

Decisions of the School Forum

Thursday 7th July 2022

Members Present:-

Name	Representing
Simon Horne (SH)	Secondary Maintained - Headteacher
Joanne Kelly (JK)	PRU - Executive Headteacher
Sarah Sands (SS)	Primary Maintained - Headteacher
Dan Hawkins (DH)	Primary Maintained - Headteacher
Ian Kingham (IK)	Special School Academy - Deputy Head
Luke Bridges (LB)	Primary Maintained - Headteacher
Sarah Maltese (SM)	Primary Maintained - Headteacher
Ziz Chater (ZC)	Primary Maintained - Headteacher
Robin Archibald (RA)	Primary Academy - Headteacher
Claire Wagner (CW)	Secondary Academy - Headteacher
John Bowra (JB)	Secondary Academy - Governor
Claire Barnes (CB)	Secondary Academy - Governor
Annette Long (AL)	Nursery Maintained - Headteacher
Nicola Curtis (NC)	Primary Maintained - Governor
Marc Lewis (ML)	Secondary Academy - Staff
Keith Nason (KN)	NEU – Barnet District
Cllr Pauline Coakley-Webb (PCW)	Councillor - LBB
Neil Marlow (NM)	Chief Executive and Director of Education and Learning, BELS
Ndenko Asong (NA)	Finance Manager, DGG - LBB
Madiha Bhenick (MB)	Finance Manager DSG - LBB
Sabrina Burrell (SB)	Senior Business Support Officer, BELS (Minute Taker)

1. Apologies

Gilbert Knight, Matthew Stevens, Liz Longworth, Anthony Vourou, Sian Morris, Sarah Vipond, Kirstie Barrett and Harvey Freeman.

2. Declarations of Interest

None. New member welcomed Cllr Pauline Coakley-Webb, new Lead Member for Children's Services.

3. Minutes of previous meeting & Matters arising

The Minutes were agreed as accurate. Matters arising updates given on agenda items.

4. DSG FY21-22

NA briefly went through some key highlights of the paper. The balance for DSG of £4.87m has been brought forward which includes a surplus of £1.6m as at the end of

the financial year. In the March meeting we made a commitment to use £1m of the reserves fund to fund programs in the year such as Hong King migrants. We also committed to £400k towards maintained nurseries. Overall the current forecast is to increase the DSG reserve with the addition of a surplus of £1.63m resulting in a forecast overall carry forward reserve of £4.870m. There was also an underspend in Early Years. De-delegated funds for redundancies has experienced an overspend. Schools are coming under some financial stress and there was greater than expected funding for redundancies in the year to March 2022. The budget for the schools block contingency which is used to fund redundancy claims for 2023 has gone up to £420K hopefully by the end of the year it should be a reasonable figure, all to be informed with updates through the course of the year. Something else which may need to be looked into is the cost of Trade Union funding which has continued to rise.

The School's Forum noted the DSG FY21-22 monitoring report.

5. School Balances

NA gave a brief overview in in terms on where we stand with school balances. Academies report to the end of August 2021 whereas maintained schools reports are based on financial year to the end of March 2022. With 127 schools in the borough (5 schools part of a federation with two federated budgets), the overall balances are approximately, £24.96m. This is made up of 87 maintained schools and 40 academies. The maintained school balances increased by 24% from £12.58m to £15.60m in the year to March 22 whilst academy balances decreased 7.4% from £10.11m to £9.36m in the year to August 21. Maintained schools ended the year with 21 schools in deficit, up from 12 last year. The total amount of deficit also increased £330k to £1.67m in the year to March 22. Academies had 2 schools in deficit at the end of August 21. This has not changed from the previous year. The level of deficit, however, did grow by £430k from £1.4m to £1.9m.

SS asked a question with regards to common patterns on why some schools are struggling and why other schools have high balances?

NA stated the highest impact is pupil numbers.

ZC see that there is a trend noticing that Secondary School seem to do better and have better outcomes with money. Is there anywhere these balances can be addressed?

NM stated that he and NA have met with some schools facing budgetary difficulties. The School Improvement Team also work closely with schools concerning their budgets and expenditure as well as contingencies, requesting information about the planned use of underspends.

The School's Forum noted the 2022-23 budget update.

6. High Needs Block expenditure 2021-22 and projected expenditure 2022-23

NM gave a brief update on the absence of a Director of SEND & Inclusion as Karen Flanagan does not start her new post until 5 September. The report is to provide the School's Forum with a breakdown of the High Needs Block for 2021/22, the pressures against the budget, and the projected spend against the High Needs Block for 2022/23, taking account of increasing numbers of pupils with SEND and rising demand for additional SEND specialist places in Additional Resourced Provisions (ARPs) and special schools.

The School's Forum noted the High Needs Block 2021/22 and the projected expenditure for 2022/23

7. High Needs Commissioned Places

NM briefed all on the paper. The purpose of this report is to provide the School's Forum with an update on commissioned places in specialist provision for children and young people with SEND for 2022/23. This includes the specialist provision in Additional Resourced Provisions (ARPs) and Special schools in Barnet.

The School's Forum noted the commissioned high needs places for the 2022/23 school year

8. AOB

Farewell retirement sentiments were given by all to AL. A replacement representing maintained nurseries will be required for this board.

NM updated about maintained nursery school funding outlining the current DfE consultation on funding for all nursery schools. Finance Team will assess the impact of this proposal which is expected to be very positive for maintained nursery schools.

Dates for the next two meetings set and invites have already been sent. Meetings will continue to be online and re-evaluated again for next year.

9. Dates for next meetings

Thursday 20th October 2022

Thursday 12th January 2023

Venue: Teams