

**MINUTES OF THE AUTUMN TERM MEETING OF
THE SCHOOLS FORUM
HELD ON TUESDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2013
AT COUNCIL CHAMBER TOWN HALL
(10.00AM – 12.30PM)**

Present

School Members:

Academies and Free School

Nick Ball (Deputy for Paul Jordan)

Representative, Thames View Infants School

Special School

Peter McPartland

Headteacher, Trinity School

Primary School Representatives

Elizabeth Chaplin (Joint Chair)

Headteacher, Valence Primary School

Avril Carnelly (Governor Rep)

Headteacher, John Perry Primary School

Ruth Ejvet

Headteacher, St. Margaret's C of E Primary School

Brian Fox

Headteacher, Roding Primary School

Margaret Pease

Headteacher, Southwood Primary School

Gary Wilder

Executive Headteacher, Furze Infants / Warren Junior Schools

Secondary School Representatives

Roger Leighton (Joint Chair)

Headteacher, The Sydney Russell School

Val Dennis

Headteacher, Eastbrook Comprehensive School

David Dickson (Governor Rep)

Headteacher, Eastbury Comprehensive School

Head of Alternative Provision

Janet Lewis

Non-School Members:

Early Years Partnership

John Trow-Smith

Trade Union

Dominic Byrne

Also Present

Helen Jenner

Corporate Director Children's Services

Jane Hargreaves (Deputy for Helen Jenner)

Divisional Director - Education

Lesley Briden

Minute Taking

Dawn Calvert

Local Authority Finance

Derek Moore

Trade Union

Gaspare Nicolini

Local Authority Finance Local Authority Finance

Andrew Ward

Principal Accountant, Children's Services Finance

Richard November

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Paul Jordan (Representative attended)

Headteacher, Thames View Infants School

Kevin Wilson

Headteacher, All Saints School

Caryn Swart

14-19 Provision (Barking and Dagenham College)

1. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting which took place on 28 November 2012 were read. The agreement of the minutes was postponed until the end of the meeting to allow duplicate copies of the minutes to be provided. The minutes were agreed.

VoIP Telephony System Project (amended)

JTS requested DC to confirm whether any of the contingency fund accrued as a result of any PVI headcount (actual + notional 90% cash floor) and, if so, what provisions might be made to allow the PVI access infrastructure improvements through a proportionate use of the contingency fund.

DC

2. REPORT FROM HEAD OF FINANCE

Dedicated Schools Grant

DC summarised the 2012/13 forecast outturn to Forum members. EC requested that DC present quarterly updates at each Forum Meeting so the financial situation can be monitored.

DC

Schools Facing Financial Difficulty Sub Group

The Barking Abbey School had requested a loan of £400,000 through the Schools in Financial Difficulty sub group. HJ queried if the school still required the loan as there is only three weeks of this financial year remaining. DC is to contact the school requesting further information regarding the loan and report back to the next Forum.

DC

Dedicated Schools Grant – Block Allocations

Queries were made regarding the High Needs Block and the cost of placing children in educational establishments out-of-borough. Overall discussion took place and it was felt that this issue be looked into carefully and asked DC to provide further information.

DC

JL stated that the Seabrook Centre opening should make savings and was a way of moving forward.

Forum members were asked to consider and endorse the Local Authority proposal to increase the cost per ARP place by £1,500 in 2013/14 (recommendation i). Members endorsed this proposal.

DC

Agreed

It was requested that the School Forum Funding Review Sub-Group look at the formulas regarding the funding of ARPs.

EC/RL

PMc thanked Dawn and her team for the quick response to emails to clarify the 2013/14 budget for Trinity.

Arrangements regarding the funding of vacant places at ARP were discussed.

Forum members were asked to consider and endorse the Local Authority proposals in respect of funding of vacant places, a temporary period of going over planned numbers and accommodating pupils from other local authorities (recommendation ii).

Members endorsed this proposal.	Agreed	DC
It was noted that the Hearing Impaired Unit at Five Elms Primary School was oversubscribed, 18 places were originally available but 23 pupils were now on the register.		
AC stated that she had been requested to open another class for October 2012 but had received no extra funding.		
MP had a new class open for September 2012 but only an additional 19 pupils had been allocated to the school, which did not cover start up costs.		
JTS asked DC to send him the January count figures regarding the Early Years Block.		DC
It was noted that LBBB was the third highest in London regarding allocation of funds to the Schools Block. BF will send a Primary / Secondary split of funding to group.		BF
HJ requested that classes 'out of deadline' be put into contingency costs. It was requested that this item be discussed at the School Forum Funding Review Sub-Group meeting in connection with finalising the criteria for the Growth Fund.		EC/RL
Centrally Retained DSG Budget		
Schools Forum was asked to agree each line of the centrally retained DSG for 2013/14 (recommendation iii)	Agreed	DC
Schools Forum are asked to agree to delegate the detailed review of 2013/14 centrally retained DSG budget to the Local Authority / Headteacher Steering Group with the findings and any recommendations being brought back to the full Schools Forum in time to make changes for 2014/15 (recommendation iv).	Agreed	DC
Schools Forum was asked to agree the growth fund of £3.07m for 2013/14 and agree the proposed allocations criteria for additional classes, new schools and expanding schools (recommendation v).		
Forum members agreed to the sum of £3.07m but did not ratify the criteria. The School Forum Funding Reform Sub-Group will endorse new criteria and report back to next Forum meeting.		EC/RL
	Sum only agreed	DC
DSG De-Delegations		
It was noted that the de -delegation is agreed on an annual basis.		
DB queried if there was any mechanism in place for Academies and Free Schools regarding finance for Trade Union Services.		
DC will liaise with DB and put together a report to bring back to the next Schools Forum.		DC
Schools Forum are asked to agree to the de-delegation of £1,925,613 2013/14 (agreement to be by school group) (recommendation vi)	Agreed	DC

Schools in Financial Difficulty

Schools Forum was asked to agree to allocate continuation funding of £160,000 to Eastbrook School for 2013/14 to continue the late entrants into the borough KS4 programme (recommendation vii).

Agreed DC

It was agreed that the 2.24 item on the agenda relating to the terms of reference for the Schools in Financial Difficulty sub group be discussed at the next Schools Forum Meeting in June.

DSG Funding Formula 2013/14 - Model D

Schools Forum was asked to consider and endorse the Local Authorities 2013/14 final funding formula for the allocation of DSG to schools (recommendation viii). Members agreed the formula but would like it noted that this would be for one year only.

Agreed for one year only DC

Movement between Funding Blocks

Various issues were discussed regarding planned expenditure and as to why one area of funding had an under spend that would be transferred to an area of overspend.

It was requested that the School Forum Funding Reform Sub-Group discuss how the finance from each block is moved around as part of the discussions on funding arrangements for 14/15.

EC/RL

Schools Forum was asked to consider and endorse Local Authority proposals to move funding between the 2013/14 funding block, to apply a sum of £739,462 of carried forward DSG to the High Needs Block and to hold the balance of retained DSG (£4,257,348) within the High Needs Block (recommendation ix).

Agreed DC

Kitchen Report

Apologies were given on Tony Sargeant's behalf for not attending the meeting due to ill health.

TS

Schools would like to know an overall cost for all schools. Any queries regarding the report should be directed at TS or DC.

3. REPORTS FROM HEAD S OF SERVICE

There were no reports submitted.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Free Schools Meals

It is noted that schools are finding it increasingly difficult to obtain information from Social Services regarding children's entitlement to free school meals. It was felt that the time being given by schools trying to retrieve information was too long.

HJ/JH

Free Schools Meals to be added to the next Schools Forum Agenda.

DC

School Admissions

It was requested that clarification be given as to what schools are actually paying for regarding School Admissions. More administrative work has fallen upon schools, which was once overseen by the Admissions Team.

HJ/JH

Forum Sub-Groups

Date of meetings to be confirmed after Forum.

EC/RL

5. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 25 June 2013, 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Barking (please note Headteachers pre-meeting starts at 9.00am)

All