

Schools Forum

Minutes

Monday 19 October 2015

Representing	Name	Organisation	Attendance
Primary Schools	5 Members		
Primary Head	Claire Fletcher (CF)	St Paul's CE Primary School	Apologies
Primary Head	Wayne Leeming (WL)	Melcombe Primary School	Present
Primary Head	Kathleen Williams (KW)	Holy Cross RC Primary School	
Primary Governor	Daisy Donovan (DD)	Avonmore Primary School	Present
Primary Governor	Sharon Robinson (SR)	John Betts Primary School	Present
Secondary schools	1 Member		
Secondary Head	Alan Streeter (AS)	Phoenix High School	Present
Academies	5 members		
Secondary Non Recoupment Academy Principal	Gary Kynaston (GK)	Hammersmith Academy	Present
Secondary Recoupment Academy Head	David McFadden (DMcf)	The London Oratory School	Apologies
Secondary Recoupment Academy	Vacancy		
Secondary Recoupment Academy (Observer)	Peter Haylock (PH)	Fulham College Trust	Present
Primary Academy	Elissa Douglas	Lena Gardens Primary School	Apologies
Maintained Nursery Schools	1 member		
Nursery Head	Michelle Barratt (MB)	Vanessa/Randolph Beresford Early Years Centre School	Present
Special Schools	1 member		
Special Schools Head	Cathy Welsh (CW)	Jack Tizard	Present
Alternative Provision	1 member		
Alternative Provision Rep	Nathan Crawley-Lyons (NCL)	TBAP	Absent
Early Years (PVI)	1 member		
	Jane Gleasure	Little People	Present
14-19 Representative	1 member		
	Vacant		
School Business Manager	2 observers		
Primary (Maintained)	Caroline Collins (CC)	Miles Coverdale Primary School	Apologies
Secondary (Academy)	Tim Scott (TS)	Fulham College Trust	Present
Trade Union	1 observer		
	Dennis Charman (DC)	NUT	Apologies
Officers in Attendance			
Tri Borough Director of Finance & Resources	Dave McNamara (DM)	Tri Borough Children's Services	Present
Tri Borough Director of Schools Commissioning	Ian Heggs (IH)	Tri Borough Children's Services	Present
Tri Borough Assistant Director Special Educational Needs & Vulnerable Children	Alison Farmer (AF)	Tri Borough Children's Services	Present

3BM Managing Director	Andy Rennison (AR)	3BM	Present
3BM Schools Finance Director	Remi Oladupo (RO)	3BM	Present
Clerking Service Manager and Clerk to Schools Forum	Owen Rees (OR)	Tri Borough Children's Services	Present

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies are set out in the table above.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR

David McFadden was elected as Chair of the Schools Forum until the first meeting of the 2016-17 academic year.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 15th June 2015 be agreed as a true and correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

There were none.

5. HIGH NEEDS BLOCK

Alison Farmer, Tri-Borough Assistant Director for SEN, introduced the report. The report provided an update on resource allocation, on the joint approach through the High Needs Block Reference Group and the block funding for the enhanced nursery offer. The report also detailed the costs pressures on the High Needs Block, and noted that a key focus would be on reducing high cost placements in the independent sector.

Ms Farmer noted that the Early Years HNB group had met. It was agreed that Jane Gleasure would be invited to future meetings to represent the PVI sector. The schools HNB Reference Group had also met, with discussions focused on the functioning of the in-year contingency mechanism. A wider representation of schools was sought, to assist in developing strategy over the long term. It was agreed that, subject to being given further detail on what was required, Peter Haylock and Gary Kynaston would join the Schools HNB Reference Group.

Ms Farmer noted that the final section of the report covered the enhanced Early Years SEN Offer, which would be delivered by the Nursery Schools in the borough. This would increase the training and support available to Early Years providers, and was aimed at supporting a better transition to primary school.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted

6. SCHOOL FUNDING FOR 2016/17

Andy Rennison, Managing Director, 3BM, introduced the report.

APT Tool

Mr Rennison noted that, as in previous years, the local authority was required to submit the draft APT tool by the 31st October; he added that no changes were proposed to the formula. He noted that the funding cycle was tight, with a number of cost pressures on schools, including imminent NI rises and increased charges from external organisations, and pressures on the formula itself through increased demand on the HNB, the expansion of SEN provision post-16 and academisation. The Forum requested a paper on cost pressures at its next meeting. In response to a question as to whether figures were likely to change, Mr Rennison replied that the Tool would be reviewed by the EFA, and that the only likely change was in relation to cushion factors.

He also noted the change to the approach taken to non-Recoupment Academies by the EFA, which were now included in the main DSG block funding received by the Council. There was a discrepancy in the funding transferred and the pupil rates at which the borough's non-recoupment academies were funded, partly due to the NRA's being largely secondaries; this would be clarified with the EFA.

Mr Rennison also noted that school rolls were under pressure, with the number of pupils entering Reception falling for the first time in 7 years. This was an issue in both the north and the south of the borough, but was more pronounced in the south due to the differing nature of housing stock. Mr Hegggs suggested that the Forum receive a report on the updated School Organisation Strategy at its next meeting.

Mr Rennison also drew attention to areas where the local authority proposed to retain funds, these were targeted support on notional SEN, which would be looked at by the High Needs Reference Group, and for pupil growth, with 7/12ths of an AWPU put in place to allow schools who were scheduled to grow the ability to do so.

Falling Rolls Fund and Criteria

Mr Rennison noted that such a fund had been discussed at the previous meeting. It allowed schools to maintain staff and class structures in the case of a sudden fall in pupil numbers. This funding would be available automatically to Good and Outstanding schools only. The local authority would retain the discretion to support schools with other Ofsted judgements through intervention and other funds.

Mr Kynaston noted that the funding was predicated on a future recovery, and that it was in question whether the demographic changes within the borough

would support a future recovery in pupil numbers. Ms Gleasure noted that demand for PVI places was strong, and that Good and Outstanding schools could generally draw pupils.

Mr Heggs suggested that the existing Schools Organisation Strategy would be distributed, with the draft 2016 version presented at the next meeting.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the APT Tool be submitted as submitted, using the 2015-16 NRA estimates and
- (ii) That the Falling Rolls Fund be approved in principle,
- (iii) That the Schools Organisation Strategy be approved.

7. LA FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Dave McNamara, Tri-Borough Director of Finance and Resources, updated the Forum on the local authority's financial position and strategy. He reported that the local authority's funding position remained difficult, with £12million in savings, 37% of the total, required from the Children's Services budgets. A large proportion of spend was in relation to child protection, meaning that other services, including services to schools, would be under pressure. There would be an increased emphasis on placing services on a commercial footing, but that the local authority was keen to provide services that were valued by schools.

Mr Scott asked whether schools would be consulted about changes. Mr McNamara replied that they would and reported that a 3 year spending plan would be set, with a number of proposals and initiatives put forward to members. All measures would not all be in place for April, and consultation would be ongoing.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted

8. DIRECTORS REPORT, INCLUDING MANAGED SERVICES AND SCHOOL MEALS

Mr McNamara noted that support to targeted universal services, in particular Children's Centres, remained a priority of the administration, and no reductions were planned in the total number of centres, with strategies being developed to grow the offer.

He noted that the Council's SEPAC had expressed a desire to see the number of schools offering an 8-6 offer raised, as well as improving the take-up of the 2 year old offer, encouraging a range of providers to come forward. In relation to the latter, he noted that capital funding was available for projects

School Meals

Mr McNamara reported that the day of the meeting was the last day for call off in RBKC. RBKC would be followed by Westminster, with call off for LBHF schools in January. It was hoped that schools would benefit from reduced costs, and that where this was not the case, officers were looking at the reasons for that

Managed Services

Mr McNamara reported that the performance of the provider remained short of expectations, and apologised to schools experiencing difficulties. He reported that the Council had agreed a 50% discount to schools purchasing the HR and Payroll SLA. Schools who were not satisfied with this could raise the issue with the Chief Executive of the local authority. Due to the level of dissatisfaction amongst schools, an alternate arrangement from 3BM was being developed, though the local authority was not suggesting that schools should leave the SLA. Any move to a new arrangement, with 3BM or outside the Council, would need to be done in a cautious and systemic way, with appropriate notice given and, where necessary, tendering undertaken.

In response to a question about the divide between payroll and HR, Mr McNamara reported that work was ongoing with HR, and that the local authority valued the relationship between schools and HR. He noted that elements of the service had returned in house, and that Clare Mapstone and Lesley Steven would act as strategic leads to schools.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted

9. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

18th January 2016 at 2pm at Lila Husset PDC.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Recruitment and Retention

In response to a question regarding access to parking, Mr McNamara noted that there was sympathy to the request regarding parking, but that an indication of collective interest would be helpful. It was suggested that a meeting between representatives from schools and the Cabinet Member be arranged to discuss the matter. It was noted that Tower Hamlets had a scheme which allowed schools to purchase parking permits, with availability based on the circumstances of an individual school.

It was noted that the penthouses at the Edward Woods Estate were now occupied by teaching. It was noted that the Housing Strategy was out for consultation and that schools should seek to contribute.

Meeting started: Time Not
Specified
Meeting ended: Time Not
Specified

Chairman

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Committee Co-ordinator
Governance and Scrutiny
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