

**MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS' FORUM HELD ON 26 NOVEMBER 2019 IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, BARKING (10:00am – 12:00pm)**

**Present:**

**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  
Julie Philips (JP) HT Godwin Primary School  
Gill Massar (GM) HT William Bellamy Primary School  
Simon Abeledo (SA) HT Rush Green Primary School  
Gurpreet Kataora (GK) – Rush Green Primary School

**Secondary School Representative**

**Governor Representatives**

David Dickson (DD) HT Eastbury Community School  
Ges Smith (GS) Executive Headteacher Jo Richardson School  
Janis Davis (JD) Headteacher Sydney Russell School  
Kim Donovan-Maddix (KD) Principal Elutec

**Academy / Free Schools**

Andy Roberts (AR) – HT Riverside School

**Academy Special School Representative**

Roger Leighton (RL) (Joint Chair) Chief Executive Partnership Learning

**Special Needs Representative**

Susan Ball (SB) HT Trinity School

**Non-School Representatives**

John Trow Smith (JTS) Early Years Representative

**Head of Specialist Alternative Provision**

Annie Blackmore (AB) HT Mayesbrook Park School

**Trade Union Representative**

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

**Other:**

Jane Hargreaves (JH), Commissioning Director – Education  
Patricia Harvey (PH) Senior Professional High Needs Block  
Katherine Heffernan (KH) Group Manager LA Finance and Investment  
Shaj Sivadasan (SS) Principal Accountant Schools LA Finance  
Kofi Adu (KA) Group Accountant LA Finance  
Ronan Fox (RF) Joint Children's Commissioner for Barking & Dagenham  
Gail Clarke (GC) Head of Workforce Change  
Bal Gill (BG) – LA Minute Clerk

**1. Apologies for absence**

Alan Jacob HT Sydney Russell School  
Jayne Meech HT Village Infant School  
Liz Warren HT Warren School  
Chris Harrison HT George Carey School

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

**3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2019 were confirmed as an accurate record

**3.2 Actions from 18 June 2019**

2.2 Successful applications have heard back. AC will be writing back to those schools who were unsuccessful.

3.2 Mapping work completed by Marianne McCarthy. PH will send summary attached to the minutes of mapping – **Complete**

**4. REPORT FROM THE GROUP ACCOUNTANT – FINANCE**

**4. Update DGS Outturn for 2018/2019**

4.1 KH – indicate allocations of DSG for 2021. Reschedule meeting due to DfE providing information late. There will be a delay in giving allocation which will affect formula setting due to the general election.

2018/2019 slightly better than previously expected due to early years settlement. 3 million in reserve which relates to early years.

**Schools Forum noted revised 2018/2019 DSG out-turn**

**Update on DSG funding for 2019/20**

4.2 Table 1 sets out the projected DSG out-turn for 2018-19. The total DSG allocations for the year was £218,341k after recoupment adjustments in respect of academies of £46,568k. The final high needs budget includes the additional allocation of £672k plus the transfer of £750k from schools block. An overall overspend of £1,902k was previously reported for Dedicated Schools Grant based on Early Years full clawback of £1,520k.

4.3 The Early Years block grant allocations were finalised by DfE in July to take account of the January 2019 census. The July announcement confirmed a grant uplift of £536k rather than the anticipated clawback of £1,520k. The provision for clawbacks and the increased allocations, totalling £2,056k, have been released back into the DSG reserve balances. This has improved the DSG reserve balances considerably.

	Budget	Period 14 Final Out-turn	Period 14 Variance +over/ (under)
	£'000	£'000	,£'000
Schools block	167,174	166,897	(276)
Early years block	21,319	20,663	(656)

High needs block	27,289	30,287	2,998
Central block	2,559	2,395	(164)
<b>Total</b>	<b>218,341</b>	<b>220,243</b>	<b>1,902</b>
Brought forward surplus DSG balance (inc. growth fund)			(3,548)
Less: Growth fund			500
DSG balance previously reported			(1,146)
Add: EY clawback contingency			(1,520)
Add: Final EY grant adjustment			(536)
<b>Revised DSG Reserves as at 31 March 2019</b>			<b>(3,202)</b>

## Schools Forum noted the 2019/2020 DSG out-turn forecast.

### HNB Outturn Forecast for 2019/20

- 4.4 Budgets are resulting an overspend. HB agreeing setting managers action which could help to 2. Million. 1 million in reserves if successful. PH said that the borough is in a positive position and that B&D were more strategic than other local authorities.
- 4.5 HNB sub working group met to benchmark data to forecast a potential saving of approximately £855k.
- 4.6 Implementation of the ARPs SLA 30% vacancy factor being filled due to growth.
- 4.7 Notional budgets to be reported and utilised as part of (top ups) element 3 payments.

PH - Pupil placed at alternative provision review is ongoing. Children placed in Acorns and CPC – there will be a cost to the school on a pro rata basis. AB – pointed out that this it is misleading and that is for primary AP. SH – Primary schools are under financial pressure and there should apply to the secondary AP too as primary numbers are falling. AB – The discussion for recouping the cost for secondary school is still in progress. SH – Should have action once both discussions have been made.

DD suggested the schools have a template everyone reporting same way bench marking and share practice on reporting on notional budget.

### **Action - Possible report on this in short format for governing body so they can see the pressure on budget and action.**

- 4.8 In year position based on current spending HNB reduce surplus just over £100,000 - schools forum to reduce the overspend and to have a larger reserve. SH – the level of needs of children in the lower end of the year are significant. Children being placed in specialist provision. The level of needs of children is not going away but getting greater. SH suggested that we look at the support in primary school so they can manage the children in mainstream. To support each other and our community which high needs of pupils.

- 4.9 Matrix (top ups/element 3) reviewed in line with statistical neighbours and mapped in accordance with high needs funding envelope – this would have to be part of a wider consultation process;
- 4.10 Special school budgets to be calculated and MFG protection applied as part of matrix review but using comparable statistical neighbours;
- 4.11 Non statutory services discontinued – again, this would have to be part of a wider consultation process;
- 4.12 Review all ARP provision and those with vacancies, reduce commissioned places – 12 months’ notice would have to be provided in accordance with SLA’s;
- 4.13 As part of ARP review - close provisions that are not demonstrating value for money and no longer suitable for SEN(D) children;
- 4.14 4% or 5% blanket reduction (saving) across all budget areas for new financial year and earmarked towards DSG reserve/HNB pressures;
- 4.15 Notional budgetary reporting from schools termly to LA;
- 4.16 Out of Borough fees – administration fee (if applicable) not paid by LA, or 5% reduced due to LA’s internal processing (legal process would have to be explored);

JTS questioned about the working around backwards. PH budget allocations meeting statutory duties. What we have to fill and look at what is left. This is subject to consultation. Early identification of children early and meeting their needs early. SH – Special needs funding increase 30 million work more special needs funding. Look at places and expected growth.

KH set more realistic budget in January and March forum.

**Schools Forum noted:**

- a) The projected High Needs out-turn forecast**
- b) The continued pressure on High Needs Block and**
- c) Risk associated with the management actions to achieve in-year savings of £855K**
- d) The strategies being taken forward to address these pressures.**

**5. Provisional 2020/21 Dedicated School Grant Allocations**

- 5.1 The provisional pre-recoupment DSG allocations published in October 2019 are set out in table 2. The schools block allocations are based on the October 2018 census, and will be updated for October 2019 census in December 2019. Provisional allocations for EY are the current year allocations and the 2020/21 allocations would be finalised in June 2021 as it is based on January 2020 and January 2021 census results. (Detailed analysis of DSG grants allocations for

Block	2019/20 Allocations	2020/21 Provisional Allocations	Movement +Favourable / (Unfavourable)	% Movt
Pupil Numbers (Schools Block)	38,661	38,661		
	a	b		
	£000s	£000s	£000s	
Schools Block	213,657	218,885	5,228	2.4
Growth Fund	2,983	2,549	(434)	(14.5)
High Needs	31,678	37,253	5,575	17.6
CSSB – On-going	1,418	1,413	(5)	(0.4)
CSSB - Historic	1,157	926	(231)	(20)
EY	22,230	22,230	0	0
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>273,123</b>	<b>283,256</b>	<b>10,133</b>	<b>3.7</b>

**Schools Forum noted the provisional funding allocations for 2020/21.**

### **Schools Block**

5.2 2020/21 is the third and, expected to be, the final transitional year before the implementation of the ‘hard’ National Funding Formula (NFF) in 2020/21. The 2020/21 NFF remains largely unchanged with some limited modifications set out below.

- The mandatory use of Minimum Per-Pupil Funding (MPPF) levels to ensure that primary and secondary schools attract at least £3,750 and £5,000 through the formula respectively. This will not have any impact on any of the schools in Barking and Dagenham as all of our schools attract funding significantly above these levels.
- Funding floor is set at 1.84% baselined 2019/20 NFF allocations before block transfers are applied.
- The gains by schools under the formula are not capped.
- Introduction of a formulaic approach to the mobility factor rather than on the basis of historic spend basis, and the local schools gain marginally as a result of this switch.
- The protection for growth funding, allocated on a formulaic basis from 2019/20 onwards, will continue at 0.5% of the Schools Block.
- In 2020 to 2021, the school block allocations will be based on the individual school’s NFF allocations baselined to 2019 to 2020.

5.3 The NFF calculations for 2020-21 are based on school and pupil characteristics data from October 2018. This is used to calculate the notional school level allocations, which is then aggregated to determine the School Block allocations and the relevant Primary and Secondary Units of Funding (PUF and SUF). The relevant unit rates are then applied to the October 2019 census to determine the final allocations in December 2019. Funding is calculated on October 2018 pupil profile whereas the actual funding to be distributed to schools is based on the

October 2019 pupil profile. Any inherent funding pressures arising from this mismatch in pupil profiles will have to be contained within the overall Schools Block grant allocations.

- 5.4 If the national funding formula were fully implemented as a hard formula based on the illustrative figures published by the Department of Education all primary schools in Barking and Dagenham bar one (Marks Gate Junior) would be on the funding floor receiving only the minimum increase in per pupil funding of 1.84%. Of the ten secondary and all through schools, two also receive an 1.84% per pupil increase and the other eleven would receive an average per pupil increase of 3.34%. This reflects greater levels of need as measured by the formula among secondary pupils.

### **Growth Fund**

- 5.5 Since 2019/20, growth funding has been allocated based on a formula and not based on lagged actual costs. which has resulted in a reduction in the growth funding available to this borough. The formula is based on the observed differences between the primary and secondary number on roll between the October 2018 and October 2019 school censuses. Under this approach, the authority has seen significant reduction in funding

### **Schools Forum noted:**

**(a) The provisional funding allocations for 2020/21**

**(b) Changes to National Funding Formula for 2020/21**

**(c) The projected shortfall in growth fund allocations for 2020/21**

**(d) Impact of CSSB reductions**

### **6. School Funding Formula for 2020/21**

- 6.1 Indicated allocation based on last year census.
- 6.2 Final amount will not match and will be adjusted on number and characteristic on children.
- 6.3 New deprivation data - will not be using this year may be using next year.
- 6.4 Growth fund expected to go down. Central services school is being reduced - early years depend on number of children.

DfE 3<sup>rd</sup> final year of transition before we move to national formula.

- 6.5 The funding allocations and distributions are set out in table 3. The provisional Schools Block allocation is based on the October 2018 census of 38,661. The funding model for 2019/20 is based on an additional 257 pupils to take account of new and growing schools. The provisional model is based on 38,918 to allow schools to make year on year comparisons as the additional pupils would be captured in October 2019 census and reflected in the December Schools Block allocations update. Hence, the movement between 2019/20 and provisional 2020/21 model are the result of changes in unit rates and formula.

	NOR	Total (000s)
<b>Schools Block Budgeted Grant Income</b>		
Provisional SB Allocation	38,661	218,885
Additional 2019/20 APT Pupil No Adjust.	257	1,585

Expected GF DSG Allocation (estimate)		2,549
<b>Total funding Available</b>		<b>223,019</b>
<b>Schools Block Budgeted Expenditure</b>		
APT Model (exc NNDR and PFI increases)	38,918	218,381
Provisional for NNDR increase		225
Provision for PFI increase		121
Growth Fund - APT		1,457
Growth Fund - Centrally Held		2,324
Falling rolls		511
Total budgeted Expenditure		223,019
<b>Net Cost</b>		<b>0</b>

6.6 The overall cash limit for funding formula and growth is £223,010k. The balance available for formula after setting aside requirements for growth and falling rolls is £218,727 including provisions for NNDR and PFI cost increases.

6.7 The provisional October 2019 census is showing that across 25 primaries Numbers on Roll (NOR) are falling 514, and 16 are reporting combined growth of 217 pupils. This is in marked difference to the secondary phase which is reporting growth of 619 across 7 seven schools, and 1 reporting negative growth, and 3 All-through schools are reporting growth of 302 across both phases. It was assumed no growth in 4 schools where provisional data was not yet available.

Phase		Negative Growth	Positive Growth	Net
Primary		(514)	217	(297)
All-through	Primary	0	129	129
Secondary		(40)	691	651
All-through	Secondary	0	173	173
<b>Total</b>		<b>(554)</b>	<b>1210</b>	<b>656</b>

Table above: set out movement in pupil numbers between Oct 2018 and Oct 2019 census.

6.8 The provisional funding formula assumes no change in pupil numbers. In reality, there is significant drop in primary pupil numbers which is likely to translate into substantial reductions in funding for schools. This reduction in funding, due to falling numbers, is predominantly a significant issue for the primary sector. Whilst this is expected to be a temporary drop, schools would require some lead in time make the necessary adjustments. It is therefore proposed to hold back a small allocation to support primary schools that would see large reductions in funding as a result of falling rolls. If this is not agreed, the earmarked funding would be returned for distribution through the formula.

- 6.9 For a number of years, it has been a local principle that the overall funding ratio between the two sectors should be 1:1.30 (or as near as technically possible.) The operation of the national funding formula however results in a ratio of 1:1.40.
- 6.10 In the previous two years it was agreed that the local formula would be adjusted in order to bring the funding balance approximately one third of the way towards the national formula i.e to a ratio of 1:1.34. This would allow a gentler transition towards the eventual funding balance and would offer some protection to primary schools. In practice this was further dampened down by the requirement to offer funding floor protection so in practice the final ratio was in the region of 1:1.31.
- 6.11 The proposed local funding formula for 2020/21 is based on the following principles:
- Funding should be set aside to support premises factors, the full growth fund requirement and a fund to support schools with falling rolls.
  - The national funding formula factors should be used for all the additional needs.
  - The AWPU factors should be adjusted in order to meet the funding available.
  - All schools should receive the minimum funding per pupil amounts set out in the national formula.
  - All schools should receive a minimum uplift of 1.84% uplift (or close to it in the final funding formula as is possible within the total funding available).
  - Additional funding above this level should be allocated to secondary schools so long as it does not move the ratio above 1:1.35 (midway between the current formula and the impact of the NFF).
- 6.12 The impact of the funding formula model based on these principles are set out in Appendix B. This assumes no reductions in NOR. However, it is already known that there are significant reductions in NOR in the primary phase, and this is likely to translate into significant reduction in funding which is unprotected by MFG. Under the proposed model, all of the schools make gains in their overall budget. However, all except 2 of the primaries and 3 secondaries remain on plus 1.84% MFG funding floor. The remaining secondaries and all through schools would make gains of over 2.7%.
- 6.13 The unit rates for 2019/20, NFF rates for 2020/21 along with actual local rates applied are set out in Appendix C. The NFF rates have been applied in full to the funding model with the exception of AWPU's. These have been flexed to achieve the MFG funding floor protection and the primary secondary target ratio of 1:1.35.
- 6.14 Schools are to be consulted on the proposed funding model for their views and comments, and these will be reported to the next Schools Forum.
- 6.15 The funding allocations through the different formula factors are set out Appendix D to this report.
- 6.16 The DfE will release updated census data and revised funding allocations based on that in December. When this is published it may be necessary to adjust some factor weightings or other aspects of the calculation. This will be done in line with the principles approved and in consultation with Schools Forum and local schools.

- 6.17 It is proposed to keep the de-delegation quantum the same as in 2019/20. Details of delegation will be presented to the next Schools Forum report for approval.

RL question the definition of growth for a brand-new school.

JH rapidly growing children could be a lobby point for our MP. SH – questioned the drop in primary numbers - this will affect the schools. KA – growth funding will be available to support school that will be growing. RL – does not differentiate those school that are growing with one class against school that is growing by 6 classes. 25% funding on top of the AWPU if you have 120 children you could be losing £120,000. Significant problems for school. RL questioned if this was national. KH – the LA will be funding the AWPU only for those schools. JH – The borough has to look at services and have to accept services likes Trewern and Music Service may need a long-term plan. KA– there used to be an option blocks within DSG where they could have pooled funding from school if they want to go down that route. In previous years under funding meant that we had to transfer school block money to HNB. This is not currently an option unless school forum decides to do this.

#### **Not transferring money to HNB – action**

- 6.18 Forum were asked whether they should set up money for 4-year-old contingency fund as the borough has seen school some increase in school roll and some schools with a reduction in school role. In primary phase there is a lot of funding pressure and this is likely to continue.
- 6.19 To maintain a 4-year-old fund small schools will be able to access that. This item will be brought back in January with a proposal.
- 6.20 DD asked what the criteria was, and he would like to see the money used to save jobs and provision rather than immediate reaction and not to use this fund for redundancy. CJ the money would help keep school going and the pupil numbers are expected to rise next year. She said that falling pupil numbers has affected her school. SH – suggested that we work together with Lisa O’Dwyer and Andy Carr regarding future pupil number and vacancies. There are 25 primary schools with falling numbers which will have a knock-on effect on funding. Need to come back with robust criteria for falling numbers.
- KH – the schools that have this concern need to make an application with what they are doing with their money. SH – the DfE guidance has criteria which schools can follow. KF said schools have to be good or outstanding to qualify.
- KH – has come up with one model which will meet the guidelines and model we are proposing.

#### **Schools Forum:**

- (a) Agreed the principles applied to the funding model (including MFG protection levels**
- (b) Agreed the target primary Secondary ration of 1:1:35 as the basis for the final model.**

**(c) Noted the issues regarding falling rolls and agree the allocation of funding for falling rolls.**

**(d) Agreed the provision for growth fund for classes opening in September 2020.**

## **7. Financial Transparency and Risk Protection Assessment in schools DfE consultations**

7.1 Insurance arrangement that operate in academy trust are consulting whether to extend this arrangement to maintain schools. **Local authority not in favour – consultation closed.**

7.2 KA reported that DfE believe more financial transparency in academies than maintained schools. There are 8 strands to the consultation and are naming and shaming those local authorities that do not meet statutory deadlines.

7.3 Deadline for submission non-negotiable and is mandatory and should be taken seriously.

7.4 Schools should set the governors meeting before the deadline so that the schools can respond before the deadline.

7.5 Schools have to report to LA 5% of the budget. Number of schools in deficient has reduced to 94 schools. Business Partners arrange meeting to see what arrangements are in place, so schools do not go into deficient. Schools need to report to LA if they have reserves.

7.6 DD –suggested that as a result of the consultation the finance team should come to heads meeting and to governors briefing to explain the consultation as it falls under the governors' responsibility. DB – questioned whether this applies to the VA schools, KA said it does..

## **Schools Forum noted these DfE Consultations**

### **8.. Arrangements for Redundancy Cost for Schools**

8.1 It had been suggested that the forum set up a new panel made up of representatives from the local authority members of school forum to review requests.

8.2 DB said that trade union representative should be at this meeting. SH and RL asked whether we needed a separate panel. KH – said it would be extra scrutiny and equity between schools.

**Schools Forum agreed that there was no need for an additional panel and that any requests from schools re redundancy payments should be considered directly by the Financial Monitoring Group. Requests approved by the FMG would then be forwarded to the Commissioning Director for Education & Section 151 Officer for authorisation.**

## **9. BACS – update/pilot**

9.1 KA asked for volunteers to be part of the pilot. KH to write to schools separately.

**Schools Forum noted and welcomed this proposal.**

## **10. Teachers' Pension Supplementary Fund**

10.1 Government said will provide funding increase of teachers' pension scheme this year. Formula was based on school numbers which may not be the best formula. Pot of money has been set aside – school have to apply for it - window open in December until mid-January for schools to apply if they meet criteria.

10.2 If a school's TPECG allocation falls short of the cost increase for Sept 19 to Mar 20 by more than 0.05% of their budget, based on actual costs from November 2019 pay bill, the DfE will provide funding for costs above that threshold. There will be two separate windows for the online application process. The window for mainstream schools will open between 02 December 2019 and 17 January 2020

**Recommendation: Schools to register before window opens. Ensure any payment going forward is implemented so it can be picked up.**

**Special schools - the LA will be doing it on their behalf.**

## **11. Update on the Sugar Tax Fund**

11.1 Update given on the sugar tax fund.

## **12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **12.1 Apprenticeship Levy Funding Arrangements**

GC – represented the report on apprenticeship levy.

GS asked if we gave the money back to the LA to distribute to the other agencies - how much say does the school have?

JH – asked the forum to consider whether we want the money to go back to the government – or give to the organisation.

RL – mentioned the teaching apprenticeship local scheme - Partnership London SCITT should be able to offer from Sept 2020. GL asked for school to start planning in September if this is the way forward.

JTS – can PFI early providers get access to this? JTS maximum our level of spend could passport the money to one provider. Really like to see PFI offering early years qualification the similar.

DB – expressed concerns on how we avoid the apprentices being paid differently. He said he needs guarantee to ensure apprenticeship are being paid properly according to London living wage and working arrangements are checked. If not then he has objections.

JTS said it was hard to achieve general rates to pay. This is to do with low paid sector affectively placing that proviso the apprenticeship an educational place route it is an

allowance while they are in education and work rather than a high paid position. Lot of PFI providers will not be paying London wage to their own staff. Can offer career pathway.

GC – the intention is that the agency will be paying living London age and it is a career pathway for these children rather than cheap labour.

**Schools Forum agreed to use the council criteria for applications from PVI sector to be included. Schools Forum agreed to support the money going back to local authority.**

### **13.. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

13.1 Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020 at 10.00 am