

**MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING**  
**Wednesday 11 June 2014**  
**Committee Room 3, Waltham Forest Town Hall**  
**6:30 – 7:30pm**

<b>PRESENT</b>	
Peter Dawe	Chair of Schools Forum
Debbie Callender	Clerk to Schools Forum <a href="mailto:debbie.callender@walthamforest.gov.uk">debbie.callender@walthamforest.gov.uk</a> 020 8496 3669
<b>Headteachers Representative: Primary [4] Secondary [3] Special School [1]</b>	
<b>Primary (4)</b>	
Sandra Campbell	Church Hill Nursery School and Children's Centre
Maureen Okoye	Davies Lane Primary
Kathryn Soulard	Greenleaf Primary
<b>Secondary (3)</b>	
John Hernandez	Norlington School for Boys
Lynnette Parvez	Kelmscott School
Shona Ramsay	The Lammas School
<b>Governor Representatives (7) – Primary (5) Secondary (2)</b>	
<b>Primary (5)</b>	
Cllr Aktar Beg	Edinburgh School
<b>Secondary (2)</b>	
Ian Moyes	Heathcote School
<b>Non School Representatives</b>	
Sarah Kendrick	PVI Sector Representative – Redwood Pre-School
Steve White	Union Representative - NUT
<b>LBWF Council Officers / Representatives</b>	
Linzi Roberts-Egan	Deputy Chief Executive, Families Directorate
Cate Duffy	Divisional Director – Education Improvement

Graham Moss Rishi Peetamsingh Duncan Pike	Strategic Development Consultant Group Accountant-Schools Strategic Finance Advisor - Families
<b>Observers</b>	
Samantha Cornelius Wendy Kow-Loomes Lindsey Lampard Sue Ruff	Revenues and Benefits Team Head of Revenues and Benefits Team Chingford C of E Primary St Andrews Pre-Schools

## 1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

### 1.1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted by the Chair: Msgr George Stokes, Julian Lee and Nicholas Russell.

Chair congratulated Aktar Beg in becoming a newly elected councillor.

## 2. Minutes of the last meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2014

The minutes were circulated in advance. The minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> March were checked and signed off by the Chair as a true record of the meeting.

### 2.1 Matters Arising

None were raised

## 3. Single Status Update – June Update

The report was not available, therefore a further update will be available and the next meeting in September

## 4. Free School Meals Registration – verbal report

Wendy Kow-Loomes, Head of Revenue and Benefits provided a verbal report and was accompanied by her colleague, Sam Cornelius.

### The following comments were raised:-

- Engagement with schools regarding the pupil premium funding with the universal infants free school meals.
- The Revenue and Benefits service currently administer the forms.

- With all reception and year 1 and 2 entitled to free school meals, but trying to capture the data to secure the pupil premium funding.
- Moving forward to administer and recommendation to produce a free school meals leaflet that will be distributed to schools.
- Asking schools to encourage parents and carers/guardians to complete the form for eligibility of the Pupil Premium. Want to create their own database and to maintain the data on the weekly checks in order to identify those eligible for Pupil premium.
- All parents need to do is tick box and for them to give permission. It will be schools who return the forms
- The Revenue and Benefits Team are asking for more detailed information, but in order to check for accuracy they need to have that information which is the only way parents and carers to secure Pupil Premium funding
- Will this be available by July for reception year classes?
- Will it only be reception year 1 and year 2? **Response:** Yes from September 2014
- A discussion took place regarding the statement on the website and this has been removed

Headteachers praised this approach

## 5. Schools Forum Membership

The report was circulated in advance of the meeting. It outlines the proposed membership of Schools Forum as follows:

That Schools Forum should consist of 22 members; 18 schools members and 4 non-schools members.

The breakdown of the 18 schools members to be elected should be:

- 6 maintained primary schools (3 headteachers and 3 governors)
- 4 maintained secondary schools (2 headteachers and 2 governors)
- 5 academy and free schools (3 primary and 2 secondary)
- 1 nursery school
- 1 special school / academy
- 1 pupil referral unit

The breakdown of the 4 non-school members should be:

- Private, Voluntary and Independent early years providers (elected by PVI providers in the borough)
- 16-19 providers (elected by 16-19 providers with 20% or more of their students residing in the borough)
- Trade unions (nominated by recognised trade unions in the borough)
- Diocesan Education Service (nominated by the two Diocesan Boards)

The Chair explained there have been various memberships over the years. Locally a growth in schools in becoming academies and a free school has been established which lies behind the changes. The main changes are featured on *Appendix A*

This is due to the number of schools in each category and to increase this to 22 members, 18 schools and 4 non schools. This needs to be completed by 12<sup>th</sup> November. All nominations need to be completed by then.

**The following points/comments were raised:**

- Conscious the report refers to pupil numbers and the PRU has above its own separate membership why that is?
- **Response:** It needs to be represented. Also we need to have a separate nursery representative.
- The Secondary sector does not appear to equal. **Response:** We now have to account for the recoupment academies and the academies
- It's the balance of the number of schools
- Regarding the voting system, it tends to be around decisions on budgets and that academies are able to vote. Will the increase in academies have a detrimental effect on the voting? **Response:** only maintained schools can vote on de-delegation. The decision about the balance on the blocks and the decision on the growth that existing non recoupment on the LA formula.
- The balance of headteachers and governors does not seem to be consistent.
- Chair: One thing about this Body is that there is a balance of governors and headteachers. We have no authority to tell academies to appoint governors. My own view that it will change the nature of the meeting all together. Recommend to academies that they should appoint a governor amongst their nominees
- Each academy is not an independent organisation. The DfE cannot dictate. They can appoint whoever they want, but this doesn't stop those making recommendations. They have to come back with names for academies to do this.
- We have valued the diverse representation.
- We have encouraged them to attend as observers. No reason to approach
- It is predetermined on headteachers and governors.
- The guidance is open ended. What there have to be are at least one governor and one secondary.
- There always use to be a balance between the headteachers and governors
- Would you say borne out by attendance at these meetings?
- There are more headteachers than governors. There has been a greater number in attendance
- Decisions can be taken by maintained secondary schools or does it have to be made at this Forum? **Response:** the membership is determined by the Local Authority with consultation by Schools Forum. If you wanted to consult you would still need to bring it back to the September meeting to get agreement.
- Ideally headteachers and governors should be of the same mind set. In the past sometimes the governors haven't always voted in the same way. Opportunity for the primary sector to seek a balance.

- The Chair received a telephone call regarding the proposal and the view was there is a large reduction in the primary governor sector. The membership of governors would be nominal.
- It is a tricky and would like to see more governor representation. The concerns are how do you assure the governors are well represented and they attend as individuals and not able to consult like headteachers can. We need to enable them to do this.
- We originally had the Governors Briefing which you could submit comments.
- This issue needs to be added to the Governors Briefing agenda
- The mechanism on governors' representation and whether it is there.
- Governors are voted democratically by the Chair of governors. We had more candidates than places.
- This is a valid point. Headteachers have their own meetings - it is important to speak to at least one headteacher and ask if there any issues that can be raised at headteacher meetings. Clearly we are completely mistaken. This area on how the governors to be on par with headteachers that we do have a governors meeting like the headteachers have their meetings.
- The secondary headteachers to report back to secondary heads group regarding the ratio
- All governors will be asked to provide a nomination. A postal ballot will take place
- There is expectation regarding the timeline and this will need to be accepted.
- It is fair to assume on ratification. We suspect strong views from the secondary sector, but we need move forward to make it valuable. We must listen to views. There are a series of options.
- In the 2005 Ofsted this Forum was singled out for praise. How do we go forward?
- Secondary headteachers meet in late June and provide invitations late September and might make it in time for the September meeting.
- The Forum has worked well due to the mixture of governors and headteachers
- Alternative model but you may have the same membership.
- We will return to this in the September meeting.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Forum members were asked to agree to the recommendations

**The Chair asked for votes.**

**Schools Forum DID NOT AGREE to the recommendations as numbered 2.1-2.5 in the report**

**Chair asked this report to be revisited in the SEPTEMBER meeting**

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

## **6. Schools Block Funding in 2015-16**

The report was circulated in advance of the meeting. It updates Schools Forum on some issues relating to the Schools Block for 2015-16. Funding arrangements for 2015-16 are affected by four key issues:

- (a) Changes to the school population between the October 2013 and October 2014 school census dates
  - (b) Consultation by the DfE on fairer schools funding in 2015-16
  - (c) Consultation by the DfE on simplifying the administration of academies funding
  - (d) Underspend in the Schools Block and High Needs Block in 2014-15.
- Schools Forum was asked to review the first three issues.

**The following points/comments were raised:**

- Consultation on School funding then we follow up on the academies funding.
- The bigger issue is what underspend will there be in the Schools Block and High Needs Block.
- The working party to review this.
- Two DfE consultations on fairer schools funding allocate an additional £350m to order to increase the per pupil budgets.
- In October 2014 that might change the distribution. However we do not benefit. Two tweaks if you update for deprivation. Most Local Authorities will get more funding but the government has tweaked and significantly reduced the funding. The EFA has identified a methodology that will take at least £250m
- There are so many academies in the Borough, but this is making life difficult for the EFA.
- It is a transitional issue but we do touch this in the Growth report. The consultation ends soon
- At the Task and Finish Group there were proposals on the use of that delegate to the Strategic Education Partnership (SEP). We want to review this is a more strategic way. There are four members from Schools Forum who are also members of the SEP so it does have headteachers. There are no governors. This is a vacancy for a governor representative.
- Agreed to the spread of the money.
- It appears we are paying the price for the funding arrangement. We should be able to have a say about how to subsidise
- Non recoupment academy. What the EFA would recoup the amount of money we would have paid through the funding formula so does not cost us in the first year. If you non-recoup it has a funding implication. Any changes made after the election in the November meeting, they would come up with a rate for secondary and a rate for primary.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Schools Forum members were asked to note to the recommendations as numbered **2.1-2.3** in the report.

**Schools Forum NOTED the recommendations as numbered 2.1 in the report.**

**Schools Forum AGREED to delegate consideration of the use of the cumulative DSG underspend to the Strategic Education Partnership. Recommendations to come to September Schools Forum**

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

## **7. Growth Fund in 2015-2016**

The report was distributed in advance of the meeting. The report updates Schools Forum on the operation of the Growth Fund. It highlights the following key issues:

- (a) Amended allocations for 2014-15
- (b) Indicative allocations for 2015-16
- (c) DfE proposed changes for non-recoupment academies and free schools
- (d) Review of criteria for allocating funding to expanding schools and good and outstanding schools with falling rolls

### **The following points/comments were raised:**

- We set money aside to subsidise the cost by £1million and built in a contingency plan.
- We will give the money to three schools: Chapel End, Mission Grove and Larkwood so we will overspend (see *para 4.1*).
- The consultation on non-recoupment changes the scenario and for existing free schools we need to meet the cost of those schools.
- For the first year of a free school we will meet the cost but after it will be the responsibility of the Local Authority.
- There are other free schools that are about to start up and if this is implemented then Waltham Forest is expected to fund.
- In 2015-16 there is an issue of £1/2 million that we might have to find. If you look at the Growth Fund and you make it meaner. What seems to be fair? We need a steer from Schools Forum – look at the recommendations.
- We don't have knowledge regarding the free schools. Emmanuel started as one class and we do not know enough about it to make a decision.
- In its first year there were more than 20 pupils (Emmanuel). Their one form intake will probably be 30. We can't treat them any different so it has to be the same
- We can comment about new schools that are not meeting basic needs, in terms of the options. What we need to find is through the underspend from the Schools Block. We should wait and see on the results from the consultation. We should also wait until the schools have re-opened after the summer break and then have that discussion

- Decisions on Growth Fund to be discussed at the September meeting.
- It seems a fairer system
- The lump sum caters for that. There are issues on numbers. They did agree that we could have this mechanism so we need to discuss how best it fits. It is about whole school size

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Schools Forum AGREED to note to the recommendations 2.1 and 2.2 in the report.**

**Schools Forum AGREED to consider the recommendations as numbered 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5 in the report**

<http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/schoolsforum> - Agenda item 7

## 8. Key Actions and Timeline

- The largest chunks of work will be in the September meeting.
- Schools Forum asked for volunteers to attend a task and finish group meeting on the formula factors and need to report back in the September meeting.
- The following Forum members agreed to be part of the task and finish group: Sarah Kendrick, Maureen Okoye and Ian Moyes

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Schools Forum AGREED to note the key deadlines and reports to be presented during the year.**

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

## 9. Any Other Business

There were none

**10 Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2014 – Committee Room 2  
Time: 6:30pm (Refreshments from 6:00pm)**

The meeting ended at **19:44**