

**MINUTES OF THE OF THE SCHOOLS' FORUM
HELD ON 18 JUNE 2019
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, BARKING
(10:00am – 12:00pm)**

Present:

School Representatives

Primary School Representatives

Paramjit Roopra (PR)	HT, Northbury Primary School
Scott Halliwell (SH) (Joint Chair)	HT, Southwood Primary School
Christine James (CJ)	HT, Dorothy Barley Infants School
Jayne Meech (JM)	HT, Village Infants School
Richard November (RN)	HT, Valence Primary School
Julie Philips (JP)	HT, Godwin Primary School
Martin Nicholson (MN)	HT, Grafton Primary School

Secondary School Representative

Governor Representatives

David Dickson (DD)	HT, Eastbury Community School
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Academy / Free Schools

Andy Roberts	HT, Riverside School
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Academy Special School Representative

Roger Leighton (RL) (Joint Chair)	Chief Executive, Partnership Learning
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Special Needs Representative

Susan Ball (SB)	HT, Trinity School
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Non-School Representatives

John Trow Smith (JTS)	Early Years Representative
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Head of Specialist Alternative Provision

Annie Blackmore (AB)	HT, Mayesbrook Park School
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Trade Union Representative

Dominic Byrne (DB)	NUT
John McGill (JMc)	NASUWT

Also present: Jane Hargreaves (JH), Commissioning Director – Education
Councillor Evelyn Carpenter (CC) – Cabinet Member for Education and Schools
Patricia Harvey (PH) – Senior Professional, High Needs Block
Katherine Heffernan (KH) – Group Manager – Local Authority Finance and Investment

Shaj Sivadasan (SS) – Principal Accountant, Schools - Local Authority Finance
 Kofi Adu (KA) – Group Accountant – Local Authority Finance
 Natasha Cock – Policy and Projects Manager
 Nichola Young (NY) – Local Authority Minute Clerk

Mr Scott Halliwell chaired the meeting. Mr Roger Leighton to chair the October 2019 meeting

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Ronan Fox – Joint Children's Commissioner for Barking and Dagenham
 Gill Massar – HT, William Bellamy Primary School
 Janis Davis – HT, Sydney Russel School
 Richard November – HT, Valence Primary School
 Ges Smith – Executive Headteacher, Jo Richardson and Dagenham Park
 Jo Tupman – HT, Barking Abbey School
 Jo Preston – HT, Gascoigne Primary School

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2019 were confirmed as an accurate record

3.2 Actions from 19 March 2019

2.2 It was noted that Andrew Carr (AC) will send the paper on the sugar tax levy to all maintained schools and include the time scale for responses – not all schools received the email from Andy Carr, as a result an extension for the deadline was requested. All maintained schools to be emailed and informed that the deadline for submission is Friday 21 June 2019.

Complete

3.2 PH will send a mapping of ARP places with the minutes – mapping work was completed by Marianne McCarthy. PH will confirm with Marianne whether this has been briefed to schools.

Action PH

8.2 Noted, from the next financial year, schools will be paid their full DFC allocation for the year upfront. Finance will have to keep a check on funding as it should be clawed back if not used within three years. KH is going to write to all schools - **Complete**

9.1 Schools who are requested to attend the Falling Rolls Sub-Group on Wednesday 27 March need to be contacted and given plenty of notice so that they are able to attend – **Complete**

9.2 HTs asked whether schools or the local authority are liable in the event of a redundancy. KH will seek clarification from Gail Clarke (HR) around who is liable for redundancy costs, and report back to schools

REPORT FROM THE GROUP ACCOUNTANT - FINANCE

4.

2. DSG outturn for 2018/19

2.1 The total DSG allocations for 2018/19 is £218,341m, including the transfer of £750k from the schools' block and the additional allocation of £672k.

	Budget	Period 14 Final Out-turn	Period 14 Variance	Previous Forecast
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Schools block	167,174	166,897	(276)	(141)
Early years block	21,319	20,663	(656)	0
High needs block	27,289	30,287	2,998	1,655
Central block	2,559	2,395	(164)	0
Total	218,341	220,243	1,902	1,514
Brought forward DSG balance (inc. growth fund)			3,548	
Less: Growth fund			(500)	
DSG balance forecast for 31st March 2019			1,146	

2.2 The 2018/19 DSG outturn is £1,146m

2.3 The Early Years underspend will go into the holding fund for next year.

2.4 **Recommendation (i):** Schools' Forum are requested to note 2018/19 DSG forecast outturn.

Noted

3. High Needs 2018/19 outturn

3.1 The High Needs outturn for 2018/19 is just under £3m after the transfer of £750k from the schools' block and the additional allocation of £672k.

3.2 The ARP overspend includes costs that were incurred due to changes at the SEMH school.

3.3 With DSG reserves at just over £1m, an overspend of this level again is not sustainable.

3.4 Noted, the reasons why the overspend is so different from the forecast is due to additional demand and decisions made late in the day. Finance are unable to account for decisions made so late in the year.

3.5 Caroline Connolly from Finance is working on the HNB which should help in future accurate regular financial reporting.

	2018/19 Budget	Outturn	Variance +over / (under)
Alternative Provision	3,146,000	3,345,815	199,815

ARP Funding	5,790,000	6,473,918	683,918
DSG - High Needs Education Inclusion	1,634,000	1,711,599	77,599
Top-ups (Inc. OB and NMSS)	5,238,000	6,467,299	1,229,299
High Needs Top Ups - Post 16	1,174,000	1,406,921	232,921
SEN Panel Top Ups	900,000	1,661,945	761,945
LACHES, Language Support, Transport	951,000	1,021,803	70,803
Special School Funding	6,643,561	7,767,045	1,123,484
Early Years & Integrated Youth Services	390,000	430,634	40,634
Total	25,866,561	30,238,563	4,420,418
Less: in-year additional allocations from DfE			-672,000
Less: transfers from Schools Block			-750,000
Net Position +over/(under)			2,998,418

4. High Needs Budget for 2019/20

- 4.1 The grant is £2m higher for next year which will help offset some of the pressures. An additional DfE grant is also payable in 2019/20 which will take the budget to £29,911m.
- 4.2 The funding for 2019/20 does not match the 2018/19 outturn, cost production measures therefore need to be managed.
- 4.3 Colleagues discussed the possibility of requesting how schools have spent their Notional SEN budgets as part of the application process for additional funding.
- 4.4 RL informed the meeting that the only funding received by special schools is top up funding where the sum of money allocated has not increased in the last ten years.
- 4.5 It was questioned whether schools are being held accountable for spending their Notional SEN budget and whether a need for training is required.
- 4.6 The DfE do not currently enforce a report on how notional budgets are spent.
- 4.7 It was agreed that it would be beneficial to hold a review of Top-up designation for primary, special schools and ARPs. Colleagues agreed to cap special school recoupmnt at £45k if required.
- 4.8 KA informed Schools' Forum that B&D need to look at short-term and long-term models. If we do nothing, there could be a £6m overspend in this financial year alone. Short term measures need to be put in place to maintain budgets and models need be developed going forward.
- 4.9 Taking the Trinity and Riverside Bridge aside for the moment, Schools' Forum members agreed that school notional budgets need to be looked at and maximised before mainstream top-up is given. Schools to be made aware of expectations and given training if required.

- 4.12 KF informed SF that Finance are working on monthly projections and that September will be too late to take action.
- 4.12 SF members requested an emergency HNB meeting and asked for the first quarter outturn be provided (date to be decided at the end of the meeting).
- 4.13 **Recommendation (iii):** Schools' Forum to consider the High Needs strategies and decide how to proceed.

Discussed

- 4.14 **Recommendation (iv):** Schools' Forum are requested to note and comment on 2019/20 high needs budget.

Discussed and noted

5. ARP Resource and Staffing Review

Please refer to Appendix A

- 5.1 An external review of ARPs has been requested by the DCS. Appendix A sets out draft terms of reference for Schools' Forum to comment. Please direct comments to Jane Hargreaves and Natasha Cock.

6. SEND call for evidence

- 6.1 As agreed at HNB, PH will draft responses to the questions on the SEND call for evidence. PH informed SF members that there are no questions concerning additional funding.
- 6.2 **Recommendation (v):** Schools' Forum is recommended to delegate the response to the High Needs Block working sub-group.

Delegated

7. Teachers Pay Grant, Pension Grant and Supplementary Funding (Pensions)

- 7.1 SF members recognised that the DfE has not mentioned anything about funding beyond 2020. PH informed the meeting that she attended a DfE event recently where it was confirmed that the funding would continue in subsequent years. The DfE confirmed that this information will be published after the spending review.
- 7.2 **Recommendation (vi):** Schools' Forum are requested to note pension grant and teachers pay grant information.

Noted

8. Redundancy Costs for school-based staff

- 8.1 **Recommendation (vii):** To ensure transparency and fair administration of the above, we are recommending for Schools' Forum to approve:
 - (a) The use of SFFDF as an initial funding source for any eligible redundancies. And then to indicate a preferred model for future funding (if required.)
 - (b) Set-up a new panel made up of representatives from the local authority and members of Schools' Forum to review requests.

- (c) Requests received and reviewed by the new panel will be recommended to the Financial Monitoring Group for approval.
- (d) Requests approved by the FMG will then be forwarded to the Commissioning Director for Education & Section 151 Officer for authorisation

Complete

9. Free School Meals (FSM) Project

Please refer to Appendix B – presented by Natasha Cock

- 9.1 Impact report will be shared with partners and all schools

10. Schools balances

Please refer to Appendix C

11. Sugar Tax

Please refer to Appendix D

- 11.1 Barking and Dagenham have set aside £165k for school-based projects as a part of the Healthy Pupils Capital Fund Programme (HPCF). Schools have been invited to submit bids, the deadline for which was 7 June 2019. Some schools have requested an extension to the deadline as they did not receive the initial communication.
- 11.2 NY to check the deadline extension with Andy Carr send guidelines and communication to all schools

Action NY

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 5.1 JTS asked SF members whether the local authority or academy trusts have any unused Apprenticeship Levy and if so is there any possibility of this being transferred to other places/departments within the borough? JTS will send a question in writing to KH.

Action – SF member (JTS) KH

- 5.2 The Financial Monitoring Group (FMG) have been devising a benchmarking model. The FMG hope to have the work completed and implemented by the Autumn term. This benchmarking model will be in accordance with the DfE model with some extended detail.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 15 October 2019 in the Chamber, Town Hall from 10:00am to 12:00pm.

Head teachers' pre-meeting will commence at **9.30am.**