

# MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Held on Wednesday, 2 October 2019 at Orchardside School

## Schools Members:

Governors: *Ms H Kacouris* (Primary), *Mrs J Leach* (Special), Vacant x 2 (Primary), *Mr J Donnelly* (Secondary)

Headteachers: *Mr D Bruton* (Secondary), *Ms K Baptiste* (Primary), *Ms R Datta* (Special), *Ms C Fay* (Pupil Referral Unit), *Ms M O'Keefe* / *Ms T Day* (Secondary), *Ms N Husband* (Primary), *Mr D Smart* (Primary)

Academies: *Ms H Thomas* (Chair), *Mrs A Goldwater*, *Ms A Nicou*, *Mr P Sadgrove*, *Mr C Lamb*, *Mrs L Sless*

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## Non-Schools Members:

Early Years Provider	<i>Ms A Palmer</i>
16 - 19 Partnership	<i>Mr K Hintz</i>
Teachers' Committee	<i>Mr J Jacobs</i>
Education Professional	<i>Ms C Seery</i>
Head of Admissions	<i>Ms J Fear</i>
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<i>Cllr S Erbil</i>

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## Observers:

Cabinet Member	<i>Cllr Jewell</i>
School Business Manager	<i>Ms S Mahesh</i>
Education Cabinet Member	<i>Mr R Jewell</i>
Director of Education	<i>Mr P Nathan</i>
Education Finance	<i>Ms L McNamara</i>
Primary School Governor	<i>Mr J Elli</i>
Resources Development Manager	<i>Mrs S Brown</i>

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Clerk: Zoe Hayes

*\* italics denotes absence*

## 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

- a) Apologies for absence had been received from Mr Donnelly, Mr Kacouris, Mr Bruton, Ms O'Keefe, Mr Lamb, Mr Sadgrove, Mr Hintz and Cllr Erbil.

### NOTED:

- (i) the absence of Mrs Leach.
- (ii) Mr Dominic Smart, De Bohun School and Ms Nuala Husband, Firs Farm School had joined the Schools Forum as primary representatives.
- b) **Membership:**
- (i) Mr Sadgrove had confirmed he was resigning from the Schools Forum.

The Forum were advised with Mr Sadgrove leaving the Forum, there would be a vacancy for an Academy representative. It was confirmed a letter would be sent to all Academies to seek a nomination for this vacancy. If more than one nomination were received, an election process would be pursued.

**ACTION: MRS BROWN**

- (iii) Mr Ellis was attending this meeting as an observer because confirmation of his nomination had not been received from the Member Governor Forum.

The Member Governor Forum would also be asked for another nomination for the remaining primary representative vacancy.

- (iv) Ms Clara Seery would be replacing Mr Johnson on the Forum as an Education Professional.

The Forum thanked Mr Johnson for his contribution to the work of the Forum.

- (v) Mr Peter Nathan had joined Enfield Council as Director of Education and would be attending the Forum as the lead officer for the Schools Forum.

All the new members were welcomed to the Forum.

## **2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

An opportunity was provided for Members to declare an interest whether pecuniary or otherwise regarding any of the items on the agenda. None was declared.

## **3 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

- a) **RECEIVED** and agreed the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 July 2019.
- b) The Forum was advised following a request at the last meeting for Induction Training for Headteachers, a training session on the Schools Financial Value Statement was scheduled for Thursday, 3 October 2019. In response to a **question** the meeting was advised that the details of this training should have been sent to all Headteachers.

**NOTED** no one present at the meeting was aware of this training.

**AGREED** that at least one further session would need to be provided.

**ACTION: MRS BROWN**

- c) In response to a question regarding the retention of balances, it was advised that there were different regulations for Church Schools relating to VAT.

**Clerk's Note: Ms Nicou arrived at this point.**

## **4 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION**

- a) **Schools Budget 2019/20 Monitoring Update**

**RECEIVED** a report providing the latest projections for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2019/20.

**Reported** that the final carry forward from 2019/20 was £389k. The current budget projections for the DSG were indicating an overspend of £3.21m. The overspend was mainly due to the need to continue to support Post 18 SEND pupils in residential

settings and general increase in demand had led to more SEND pupils being placed in independent placements.

**NOTED:**

- (i) The SEND reforms required pupils to be supported until 25 years of age. Previously, the cost of residential placement was split between Education, Health and / or Social Care until the pupils turned 18 years old. Now, the view was that all the costs be met by Education and for some placements this was resulting in an increase of £200k plus. Officers were meeting with Health and Social Care to seek an agreement to share the costs.
- (ii) It was anticipated when the refurbishment works at Durant School were completed, this should reduce number of pupils placed out borough and enable some pupils placed in independent provision to transfer to Durants.
- (iii) To manage the increase in workload to the rising demand, the SEN and Educational Psychology Service had restructured and this had resulted in an increase in costs.
- (iv) Recent projections for the Authority's contract with Health for the Speech & Language Service was indicating an overspend. Officers were due to meet with Health to review the contract.
- (v) The Forum was informed If the DSG overspent by more than 1%, then the ESFA would require the Authority, in discussion with the Schools Forum, to develop and submit a Deficit Recovery Plan.

The Forum noted the update on the budget position.

**Clerk's Note: Mrs Sless arrived at this point.**

b) **Dedicated Schools Grant 2019/20: Analysis**

**RECEIVED** an analysis of the allocation of the DSG.

**REPORTED** the report compared the allocation of DSG and the application of the local funding formula with Enfield's statistical neighbours, outer London authorities and nationally.

**NOTED:**

- (i) Enfield had the second highest pupil numbers in outer London but this appeared not to be reflected in the funding provided through the High Needs block.
- (ii) The change in the comparison between last and the current year for the unit rates for the local funding formula was possibly reflecting the decision by authorities on how they moved closer to the national funding formula.
- (iii) The aim of the report was to inform discussions when considering funding arrangements and budget setting for the coming year.

The Forum noted the report.

c) **School Funding Arrangements**

**RECEIVED** a report summarising the latest information on the school funding arrangements for 2020/21.

**REPORTED** during the summer the Government had confirmed they would carry out an annual Spending Review and this would be followed by a three year Spending Review in 2020. At the beginning of the Autumn term, headline information was published on additional funding for education for 2020/21.

**NOTED**

- (i) The increase in national education funding over the next three year was £7.1bn (or 7.4%) with £2.6m being allocated in 2020/21. The IFS confirmed that the additional funding of 7.4% would reverse the 8% cut since 2009/10.
- (ii) The funding for the teachers' pay and pensions would continue to be funded as a separate grant. Information was awaited on how it would be distributed

It was questioned, with the lack of information, were Forum members aware of how schools would manage the 2.75% pay award because the Unions were working on the assumption that schools would implement the full increase for all teaching staff. In response, it was stated that the Authority had advised schools of the likely outcome for the pay award and most schools had allowed for this increase. Having said this, most schools were projecting deficits in year two.

- (iii) As part of the consultation for this year's funding arrangements, it was proposed to move to the NFF and to use the minimum funding guarantee to manage the change in funding. With the change in the quantum of funding and insufficient information on how the additional funding would be allocated, it was unclear the effect this would have on the local formula and the move to NFF. It was stated that modelling could not be carried out until the DfE had published their operational guidance.

In response to a **question**, the Forum were advised that the modelling carried out last year showed significant turbulence for schools over the three year period. However, this modelling had been completed before the latest announcements and the additional funding.

To a subsequent question, it was commented that it was unlikely any Government would implement significant change in the pupil led funding provided to schools. The issue for individual schools was whether the schools were able to maintain pupil numbers. An assessment carried this year highlighted a significant change in funding at an individual school level due to a reduction in pupil numbers or other contextual changes, e.g. free school meal eligibility.

The NFF was likely to shift funding from secondary to primary and the aim was to minimise the impact of this whilst moving towards the NFF.

- (iv) Currently, £140k had been transferred from the Schools to the High Needs block to provide targeted support for Looked After Factor. Work on the

criteria allocating this funding had begun, if this Forum was agreeable, it was proposed that the funding continue to be transferred for 2020/21 to enable the projects to embed and then for a full review to be carried out.

- (v) Once information was published by the DfE and options for models were developed, these would be discussed with the Education Resources Group and there would then follow a consultation document in November and proposals would be presented to the Forum in December.

It was suggested that an extra-ordinary meeting be held once information was available to outline the proposals and rather than last year, the proposals should include details of the impact for individual schools.

- (vii) Due to the timetable to ensure all the statutory requirements and deadlines were met, the Forum was asked to agree in principle to the disapplication request for some of the items discussed during the meeting and one other detailed below:

- i) to prevent secondary funding being applied to primary pupils in all-through schools;
- ii) to transfer 0.5% of School Block funding to High Needs Block. It was requested a breakdown be provided of the number of pupils benefiting from this funding;
- iii) to transfer £140,000 from Schools' Block funding to High Needs Block, specifically for interventions aimed at Looked After Children

**RESOLVED** that:

- i) a briefing would be arranged for all Headteachers and Chairs of Governors to attend.
- ii) modelling will include information on the impact for individual schools.
- iii) The following disapplication request were agreed in principal to:
  - A) transfer 0.5% from Schools to High Needs Block.
  - B) transfer £140k from Schools to High Needs Block, specifically for interventions aimed at Looked After Children
  - C) prevent secondary funding being applied to primary pupils in all-through schools

d) **DfE Consultation on Financial Transparency and Risk Protection Arrangements**

- (i) **RECEIVED** draft responses to two documents published by the DfE, concerning financial transparency arrangements for maintained schools to bring them in line with those for academies and risk protection.
- (ii) Mrs S Brown advised the meeting that these changes would mean additional data requirements and responsibility for the Authority and for schools. It was intended that the requirements for maintained schools would be

implemented sometime during 2019/20 and for academies these new requirements in relation to the Schools Financial Value Statement came into force in September 2019.

In response to a **question** raising concern as to whether Headteachers and School Business Managers had the skill sets to fulfil these new requirements, It was advised that there were plans to identify SBM's who would be able to offer support to those with less experience.

**5 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

None.

**6 WORK PLAN**

**RECEIVED**

**7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Closure of Accounts for Maintained Schools**

**Reported** the Authority was proposing to change the date for closing their accounts for 2019/20. This would require schools to respond and submit their accounts much earlier. The deadline proposed for returns was 7 April 2020. This would require schools possibly not spend, other than salaries, after the end of February 2020. Information was being sent to all Headteachers and a briefing and training provide to School Business Managers.

**Healthy Schools Capital funds**

There was no update on whether there would further funding.

**8 FUTURE MEETINGS**

- a) Next meeting is Wednesday, 11 December 2019 at 5:30pm at Chace Community School.
- b) Future meetings:
  - 15 January 2020 at Chace Community School
  - 4 March 2020 at Chase Community School.

**9 CONFIDENTIALITY**

No items discussed at this meeting were to be considered confidential.

7.25pm THE MEETING WAS CLOSED.