

**MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING**  
**Held on Wednesday 11 December 2019 at Chace Community School**

- Governors: Vacancy (Primary), Mr J Ellis (Primary), Ms H Kacouris (Primary), Mrs J Leach (Special), Mr J Donnelly (Secondary)
- Headteachers: Mr D Bruton (Secondary), Ms K Baptiste\* (Primary), Ms R Datta (Special), Ms C Fay (Pupil Referral Unit), Ms N Husband (Primary), Ms M O'Keefe\* / Ms T Day (Secondary), Mr D Smart (Primary)
- Academies: Ms H Thomas (Chair), Mrs A Goldwater\*, Mr C Lamb, Ms A Nicou, Mrs L Sless, Mrs A Cattermole.

**Non-Schools Members:**

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

**Observers:**

- Cabinet Member Cllr R Jewel  
School Business Manager Ms S Mahesh  
Director of Education Mr P Nathan  
Head of Finance Challenge Mr N Goddard  
Finance Manager Mrs L McNamara  
Resources Development Manager Mrs S Brown

Clerk: Alice McLellan

*\* italics denotes absence*

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND MEMBERSHIP**

- (i) Apologies for absence had been received from Ms Baptiste, Ms O'Keefe, Mrs Goldwater, Mr Hintz and Ms Palmer.

**NOTED:** Mrs Leach apologised for not advising the Forum that she was not able to attend previous meetings.

- (ii) **Membership**

**NOTED** that;

- (a) Mr John Ellis was now a member of the Schools Forum.  
(b) Angela Cattermole was now an academy representative.  
(c) A nomination for a primary governor representative was awaited from the Member Governor Forum.

**ACTION: CLERK**

## 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. No declarations were made.

## 3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

RECEIVED and agreed the Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 October 2019.

## 4. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION

### REPORTED that;

#### (a) Schools Budget – 2019/2020 Monitoring Update

**RECEIVED** a report providing the latest projections of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2019/2020.

**REPORTED** that there had been no change in DSG allocation for the current year. There had been a net decrease in the Out Borough Provision because there had been more leavers than starters during this period but demand for Post 16 High Needs was still increasing. In Borough, a £200k underspend was projected due to the delay in start-up of new units. Some units were still in progress. Overall the position was broadly the same with a £36,000 increase.

The Forum noted the update on the DSG.

#### (b) School Funding Arrangements – 2020/21: Responses to Consultation

**RECEIVED** a report summarising the responses to the consultation on school funding arrangements for 2019/2020.

**REPORTED** the consultation document was published on 11 November 2019. A briefing session was held with 43 Headteachers, Chair of Governors and School Business Managers attending. In total 32 responses were received of which two were received the day after the deadline.

### NOTED;

#### (i) Mainstream Schools: Enfield Funding Formula (EFF)

It was proposed to move to the NFF Unit Rate for EAL and LPA. All other factors would move to 85% of the NFF Unit Rate. LAC was not included as a factor as it was assumed that funding would be transferred to the High Needs Block for targeted support. There was a 1.84% Minimum Funding Guarantee and no Gains CAP.

There was a majority agreement to go forward with the proposal. Comments supported the proposal but saw the need to move to the NFF for 2021/22. The comment that there was insufficient funding for infant schools was noted, and the Forum advised that the use of a single per pupil rate for primary pupils had created this anomaly.

With regards to the comment on the use of the lump sum, previous modelling indicated that the removal of the lump sum created turbulence for small schools across all sectors. The lump sum acted as an equaliser for schools.

**RESOLVED** that members agreed the proposals.

#### (ii) Looked After Children (LAC)

**NOTED** that the NFF had removed this factor, and the proposal was to transfer the funding to the High Needs block for targeted support for LAC. The Forum was informed that a Working Party had been set up and strategies would soon be put into place. In response to a **QUESTION**, it was confirmed this transfer was separate from the 0.5% transfer from the Schools to High Needs block.

There was a majority approval for the transfer of funding to the High Needs block. In response to comments, the Forum was advised a review of the support being provided through this factor would be carried out in the coming year. The allocation of funding would be agreed by the Working Group.

**RESOLVED** that members agreed to the proposals.

(iii) Funding for Pupils with High Needs in Mainstream Schools

**NOTED** that it was proposed to transfer 0.5% of funding from the Schools to the High Needs Block to continue to support schools with an above average incident of pupils with SEND.

There was a majority approval for this proposal. In response to comments, there would be a review over the coming year of the transfer as well as consideration of the hourly rate of used to fund the top up for pupils with EHCPs.

In response to a **QUESTION**, it was confirmed the 0.5% went towards the £6K where the incident of pupils with EHCPs in any school was above 1 in 60.

**RESOLVED** that members agreed to the proposals.

(iv) Early Years Inclusion Fund

**NOTED** that the proposal was to continue with the current arrangements for allocating the funding to providers and the use of the Inclusion Fund.

There was a majority approval for the proposal. It was noted that it was difficult for Infant Schools to access extra funding. This comment had been passed on to Early Years for consideration.

**RESOLVED** that members agreed to the proposals.

(v) Maintained Schools: Treatment of Surplus Balances

**NOTED** that the proposal aimed to reduce the threshold for retaining surplus balance for primary and special schools from 8% to either a maximum amount or a percentage of the school's total budget. The thresholds for 2020/21 proposed were 6.5% or £100,000 and for 2021/22 would be 5% or £100,000.

In response to a **QUESTION**, it was confirmed that schools would be able to carry forward the amount that was highest. The comment in response to the consultation expressed a concern that larger schools may be disadvantaged by a cap of £100,000. The Forum was advised that the school had misunderstood the proposal and if the proposal was agreed Mrs Brown would clarify with the school the arrangements and confirm that the Authority's aim was not to clawback balances, but ensure schools spent the money delegated for the pupils at the school at that time.

The Forum were of the view that Headteachers should be aware of their financial position, however it would be helpful if the Authority alerted those schools close to the thresholds for recycling after each quarterly return had been received.

School Business Managers would be informed of the changes and the thresholds would be clarified to schools.

**ACTION: MRS BROWN**

**RESOLVED** that the proposal be agreed, gaining 8 votes from maintained schools.

(c) Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) & De-delegation of Services for 2020/2021.

(i) CSSB

**NOTED** that the CSSB was made up of two elements: statutory duties and historical commitments. Statutory duties would continue to be funded based on a national funding formula that used pupil numbers and deprivation as the factors to inform the formula. For 2020/21, there was a reduction in funding Enfield would receive.

The DFE were looking to reduce and remove funding for the historical commitments included in the CSSB. For 2020/21, the funding will be reduced by £103k.

The Forum was being asked to consider and comment on the services being supported for both the statutory and historical commitments. In response to a **QUESTION** it was stated that the aim was to subsume and manage the cuts being made to the appeal and other services. The services funded as historical commitments including the Parenting Support Service would eventually have to cease and it was unclear how the services could continue to be supported, possibly through the use of volunteers instead.

**RESOLVED** that members agreed to the proposed use of the CSSB for 2020/21.

(ii) De-delegated Services for Maintained Schools for 2019/2020

**NOTED** that under current arrangements services could continue to be provided as de-delegated. A member commented that it would be useful to review the services being supported and not just have information on services in the same format year. It was stated that the review would be planned to be carried out during the summer before approval was required in the Autumn term.

**RESOLVED** that maintained schools members agreed to the proposed allocation for delegated services for 2020/21 with a review on future delegation to be carried out during the Autumn term.

**ACTION: MRS BROWN**

(d) Schools Budget Update 2020/21

**RECEIVED** a report providing an update on the DSG for 2020/2021.

**REPORTED** there was an increase in the DSG to be received and the final amount to be received won't be known until the budget settlement had been received just before Christmas. There were still concerns about the High Needs projected overspend of £3.9m and managing this and ongoing commitments with the resources available. The information in the report for 2020/21 used indicated amounts and an update would be provided in January 2020 when the exact allocation was known.

**NOTED**

- (i) The amount proposed for the growth fund remained at £0.3m because it was unclear the amount that would be required for the Wren academy which was due to open in September 20.

- (ii) Pupil numbers had decrease in Primary and were increasing in Secondary. The total number of pupils in October 2018 was 50,879.
- (iii) A disapplication request had been submitted and approval awaited.
- (iv) It was expected that the pupil premium rates and Sixth Form funding would remain the same. Other Grants were expected to continue and further information on this was awaited.
- (v) Following an actuarial review of pension contributions for support staff, the contributions were due to decrease from April 2020 by approximately 4% and would remain at this level for the next three years.
- (vi) The final formula values for mainstream schools would be presented to the next Schools Forum meeting and would be circulated to schools once agreed.

**RESOLVED** that members agreed to the continuation of the Growth Fund at £0.3m.

**5. WORKPLAN**

**RESOLVED** to update the Workplan with items arising from this meeting.

**ACTION: MRS BROWN**

**6. FUTURE MEETINGS**

**NOTED** the next meetings:

- Wednesday 15 January 2020, 5:30pm, Chace Community
- Wednesday 4 March 2020, 5:30pm, Chace Community

**7. ITEMS TO REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL**

**NOTED** there were no items to remain confidential.