

**Minutes of the Schools Forum Meeting
15th October 2015
(4.00 pm, Training Room 3, BEST hub, Colindale)**

Attended	Type of Member	Name	Representing	Member until end
Members	Academy Representative	Tom Brighton (substitute for Angela Trigg)	London Academy	Sep 2016
	Academy School Principal	Rachel Fink (substitute for Andrew McClusky)	Hasmonean High School	Oct 2018
	Primary Community Gov	Nigel Taylor	Wessex Gardens	May 2018
	Primary Community Gov	Elizabeth Pearson	Holly Park/Livingstone	Sep 2016
	Primary Community Gov	Lesley Ludlow	Moss Hall Infants	Apr 2017
	Primary Community HT (4)	Sally Lajalati	Colindale Primary	Sep 2014
	Primary Foundation/ VA Gov	Anthony Vourou	St Johns CE N11	Sep 2016
	Primary Foundation/VA HT	Matthew Glenn	St Mary's & St John's	Apr 2018
	Primary Foundation/VA HT	Maureen Kelly	St Theresa's Catholic	Jul 2017
	Private Early Years Provider	Sarah Vipond	Middlesex Uni. Nursery	Sep 2016
	Secondary HT	Seamus McKenna	Finchley Catholic	Nov 2016
	Secondary HT	Simon Horne	Friern Barnet	Oct 2017
	Special School Governor	Gilbert Knight	Oakleigh	Sep 2016
	Special School Headteacher	Lesley Burgess	Northway	Sep 2016
	Unions	Keith Nason	National Union of Teachers	Sep 2016
LA Officers	LBB Officer	Ian Harrison	Education & Skills Director	
	LBB Officer	Val White	Lead Commissioner	
	LBB Officer	Catherine Peters	CSG – Head of Finance	
	LBB Officer	Carol Beckman	CSG – School Funding	
	LBB Officer (Clerk)	Claire Gray	CSG – School Funding	

Did not attend				
Members	14-19 Provider Representative	David Byrne	Barnet & Southgate Col	
	Academy School Principal	Andrew McClusky	Hasmonean High School	Oct 2018
	Academy School Principal	Jo Djora	The Hyde Academy	Jul 2017
	Academy School Principal	Jack Newton	Grasvenor Infants	Nov 2015
	Academy School Principal	Jane Beaumont	Copthall	Jan 2016
	Academy School Principal	Marc Lewis (substitute for Michael Whitworth)	Wren Academy	Nov 2016
	Nursery School Headteacher	Perina Holness	Moss Hall Nursery	May 2017
	Primary Community Gov	Cllr Brian Salinger (substitute for Elizabeth Pearson)	Holly Park/Livingstone	Sep 2016
	Primary Community HT	Jude Stone	Tudor / Cromer Road	Mar 2018
	Primary Community HT	Jeanette Adak	Monkfrith Primary	Sep 2016
	Primary Community HT	Clare Rees	Sunnyfields Primary	Feb 2017
	Primary Foundation/VA Gov	VACANT		
	Primary Foundation/VA HT	VACANT		
	Pupil Referral Unit	Joanne Kelly	Pavilion PRU	Sep 2016
	Secondary Community/VA Governor	VACANT		
Non Members	EFA Observer	Beverley Pennekett	EFA	
	LBB Officer	Chris Munday	Commissioning Director for Children and Young People	
	LBB Officer	Nick Adams	CSG – Financial Services	
	Elected Member	Cllr R Thompstone	Lead member for Children’s Services	

1. WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Gilbert Knight (GK) welcomed new members: Lesley Burgess (replacing Jenny Gridley who is on secondment to the local authority), Andrew McClusky (apologies for this meeting) and his substitute, Rachel Fink (RF) of Hasmorean High School.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received at the meeting from Andrew McClusky, Jeanette Adak, Chris Munday, Jude Stone and Nick Adams. Post-meeting apologies were received from Perina Holness and Jo Djora.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Keith Nason (KN) declared his interest in item 8c) De-delegation of Trades Union facilities time.

4. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Members were asked to nominate a Chair and Vice Chair person for the forthcoming academic year.

Elizabeth Pearson (EP) nominated Gilbert Knight (GK); this was seconded by Nigel Taylor (NT). As there were no other nominations, GK was elected.

Tony Vourou (TV) volunteered as Vice-Chair; he was nominated by Keith Nason, seconded by Sally Lajalati (SL). As there were no other nominations, TV was elected.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Agreed as a true and accurate record.

6. MATTERS ARISING

Ian Harrison (IH) confirmed that letters had been sent to schools with high balances, requesting responses to the authority by half-term. No responses have been received to date.

EP asked if the DfE had made any announcements regarding extension of the 3&4 year old free entitlement. IH replied that there have been no announcements.

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

7a 2015/16 Budget monitoring

Catherine Peters (CP) presented the Quarter 1 budget summary as shown in the agenda. This is the most recent position that was presented to the council P&R committee on 2nd September 2015. There has been a reduction to income received from the EFA mainly due to fewer 2 year olds than expected, as shown in Appendix 2; expenditure in the Schools Budget and High Needs lines has reduced by the same amount.

7b 2015/16 Schools Budget

CP clarified that the projected outturn is currently an underspend of £99,000, made up mainly by an underspend on top-up funding of £490k, and an overspend on growth.

7c Applications to become a maintained school

Val White (VW) presented a report on the current status of the application to join the maintained sector made by Menorah High School for Girls (MHS), and sought the views of Schools Forum on the proposal in order to inform the assessment of the school's case which takes place before the next meeting of Schools Forum.

This has been a complex application and has included carrying out due diligence by legal services. An external consultant has also been appointed to work with the school regarding the requirements of maintained sector financial management, and also to assess whether the curriculum offer is appropriate and manageable within the formula funding available.

Barnet has also received confirmation from the EFA that the DSG allocation will be increased in line with MHS pupil numbers if and when the transfer takes place. However, with secondary schools per pupil formula funding is slightly higher than the amount received in DSG.

NT asked if the proposed application was good news for Barnet. VW commented Barnet was proud of the diversity of its educational offer and that the proposal would extend this diversity. Although located in Brent, the overwhelming proportion of pupils are Barnet residents and should the school close, Barnet would have a duty to offer alternative places to children who wanted one.

SL asked about the admissions criteria and process as the school is currently an independent school, VW advised that the school would be required to follow the Admissions Code and would be part of the Barnet co-ordinated admissions service.

KN asked if the school has to pay staff on Inner London pay scales. CB confirmed that it does, but that does not mean an increase in formula funding – the school must manage staff costs within the formula funding allocation. RF asked how the school could join the maintained Barnet sector yet offer Inner London salaries. VW advised that the school will have greater budget pressures, but there will be no additional formula funding for this. VW explained that given the size of the school, the council has engaged some external financial assistance to test the financial standing of the school.

Seamus McKenna asked if any other schools had approached Barnet to join the maintained sector. VW confirmed that Noam Primary has expressed an interest, and Menorah High School for Boys has also made enquiries.

NT & KN commented that Barnet needs to clarify ownership of the site and the condition of the premises. VW confirmed that due diligence on all site and property issues is being carried out by the legal services team.

SL asked who has covered the cost of processing this application and the legal/ financial advice taken. VW confirmed that Barnet has covered these costs so far.

Members expressed concern regarding the limited curriculum offered and viability of the school 6th form, which currently has very small pupil numbers. VW advised that these matters will be considered.

VW asked Schools Forum for a summary of their views so that she could factor these into the decision making process, as the application will be progressing before the next Schools Forum meeting. The Forum indicated that it felt the council should be cautious

about the extra financial liability. Members expressed concern about Barnet taking on such a small secondary school, the small size of the sixth form and its location in Brent. They also questioned whether there is any benefit to Barnet children.

7d Consultation responses

Carol Beckman (CB) provided members with a tabled paper showing the responses to the Schools Formula funding consultation which had closed the previous day, 14th October 2015. 37 schools had responded, of which 31 expressed a preference for one of the formula funding options proposed. Seventeen of the 31 schools expressing a preference selected option 3 (+£10 AWPU/ 15% cap on MFG gains) as their first choice, with option 1 the next most popular; option 2 was the least popular, other than the no preference option.

The Schools Forum was therefore asked to give a view on the option to adopt for schools in 2016/17, bearing in mind that the total amount of funding available will remain at 2015/16 levels other than any increase in relation to additional pupils.

Decision: Members agreed that Option 3 was the most popular and should be implemented, but acknowledged that the MFG and cap on gains constrain the authority so tightly that more significant changes cannot be made. Members therefore recommended implementation of Option 3 in the 2016/17 budget planning.

7e Schools forum training on 30 September 2015

IH advised that a number of members had attended the training session on 30 September which provided an overview of the principles and application of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and schools funding.

Lesley Burgess (LB) asked if the training had covered issues of High Needs (HN) funding and the HN funding block. IH said that this was covered, but that the Forum should note that the DfE has issued documents stating that authorities cannot bid for an increase in places as was allowed last year. Place numbers in establishments within the authority could be re-organised but there would be no funding increase.

Simon Horne (SH) thanked IH and CB for the training provided, and commented that he found the papers provided and the discussions very helpful in increasing his understanding of the DSG and funding system.

8. ITEMS FOR DECISION

8a 2016/17 Schools budget planning

The first draft of the 2016/17 schools budget will form the basis of the Authority Proforma Tool (APT) submission due to the EFA at the end of October. The first draft presents a balanced budget, but only by drawing on the 2014/15 underspends to cover the additional growth funding and also the (reducing) nursery school subsidy. The income from the Early Years and High Needs blocks are not confirmed until later in the year.

The draft school budget share expenditure has been based on October census pupil numbers at maintained schools, but academy pupil numbers are not yet known and therefore the budget is still on estimated pupil data at this stage.

Other expenditure has been based on the following assumptions:

- 2 year old funding – best estimate on take-up
- 3/ 4 year old funding – 3% increase in pupil numbers/ funding (based on past pupil number trend)
- HN places – place funding and estimated top-up values on current data
- Kisharon converting from a Special free school to Special maintained status
- Oak Hill campus converting to Special Academy status

Officers will provide a further report in December once all pupil data has been factored into the modelling. They will also provide a summary of any DfE announcements made as a result of the government Comprehensive Spending Review in November.

8b 2016/17 Funding formula & APT submission

As stated above, the current school budget modelling has incorporated up-to-date pupil numbers where known and these will be included in the provisional APT submission made to the EFA in October. As a result of the Schools Forum recommendation on the formula funding consultation (item 7d) and subject to the agreement of the council's Director of Children's Services, Option 3 giving a £10 AWPU increase and setting a 15% cap on gains, will be factored into the APT to be submitted in October. The final APT will be submitted in January, once the EFA have provided Barnet with a full school level data set, so the schools budget will continue to change. Updates will be provided at the Schools Forum meetings in December and February.

Decision: Members unanimously agreed to recommend that Option 3 should be factored into the APT model for submission to the EFA by 30th October.

8c 2016/17 Dedelegation by maintained schools

IH advised members that Schools Forum representatives of maintained schools must vote whether to dedelegate the following budgets for provision of some central services in 2016/17. The table below shows the items currently dedelegated in 2015/16 by sector:

Line no.	Description	Primary maintained	Secondary maintained
1.1.2	Behaviour Support	Yes	No
1.1.3	Narrowing the Gap	Yes	Yes
1.1.9	TU facility time	Yes	Yes

LB asked if Special Schools vote on this and whether they can use Behaviour Support (HIST) services. IH advised that they can use the services, but that could not be funded through dedelegation. SL asked what the offer is for Behaviour Support. IH stated that Level 1 is the core service available to primary schools, but Level 2, which provides additional services, can be purchased by schools. SL asked whether TU representation at school level is covered by the facility time budget. IH said no, it was only for LA level TU representatives.

The council was asking representatives of maintained schools by sector whether they wish to dedelegate the same budgets in 2016/17, with the following results:

Voting

		Primary maintained	Secondary maintained
1.1.2	Behaviour Support	Agreed 7/7 members	Not agreed *0/3 members
1.1.3	Narrowing the Gap	Agreed 6/7 members	Agreed *3/3 members
1.1.9	TU facility time	Agreed 7/7 members	Agreed *3/3 members

* Includes St Mary's & St John's all-through school

9. SCHOOLS FORUM TERMS OF REFERENCE & VACANCIES

The Schools Forum terms of reference should be reviewed each year, but no change was proposed for 2015/16 since the profile of numbers and types of schools has not changed significantly in the last year. SV asked for clarification of PVI representation. This is shown under 'stakeholders'

The TOR will be reviewed again in the autumn of 2016.

Members were also asked to encourage other Headteacher and Governor representatives to come forward, as there are currently 4 vacancies on the Schools Forum.

Decision: Members voted unanimously to keep the Terms of Reference unchanged for this academic year.

10. DRAFT AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

The draft agenda for the next meeting was agreed, with the additional information that item 6.1 will be the 2015/16 quarter 2 budget monitoring position.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Two members recorded their apologies in advance for the next meeting on 3 December – Lesley Ludlow and Elizabeth Pearson.

SMcK commented that the format of the Schools Forum papers was much improved and easier for members to access now they are published on the Barnet committee website.

GK thanked members for their attendance and contribution.

Meeting closed at 5.30pm

Dates of future meetings:

3 December 2015, 4pm.	Training Room 3, BEST hub, Colindale
11 February 2016, 4pm.	Training Room 3, BEST hub, Colindale
12 May 2016, 4pm.	Training Room 3, BEST hub, Colindale
7 July 2016, 4pm.	Training Room 3, BEST hub, Colindale