MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING
Wednesday 13 November 2013
Committee Room 3, Waltham Forest Town Hall
6:30 – 7:30pm

PRESENT	
Peter Dawe	Chair of Schools Forum
Debbie Callender	Clerk to Schools Forum debbie.callender@walthamforest.gov.uk **020 8496 3669**
Headteachers Representative: Primary & Nursery [4] Secondary [3] Special School [1]	
Primary & Nursery (4)	
Maureen Okoye	Selwyn and Davies Lane Federation
Kathryn Soulard	Greenleaf Primary School
Nursery (1)	
Sandra Campbell	Church Hill Nursery School and Children's Centre
Secondary (3)	
John Hernandez	Norlington Schools for Boys
Lynnette Parvez	Kelmscott School
Shona Ramsay	The Lammas School
Special School (1)	
Peter Falconbridge	Joseph Clarke School
Governor Representatives (7) – Primary (5) Secondary (2)	
Primary (5)	
Aktar Beg	Edinburgh Primary
Peter Dawe (Chair)	Dawlish Primary
Secondary (2)	
Rukhsana Yaqoob	Leytonstone School
Academy Representative	
Mark Morrall	Chingford Foundation / Rushcroft
Non School Representatives	

Msgr George Stokes	Diocese of Brentwood
LBWF Council Officers / Representatives	
Andrew Beckett	Head of Inclusion
Debbie Callender	Clerk to Schools Forum
Gerry Kemble	Head of HR Delivery
Graham Moss	Strategic Development Consultant
Rishi Peetamsingh	Group Accountant-Schools
Duncan Pike	Strategic Finance Advisor
Shehwar Sultan	Principal Accountant-Schools & High Needs
Observers	
David Ball	Sir George Monoux College
Graham Jackson	Willowfield Humanities College
Malcom Doolin	Astra Education
Julia Mainwaring	Belmont Park School
Jey Monsen	Joint Principal Educational Psychologist (Waltham Forest)
Zoe Cozens	Heathcote School
Michael Rennie	Sir George Monoux College
Jon Ashwell	Highams Park School
Karen Wishart	Acacia Nursery

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Chair made a particular welcome to Sandra Campbell, Head of Church Hill and Acting Head of Low Hall Nursery who is the newly elected Nursery representative.

PVI Setting vacancy

There has been a vacancy for the PVI setting for almost a year. Mahf Ambia from the Early Education Centre attended both Early Years Task and Finish group meetings in October. It was suggested he is co-opted to represent the PVI setting. Schools Forum agreed to co-opt Mahf Ambia for the PVI setting.

1.1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted by the Chair: Beverley Hall (St Mary's and St Saviours Federation); James O'Rourke (Parkside Primary School); Cllr Nicholas Russell (Davies Lane & Selwyn Federation); Ian Moyes (Heathcote School); Steve White (NUT) and Claire Coghill (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People Services – Families Directorate).

2. Minutes of the last meeting held on 18th September 2013

Item 2: Pre -briefing technical session

Chair and one other Forum member were the only voting members present at today's pre-briefing technical session. The meeting commenced at 5:15pm. It was members' wishes to continue with these sessions and the Chair wondered if it was the best use of everyone's time.

Comments

- There are complex reports that are being discussed and think it would be at officers' discretion.
- If members want to have more detailed overview of particular reports then it would be their responsibility to attend these sessions.

Chair agreed a **5:45pm** start at the next meeting. Forum members to note the change of the timing of agenda item 9a.

Chair went through the minutes, page by page of the last meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on the **18th September 2013** were checked for accuracy and signed off by the Chair as a true record of the meeting.

There were no matters arising.

3. Single Status Update – November 2013

- The Single Status brief update report was tabled at the meeting.
- A signing session has been scheduled to take place on 25 November 2013.
- Headteachers meeting took place last week.
- A meeting with the trade unions meeting took place today.
- Preparing consultation document for schools with their RSSOs.
- Recommend to replace with residents and non-residents.

4. High Needs Block 2014-15 Progress Report on place-allocation for High Needs Low Incidence (HNLI) Pupils – for information

The report was distributed in advance. Report authors provided additional verbal updates. This is a follow-up report from the last meeting on information on the demand for special school and college places. Comments received were:

- Submission to the DfE regarding commissioning places for 5-25.
- Post 16 students to post 16 provision resources.
- The DfE produced some detailed guidance on this.
- New arrangements embedded from April 2013. Restructure and revamped. To embed these new arrangements.
- Readily acknowledged short period of time.
- There were inaccuracies, but that was a result of colleges getting used to a new system. The new guidance is really encouraging, that they have to get the number of places and the distribution of those places as accurate as possible.

- **Question**: Is that the last opportunity to have a hands-on process? **Response:** After 2014-15 according to the Census.
- **Comment**: It's important that we have the details of where we are commissioning those places. Regarding the pre-16 places, we have the process in place and confident that we have the right number of places.
- **Comment**: Finalising the figures in the coming weeks.
- Further education (FE) colleges need to communicate on information regarding the number of students they are aware of.
- Forecasting information to inform how many places we want to commission for those places. Template to be submitted to the DfE by 23 December. The DfE will tell us what (Census) tells us. Further updated information at the next meeting in January 2014.
- A business plan should be established to look at changes. Harsh realities on post 16. In some local authorities there are fewer than 10 places.
- More work is needed to sort out the number of post 16 places. We need more pre 16 places. The 2014/15 cycle for post 16 operates on an August-July timescale. The cycle for pre 16 is April to March. The work has been done and has been excellent.

There were no further questions and Chair thanked the officers for the report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Forum members were asked to note recommendations **2.1-2.3;** Forum members were asked to agree to the recommendations **2.1-2.3**.

The Chair asked for votes.

Schools Forum AGREED to note the recommendations as numbered 2.1-2.3 in the report

http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/schoolsforum - **Agenda Item 4**

5. Early Years Single Funding Formula for 2014-15 – for information and decision

The Chair thanked members who worked hard in setting up the task and finish group meetings. The report was distributed in advance of the meeting.

- Two meetings were held in October. Final meeting of Task and Finish will be on 12th December.
- Reviewed the formula. Recommendations are listed on the second page.
- **Comments:** We are reviewing the various factors on deprivation and how maintained nursery schools are being funded. We are making recommendation of the hourly rate which is part of the consultation. There are further discussions with Cate Duffy, Divisional Director, Education Improvement. There will be further feedback in in the January meeting.
- **Comments:** Waltham Forest is one of the first local authorities to use the single formula, therefore up until this year, it wasn't possible to benchmark against other authorities. LA's have approached Early Years in different years.
- **Comments:** Other authorities have kept large sums of money to deal with the transition, in particular in nursery schools. None of us have been able to do that. We need to

move forward to justify to parents on the level of funding we are given. The main issue is it depends on the amount received by the government. Some receive £1000 per pupil. We need to look at what we achieve, but do need to constantly review.

- **Comments:** The effect of the end of the free school meals. Funding mechanisms is proportionate. Waltham Forest has the lowest participation rate in London. 2 year olds not receiving free education which they are entitled to. Longer term discussions are needed with the Early Years settings.
- **Comments:** The PVI will be consulted. Maintained sector need to be consulted. The idea is to consult all sectors. There will be consultation across all sectors
- **Question:** The participation rate so different. Did this discussion go to the Task and Finish group?
- **Response:** £600,000 was received but that was stopped and lost from the DSG. This falls outside Schools Forum's brief. You never get 100%, but there must be another mechanism. We know the number of settings have spare places. We need to get more information from these settings. A meeting to discuss this is currently being arranged
- This will go to the task and finish group once this meeting has been arranged.

All agreed to the recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Forum members were asked to note the recommendations on the report.

Schools Forum members were asked to agree to the recommendations as numbered **2.1 (2.1.1 – 2.1.4)** in the report.

The Chair asked for votes.

Schools Forum AGREED to the recommendation as numbered 2.1 (2.1.1- 2.1.4) in the report.

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

6. Feedback on consultation, centrally retained budgets and De-delegation for 2014-15

This is a follow-up on from the Schools Forum meeting that took place in September on growth and schools block. The report also features feedback on the recommendations.

- The consultation was issued on 9th October. It explains items that are held centrally. In addition the consultation has two questions on these items as featured in *Appendix A*. Recommendation *2.1* to note the responses. Responses were quite good. Most responses on the growth were quite positive. A series of options on the 2.4 recommendation.
- The de-delegation voting will take place by split sector.
- Chair agreed to 2.1 - 2.2 for noting.
- Chair explained Forum needs to agree to 2.4 recommendation – *This was all agreed*

The de delegation items that require voting are Schools Contingency, Occupational Health and Trade Union Facility Time.

- **Comment/Question**: Occupational health vote: the central area partnership there was concerns raised on this service. If we were to vote to keep are we going back to keeping it for three plus years?
- **Response**: to June 2014. The existing contract is to be extended for another year.

The guidance is that any universal contract has to be brought forward to six months before anything is signed.

- **Comment:** regarding the recommendation *2.10* wanted to make some comments following heads meeting this afternoon. The report was received, but we requested a delay on a decision on the recommendation *2.10* as we needed more time. The general views were there was to be a protocol regarding how facilities time was to be managed. We had a variety of issues and we had committed to looking out for the implementation on the relations and protocols with the trade unions.
- **Comment:** We will be prepared to discuss this, but there has not been any time to discuss with the governing body

The Chair asked whether recommendations *2.7* and *2.10* be deferred. **Response**: It is possible but it would be a very tight deadline.

Proposal for the decision on de delegation to be deferred to the January meeting (to hand back the money)

Chair asked for votes.

Question: If decisions not agreed today will the funding be taken to another pot?

Response: What is going to happen this year are the shortfalls which are funded through school improvement. Whether that it is sustainable is a matter for service management.

Question: If schools don't agree to fund either through de delegation or other arrangements, won't this subsidise that service any further?

Response: Education improvement - some are from the early intervention Grant. This comes out from maintained and academies.

De delegation is actually around who is responsible. If you don't agree to de delegate you keep the money and each governing body will become responsible are able to fulfil those functions. In terms of where the LA finds the funding, this financial year's underspend on DSG accepting on centrally retained items

Trade Unions have to keep a list on who has contributed.

Those schools agreed to pool will lose out.

The consultation had taken to account on trade union facilities time. The general view is cannot agree or disagree until schools know more on the outcomes of the discussions.

They understood there to be a protocol regarding how facilities times was to be managed (*Appendix B*)

There has been an overall reduction in facility time.

Schools that were academies in the past and were not contributing to many years.

Question: The reduction is that going to be continued next year?

Response: Yes.

The following votes were received:

Voting for delegation for 2014-15 – Maintained Primary Schools

Headteachers

Item 2.5 Schools Contingency £203,000 – *2 for*

Item 2.6 Occupational Health £65,300 – 2 *for*

Item 2.7 Trade Union Facility Time £90,000 – requested this to be deferred to the January meeting

Governors

Item 2.5 Schools Contingency £203,000 – 2 *for*

Item 2.6 Occupational Health £65,300 – 2 *for*

Item 2.7 Trade Union Facility Time £90,000 – requested this to be deferred to the January meeting

There was request to defer the decision on recommendation 2.7: Trade Union facility time of £90,000 as more time is needed

Voting for delegation for 2014-15 – Maintained Secondary Schools

Headteachers

Item 2.8 Schools Contingency £97,000 – *3 for*

Item 2.9 Occupational Health £31,200 – *3 for*

Item 2.10 Trade Union Facility Time £43,000 - *requested this to be deferred to the January meeting*

There was request to defer the decision on recommendation 2.10: Trade Union facility time of £43,000 as more time is needed

Governors

There were no votes received from this sector

The Chair thanked the report authors for the report.

Chair asked all to agree to 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 and 2.8 and 2.9.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Schools Forum was asked to note the content of the recommendations.

The Chair asked for votes.

Schools Forum AGREED to the recommendations to 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 (for Primary sector) and 2.8 and 2.9 (Secondary sector) in the report.

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

The decision on the Trade Union Facility Time to be deferred to the next meeting in January 2014

7. National Fair Funding Formula (from April 2015) verbal update from Graham Moss

Comments

- It is necessary to update on the local funding with effect from April 2015
- The Census data for October: so far issues for academies, basically the number on roll is about 175 down that what we are predicating.
- The vast majority of primary schools have vacancies.
- Parents who have decided to defer admission and appears quite few schools filled their vacancies after the census data.
- Reception places discussed.
- The scenario in the secondary sector is numbers have risen.
- DSG 3 ¼ of a million less than anticipated.
- The other points are there was a discussion on free school meals, however the report was pulled as the Local Authority was expecting a letter from the DfE which will count against basic needs. Whereas the DFE talking to the LA who had to fund. This was only clarified recently.
- Funding is coming by top slicing other schools.
- If 330 pupils in secondary schools come into our schools next years that it will mean £2 million come out of your budget.
- Minister did not agree regarding the adjustment on the collaboration between primary and secondary. Locked in the based budgets.
- No impact on some secondary schools.
- MFG has gone up by a quarter of a £1m. More information will be provided in the January meeting. CERA was about £770,000.
- LA will be taking decisions on 2014/15 before the DfE publishes its formula.
- Proposal out in Spring, and late spring to the consultation
- Essentially two options: to fund local authorities using the date which relates to the previous census (12 months out of date) then it will be updated. Intention to shift amounts of money to rural areas. The balance for funding is wrong. The government will have a formula for primaries and secondary schools and will write to explain what they are entitled to.
- Schools Forum will have the powers of the distribution £4 or £5 million for the Growth Fund.
- 5000 per pupil there is likely to be a formula, e.g. e 4000 for primary and 2000 for secondary. Flaw for those that lose. MFG minus 1.5%.
- The consultation education support grant is to be cut by £200 million in 2015-16.
- This will be an impact on academies.
- No intention the High Needs Block to change how that it is funded. It is possible if they need more funding either from Early Years or Schools Block.
- No intention to introduce a fair funding formula for Early Years.

- The only change will be 2 year olds will be incorporated into the Early Years Block and link with that 2015 participation-led and that may cause a problem if we fund on an hour rate.
- 15% reduction to stay within budget. We use the total in a different way. Probably won't be published by the time of the January meeting.

Question: Free schools. Any sense when the decision on the Authority to open next year?

Response: Have the go ahead to open, EFA costs. There will be no difference to Emmanuel School. Those schools were not included in the capital bid.

Question: Will free schools be funded by the EFA?

Response: Not in 2014-15

Question: When will they come across in Waltham Forest?

Response: We don't need any of those schools 2014-15. Intake drops will receive less funding. The EFA are unclear when the free schools might be part of the Waltham Forest 'family'.

Question: when you said regarding the local funding formula there were three whole classes fewer than anticipated?

Response: In June the admissions service confirmed every place had been allocated. This in practice has not turned out.

There are 80 places vacant.

- Cohort reception is smaller than the reception cohort last year.
- The October 2013 census for Reception was lower than projected. Where have these children gone?

Additional response: Additional classes? For this September, yes. I was approached to take in an additional class in September (when not all were full). LA needs to talk to each other.

Comment: In a meeting late October with senior officers about more additional places for next September. All secondary schools will be needed and we were not to worry. There is no need for additional places.

Response: This was based upon some schools taking on additional places. We will check on the Primary places.

Comment: It is the efficiency process of admissions

ACTION

DP will feed these comments back to Service Management regarding these concerns

8. Any Other Business

Schools Forums: Operation guidance

Chair explained we must be at least 95% compliant. Chair requests that Schools Forum members retain the guidance as long as they remain a member of the Schools Forum. Please read through.

9 Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 15th January 2014

Time: 5:15pm – Pre-briefing Technical Session

Time: 6:30pm (Refreshments from 6:00pm)
Schools Forum agreed to change the date to 5:45pm for the pre-briefing technical session
The Chair wishes everyone an enjoyable Christmas

9a. Task and Finish Groups
High Needs Block Task and Finish Group
Date: A date in February 2014
Time: 5:15pm
Venue: TBC, Waltham Forest Town Hall

The meeting ended at **7:53pm**