of Children's Services

*Jon Abbey

LBH Assistant Director, Schools and Learning

* Rory Kennedy

LBH Head of Finance - Child, Adults and Schools

*David Tully

LBH Finance Business Partner (Schools and Learning)

*Yoke O'Brien

LBH Head of Audit and Risk Management

*Anne Woods

LBH Head of SEN and Disability

* Vikki Monk -Meyer

LBH Early Years Commissioning Manager

* Ngozi Anuforo

LBH Governors Services Head of Education Services

*Eveleen Riordan

LBH Governance Services Manager

*Carolyn Banks

Haringey Clerk (minutes)

*Jonathan Adamides-Vellapah

* Members present

A Apologies given

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MINUTE No.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTION BY
1.	CHAIR'S WELCOME	
1.1	The Chair welcomed all members and attendees to the meeting	
2.	APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS	
2.1	Apologies: Noted.	
2.2	Substitutions: None noted.	
3.	DECLARATION OF INTEREST	
3.1	None.	
4.	MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS 16 JANUARY 2017	
4.1	The minutes of the 16 January 2017 were approved.	
5.	MATTERS ARISING 16 JANUARY 2017	
5.1	<p>From 03 December 2016.</p> <p>8.4 – Vikki Monk-Mayer to hold initial scoping discussion with Zena Brabazon and report back to forum. This action is outstanding and will be reviewed.</p> <p>Updated: 23 February 2017 – The meeting has been booked.</p>	VMM/ Brabazon
5.2	<p>Attendance and Welfare Service – De-delegation for Attendance and Welfare services.</p> <p>The Chair advised that a letter had been received from the Primary Heads concerning the de-delegation of the funds. The Forum agreed that when considering the de-delegation for particular services the proposals must make clear that if by de-delegating, that the service provided must be restricted to the maintained sector. It was acknowledged that this service provides assistance to the non-maintained academies and free schools who do not contribute and therefore there is an inequity, which must be avoided.</p> <p>The Forum noted that there are pre-meetings held to discuss proposals and within these meetings the members can question the proposals being put forward. The Forum itself can agree to defer decisions and request further information.</p> <p>AGREED: The Forum agreed that when considering the de-delegation of budgets, information will be provided if the maintained sector de-delegation will support activity for the non-maintained sector including Academies and Free Schools.</p> <p>NOTED: The Director of Children's Services will contact the Manager of Shared Service Center on the quality of HR support to schools who have purchased HR services through the SLA.</p>	DCS
5.3	<p>The Forum previously raised a question on the support by HR on redundancy assistance from Haringey HR. The Forum acknowledged that if the SLA has been purchased then assistance is provided, however if not there will be a charge applied.</p> <p>CONFIRMED: All schools maintained by the local authority including Voluntary Aided schools are eligible to be considered for support on an equal basis for redundancy assistance.</p>	

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6.	THE 2017/18 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRAMME FOR SCHOOLS	
6.1	<p>Anne Woods – Head of Audit and Risk Management, presented the paper and the Forum noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The internal audit reviews if schools are complying with the Schools Finance Manual • Internal audit is not required to audit the Schools Financial Standard (SFVS) • Audits are agreed and arranged with the Headteacher eight weeks in advance • Audits reports are provided to the Chair of Governors • The agreed escalation process has not been used, but is retained as an option should the school not provide appropriate responses to the audit recommendations • Training will be provided to Headteachers, Deputies and Business Managers on the audit list, however schools not on the list can attend. <p>The Forum noted that from the audits conducted so far, a number of schools have received a limited level of assurance.</p>	
6.2	<p>Q= Are there key areas/themes where schools are failing A= Yes, there are common themes and recommendations from the audits.</p> <p>Q= What does the workshop cover? A= It is very informative and looks at case studies and provides guidance.</p> <p>Q= Is there a governor workshop? A= Yes, this takes place on the 23 March 2017.</p> <p>ACTION: Anne Woods to make available the Internal Audit Proforma.</p>	AW
6.3	RESOLVED: The Schools Forum noted the planned programme of internal audit work for 2017/18	
7.	RESPONSE TO DFE CONSULTATION ON STAGE 2 NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA	
7.1	<p>David Tully: Head of Finance, Children, Schools and Adults, presented the paper, which proposed responses to the consultation. The Forum noted the following summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools Forum have considered at their meetings the National Funding Formula and have provided responses the last being in the summer of 2016 • The proposal will separate the schools block into two areas one is a formulaic allocation and the second is a block for centrally retained activities • Haringey is expected to lose up to 10% as the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) is established within schools • The Stage 2 consultation is now open and requires a response by the 22 March, with the NFF being introduced in 2018/19 rather than April 2017 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DfE will allocate funding to local authorities in 2018/19 based on the entitlements for each school, however the local authority is permitted to allocate using the local formula, this is a Soft NFF • 2019/20 will be the Hard NFF, which will be the schools budget including any MFG and floor protections • The DfE has set up the COLLECT portal which allows schools to review their own circumstances, which include the allocations for premises • The DfE have agreed a 3% floor and Haringey schools will benefit from this • The Formula Working Group has met to consider the implications based on the 2016/17 data and the impact of the NFF • Figures for 2017/18 indicate that primary schools will receive -7.8% and secondary schools -2.7% less based on the introduction of the NFF, however including the MFG and floor guarantee this is between -2.6 to – 2.9% • Most schools it appears will be funded through the MFG • Governing bodies must revisit how they organise budgets. 	
7.2	<p>The Forum discussed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All schools are facing cumulative cuts on average of 1.5% per year • There should be further work undertaken to reflect the changes for post 16 and special schools • Inclusion within the mainstream settings may face difficulties as funding becomes tighter • The inclusion practice should be re-visited. <p>Vikki Monk-Myer noted that at present the inclusion practices are being reviewed in all settings and that the High Needs Block (HNB) are looking at the proposed funding settlement and options available.</p> <p>The Forum noted that all blocks will work together in providing the best solutions. There has already been work undertaken by the working party to ascertain fixed costs (such as premises, business rates and utilities) and providing this information to schools.</p>	
7.3	<p>The Forum considered how to strengthen the responses and noted that the Leader of the Council has sent an email to Chairs and Headteachers on formulating their own response.</p> <p>The Forum agreed that the strategy would be to encourage each setting to engage their local community and stakeholders by writing and addressing separate letters to them and not to just copy everyone into the same letter. Separate letter could be sent to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Minister (both sides of the bench) • The Lords (including Lord Nash, Lord Harris and cross party Peers) • The Government Departments (Treasury and Education) • The Prime Minister and opposition Leaders • The Local Members of Parliament • Members of the Greater London Authority. 	

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7.4	<p>The Forum noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DfE plan to consolidate the Schools block and Education services grant. Historic commitments will be funded and on-going commitments such as admissions will be funded on a formulaic basis. Transitional funding will be in place to support reducing historic commitments • The Growth Fund may be administered differently in the future • There is a separate High Needs consultation and the DfE proposal sees a formulaic approach driven by historic spends and proxy indicators. <p>The Forum thanked the Working Parties and Officers on providing these responses.</p>	
7.2	<p>RESOLVED: The Schools Forum noted the implications for Haringey Schools on the introduction of a National Funding Formula arrangements set out in the DfE consultation paper.</p>	
	<p>RESOLVED: The Schools Forum agreed the proposed responses to the Schools National Funding Formula Stage 2.</p>	
	<p>RESOLVED: The Schools Forum agreed the proposed responses to the High Needs Funding Formula Stage 2.</p>	
8.	<p>DEDICATED SCHOOLS BUDGE STRATEGY 2017/18</p>	
8.1	<p>David Tully: Head of Finance, Children, Schools and Adults, presented the paper, which provided an update to the Forum on the dedicated Schools Budget (DSG)</p>	
8.2	<p>The Forum noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DSG settlement from DfE is £249.6m and accounts for the funding increases such as the extension of the Early Years' provision • There are underspends in the DSG, which will be used to manage the overspends in the High Needs block with the remaining funds re-distributed to the remaining blocks • There are 28 school budgets that will be set under the MFG • Early Years settings will receive £4.88 as their universal base rate excluding the deprivation rate • The High Needs Block continues to require support • Special Schools and Resource units will be issued their Place Funding allocation by February 17 and the EFA agreed funding is £10,00 per place • Pupil Premium Grants will be paid in quarterly installments to the local authority and paid to schools quarterly once received from the EFA • Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) is set at £2.30. <p>The Forum noted that the local authority will be contacting all maintained schools on the management of redundancies as the Forum declined to de-delegate resources. A response from the Secretary of State is awaited.</p>	

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8.4	RESOLVED: The Schools Forum noted that Cabinet agreed the presented figures to the Schools Forum in January 2017.	
	RESOLVED: The Schools Forum noted that the base funding rate for Early Years provision for 3 and 4 Year olds will be £4.88 for 2017/18, with a deprivation factor based on the child’s eligibility	
	RESOLVED: The Schools Forum agreed that the £60k provided through the DSG Early Years Block for the Disability Fund may be included in the centrally retained budget	
	RESOLVED: The Schools Forum noted the status for the release for budget information to schools by the local authority.	
9.	CONTINGENCY FOR SCHOOLS IN FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY	
9.1	<p>Yoke O’Brien: Finance Business Partner introduced the paper and noted to the Forum that no allocations had been made due to insufficient evidence provided.</p> <p>The Forum noted that the criteria is provided to all applicants and the Panel after reviewing all applications noted that the main reason for refusal is that no application met the outlined criteria. The contingency should not be used to support cash flow issues, prop up budgets, fund deficit scenarios or poor fiscal management.</p> <p>The Forum noted the following from the paper: “In view of the emerging financial modelling figures of the proposed National Funding Formula. Schools Forum are also advised to ask schools to robustly review their respective school’s budgets and organisational structure with Governing Bodies on a termly Basis to ensure that it is able to continue as a financial viable entity” “... that school business managers need to be ... more alert to their schools financial situation and take steps early enough to warn the Headteacher and Governing Body of all issues arising so that effective action can be taken to address all emerging issues”.</p>	
9.2	<p>Q= Did no school present information that could be considered? A= No school applications met the criteria and some schools apply year on year who have positive cash positions. There are applications received which can be attribute to poor financial management.</p> <p>Q= What can be done to help? A= There needs to be robust solutions including financial training and budget assistance in the long term to ensure that these schools can set balanced budgets. The overarching aim is that all schools must set a sustainable budget.</p> <p>Q= Can schools set a deficit budget? A= No and this will not be supported by the local authority.</p> <p>Q= Have schools been informed of the decision?</p>	

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	<p>A= We are waiting on the agreement from Forum on the proposal to get assistance to schools to help set budgets.</p> <p>Q= If we agree what happens next? A= We will include the offer of support in the letters and engage with the schools. The impending NFF settlement makes it more urgent to get schools to have a balanced budget and work through solutions now.</p> <p>Q= Will some budget be retained after the £80,000? A= Yes, there will be a smaller fund.</p>	
9.2	RESOLVED: The Schools Forum noted that in the most recent meeting of the Panel, no allocations were made because of insufficient evidence provided by schools.	
	RESOLVED: The Schools Forum agreed for the Panel to use up to £80k of available resources for specialist school finance support (i.e. budget management training and short-term support in setting realistic recovery plans) rather than provide the funding to the schools directly. This will only affect maintained primary and secondary schools.	PD/YO' B
10.	PROPOSALS FOR BACK TO BUDGET FOR HNB (PLUS MINUTES OF HNB 3/2/17)	
10.1	<p>Vikki Monk-Myer: Head of SEN and Disability, presented the paper, which outlined the actions taken to date to ensure that children with SEND have a service that is of high quality and value for money. The Forum noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenditure has been contained by reviewing vacancies and agreeing to hold these at present as re-organisation of services and associated post are pending • Expenditure in some service areas including Portage has not been fully spent • The SEN contingency will have a new distribution plan and concentrated in fewer schools • Early Years top -up funding and application process is being reviewed • There are predicted savings of £385,000 in the current year <p>The Forum noted that a HNB Grant has been secured to assist with the strategic review of the HNB. To progress with the project a commissioner will be employed on a fixed term contract to look at all areas of commissioning and procurement process. The Forum noted the HNB minutes.</p>	
10.2	<p>Q= Are early support places being retained? Y= Yes, as outlined in the paper they will be monitored for the take-up</p> <p>Q= The application process how is it changing? A= It is being simplified so that request can be assessed and agreed quickly.</p> <p>Q= Do we not have the in-house expertise for the commissioning project?</p>	

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	A= We do however, this is a specific grant to look at commissioning and a discreet project. An outside commissioner looking at this area independently should complete this quicker and more effectively.	
10.2	RESOLVED: The Schools Forum noted the report and agreed the approach.	
11.	UPDATE FROM WORKING PARTIES	
11.1	Early Years Working Party.	
11.1a	The Forum noted the minutes dated the 6 January 2017. The Forum noted that a meeting has been held on the 26 January 2017, the main topic was a response to the consultation.	
11.2	High Needs Block.	
11.2a	The minutes were noted under item 10.1	
11.3	Traded Services	
11.3a	The Forum noted the paper presented by Douglas Cook on the Traded Services which outlined to progress made to date and how the service has developed new streams of income work including the contract for providing clerking services for Enfield schools. The paper highlighted that service does face challenges including recognising that schools will have restricted budgets, and the impact of Multi Academy Trusts procurement of services. The Forum thanked Douglas for his work as this will be his last meeting a permanent appointment has been made to the post of Traded Services Manager.	
12.	WORK PLAN 2016/17	
12.1	The Work Plan was noted.	
13.	ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS – NONE	
13.1	The Forum were advised by the Assistant Director that a working group had been established to review the contract for Trade Union facilities. The Forum noted that there were vacancies on the group and decisions are required. AGREED: Will Wawn, Mike McKenzie and Natasha Lewis to join the working party. NOTED: Tony Hartney, Cal Shaw and Ed Harlow are existing members. ACTION: A meeting of the group to be organised by the Assistant Director	RK/ER/ JP
13.2	The Forum gave thanks to Rory Kennedy as this was his last meeting. The Forum gave thanks to David Tully for his support and noted that a new Head of Finance has been appointed. The Forum congratulated Carolyn Banks on her appointment as Governance Services Manager.	
14.	DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 May 2017 • 29 June 2017. 	