

Minutes of the Schools Forum Meeting
11th October 2018
North London Business Park Building 4, Central Room

Attended	Name	Representing	Type of Member
Members:	Gilbert Knight	Oakleigh	Special School Governor
	Ian Kingham	Oak Lodge	Special School Deputy Headteacher
	Jude Stone	Cromer Road	Community Primary Headteacher
	Marc Lewis	Wren Academy	Substitute for Gavin Smith Wren Academy
	Simon Horne	Friern Barnet	Community Secondary Headteacher
	Jo Djora	The Hyde Academy	Academy Principal
	Robin Archibald	Broadfields Primary Academy	Academy Headteacher
	Ayalah Hirst	Independent Jewish Day School	Academy Governor
	Luke Bridges	All Saints N20	Primary VA Headteacher
Councillors:	Cll David Longstaff	Lead member for Children's Services	
LA Officers:	Gaspare Nicolini	Senior Business Partner LBB Officer	
	Claire Gray	School Funding Manager LBB Officer	
	Chris Munday	Commissioning Director for Children and Young People LBB Officer	
	Neil Marlow	Head of School Improvement LBB Officer	
	Dr. Helen Phelan	Assistant Director, SEND & Inclusion LBB Officer	
	Ben Thomas	Lead Commissioner LBB LBB Officer	
	Adam McPhail	CSG- School Funding LBB Officer	
Observer:	Claudette James	Senior Management Accountant CSG Finance	

Did not attend			
Members:	Anette Long	Barnet Early Years Alliance (BEYA)	Community Nursery Headteacher
	Jane Harris	Garden Suburb Schools	Community Primary Governor
	John Bowra	Christ's College Finchley	VA Secondary Governor
	Keith Nason	National Education Union	Stakeholders – Trades Union
	Nigel Taylor	Childs Hill	Community Primary Governor

	Andrew McClusky	Hasmonean High School	Academy Principal
	Joanne Kelly	Pavilion PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
	Angela Trigg	London Academy	Academy Principal
	Anthony Vourou	St John's N11	VA Primary Governor
	David Byrne	Barnet & Southgate College	14-19 Providers
	Gavin Smith	Wren Academy	Academy Principal
	Sarah Vipond	Middlesex Uni. Nursery	Early Years Private Providers
Officers:	Ian Harrison	Education & Skills Director	Cambridge Education

1. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair.

Marc Lewis nominated Gilbert Knight as Chair, and Simon Horne as Vice-Chair, JS seconded, agreed unanimously.

2. Welcome to new members.

Welcome to Cllr David Longstaff (Lead member for Children's Services), Luke Bridges (Headteacher, All Saints N20), and Dr. Helen Phelan (Assistant Director, SEND & Inclusion).

3. Apologies.

Apologies were received from Nigel Taylor, Jane Harris, Keith Nason, Ian Harrison, and John Bowra.

4. Declarations of interest.

None.

5. Minutes of previous meeting.

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

6. Matters arising.

None

7. Items for information.

a. 2017/18 Budget monitoring/Final outturn

GN presented the final 2017/18 DSG outturn, which remains as presented to Schools Forum in May 2018. The closing position remains balanced when using drawdown of reserves. The reduced drawdown has been finalised at £3.724m.

Reserves & Provisions

Due to the reduced call on reserves in 2017/18 as reported to members in May, there is an amount of £0.501m carry forward to 2018/19.

GK asked members to vote on the following recommendations:

- (i) Note and agree the final 2017/18 DSG outturn figures.
- (ii) Agree the DSG carry forward figure of £0.501m to 2018/19.

Members approved both (i) and (ii) unanimously.

8. Towards a National Funding Formula.

a. 2018/19 draft Budget

CG presented an update on the 2018/19 draft budget. Since the May meeting, adjustments have been made to the High Needs block allocation (a net reduction) as a result of:

- Higher 2018/19 academic year high needs place numbers in Post16 establishments.
- Fewer imported HN pupils from other authorities.

There has also been an adjustment (increase) to the Early Years block due to higher pupil numbers in January 2018.

The main changes for Schools Forum to note are:

Line 1.0.1- Individual Schools Budget (Includes funding of EY pupils and SEN places)

- Early Years expenditure to providers realigned based on increased pupil numbers
- Minor change in HN recoupment figure

Lines 1.2.2 - 1.2.3- Top-Up funding

- Increased HN contribution to joint placements for 2018/19

Line 1.3.1- Central expenditure on Under 5s

- An increase in the EY contingency budget because of increased pupil numbers, set aside to allow for any future EY block clawback.

Because of the HN block reduction in income but higher expenditure due to a greater contribution to joint placement costs, the overall expenditure currently exceeds income but £0.501m. To balance the 2018/19 DSG budget, it will be necessary to use the full amount of £0.501m reserve brought forward from 2017/18.

JD asked if the EY increase was a result of an increase of 2yr olds. CG explained that 2year old numbers did increase, as did 3 and 4 year old 30 hour take up.

ML asked how the figure was calculated to balance. CG explained that the actual amount needed to balance the HN block was £0.700m, £0.501m of which came from brought forward reserve, the remaining £0.199m has been adjusted by reducing HN budget line expenditure. ML asked if the HN budget is under significant strain, CG confirmed this was the case.

IK asked if it was just the education budget contributing towards joint placement costs. CM explained that contributions are made by health and social care as well as education.

GK asked the members to:

- (iii) Note the revised 2018/19 draft budget as shown in Appendix A
- (iv) Agree to the use of carry forward reserve to set a balanced budget

Both items agreed unanimously.

b. 2018/19 Budget monitoring

CG presented the M3 DSG monitoring position, which is based on the revised block income figures shown in item 8a. The Schools, Early Years and Central Services block are all projected to spend to budget, but the HN block expenditure is currently projecting a full-year overspend of £0.490m (this is in addition to the use of £0.501 brought forward reserves to cover the joint placement costs).

The variances in projections are as follows:

1.2.1 Projected overspend £0.123m

- Increased top-ups in Barnet maintained primary schools
- Increased top-ups in OOB maintained special schools
- Reduction in top-ups at Barnet maintained special schools

1.2.2 Projected overspend £0.322m

- Increased top-ups in Barnet secondary Academies
- Increased top-ups in OOB Academy special schools

1.2.3 Projected overspend £0.025

- Increased top-ups in Non-Maintained Residential special schools

The new Assistant Director, SEND & Inclusion will be negotiating costs with providers to mitigate this overspend, but further action will be required to manage the HN block expenditure going forward. Details of future proposals on this are discussed further in item 9.b - LBB proposals.

Schools Forum was asked to:

- (v) Note and agree the M3 projected position, and to receive further 2018/19 budget monitoring reports at future meetings.

Members agreed item (v) unanimously.

9. 2019/20 National Formula Funding Arrangements

a. 2019/20 Illustrative DSG Allocations

CG presented illustrative DSG allocations, which were released by the DfE based on October 2017 numbers (table 1). A further table showing projections for 2019/20 based on estimated October 2018 pupil numbers was also presented.

ML asked if figures include the increase in Schools Block per pupil funding as indicated by the government. CG explained that the per pupil increased funding (over 17/18 baseline) is included in the revised Schools Block income projection.

CG advised that the Schools Block income may increase, as early indications of the formula based growth funding allocation may be beneficial to Barnet. Modelling suggests that Barnet may receive an additional £0.500m growth funding in the Schools Block once actual October 2018 pupil numbers are confirmed.

RA asked if the income figures include the Teachers' Pay Grant (TPG). CG said it does not, as this is an additional grant over and above formula funding. AH asked if TPG is confirmed. CG advised that the TPG methodology used for allocations is shown on the school funding and finance website. LB asked if the grant only affects teachers on M1 and M6. CG stated that the grant will be allocated on pupil numbers, and the grant includes all teachers, not just those on upper and lower pay scales. The school level allocations are due to be advised during the autumn term, with payment following thereafter.

b. LBB proposals for 2019/20

CM presented the requesting the transfer of 0.5% of schools block funding into the High Needs block for 2019/20. CM stated that all schools will be consulted on the

proposal, with a special meeting of Schools Forum to be arranged in November to consider the consultation responses and to vote on the proposed transfer.

CM outlined the paper explaining the proposal, which discusses DfE guidance and an explanation of the reasons behind the proposal, which include:

- Increasing numbers of pupils with EHCPs
- Increase in post-16 numbers and costs
- Increasing complexity
- Additional specialist places

The paper also explains changes in alternative provision, how the proposal will affect the achievement by children and young people with special educational needs, and the council's strategic financial plan to re-align High Needs expenditure to the High Needs block.

HP added that Barnet is very inclusive, however there are inconsistencies in funding, and this is particularly significant because of increasing post-16 numbers.

ML asked if all the 0.5% increase in Schools Block funding will be transferred to HN. CM confirmed this would be the case.

JD asked if during consultation with schools that both the positives/benefits, and risks/negatives, were presented. CM said he will take the suggestions on board.

SH asked as schools were paying for empty HN places in 2018/19, would this still be the case in 2019/20. HP advised that vacant places are still being funded in 2018/19, but the review of HN places is currently being finalised for 2019/20 and this will align commissioned places to occupied places. JD stated that for ARPs to be viable, funding should be based on commissioned place numbers.

RA asked if LBB could review the principles behind ARP and SEND funding to ensure fairness to all schools. HP stated that this will be taken into consideration.

IK asked whether increased pressures in pre-16 will put further pressures on the budget in future when pupils move through the age range. HP said that she is aware of the impact around the top-ups for both pre- and post-16, and the review will address these issues.

GK asked if post-16 HN pupils attracted extra funding. CG advised that the increase in post-16 HN pupils had not been matched by a commensurate increase to the HN block allocation.

LB asked if this was a problem nationally, and if so is the government aware. HP said it is a nationwide issue. CM advised he is on a CYP group that has been asked by government to contribute to their review, so is clear that they are aware of this issue.

NM asked if figures for LAs transferring funds to their HN block are published, but was advised that this information is not available.

LB asked if LAs had been refused Secretary of State permission to transfer between blocks. CM said that, to his knowledge, no local authority has been refused.

ML asked if we are running the risk of not having a middle ground, if schools don't want to transfer the maximum 0.5% permitted. CG stated that, based on current expenditure projections, the 0.5% transfer is needed in full.

A replacement Appendix B was tabled for members, showing the anticipated impact on schools if the 0.5% transfer (£1.2m) proposal is agreed, and if it was rejected.

GK reinforced the message that transparency is key when consulting schools.

c. Existing de-delegated budgets

CG presented the item requesting continuation of existing de-delegated items. The currently de-delegated items are:

- Behaviour Support- Currently de-delegated to maintained primary schools
- Support to UPEG and bilingual learners (Narrowing the Gap)- Currently de-delegated to maintained primary and secondary schools
- Trade Union Duties- Currently de-delegated to maintained primary and secondary schools
- School Contingency- Currently de-delegated to maintained primary and secondary schools

GK asked the representative members to vote on the proposals

- 1- Behaviour Support – Agreed, Primary maintained schools only
- 2- Narrowing gap – Agreed, Primary and Secondary maintained schools
- 3- TU duties – Agreed, Primary and Secondary maintained schools
- 4- School contingency – Agreed, Primary and Secondary maintained schools

d. De-delegation of additional school improvement services

CM presented the item requesting de-delegation of additional school improvement services. The proposal explains the request for increased funding for “additional school improvement services” from £101,000 to £310,000.

For this de-delegation item, only maintained primary and secondary schools will be consulted. A special Schools Forum meeting will be arranged for November for Schools Forum to consider the consultation responses and to vote on the proposal. The papers give background information on why the increased amount is being requested.

NM noted comments from members that the consultation should show the impact of the service provided to schools if the proposal is or is not agreed.

JD asked why the requested increase is so large and what services the increased de-delegation would cover. CM and NM responded that it is due to Barnet having providing strong partnership services through the existing school improvement team.

CM stated that as the ESG is expected to be completely withdrawn, the requested amount is needed to continue the support currently given to schools.

SH asked if Cambridge Education had sold services to generate income. CM confirmed that they have, and that school improvement is part of the contract with Cambridge Education, however the funding is needed to continue existing service levels.

RA raised a concern that if schools did not buy into the de-delegation then school performance ratings are very likely to drop. NM agreed.

e. Former ESG funded services

CM presented the proposal to request funding for Education Functions, previously funded from the ESG, from maintained school budget shares. The proposal states the services in this area are:

- Statutory and regulatory duties
- Asset management
- Premature retirement and redundancy
- Monitoring national curriculum assessments

Only maintained primary and secondary schools will be consulted on the proposal, and a special Schools Forum meeting will be arranged for November for members to consider the consultation responses and to vote on the proposal.

The proposal provides background information on removal of the ESG, guidance from the DfE, and the rationale and supporting information behind the proposal. The proposal also explains the consequences if the request is not approved, and the impact on both individual schools and the Local Authority.

Appendix C provides illustrative school level de-delegation and Education Functions figures, based on estimated pupil numbers and projected formula funding.

CM asked for suggestions on how best to present this to schools in the consultation document (maintained schools only).

SH asked if all the consultation requests will happen at the same time. CM stated that the consultation paper will most likely be a single document.

JS expressed concern that consultation on implementing all of these proposals in a single financial year will adversely affect a significant number of schools, who already feel their funding is stretched.

CM stated that these are not to achieve savings for the LA, but to ensure the continuation of services currently provided. He also accepted that the consultation questions and supporting details will be carefully considered to provide clear and transparent information to schools.

LB asked why Unified Pay awards were announced so far into the financial year, after schools had set their annual budgets. CM said he was not aware of the reasons behind the delayed announcements, but he would investigate and advise members.

NM stated that the request is for the provision of statutory duties. LB asked if there is an alternative source of funding if the proposal is rejected by schools. CM advised that the funds would have to come from within Children's Services, an area which has already seen significant cuts.

Cllr DL advised that the Secretary of State can be asked to adjudicate if schools or the Schools Forum do not agree to the proposals.

10. Draft agenda for next meeting.

Draft agenda was agreed.

11. Any other business

None

12. Dates of future meetings

Extraordinary Schools Forum
(Date to be confirmed)

Tuesday 11th December 2018

Thursday 7th February 2019

Tuesday 7th May 2019

Thursday 11th July 2019

(Venue for future meetings to be confirmed)