

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING
Tuesday 14th May 2019
Council Chambers, Waltham Forest Town Hall
5:30pm – 6:30pm

ATTENDEES	
Dorinda Ahenkan	Clerk to Schools Forum schoolforum@walthamforest.gov.uk
Maintained Primary Headteacher Representatives (5)	
Kathryn Soulard	Greenleaf Primary School
Kate Jennings	Mission Grove
Lindsey Lampard	Chingford CofE Primary
Tracey Griffiths rep. Linda Adair	Henry Maynard Primary School and Nursery
AJ Byleveldt rep. Ruth Boon	St Joseph's Infants
Primary Academies and Primary Free School Representatives (4)	
Amanda Daoud	Lime Trust Larkwood
Anne Powell	Riverley Primary (Not Present)
Lynne Harrowell	Lime Trust Larkwood
Maureen Okoye (Chair)	Davies Lane Primary Academy & Selwyn Primary
Maintained Primary Governor Representatives (1)	
Aktar Beg	Edinburgh Primary (Not Present)
Nursery School Representative (1)	
Helen Currie	Church Hill Nursery School & Low Hall Nursery School (Not Present)
Maintained Secondary Headteacher Representatives (2)	
Clive Rosewell	Willowfield School
Lynnette Parvez (Vice-Chair)	Kelmscott School
Secondary Academies and Secondary Free School Representatives(4)	
Gareth Cross	Connaught School for Girls (Not Present)
John Hernandez	Norlington School and Sixth Form
Mark Morrall	South Chingford Foundation School and Chingford Foundation School
Rob Pittard	Norlington School and Sixth Form (Not Present)
Maintained Secondary Governor Representative (1)	
Gillian Barker	Walthamstow School for Girls (Not Present)
Special School Representative (1)	

Gary Pocock	Hornbeam Academy
PRU (1)	
Bridget Solecka rep. Catherine Davis	Hawkswood Group
Non-School Representatives (4)	
Early Years Providers	Sarah Kendrick (Redwood Pre-School)
16-19 Providers	Stella Fleming rep. Joy Kettyle (Waltham Forest College)
Trade Unions	Steve White (NEU) (Not Present)
Diocesan	Moira Bishop (Brentwood Diocese)
LBWF Council Officers	
David Kilgallon	Director of Learning and System Leadership
Duncan James-Pike	Strategic Finance Advisor - Children and Young People Services
Eve McLoughlin	Head of Early Years, Childcare and Business Development
Linzi Roberts-Egan	Deputy Chief Executive
Mohammad Akhtar	Principal Accountant
Observers	
G E Jackson	Willowfield
Joanna Mahadoo	DES
Barbara Thurogood	DES
Elaine Colquhoun	Whitefield
Apologies	
Helen Currie	Church Hill Nursery School & Low Hall Nursery School
Gillian Barker	Walthamstow School for Girls
Anne Powell	Riverley Primary
Aktar Beg	Edinburgh Primary
Gareth Cross	Connaught School for Girls
Rob Pittard	Norlington School and Sixth Form
Steve White	Trade Union, NEU.

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed and thanked all for attending this extraordinary meeting. Apologies were noted as above. It was noted Tracey Griffiths is representing Linda Adair, A.J Byleveldt representing Ruth Boon and Bridget Solecka representing Catherine Davis.

2. Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th February 2019 and Matters Arising.

Amendment to the first question on page 7 to read 'What happens if a Nursery school goes in deficit due to using surplus?'

The remainder of the minutes were approved as an accurate reflection of the meeting. There were no matters arising.

3a. Decision Sheet from Meeting 13th February 2019

The decision sheet was agreed as an accurate record.

4. Proposed High Needs Budget 2020-21

The chair asked the Director of Learning to introduce this item.

It was noted over the last couple of years, there has been an overspend in the high needs block compared to the funding provided. In setting the budget for 2020-21, Schools Forum needs to consider how to address this which by that point would be approximately £4.2 million including deficits brought forward. In order to do that, Schools Forum agreed the Inclusion group continue to meet. The group has now met on four occasions and it is really well attended. All sectors are represented and different ideas about how to tackle the deficit were proposed. The Director of Learning thanked the people that have been involved in the work of the group. It was highlighted the group has been challenging and there has been really good debates.

At these meetings, a range of measures that articulate how we plan to spend the high needs block were put forward. This did not include the accumulated deficit going forwards. There was a real ownership from the group, who have agreed these proposals knowing whatever outcome would affect their budgets. The group agreed to the objective to stay within the funding provided while meeting the needs of all children. The SEN contracts are being progressed which will drive efficiencies through. Special

schools have also made a contribution as any change to high needs funding affects their whole budget.

Primary and secondary schools spend a lot of money of pupils on Level E and F's. A desire from schools was to protect children with the higher level of need. The resource ladder is a system designed to ensure protection is given to pupils with a high level of need and this was agreed by the representatives in the Inclusion group. The group tried to examine all the areas and came up with reasonable proposals.

4.1 Comments, Questions & Responses

- 4.1.1 Comment / Question: We are not all at the same starting point. There is a 3% rise year on year for PFI costs and schools can't afford it now. Has that been taken into consideration when taking money from the budget?
- 4.1.2 Response: Have not given any weighting to schools in a PFI contract. Whilst those schools are paying higher costs they have better facilities. Do understand PFI contract is proving challenging. This is why the consultation is out there for people to reflect on what should be considered.
- 4.1.3 Question: It was noted Peterborough has a good model. We are working on the premise that if we want teachers, there is no flexibility whatsoever.
- 4.1.4 Response: Can't comment on Peterborough and the way their funding works. When you work in those places, funding system is inconsistent. Schools can submit this response as part of the consultation and include any proposed solutions with it. Officers will consider any proposals and come to a decision afterwards.
- 4.1.5 Question: regarding the consultation, is it one response from each school or more diverse?
- 4.1.6 Response: Officers will take whatever comments come back. The proposal was presented at governors group by Director of Learning last week and they are aware. The point is to do a wide consultation receiving new recommendations not just criticism. This is a collective voice of a lot of people and at the moment, that's where the consensus lies. Schools can tell officers how to improve this model, comments on the content and if anything was missed? If officers receive a response in a particular area, they can take it back to the Inclusion group for further work. There will be a further meeting with SEND parent forum and might organise a workshop for Primary schools. A workshop has also been offered to governors.
- 4.1.7 Question: is the consultation taking the format of an open one or identifying each area and addressing it?

- 4.1.8 Response: The consultation will take an open format. This process has been challenging and was likened to a jigsaw. Changing any pieces of the jigsaw will have a knock-on effect and implications on other parts.
- 4.1.9 Question: What happens with existing level E's when the change happens? How would you defend a challenge from a parent?
- 4.1.10 Response: Schools and Parents need to understand that the lowest funding band in Waltham Forest (Band E) is £8,000. Islington pays £1,200, Enfield pays £2,000. The only other Local Authority who pays closer to what Waltham Forest pays is Newham at £7,000. Upon researching, there was no other Local Authority who paid more in the lowest band than Waltham Forest. Waltham Forest's care plans are not written to a figure but to a child's needs. Within that particular band, that child was allocated £8,000 to care of their needs. It doesn't mean the plan articulates £8,000 worth of support. The proposal for E's is £5,000 which is above the average locally and nationally, not the current £8,000 allocated however; this is a proposal subject to the consultation and later decision-making process.

The Director of Learning met with SEND Parents Forum twice and he feels they understand the concern. They have said they are not happy with any of the changes but accept that we as a whole are 'underfunded' by central government. The objective is to work in a way that stays within the allocated budget of £30 million to spend for high needs. The reality is how as a group we move the jigsaw pieces. The Inclusion group feel the proposals are the most logical way forward and is a model that will meet legal obligations to meet needs.

- 4.1.11 Comment: On Pg. 27, it shows there are 16 children on Level E at Chingford Foundation.
- 4.1.12 Response: Chingford Foundation's core number of places is 10 however at the moment, they have 30 children. That has grown over the past few years. This is the biggest example of over placing in unit, but we do not intend to commission more than the core number of places currently.
- 4.1.13 Comment: Observation is not about core numbers which relate to need but rather the impact on the large number of E's. Number is quite staggering for 1 school and there are those schools where the change will have high impacts on.
- 4.1.14 Response: At one point, the Inclusion group talked about resource provision and a way of protecting those children. There were two outliers with one being Chingford Foundation. The group will consider issues like this through the consultation
- 4.1.15 Comment: The Chair stated as a head of resource provision, not asking for any protection. Don't agree there should be additional protection for any other.

4.1.16 Comment: Fascinated about Islington's Level E amount and whether they reduced it. This is something to consider as it's about how we approach the issue as it's incredibly complex.

4.1.17 Response: Don't know whether Islington reduced the amount or not.

4.2 Recommendations

Schools Forum to **agree**:

4.2.1 That the proposed consultation document appended to this report shall be consulted on from 15th May to 12th June 2019 and that the consultation will include meetings with parents and governors.

VOTE

Agree: 16

Against: 0

Abstention: 0

4.2.2 That the outcome of the consultation and final proposals will be reported back to Schools Forum on 19th June 2019.

VOTE

Agree: 16

Against: 0

Abstention: 0

4.3 Comments, Questions & Responses

4.3.1 Comment: In relation to consultation meetings with governors, wondered if consultation with this group is appropriate? Whether it should be with all Head teachers in general or if its head teachers represented at School Forum's job to inform governors. It might be useful for all Head teachers to hear this information directly from officers.

4.3.2 Response: Officers could go through the Secondary Head Teachers group which every school is represented at.

4.3.3 Comment: Also to consider whether schools want a joint meeting.

4.3.4 Response: There is a Secondary Head Teachers meeting with Linzi and the High Needs Budget consultation is on the agenda. Should schools prefer specific meetings, this can be accommodated. Should they prefer a meeting for all Head Teachers; officers can do a blanket invite to all schools.

- 4.3.5 Comment: Secondary Head Teachers will prefer a meeting with all schools.
- 4.3.6 Comment: The consultation is with parents' groups and Head Teachers but is wider than that.
- 4.3.7 Response: If there are no objections for a meeting to be convened for all schools, officers will arrange two sessions on the same day. One in the morning at approx. 10am and the other in the afternoon at approx. 4pm.
- 4.3.8 Comment: Although this has been a painful process; what was helpful with collective learning was to look at every budget line and the traditional things that were continuing have been questioned. That has set a good precedent for the future and Schools Forum ought to be looking at that in future and whether we are receiving good value for the allocations we get.
- 4.3.9 The Chair echoed thanked all those who participated in the Inclusion group and noted what's important to everyone is that Schools Forum put the children first.

5. **Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 19th June 2019, 5:30pm (Light refreshments from 5:00pm). Council Chambers, Waltham Forest Town Hall.