

**MINUTES OF THE OF THE SCHOOLS' FORUM  
HELD ON 5 DECEMBER 2023  
VIRTUAL MS TEAMS MEETING  
(10:00am to 12:00pm)**

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Maintained Primary Representatives</b>	
	Scott Halliwell (SH (Co-Chair)	HT, Southwood Primary School
	Julie Philips (JP)	HT, Godwin Primary School
	Gill Massar (GM)	HT, William Bellamy primary School
	Richard November (RN)	HT, Valence Primary School
	Simon Abeledo (SA)	HT, Rush Green Primary School
	Junaida Bana (JB)	HT, Furze Infant School
	Sara Rider (SR)	HT, Monteagle Primary School
	<b>Maintained Secondary Representatives</b>	
	Tony Roe (TR)	HT, Barking Abbey School
	Lisa Keane (LK)	HT, Eastbury Community School
	<b>Maintained All-through (A/T)</b>	
	Russell Taylor	HT, Robert Clack School
	<b>Governor Representatives (1 pri &amp; 1 sec)</b>	
	Vacant	
	Vacant	
	<b>Academy &amp; Free Primary</b>	
	Lisa Shepherd (LS)	HT, Eastbury Primary School
	<b>Academy &amp; Free Secondary</b>	
	Andy Roberts (AR)	HT, Riverside School
	<b>Academy &amp; Free Schools (A/T)</b>	
	Clare Cross (CC)	HT, Sydney Russell School
	<b>Academy Special School Representative</b>	
	Roger Leighton (RL)	Chief Executive, Partnership Learning
	<b>Maintained Special Schools Representative</b>	
	Jo Long (JL)	HT, Trinity School
	<b>Maintained PRU Representative</b>	
	Cathy Stygal (CS)	HT, Mayesbrook Park School
	<b>Early Years Representative</b>	
	John Trow-Smith (JTS)	Early Years, Local Authority
	<b>Trade Union Representatives (shared role)</b>	
	Dominic Byrne (DB)	NUT
	John McGill (JMc)	NASUWT
	<b>Church of England Representative</b>	
	David Huntingford (DH)	HT, William Ford C of E Junior School
	<b>Catholic Representative</b>	
	Clare Cantle	HT, All Saints Catholic School
	<b>14-19 Representative</b>	
	Vacant	Principal, Barking and Dagenham College

**Also present:**

Jane Hargreaves (JH) – Commissioning Director, Education; Councillor Elizabeth Kangethe (CK) – Cabinet Member for Educational Attainment and School Improvement; Patricia Harvey (PH) – Senior Professional, High Needs Block; Amar Barot (AB) – Group Manager, Local Authority Finance and Investment; Local Authority Finance; Gurmit Kaur (GKa) – Group Accountant, Local Authority Finance; Florence Fadahunsi (FF) – Group Accountant, Local Authority Finance; Caroline Connolly (CCo) – Group Accountant, Local Authority Finance; Amrita Kaur (AK) – Group Accountant, Local Authority Finance; Evan Hollows (EH) – Eastbrook School; Yolanda Cattle (YC) – Village Infant School; Kim Cerri (KC) – Riverside School; Tracey Whittington (TW) – Beam Primary School; Mairead Pryor (MP) – Warren Junior School; Grant Krog (GK) – The Leys Primary School and Nichola Young (NY) – Local Authority Minute Clerk.

**Mr Roger Leighton chaired the meeting, Mr Scott Halliwell to chair the January 2024 meeting.**

<b>1.0</b>	<b><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b>				
	Apologies were received from Jane Hargreaves; Cllr Elizabeth Kangethe; David Huntingford; Andy Roberts and Ronan Fox.				
<b>2.0</b>	<b><u>DECLARATION OF INTEREST</u></b>				
	None.				
<b>3.0</b>	<b><u>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</u></b>				
	3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2023 were confirmed as an accurate record. Amar Barot to be added to the attendance list of the October meeting.				
	<u>Update on previous actions</u>				
	<b>No.</b>	<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Item No</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>
	1	27 June 2023	Item 1.7	<b><u>EY - Low take up of nurse places</u></b> A briefing on the low take up of nursery places to be prepared and circulated as an appendix – <b><u>Ongoing</u></b> . <b>Early Years will be invited to the January meeting.</b>	Joy Barter/ Rikke Damsgaard
	2	17 October 2023	Item 3.3	<b><u>SF Membership</u></b> SF membership must be up to date and appear at the top of each agenda. The membership will be re-confirmed in January 2024 – <b><u>Ongoing</u></b> . <b>As SF papers must be circulated one week ahead of the meeting, Finance to ensure that an up-to-date membership list is included in the meeting papers for advance circulation.</b>	Finance
	3	17 October 2023	Item 3.4	<b><u>14-19 Representation</u></b> Barking and Dagenham College to be contacted to ensure there is 14-19 representation at SF. The new principal will be in post from January 2024 and should be present at the January meeting – <b><u>Ongoing</u></b> .	Kofi Adu
	4.	17 October 2023	Item 5.2	<b><u>HNWP Meeting</u></b> A High Needs working group meeting to be arranged before Christmas – <b>Complete</b>	Pat Harvey
	5.	17 October 2023	Item 10.6	<b><u>Trade Union Consultation</u></b> The results of the Trade Union consultation and the implications will be brought back and worked through at the December meeting – <b><u>Ongoing</u></b> . <b>Decisions were made around finances, there are ongoing</b>	Finance

				discussions. The outcome of the consultation will be reported to the January 2024 meeting.		
<b>4.0</b>	<b><u>REPORT FROM THE GROUP ACCOUNTANT – FINANCE</u></b>					
	<b><u>1.0 Update on DSG Outturn</u></b>					
	1.1	All areas are expected to break even apart from the High Needs Block which is a high-pressure area.				
	1.2	There is a healthy DSG position, with reserves of £8.2m, even with the HNB overspend.				
	1.3	The DSG reserves are projected to be £7,265m at year end, after SFFD & Falling Rolls have been financed, instead of top slicing from the schools block.				
		<b>Recommendation (i):</b> Schools Forum are requested to:				
		a)	Note the DSG projected outturn for 2023/24.			
						<b>Noted</b>
	<b><u>2.0 Update on High Needs Outturn Position</u></b>					
	2.1	There is a projected £1.8m overspend on the HNB.				
	2.2	The pressure areas are ARP funding, OOB & non-maintained funding.				
	2.3	The co-chairs have requested that the individual needs of children who are in OOB placements be reviewed strategically to see whether there is scope to bring them back into borough. This is a big job and there may not be capacity within the team to undertake this work. Paul Richardson undertook this work approx. 8 years ago, but no longer works for the council. Somebody may be commissioned to undertake this piece of work.				
	2.4	£1.4m has been earmarked for a one-off exceptional payment to alleviate the financial pressures that schools are facing due to the ongoing demand and complex cases of children with SEN. Noted, this includes Early Years.				
	2.5	HTs flagged that the top-up rate for maintained schools has not been updated for approximately ten years and requires a significant uplift. A formula within the system is required to get funds to maintained schools at an early stage so that planning can occur.				
	2.6	PH informed HTs that the top-up rate was set based on affordability.				
	2.7	HTs expressed that funding for Band G children in maintained schools is not comparable with special school/ARP funding and suggested even an uplift for band G children only. MN, JB, and SH are having ongoing discussions around this issue and will bring proposals to SF.				
	2.8	RL suggested there may be opportunities for clusters of need being dealt with by setting up specialist units which are associated with in-borough special schools.				
	2.9	HTs questioned whether it is predicted that the overspend will continue into upcoming years. PH responded by saying that this is why the LA are looking at the bigger picture and the needs of the children, as if the position does continue, we will be in a deficit position.				
	2.10	Funding was allocated to all schools this year, regardless of whether they had an				

ISP. This is called provision funding and is allocated based on the number of pupils. Noted, ISP funding was not extra money, but top-up in advance. Noted, Schools appreciate the provision funding which was additional money.

2.11 Noted, Appendix A has no PVI setting data. PVIs were however, included in the one-off payments, which will be received this month.

**Recommendation (ii):** Schools Forum are requested to:

- a) Note and comment on the 2023/24 High Needs outturn position.
- b) Note the one-off exceptional payment to be made to schools this autumn.

**Noted**

### 3.0 2023/24 Update on Early Years Funding

3.1 The Early Year's supplementary grant has come in.

3-4 yr Olds	Universal Pte
<b>Current Rate</b>	5.21
<b>Supp Rate</b>	0.06
<b>New Rate</b>	5.27
<b>1% increase</b>	
<b>2yr Olds</b>	
<b>Current Rate</b>	6.09
<b>Supp Rate</b>	2.07
<b>New Rate</b>	8.16
<b>32.5% increase</b>	

3.2 There is a projected surplus of approx. £1.4m. due to reduced take up in comparison with census numbers.

Current Arrangements				
3&4 YOF	Payable Rate			5.27
	Summer 23	Autumn Term 22	Spring Term	Total
Days in the term		70.0	55	
Weeks in the term (23-24)		14	11	
Total Pupil Numbers		3,342	4,123	
No. on 30 hours		1,069	1,355	
No. on 15 hours		2,273	2,768	
£ for 30 hours		2,366,124.60	2,356,480.50	
£ for 15 hours		2,515,529.10	2,406,914.40	
Already Spent (Apr-August)	6,675,310			
<b>Total for term</b>	<b>6,675,310</b>	<b>4,881,653.70</b>	<b>4,763,394.90</b>	<b>16,320,358.60</b>
Budget				17,862,736.95
<b>23/24 Estimated Projected Surplus</b>				<b>- 1,542,378.35</b>

3.3 There is a proposal to make additional one-off payments with the projected surplus for the spring term only, of £1.00 per child per hour. This will bring the surplus

down to approx. £600k.

3.4 Once numbers are confirmed in the spring term and if the surplus is the expected £600k then Early Years will bring this item to SF.

3.5 JTS asked SF whether the Local Authority or SF members had any views on the [Early years funding - extension of the entitlements Consultation response \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk), including how the 2 Year Old Formula might work in LBB, i.e. central retention and use of supplements, and the [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childcare-expansion-capital-grant-funding?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm\\_source=63f5e632-5546-4114-80c8-c6e965574f64&utm\\_content=weekly](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childcare-expansion-capital-grant-funding?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=63f5e632-5546-4114-80c8-c6e965574f64&utm_content=weekly). KA confirmed that LBB intend to retain the maximum 5% and that details of the formula and the capital funding would be brought to January 2024 Forum. JTS highlighted the urgency as the first changes would take effect in April 2024 and offered to speak with Officers in January ahead of the Forum.

**Action** KA

**Recommendation (ii):** Schools Forum are requested to:

- a) To approve a one-off payment of £1.00 per child per hour for nurseries and PVI settings for the 2023/24 Spring term only.

**Approved**

#### **4.0 Schools Block Funding Formula 2024/25 and consultation update**

4.1 The allocation remains unchanged. The Schools Block is forecasted to breakeven, with Falling Rolls funding to be met from the Growth Fund.

	Budget	Forecast	Variance overspend / (underspend)
Pupil Led factors	177,925,937	177,925,937	-
Growth Fund	1,565,576	1,085,490	(480,086)
Falling Rolls Fund	-	480,086	480,086
NNDR	4,739,398	4,739,398	-
PFI	4,724,569	4,724,569	-
<b>Schools Block Total</b>	<b>188,955,480</b>	<b>188,955,480</b>	<b>-</b>

4.2 There is a projected net deficit of £728k at Q2. 24 out of 41 maintained schools are projecting a combined deficit of £4.3m. 17 schools are projecting a combined surplus of £3.6m.

##### 2023/24 Schools in-year Deficit

Phase	Numbers	Total
Primary	21	£3,519,174
Secondary	1	£311,626
Special	1	£387,017
Pupil Referral Unit	1	£109,712
<b>Total Schools deficit</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>£4,327,529</b>

##### 2023/24 Schools in-year surplus

Phase	Numbers	Total
Primary	11	£960,561
Secondary	4	£1,843,781
All through	2	£795,532
<b>Total Schools surplus</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>£3,599,874</b>

<b>Combined Schools outturn position -net deficit</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>£727,655</b>
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	<p>4.3 Lisa Shepherd informed Forum members that wellbeing pressures were raised at the Primary HTs meeting, around mental health. Support and kindness from the LA has been requested, especially in communications around SFFD.</p> <p><b>Recommendation (iv):</b> Schools' Forum are requested to:</p> <p>(a) Note the Schools Block projected outturn position  (b) Note the Quarter 2 outturn forecast monitoring returns for schools</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Noted</b></p>											
	<p><b><u>5.0 Schools Block Funding Formula for 2024-25 Consultation</u></b></p> <p>5.1 Consultation will close next week. Three models have been put together to try and drive more money towards the primary sector. HTs have been asked to ensure they contribute to the consultation. Individual school comments are welcomed and encouraged.</p> <p><b>Recommendation (iv):</b> Schools' Forum are requested to:</p> <p>(a) Remind schools of the consultation deadline of the 14 December 2023, for the 2024/25 funding models.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Noted</b></p>											
	<p><b><u>6.0 Additional funding for local authorities to support maintained schools in financial difficulties</u></b></p> <p>6.1 LBBB do not qualify for additional funding from DfE for schools in financial difficulty and will not benefit at all.</p> <p><b>Recommendation (v):</b> Schools' Forum are requested to:</p> <p>(a) Note: No additional funding for LBBB maintained schools</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Noted</b></p>											
5.0	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <p>None</p>											
6.0	<p><b><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></b></p> <p>Tuesday 16 January 2024, from 10.00am to 12.00pm. HT pre-meet is scheduled for Monday 15 January, time TBC.</p>											
7.0	<p><b><u>Action Log</u></b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="224 1451 1390 1711"> <thead> <tr> <th>No.</th> <th>Date of Meeting</th> <th>Item No</th> <th>Action</th> <th>Owner</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>27 June 2023</td> <td>Item 1.7</td> <td><b><u>EY - Low take up of nurse places</u></b> Details of the Early Years - extension to entitlements formula and capital funding to be brought to the January 2024 meeting.</td> <td>Kofi Adu</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	No.	Date of Meeting	Item No	Action	Owner	1	27 June 2023	Item 1.7	<b><u>EY - Low take up of nurse places</u></b> Details of the Early Years - extension to entitlements formula and capital funding to be brought to the January 2024 meeting.	Kofi Adu	
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