

Minutes of the Schools Forum Meeting
7th December 2017
(4.00 pm, Training Room 3, BEST hub, Colindale)

Attended	Name	Representing	Type of Member	Member until end
Members	Beata Felmer	London Academy	Substitute for Angela Trigg (Academy Principal)	Sept 2019
	Nigel Taylor	Childs Hill	Primary Community Governor	May 2018
	Robin Archibald	Broadfields Primary Academy	Academy School Representative	July 2019
	Gilbert Knight	Oakleigh	Special School Governor	Sep 2019
	Jeanette Adak	Monkfrith Primary	Primary Community HT	Sep 2019
	Jude Stone	Cromer Road	Primary Community HT	Mar 2018
	Simon Horne	Friern Barnet	Secondary School HT	Sep 2020
	Keith Nason	National Education Union	Stakeholders - Unions	Sep 19
	Lesley Ludlow	Moss Hall Infants	Primary Community Governor	Sep 2020
	Sarah Vipond	Middlesex Uni. Nursery	Early Years Private Provider Representative	Sep 2019
LA Officers	Ian Harrison	Education & Skills Director (Cambridge Education)	Officer	n/a
	Claire Gray	School Funding Manager		n/a
	Val White	Lead Commissioner		n/a
	Gaspere Nicolini	Senior Business Partner		n/a
	Nick Adams	Finance Manager		n/a
	Tamara Kulatunga	CSG – School Funding		n/a

	Did not attend			
Members	Andrew McClusky	Hasmonean High School	Academy School Principal	Oct 2018
	Alayah Hirst	Independent Jewish Day School	School Governor	Jul 2020
	Jo Djora	The Hyde Academy	Academy School Principal	Jul 2017
	Joanne Kelly	Pavilion PRU	Pupil Referral Unit	Sep 2019
	Ruth Taylor	Trent	VA governor	Jul 2020
	David Byrne	Barnet & Southgate Col	14-19 Provider Rep.	Sept 2019
	Kit Davies	Barnet and Southgate Col	Substitute 16-19 provider	Sept 2019
	John Bowra	Christ's College Finchley	Secondary School Governor	Jul 2020
	Lesley Burgess	Northway	Special School Headteacher	Sep 2019
	Angela Trigg	London Academy	Academy Representative	Sep 2019
	Anthony Vourou	St John's N11	Primary VA/Found. Governor	Sep 2019
	Annette Long	Barnet Early Years Alliance (BEYA)	Nursery Community	Sep 2020
Non Members	Cllr Reuben Thompstone	Lead member for Children's Services		

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from John Bowra, Andrew McClusky and Joanne Kelly. Post meeting apologies from Jo Djora.

Gilbert Knight (GK) bid farewell to Val White (VW) who was attending her last Schools Forum meeting. GK thanked VW on behalf of the members of the Barnet Schools Forum for all the support to the group and the wider school community for the last 14 years.

2 WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

There were no new members attending the meeting.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

GK asked if there were any declarations of interest regarding personal pecuniary gain.

Keith Nason (KN) declared his interest in De-delegation of Trades Union duties and

funding.

4 MATTERS ARISING

None.

5 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Agreed as a true and accurate record of the last meeting.

6 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

6a 2017/18 Budget Monitoring and Revised budget – Gaspare Nicolini (GN)

Gaspare Nicolini (GN) presented the Quarter 2 budget monitoring as shown in the agenda. There were no changes from what was reported in Quarter 1. The main pressures as previously reported include a reduction in Early Years income as a result of updated January census data (£0.425m), underlying pressure in rising cost of High Needs place expenditure / top ups (£0.342m). NNDR revaluations (£0.212m) and a correction to ISB income (0.379m).

GN highlighted the fact that there is a pressure on High Needs. A review of budgets and commitments was being undertaken with a view to containing the pressure within the remaining DSG reserve. It is expected that the remaining contingency would be fully utilised to support this. This will be confirmed and reported to members at the February Schools Forum.

6b DFE consultation on FSM/EYPP eligibility as a result of Universal Credit rollout – Claire Gray (CG)

CG made the Schools Forum aware of the DFE consultation on FSM/EYPP eligibility as a result of Universal Credit rollout.

Under the new proposals the criteria for the FSM/ EYPP entitlement will be based on net earnings instead of total household income (including benefits) as currently.

The DFE states that the statistics suggest that more people would benefit under this measure. Claire Gray (CG) confirmed that protection is proposed for those pupils who are currently eligible until such time as they leave their current phase of education (e.g. end of Primary, end of Secondary). Beata Felmer (BF) asked how this will affect all-Through schools and CG confirmed that the protection for Primary and Secondary phases would still apply. Lesley Ludlow (LL) asked if the link for the consultation can be shared and CG confirmed that the link will be shared via the School Circular for all schools to access. Action: CG

6c School Revenue Balances at March 2017 – Nick Adams (NA)

NA presented a list of school revenue balances (Appendix I) and a comparison with the previous year. This report informed the Schools Forum of the maintained schools' revenue balances for 31 March 2017.

The appendix shows schools' balances in relation to the Total Revenue Income (e.g. LA funding, plus school generated income), which is consistent with DfE reporting.

This is a change in presentation from previous reports to Schools Forum which compared revenue balance percentages with local authority funding only. This accounting change conforms to DfE guidance on presentation of schools' financial data for CFR (Consistent Financial Reporting) returns.

NA highlighted the significant variations in balances between individual schools and how different schools have managed with the financial pressures facing them.

NA stated that Barnet will continue to work closely with its schools to challenge those that appear to have "high" balances and support and challenge those with deficits or that are in danger of having a deficit budget position.

NA indicated that the LA can request a three year budget plan for schools with low balances or significant difficulties. However, most schools are planning ahead and avoiding difficulties.

IH stated that this report is for information only and to highlight the processes currently in place.

7 TOWARDS A NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA – Ian Harrison, Claire Gray

7a. Consultation responses (CG)

CG started by thanking all who responded as there was a high level of responses. There were 98 responses which included 80 from Primary schools (maintained and academy/ free), 16 from Secondary schools (maintained and academy/ free), and 2 from All-through schools. 47 responses were from Head teachers or Principals, 40 from Governors and 11 from other representatives such as Bursars or School Business/ Finance managers. Details of respondents were listed in a table.

The Survey presented two options:

Option 1 – the full National Funding Formula

Option 2 – the National Funding Formula with additional protection (a phased introduction of the NFF in 2018/19 using MFG in order to make the formula affordable).

Responders were asked to select Option 1 or Option 2.

CG stated that head teachers and several governors responded and the preferred option was option 2. The respondents felt that this option gave schools time to adapt before full implementation of the NFF in 2020/21.

IH stated there have been a number of queries about the treatment of the increase in DSG (Dedicated Schools Grant) funding allocations to local authorities, which is equivalent to an extra 0.5% per pupil for all schools. IH explained that the increase doesn't automatically feed through to school-level allocations. IH pointed out that the funding for newly open/ growing schools has to be the first call on the Schools' Block funding and that the criteria for growth funding is agreed by the Schools Forum. This reduces the amount available through the funding formula.

IH explained that the total growth funding for Barnet schools in 2017/18 was £3.9m.

Whilst Schools Block income covers only £813,257 of this, the council funded the remaining £3.1m from DSG reserves. The council is no longer able to make up any shortfall in growth funding from DSG reserves, because the reserves have gradually been used up over the last few years (covering growth funding and increased pressure on the High Needs budget)

Val White (VW) stated that it is very important for Schools Forum members to go back and explain this to other headteachers and governors. VW also mentioned that the lack of growth funding has been raised as an issue with the DfE. The perception was that growth would be funded on actual need rather than a historical basis but this is not what has happened. The allocation of growth funding is being reviewed by the DfE before full implementation of the National Funding Formula in 2020/21.

Simon Horne (SH) stated that the PowerPoint presentation at the last Schools Forum was very clear and straightforward.

BF queried if there was a possibility the LA could get a higher growth funding allocation in 2018/19 if we go back to the DfE and ask for more money. IH stated that this has already been done but he did not expect it to be successful.

BF requested a table showing the growth funding costs in the last years (2015/16 to 2017/18) and how much was funded from the schools block allocations and how much from reserves.

The Schools Forum agreed that option 2 (the phased introduction of the NFF) should be recommended to CELS for implementation.

7b 2018/19 Education Services Grant (IH)

IH explained that in 2016/17 Barnet received Education Services Grant (ESG) funding of £2.8m in relation to the statutory services it must provide to maintained schools (community and voluntary-aided schools, maintained special schools, nursery schools and PRUs). This funding was cut in the current financial year apart from £985,000 of transitional funding and the 2017/18 reduction was absorbed by the council.

There is no transitional funding in 2018/19 and it is not yet known if the school improvement grant will continue.

VW explained that it was a political decision by members not to ask schools for new de-delegation except for the School Improvement Service and contingency requests shown in the following item 7c, as schools have other pressures.

SH asked if this would affect the DSG. IH explained that it does not impact on the DSG – the council would make up for the loss of ESG income through the council's General Fund.

7c 2018/19 De-delegation (IH)

IH explained that decisions on de-delegation have to be taken at the Schools Forum. Votes have to be taken separately in respect of maintained primary and maintained secondary schools and in each case the decision requires the agreement of a majority of the maintained representatives for the relevant phase on the Schools Forum.

IH confirmed that for the 2018/19 financial year, the council is requesting the

following de-delegation items:

Existing de-delegation items

1. Behaviour support services (HIST - currently de-delegated by primaries but not Secondaries)
 2. Support to UPEG and bilingual learners ("Narrowing the Gap")
 3. Staff costs – supply cover for (trade union) facility time
- de-delegation items

The Schools Forum was asked to approve the continuation of the existing de-delegation at the same rates as 2017/18.

For all these budgets, the total amount de-delegated depends on the number of LA maintained schools in Barnet, and how many pupils are on roll. The budget falls if more schools convert to academies, but rise if maintained schools expand, or independent schools join the maintained sector.

The Behaviour Support budget funds the high incidence support team's (HIST) work with maintained primary schools and the de-delegation rate is proposed to remain unchanged from 2017/18 (£3.01 per pupil).

The de-delegation rates for 'Narrowing the Gap' are proposed to remain unchanged from 2017/18 (£9.55 - Primary and £16.34 - Secondary per pupil).

Staff costs for trade union duties funds the salaries of officials of the various unions representing staff in schools. The budget is supplemented by income from a traded service that enables academies to contribute to these costs. This funds the release of staff on union duties. The de-delegation rates are proposed to remain unchanged (£1.66 for Primary and £1.02 for Secondary per pupil).

The table below shows the decision for each de-delegation item by phase for the maintained schools:

De-delegation	Primary	Secondary
Behaviour Support	Yes - unanimous	
Narrowing the Gap	Yes - unanimous	Yes - unanimous
Trade Union Duties	Yes - unanimous	Yes - unanimous

The Schools Forum was asked to approve the **new** de-delegation items for 2018/19 as follows.

New de-delegation items for 2018/19

4. Additional school Improvement services

IH stated that the LA is proposing as an exception to hold a de-delegated budget in

2018/19 of £101,000 for 'additional school improvement services' to enable the school improvement service to continue at its current level.

IH stated that the council no longer receives Education Services Grant funding in respect of school improvement services to maintained schools. Council funding for these services is estimated to be around £450,000. In 2017/18 the council received a school improvement grant of £192,000 from the DfE towards the cost of statutory school improvement services; it is not yet clear whether the grant will continue beyond this year or at what level

The de-delegation rate proposed is £3.55 per Primary pupil and £1.80 per Secondary pupil. This would equate to a similar average contribution per phase (primary and secondary), as school improvement support does not tend to vary with the size of school.

5. Contingencies

IH requested that the Authority is permitted to hold a de-delegated budget in 2018/19 of £61,000 for schools specific contingency.

This would enable cover for unforeseen expenditure not known when the school budget shares are originally allocated, such as business rate revaluations IH confirmed that the proposed budget is based on experience this year.

The de-delegation rate requested for both Primary and Secondary maintained schools is £2 per pupil.

The table below shows the decision for each de-delegation item by phase for the maintained schools:

De-delegation	Primary	Secondary
School contingency	Yes - unanimous	Yes - unanimous
School improvement services	Yes - unanimous	Yes - unanimous

9 Any other business

GK mentioned that a new venue would be required for future Schools Forum meetings as the Best Hub will be unavailable after April 2018. Cambridge Education is actively seeking an alternative venue to serve as a training centre for schools. He indicated that it would require training rooms for day-time use with parking for approximately 50 places within 20 minutes' walk. BF indicated that the London Academy may be able to help. IH welcomed the offer and said he would follow it up. Action: IH

10 **Draft agenda for next meeting – 1 February 2018**

7a. 2017/18 Budget monitoring and revised budget

Towards a National Funding Formula

8a. 2018/19 Draft budget

8b. January 2018 Authority Proforma Tool submission

8c. High Needs review

GK closed the meeting by wishing all compliments of the season and thanking everyone for attending. The meeting closed at 5.00pm.