

**MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM**  
**HELD ON 16 JANUARY 2017**  
**IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, BARKING**  
(10:00am – 12:00pm)

<b>Primary School Representatives</b> Scott Halliwell (Joint Chair) Paramjit Roopra Julie Philips Brian Fox Grant Krog Jane Meech Tracey Whittington Richard November	HT, Southwood Primary School HT, Northbury Primary School HT, Godwin Primary School HT, Roding Primary School HT, Leys Primary HT, Village Infants HT, Beam County Primary HT, Valance Primary
<b>Secondary School Representative</b> Ges Smith	HT, Jo Richardson Community School
<b>Governor Representatives</b> David Dickson	HT, Eastbury Community School
<b>Academy / Free Schools</b> Janis Davies	HT, Sydney Russell School
<b>Academy Special School Representative</b> Roger Leighton (Joint Chair)	Chief Executive, Partnership Learning
<b>Special Needs Representative</b> Susan Ball	HT, Trinity School
<b>Non-School Representatives</b> John Trow Smith	Early Years Representative
<b>Head of Specialist Alternative Provision</b> Annie Blackmore	HT, Mayesbrook School (PRU)
<b>Trade Union Representative</b> Dominic Byrne John McGill	NUT NASUWT
<b>Also Present:</b>  Jane Hargreaves, Commissioning Director – Education Katherine Heffernan – Group Manager – Local Authority Finance and Investment Daksha Chauhan – Group Accountant – Local Authority Finance Shaj Sivadasan – Principal Accountant, Schools - Local Authority Finance and Minute Clerk Vic Grimes - Interim Apprenticeships Co-ordinator Patricia Harvey – Senior Professional, High Needs Block Councillor Evelyn Carpenter – Cabinet Member Education and Schools	

**MINUTES**

Mr Roger Leighton chaired the meeting.

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Dan Craft - HT, St Peter's Primary School

Andrew Roberts - HT, Riverside School

Nichola Young – Local Authority Minute Clerk

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

There were no declaration of interests.

<b>3</b>	<b>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</b>	
3.1	The minutes of the meeting held on 17 <sup>th</sup> October 2017 were confirmed as an accurate record.	

<p>3.2</p>	<p>Actions from 17 October 2017 Early Years sub group established by Joy Barter, and any representative welcome to attend.</p> <p>3.6.4 JH recommended that DC check the admissions forum report. Andy Carr to feedback to the next education improvement board</p> <p>2.2 DC to review the constitution. Annual elections of chair and co-chairs, co-chairs works well so will be included in constitution; DC will prepare a draft for distribution.</p> <p>3.8 Pat Harvey (PH) stated that it may be useful to provide SF with an update on schools' spending plans, what they have committed and what the final balances are. There are schools listed in appendix B that have earmarked projects. PH suggests that columns are added to appendix B for committed funds and what the final revised balances are</p> <p>4.5 David Dickson (DD) queried as to whether there has been any movement on funding to ARPs, PH stated that this was discussed during the last HNWG meeting and that Joy Barter (JB) and Ann Jones (AJ) are working directly with the school. PH to check with (JB) and (AJ) that this is the case</p> <p>7.4. Schools Block – consultation and funding ratio's</p>	<p><b>Complete</b></p> <p><b>Complete</b></p> <p><b>DC</b></p> <p><b>Complete</b></p> <p><b>Complete</b></p>
<p>3.3</p>	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2017 were confirmed as an accurate record.</p>	
<p>3.4</p>	<p>Actions from 21 November 2017</p> <p>5.3.4 Schools' Forum members have agreed to set up a working sub group surrounding growth. The starting point will be Joy's meeting. The proposed name is School Place Planning. Action JB</p> <p>1.3 KH stated that schools will be sent a letter which will outline how funds can be accessed. HR will write to schools to establish how schools plan to or Ref: Minutes 17.10.17 The Schools Forum 5 6. whether they intend to use this money, and whether there is enough. It may be sensible to convene a School's Forum working group to see where any excess funds can be utilised. All schools will be able to access the equivalent of what they pay into the Apprentice Levy. Action HR</p>	<p><b>Complete</b></p> <p><b>Complete</b></p>
<p>3.5</p>	<p><b>APPRENTICESHIP LEVY (AL)</b></p> <p>The Chair agreed this agenda item to be brought forward.</p> <p>The Interim Apprenticeships Co-ordinator role commenced in October to co-ordinate the Apprenticeship Levy (AL) relating to direct work force and maintained schools. Vick Grimes (VG) apologised for the lateness of the report. The purpose of the report is to bring to the attention of the Forum the progress made and take feedback regarding barriers to increasing take-up across the maintained sector, and how this can be moved forward more efficiently. AL is major reform that impacts on establishments with wage bill in excess of £3m making contributions of 0.5% into the digital account. 0.5% of the wage bill is added to the digital account on a monthly basis by community and voluntary aided schools. This schools pot is estimated to be £616K for the whole of last year plus government top up of 10%. If the levy is not spent within 24 months of being paid into the digital account, it is clawed back by treasury.</p> <p>There have been problems nationally, national standards have taken too long to develop for each of the sectors or have been too slow in merging. There have been difficulties around pay rate, agreement, sourcing, recruitment, and lack of revenues to top-up fund salaries of apprentices. Now there is a duty on local authorities to meet 2.3% apprenticeship headcount. Many schools have a large number of part-time staff. There are also issues with digital account, which is poorly resourced, lack of management reports and forecasting tools. Apprentices will need to undertake formal study 1 day a week.</p> <p>The Council's overall target is 190 apprentices a year (including 40 for schools). Council has achieved 35 new starts and is off target due to difficulties.</p>	

	<p>List of approved standards are now available. Establishment need to keep up to date with the new standards. The public sector needs to report on the targets and outcomes, which will need input from school. Because of the difficulties, nationally, the number of apprentices is down 60% last year compared to the previous year.</p> <p>Currently, contributions from individual schools are ring fenced, however many schools are not currently accessing the levy, the risk is that these will be lost to the Treasury. So there is a need to make the system more flexible allowing schools to spend more than their own budget.</p> <p>Options discussed:</p> <p><b>Option 1</b> – continue with present system, with unused levy going to the government.  <b>Option 2</b> - operate on a first come first serve basis to allow unused amounts to be spent locally rather than being lost, allowing schools to exceed the ringfenced budget,  <b>Option 3</b> – ask schools to give up ring fencing.</p> <p>The arrangements should encourage take up and investment.</p> <p>RN (HT Valance), commented that there have been issues with payroll. The aim is to make sure that the levy is used and does not go back to government. There is a lack of knowledge amongst the heads around accessing good training and development. There are opportunities to develop teaching courses with Chelmsford. Once the system picks up, it will gather momentum. Option 2 and 3 are the best way forward.</p> <p>DD (HT Eastbury)- commented that there is a need to look to maximise the benefits for the borough resident and make it easier to employ local people and ensure equitable access across the borough. Currently there is an issue with local people not being able to access education and employment. Option 2 and 3 are preferred.</p> <p>Dominic Byrne - NUT – raised issues around terms and condition and protection for apprentices.</p> <p>VG replied that there are now agreed pay scales with pay and a standard agreement. He has been asked to review the system, which is currently under way. LBBB is committed to standards and pay above national minimum rate for Apprentices.</p> <p>JTS (PVI) commented that if the funding could not be utilised, consideration should be passed to employers to fund Level 3 EY places.</p> <p>VG - The increased flexibility is under consideration. Working with Finance to set up a system to monitor underspend so that these are on the radar and remedial action can be taken.</p> <p>GS (JRCS) – The preferred option is 2 for 1 year after which it should be reviewed. GS asked whether the school take-up figures were accurate. VG commented that he could not be sure but should be fairly accurate. VG - There are some practicalities to implementing the preferred option and will requires LA school representatives and LA representatives to work together.</p> <p>JH – Suggested that we work with option 2 first, and then as the scheme is more established agree on a cut-off date to move to option 3, as we get better at managing the system. There is a general concern about funding being lost if not utilised within the 24 months.</p> <p>Heads – It was agreed that the above was a good suggestion. Primary and Secondary schools are in the process of meeting with providers, including Coventry University to map out ways to deploy the levy for teacher training as well as other opportunities for Masters Level for developing staff.</p> <p>Also noted opportunities for LA maintained schools and Academies to work together on joint approach to standards, quality and other issues that are common to both.</p> <p><b>Forum agreed Option 2, with option to review at the end of next year.</b></p>	<p><b>Agreed Option 2</b></p>
4	<b>REPORT FROM GROUP ACCOUNTANT - FINANCE</b>	

	<p><b>4.1 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2017/18 AND 2018/19</b></p> <p>The Forum noted the position regarding 2017/18 and 2018/19 DSG position as set out in the report.</p> <p>The forum was advised of the updated de-delegation rates, which is now based on October 2017 census. <b>The Forum noted the revised de-delegation pupil rates.</b></p>	<p><b>Noted</b></p>
	<p><b>4.2 SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA 2018/19</b></p> <p>The forum was informed that the DfE had identified data issues relating to Free School Meals (FSM) figures supplied to Local Authorities for calculating the budget. The corrected figures were provided on Friday 12 January, two working days before the School Forum meeting. There was insufficient time to circulate the recalculated budgets prior to the meeting. Net impact of the adjustment was to reduce amount distributed through primary FSM by £193K and secondary by FSM by £144K. These were put back into the MFG. <u>The revised ISB budgets were tabled at the meeting.</u> It was clarified that the previous ISB was overstated because of incorrect data proved by DfE. The revised ISB restates what the initial ISB should have been.</p> <p>The Forum expressed concern that 23 primary schools were seeing funding reductions driven by falling pupil numbers. The Primary phase in under exceptional pressure because of the interaction falling growth and falling FSM. Issue of particular concern was reduction in FSM in the primary phase and asked what if any support was available.</p> <p>The issue of falling pupil numbers is being picked up by the sub group for pupil place Planning.</p> <p>Schools Forum were asked to agree a Growth Fund of £2.939m.</p> <p>Schools Forum were asked to agree Growth for expanding schools at AWPU plus 20%.</p> <p>This arrangement to be reviewed as part of the budget setting for 2019/20.</p> <p>Schools Forum to consider how the growth fund can be used to support the exceptional cases (falling rolls) given the pressures in having to fund expanding classes.</p> <p>Members advised that growth needed a better area based co-ordinated approach so to eliminate / minimise vacancies as these are unfunded and will compound budget pressures going forward. Properly co-ordinated growth can minimise vacancies that impacts on funding.</p> <p>The funding rates are now aligned to the NFF rates except AWPU. The AWPU rates have been flexed to achieve transition ratio of 1:1.34. The AWPU would be flexed again in 2019/20 to achieve a ratio of 1:1.39, and then converge to NFF the following year.</p> <p>Schools Forum were asked to agree the final funding model with the proposed factors included in Appendix A to maintain a primary to secondary ratio of 1:1.34.</p>	<p><b>Action Andy Carr</b></p> <p><b>Agreed</b></p> <p><b>Agreed for 2018-19</b></p> <p><b>Action DC</b></p> <p><b>Action Andy Carr</b></p> <p><b>Agreed</b></p>
	<p><b>4.3 HIGH NEEDS BLOCK</b></p> <p>Feedback was provided from the High Needs Working Group which met on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2018. SH (HT Southwood) commented that continued attendance from school representatives is essential to ensure issues are voiced and reflected.</p> <p>Schools Forum agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Review the ARP placements and undertake strategic mapping of requirements over the next 3 years;</li> <li>ii. Review vacant places and link;</li> <li>iii. To update the exercise undertaken 2 years ago to recoup 'top ups' from establishments with vacant places on a termly basis;</li> <li>iv. To fund census ARP places at the following rates:</li> </ul>	<p><b>Agreed</b></p> <p><b>Action</b></p> <p><b>HNWG/ PH</b></p>

<b>ARP Place Funding</b>					
<b>Phase</b>	<b>2018/19 AWPU</b>	<b>Factor Led (at 20%)</b>	<b>Funding via Schools Block</b>	<b>Balance of 10K Place to be Funded (rounded)</b>	
Primary	3,315	663	3,978	6,000	
KS3 (Yr 7 to 9)	4,235	847	5,082	5,000	
KS4 (Yr 10 and 11)	4,925	985	5,910	4,000	

  

	<p>v. Undertake a benchmarking exercise to inform the review of top up bands and rates.</p> <p>Schools Forum were advised that the previously agreed transfer of £1.1M from the Schools Block to High Needs Block had been reduced to £750K, to ensure that the Schools Block formula remained affordable. The £750K will be held as contingency for the High Needs but will not be allocated to any specific budget line.</p>	<b>Noted</b>
<p><b>4.4 EARLY YEARS</b></p>	<p>Schools Forum were advised that the main changes relating to early years were</p> <p>(a) the uplift to the base rate from £4.50 to £4.70;</p> <p>(b) increase in SEN inclusion fund;</p> <p>(c) reduction in centrally retained amount.</p> <p>Schools Forum were asked to:</p> <p>(a) agree that the revised hourly rate of £4.70, note the increase in SEN inclusion fund, and agree the centrally retained budget of £883K.</p> <p>JTS enquired about details of the campaign relating to 30 hours. JTS to contact Rikki Damsgaard.</p>	<p><b>Agreed</b></p> <p><b>Action JTS</b></p>
<p><b>4.5 EARLY CLOSURE</b></p>	<p>The Forum was advised that quarter three estimates are now due from LA maintained schools. Quarter three estimates would be used to close the accounts because of the statutory early closure timetable.</p>	<b>Noted</b>
<p><b>5 ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p>	<p>Schools Forum were asked to approve 10 additional high needs places at £4K to be met from the £300K earmarked contingency that was brought forward into 2017/18 to enable placement of late EAL arrivals into schools. The cost of placing these children with outside providers would be £7K per pupil. Forum advised that colleges may offer more continuity and stability for those year 11 but school settings are suitable for those in year 10 and below.</p> <p>Schools Forum agreed to fund the 10 places at £4K each. (total £40k)</p>	<p><b>Noted</b></p> <p><b>Agreed</b></p>
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>Tuesday 20 March 2018 from 10.00am – 12.00pm  Head Teachers pre-meet 9.30am  Council Chamber – Barking Town Hall</p>	