

**MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING**  
**Wednesday 12 November 2014**  
**Committee Room 3, Waltham Forest Town Hall**  
**6:30 – 7:30pm**

<b>PRESENT</b>	
Shona Ramsay	Acting Chair of Schools Forum and Secondary Headteacher Representative
Debbie Callender	Clerk to Schools Forum <a href="mailto:debbie.callender-oneill@walthamforest.gov.uk">debbie.callender-oneill@walthamforest.gov.uk</a> 020 8496 3669
<b>Maintained Primary Headteachers Representative: [4]</b>	
Jane Harris	Edinburgh Primary
Kate Jennings	Mission Grove Primary
Lindsey Lampard	Chingford CofE Primary
Maureen Okoye	Davies Lane Primary School
<b>Maintained Primary Governor Representatives: [3]</b>	
Greta Akpeneye	Thorpe Hall Primary
Cllr Aktar Beg	Edinburgh Primary
Thomas Goodall	Edinburgh Primary
<b>Maintained Secondary Headteacher Representatives: [3]</b>	
John Hernandez	Norlington School for Boys
Lynnette Parvez	Kelmscott School
<b>Maintained Secondary Governor Representative: [1]</b>	
Ian Moyes	Heathcote School
<b>PRU</b>	
Julian Lee	Hawkswood Group
<b>Non School Members</b>	
Sarah Kendrick	Early Years Provider

Gill Burbridge (Leyton 6 <sup>th</sup> Form College)	16-19 Providers
Steve White (NUT)	Trade Unions
<b>LBWF Council Officers</b>	
Cate Duffy	Divisional Director – Education Improvement
Andrew Beckett	Interim Head of Inclusion
Gerry Kemble	Head of HR Delivery
Graham Moss	Schools Finance Consultant
Rishi Peetamsingh	Group Accountant Schools
Duncan Pike	Strategic Finance Advisor
Shehwar Sultan	Principal Accountant
<b>Observers</b>	
Peter Dawe	Former Schools Forum Chair
Joanne Littman	Primary Headteachers Co-ordinator

## 1. Welcome all and Apologies

Acting Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

Acting Chair was asked to chair in the absence of the Vice-Chair at short notice.

The term of office of most members of the Schools Forum ended in October 2014.

Acting Chair explained that Schools Forum has a new constituted membership and asked for a round of introductions.

Clerk received the following apologies:

Linzi Roberts-Egan, Deputy Chief Executive, Families; Msgr George Stokes; Cllr Mark Rusling (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People Services); Mark Morrall (Vice-Chair)

### **1.1 Goodbye Presentation for Peter Dawe, Former Schools Forum Chair**

Acting Chair delivered a farewell presentation to Peter Dawe who served as Chair since its first meeting on 29 October 2002. Acting Chair thanked Peter for his tireless work as Chair and all admired his rigour, fairness, integrity and transparency which will be sorely missed.

Clerk presented Peter with a thank you card and small gift as a token of our appreciation for all his hard work.

Peter commented it has been a marvellous 12 years serving as the Forum's Chair, which has been enjoyable. He welcomed all members and paid a particular tribute to Nick Russell, who passed away suddenly during the summer holidays and who was also a founding member of Schools Forum.

Peter thanked Acting Chair and finance colleagues for their hard work and professionalism.

Peter also thanked Graham Moss who he has worked with since the first meeting and thanked Graham for the professional reports that he has produced.

Lastly, Peter thanked the Clerk for her hard work in getting all papers delivered in a timely manner and requested that the Clerk conveys his thanks to Jenny Hall, who had assisted on occasion and to previous Clerks who serviced the Forum in the past.

## **2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

### **2.1 The Clerk to Invite Nominations for the position of Chair**

Clerk invited nominations for the position of Chair. Shona Ramsay was proposed and seconded. There being no further nominations; Shona was elected as Chair. The Clerk then handed over to the Chair.

### **2.2 Nominations to be invited for the position of Vice Chair**

It was unclear whether the current Vice-Chair could be nominated in his absence.

There should be a balance of positions between Primary and Secondary representatives.

Maureen Okoye was proposed and seconded. There being no further nominations; Maureen was elected as Vice Chair.

## **3. Minutes of the Last meeting that was held on 17 September 2014**

Acting Chair asked Forum to review the minutes for accuracy. The Clerk was asked to make the following amendments:

### **Page 3**

#### **Agenda item 4 - Update of Free School Meals Registration**

In the last bullet point it was clarified that it related to a reception child

### **Page 4**

#### **Agenda item 5 – Schools Forum Membership – Update for Discussion and Decision**

LP was contacted by a former secondary governor where she felt if there were three headteachers that it would reduce the governor representation. She wanted it noted she felt there should be more governor representation.

## Page 5

### Agenda item 7 – Use of DSG Underspend

The following comments should be amended as:

In June 2014 Schools Forum agreed to delegate proposals for the underspend to the Strategic Education Partnership (SEP) Board

- In context there has been a real improvement in education outcomes across all key stages.
- those improvements are the testimony to our excellent leaders and teachers and their commitment to tackle mutual challenges.
- Need to secure improvements whilst also addressing any new challenges from policy changes and the on-going demand for school places.
- Given the high level of deprivation and mobility in Waltham Forest there is also an ongoing need to secure high quality early help services for children to enable them to overcome barriers to learning.
- The LA funding context has seen cuts of 40% to school improvement and early help.

These proposals are designed to build up the capacity and strength in schools to create sustainable improvement and to maintain a high quality early help offer.

- there are four proposals agreed at the SEP board which we are asking Schools Forum to agree this evening

Growth Fund – further report on pressures here later in the agenda

System leadership and Secondary Challenge- funding from these proposals would be delegated to a budget holder school to manage on behalf of all schools.

The Universal offer School Improvement and Early Help

- If agreed tonight the details of each proposal will be worked through with headteacher groups.
- **Question:** How did you arrive at those figures and is there a costed plan?
- **Response:** It is based on cost of delivering a range of services up to July 2017.
- **Question:** Experience in the past that you need more money than this to effect system improvement
- **Response:** Agreed but this would not be the only resource for this work. Schools already commit funding to this area and have indicated willingness to collaborate further
- **Question:** Can this include Schools with sixth forms and all the colleges?
- **Response:** this funding comes from the Schools and High Needs block underspends so does not cover post 16. That said secondary heads have indicated their desire to work with the existing post 16 partnership and to learn from the methodology applied here.

- **Question:** from the academies perspective, is the money given back to the academies or do they buy-in to this process? Is that a process that can be and should be processed? **Response:** This is from the underspend in high needs and schools block. The recommendation came from the SEP is that it is used in this way. If these proposals for the use of the underspend are not accepted by Schools Forum then alternative proposals would be need to be designed and brought back to a further meeting.

Acting Chair asked Forum members to review the recommendations: 13 in favour / none against / none abstaining

## Page 8

### Agenda item 11- High Needs Block 2014-15 – For information and decision

Clerk was asked to add the word “health” as:

*Common characteristics each one of them has acute mental health needs and special SEN*

## Page 9

### Agenda item 11 – High Needs Block 2014-15 – For information and decision

In the second bullet point on page 9 the following sentence should read:

*3 months between January and March 2015 and with the balance of funding from the financial year 2015/16*

The minutes were accepted with all the amendments noted.

## Matters Arising

### Page 9

#### Any Other Business

The draft Fair Funding document was distributed in September. The final copy will be posted in hard copy format. There will be one copy per school and a PDF version will be emailed more widely. There will be a launch event on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2015 in Jubilee Room at the Houses of Parliament

## 4. Single Status update – November 2014

The Single Status summary document was dispatched in advance of the meeting.

Gerry Kemble stated that:

- The Single Status project is nearly completed.
- The Director of Finance and Chief Finance Officer will sign off outstanding issues on tribunal claims that were made against the Local Authority and it is expected the sign-off will take place in December 2014.
- Residential Site Service Officer (RSSOs) consultation around the deletion of this role and implementation of Single Status for an alternative role.

- GK requested that he no longer attends future Schools Forum meetings as there is an expectation Single Status project will cease in December 2014. The project has been ongoing for six years.

There was a query regarding the minutes and whether they should be signed-off at the next meeting. It was confirmed the minutes will be signed off at the next meeting once the amendments have been added.

## 5. High Needs Block Update

Andy Beckett, Interim Head of Inclusion presented the report.

- This is a block of funding set aside by the DSG to use and support SEN provision. The report informs Schools Forum about decisions that will need to be made in allocating funding in 2015-16
- A request has been submitted to the DfE for additional place funding which amounts to £0.338m
- AB asked Forum to note and agree the recommendations on page 2
- **Question:** How do you anticipate the distribution of the 58 places? Would consultations take place?  
**Response:** A detailed exercise took place on projections for places needed in 2015-16 and we anticipated we need to have more commissioned places around the special resource provision and so adjusted the numbers. In addition, we added places as depicted in *Appendix B*.
- **Question:** How many of these settings were contacted?  
**Response:** We used actual places less those who were going to leave for secondary school. Those places will be available from September.
- Pupil projection for SEN cannot be precise but we used forecasting on the basis of previous year's patterns.
- **Question:** When will you receive the response from the DfE?  
**Response:** It was advised before December 2014
- There is a strong expectation they will approve.
- **Question:** The Alternative Provision expenditure appears too high. This is met through the DSG contribution to cover £8000 place element plus the top-up commissioning fee.
- **Question:** What is Forest Pathway?  
**Response:** It specialises in working with Year 11 students who are either, newly arrived from overseas or Year 11 students from the UK who have had a disrupted educational pathway. The view is Year 11 may find mainstream schools can be quite challenging.
- The figure is surprising. The costs have been known for a long time. The notes in *Appendix A* have more detail.
- We need to be mindful that places part-funded by the HNB at the PRUs are decreased by 10 from 82 to 72, reducing commissioning costs to schools.

- The total number of PRU and Alternative Provision funded places for 2015-16 remains unchanged for 2015-16 at 136
- The total amount of places that are available excluding forest pathways is 56. There is not going to be any reduction in the secondary sector.
- Youngsters were being turned away as this provision is oversubscribed. There are 66 pupils at Forest Pathways and funding needs to be found for them. Places are highly sought after as there is a reduction in Alternative Provision.
- Local Authority-born cost placement availability has not dropped.
- **Question:** Would the cost come from the Schools Block?
- We would need to transfer a pro-rata rate from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block (*recommendation 2.2.6*)
- There is a recommendation reducing commissioning costs to schools. The full year income will pass on to schools which will result in a reduction of 28%
- There was a concern that this could cause isolation from other mainstream pupils.
- JL suggested that he would provide his contact details to
- Chair asked whether Forum members vote for all of the recommendations under 2.1

### Votes

Recommendation 2.1 – *all agreed*

Recommendation 2.2 – 15 agreed / 1 – against / 2 - abstention

### DECISION

Schools Forum members **AGREED** all the recommendations under 2.1

Schools Forum members **AGREED** all the recommendations under 2.2

<http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/schoolsforum> - Agenda item 5

## 6. Consultation on Growth and Local Funding Formula

- RP provided a verbal update to this report and highlighted the recommendations on page 2 (2.2)
- This report provides information about the consultation process that took place between 13 October and 5 November 2014
- Recommendation 2.2.2 was highlighted
- If schools are categorised as good or outstanding expected to rise significantly to give additional support
- The methodology currently applied by Waltham Forest results in a higher cost than if these schools were funded in the same way as academies
- Currently in Waltham Forest, where the actual NOR in the October census is below 80% of the capacity of the school, there is additional funding equivalent to 75% of the AWP rate for that phase for every pupil below the 80% capacity figure
- When there is funding to support schools this is addressed
- The Council is very limited on where school sites should be situated and do try to avoid split sites so instead we try amalgamate

- Holy Family, George Mitchell and the nursery building are separate from their main buildings
- There is an argument on these the more we put into split site funding
- If we apply AWPU the calculation has to be readjusted
- What is the ratio of the LFF?
- We have a national formula to allocate funding and one of the biggest issues is what should we do about the primary / secondary differential
- Secondary schools receive 27% more funding
- In Waltham Forest we are an outlier (41%)
- Waltham Forest has one of the highest percentage of LFF in London
- Local authorities should look carefully at published information
- The dilemma is to achieve closing the gap. We seem to be moving in the right direction
- The proposal is additional funding available to be allocated to the primary sector should be distributed through the AWPU.
- **Question:** Why are we so high? **Response:** This is the Standard Fund Grants and it is secondary school-orientated. There has been clear guidance when we moved from the old to the new system. We shifted some funding but not a significant amount
- **Question:** Has the Local Authority used new monies to support the Primary schools? **Response:** This is only if needed. The guess is it doesn't. We have new schools that we are funding. There are Deprivation issues. We have the mandate to do the modelling

## Votes

Schools Forum was asked to note the recommendations as numbered 2.1.1 and 2.1.2

Recommendations 2.2.1 – 14 agree / 4 abstention

Recommendation 2.2.2 – 14 agree / 2 against / 2 abstention

Recommendation 2.2.3 – **Question:** should we be voting on the 'maybe'?

**Response:** A model would need to be approved at the January meeting

Recommendation 2.2.3 – 14 agree / none against / 4 abstention

Recommendation 2.2.4 – 15 agree / 3 abstention

Recommendation 2.2.5 – 11 agree / 6 against / 1 abstention

Recommendation 2.2.6 – 11 agree / 2 against / 4 abstention

**Question:** On behalf of secondary schools, how does that impact on MFG?

**Response:** If we reduce the AWPU £50 reduction to those secondary schools we will have no reduction as protected by the MFG. The impact for other schools is the MFG is reduced by 1½%. If MFG goes up for secondary schools the cost is met by those schools that gain. The primary schools will have a bigger top slice to guarantee. It is a delicate area. The government was minded to remove the 1½% MFG so they could be shifting of funding. Although secondary schools, when you compare the inner London allowance, their funding is even higher.



Recommendation 3.1 – **Question:** what is the money used for? **Response:** These are for unforeseen financial costs like numbers going over. Those in favour – none / 7 against / 1 abstention

Recommendation 3.2 – Those in favour 4 / 0 against / 1 abstention

## DECISION

Schools Forum was asked to note the content of the recommendations 2.1.1 and 2.1.2

Schools Forum agreed 2.2.1

Schools Forum agreed 2.2.2

Schools Forum agreed 2.2.3

Schools Forum agreed 2.2.4

Schools Forum agreed 2.2.5

Schools Forum agreed 2.2.6

Schools Forum voted for **Recommendation 3.1:** “That voting members of Schools Forum, who are Governors and Head Teachers of **maintained primary schools only**, **agree not** to De-delegate **£183,300** for a Schools Contingency

Those in favour – 0 / those against – 7 / those abstain – 1

Schools Forum voted for **Recommendation 3.2:** “That voting members of Schools Forum, who are Governors and Head Teachers of **maintained secondary schools only**, **agree not** to De-delegate **£91,700** for a Schools Contingency

Those in favour – 4 / those against – 0 / those abstain – 1

<http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/schoolsforum> - **Agenda item 6**

## 7. DSG Funding Blocks 2015-16

- The Schools Block will be based on the census data
- The non-recoupment is not known
- Early Years Block is based on the census count
- The High Needs Block was already discussed earlier in the agenda
- Recoupment academies is a method of adjusting a dedicated schools grant (DSG) to take account of the conversion of a maintained school into an academy
- Free Schools are being brought into this system

## Votes

Recommendation 2.2.1: Those in favour 13 / those against: 2 / those abstain: 2

## DECISION

Schools Forum agreed recommendation 2.2.1

<http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/schoolsforum> - **Agenda item 8**

**8. Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2015**

The meeting ended at **8pm**