

**MINUTES OF THE OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM  
HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2017  
IN ROOM 115, BARKING LEARNING CENTRE, BARKING  
(10:00am – 12:00pm)**

**Present: School Representatives**

**Primary School Representatives**

Daniel Craft	HT, St Peter's Primary School
Brian Fox	HT, Roding Primary School
Scott Halliwell (Joint Chair)	HT, Southwood Primary School
Jayne Meech	HT, Village Infants School
Martin Nicholson	HT, Grafton Primary School
Richard November	HT Valence Primary School
Julie Philips	HT, Godwin Primary School
Paramjit Roopra	HT, Northbury Primary School

**Secondary School Representative**

**Governor Representatives**

David Dickson	HT, Eastbury Community School
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**Academy / Free Schools**

Janis Davies	HT, Sydney Russell School
Andrew Roberts	HT, Riverside School

**Academy Special School Representative**

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

**Non-School Representatives**

John Trow Smith	Early Years Representative
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**Head of Specialist Alternative Provision**

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

Dominic Byrne	NUT
John McGill	NASUWT

**Also present:** Jane Hargreaves, Commissioning Director – Education  
Daksha Chauhan – Group Accountant – Local Authority Finance  
Katherine Heffernan – Group Manager – Local Authority Finance and Investment  
Shaj Sivadasan – Principal Accountant, Schools - Local Authority Finance  
Councillor Evelyn Carpenter – Cabinet Member Education and Schools  
Susan George – Senior Accountant, Finance and Investment  
Nichola Young – Local Authority Minute Clerk

## **MINUTES**

Mr Roger Leighton (RL) chaired the meeting.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Ges Smith, HT Jo Richardson School  
Susan Ball, HT Trinity School  
Jo Tupman, HT, Barking Abbey School  
John Trow-Smith, Early Years Representative  
Yvonne Kelly, 14-19 Representative  
Patricia Harvey – Senior Professional, High Needs Block and Minute Clerk

### **2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

### **3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

- 3.1 The minutes and matters arising will be discussed in the January main Schools' Forum (SF) meeting on Tuesday 16 January 2018.

### **4. REPORT FROM THE GROUP ACCOUNTANT - FINANCE**

#### **2. National Funding Formula**

- 2.1 The main funding change which will have an impact on the formula is the flexibility surrounding the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG). Local authorities have the flexibility to set MFG between 0% and minus 1.5% per pupil.

#### **3. Schools Funding Formula Models**

- 3.1 Noted, there were 23 responses to the consultation that was sent to schools on 25 October 2017. This is a 40% response with 13 (56%) selecting option 1 as their preference and 10 (43.5%) selecting option 2. In terms of the number of schools that could have voted, a majority of 3 did not seem conclusive enough, the vote has therefore been brought back to Schools' Forum.
- 3.2 Noted the modelling is based on the October 2016 census data. Final numbers will come through in December 2017 when the Department for

Education (DfE) issue the APT (Authority Proforma Tool).

- 3.3 Noted, Appendix 2 shows that there are significant reductions in the Primary AWPU (Age Weighted Pupil Unit), flexi AWPU rates have been implemented to avoid turbulence.
- 3.4 Noted, Scott Halliwell (SH) brought an error to the attention of Schools' Forum. 3.6 in the Schools' Forum report should state that the Primary and Secondary ratio will be 1:1.43 rather than 1:1.40, Daksha Chauhan (DC) confirmed that this was an error.
- 3.5 Noted, SH informed SF that there is a query as to why the NFF is at 1:1.29 or 1:1.30 nationally.
- 3.5.1 Noted, Katherine Heffernan (KH) replied saying the NFF was balanced at 1:1.30, but AWPU levels have gone down, more for Primary than Secondary; the government is nationally trying to bring these in line with national averages. The comparative amount going through deprivation and other need factors is lower for Primary than Secondary. Change is mainly around the relative balance of deprivation. Free school meals and ever 6 have an impact.
- 3.6 Noted, KH informed SF that the lump sum in the NFF is lower, all schools will experience a reduction as a result of that. Also split site formula has been kept for now but will disappear when the NFF comes into effect.
- 3.7 Noted, significant protection has been applied through the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) to get to the positions.
- 3.8 Noted, it is recommended that SF agree to go with Option 2 in readiness for the changeover to the NFF.
- 3.9 Decision required for Schools' Forum to agree to funding model Option 2 for 2018/19

**Approved**

## **5. Growth Fund**

- 5.1 Noted, the proposed Growth Fund requirement for 2018/19 is £3.5m and is made up of allocations through the phases and a contingency of just under £175k.
- 5.2 Noted, Growth Fund is top sliced from the Schools Block.
- 5.3 Noted, SH informed SF that the Primary Sector have concerns over the locality of vacancies. Schools have asked for pupil places planning to be considered on a locality bases as unfilled places had the potential to aggravate the funding shortfall where classes are below full. Needed sensible local planning, and reduce down PAN where necessary to remove vacant places to ensure classes across neighbouring schools are full. Likewise, new classes opening up would impact on neighbouring schools.

and suggested that it may be beneficial to start a working group to see where spaces are becoming available.

5.3.1 Noted, Jane Hargreaves has informed SF that there are no new Primary classes opening up in September and has said that Andrew Carr will be at the Headteachers meeting on 06 December 2017 to present.

5.3.2 Noted, Roger Leighton (RL) stated that this will have a serious impact on funding and would like to propose a formal working group of Schools' Forum to look at planning

5.3.3 JH suggested that it may be good to start with Joy's meeting which initially met to discuss nursery places and are now going to discuss Reception places.

5.3.4 Schools' Forum members have agreed to set up a working group surrounding growth. The starting point will be Joy's meeting. The proposed name is School Place Planning.

**Action JB**

5.4 Decision required – Schools' Forum is asked to approve the growth fund for 2018-19 for each of the respective phases.

**Agreed**

## **6. De-delegation**

6.1 Decision required – Schools' Forum is asked to agree, separately for Primary and Secondary phases, the de-delegated budgets for centrally provided services.

**Agreed**

6.1.2 Primary Representatives – 8 votes in favour  
Secondary Representatives – 3 votes in favour

## **5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **1. Apprenticeship Levy – KH provided SF with an update on the Apprenticeship Levy**

1.1 Noted - the Apprenticeship Levy is being enforced and the LA has been paying it but difficulty has been experienced in invoicing schools. Schools are to be invoiced for the first half, schools that do not use payroll will be sent letters explaining how to get the deductions linked to the LBBB digital account.

1.2 Noted, Brian Fox (BF) informed SF that it has been extremely difficult to access these funds and start apprentices via Chelmsford College.

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

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**

- 1.4 Noted, SLA schools now invoiced twice yearly (previously annually). This is not done on a monthly basis due to resourcing issues.

**6.**

### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Schools' Forum meeting will take place on Tuesday 16 January 2018 in Council Chamber, Town Hall, Barking, from 10:00am to 12:00pm.

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