

Schools Forum

Minutes

Tuesday 12 January 2021

Present

Voting members	Non-voting members
Primary School Heads Kathleen Williams, Holy Cross Primary Wendy Aldridge, Sullivan Primary Michelle Barrett, Randolph Beresford and Vanessa Nursery Karen Cunningham, St John XXIII Catholic Primary School Jo Brown, Old Oak Primary School Sam Naismith, Flora Gardens Primary School Academies and Free Schools Gary Kynaston, Hammersmith Academy (Chair) Clare Wagner, West London Free School Daniel Upfield, Ark Swift Primary Academy	Observers Aidan Smith, LA Governor at Jack Tizard Chantelle Thomas-Payne, St John's Walham Green School (School Business Manager)

H&F Officers

Jacqui McShannon, Director of Children's Services
Jan Parnell, Director of Education
Tony Burton, Head of Finance, Children's Services & Education
Jill Lecznar, Head of Finance (Corporate)
Caroline Baxter, Strategic Finance Manager
David Abbott, Head of Governance
Satwinder Saraon, Strategic Lead Education Transformation
Phil Tomsett, Head of Early Years

NOTE: This meeting was held remotely

1. **WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

Welcome and introduction

The Chair, Gary Kynaston from Hammersmith Academy, welcomed everyone to the meeting and led a round of introductions.

Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Tim Scott.

Minutes of the previous meeting

The Chair asked for an update on the H&F teaching commission Jan Parnell, Director of Education, said the commission had recently been launched and would focus on retention and recruitment of teachers in the borough. A schedule of open meetings will be published soon.

RESOLVED

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 November 2020 were agreed by the Forum.

2. APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP OF SCHOOLS FORUM

RESOLVED

The Forum agreed the appointment of the following members:-

- Karen Cunningham, St John XXIII Catholic Primary School
- Jo Brown, Old Oak Primary School
- Sam Naismith, Flora Gardens Primary School

3. SCHOOLS BLOCK BUDGET 2021/22 - FINAL PROPOSED AUTHORITY PROFORMA TOOL

Tony Burton, Head of Finance – Children's Services & Education, presented the report that provided a briefing on the final Schools Block allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2021/22, following the receipt of final funding allocations and Authority Proforma Tool on 18 December 2020.

The Chair requested an item at the next meeting that showed the difference between the current budget position and the projected budget if the national funding formula changes continued to 2023.

Tony Burton noted that there was a slight budget allocation uplift of 0.45% in H&F but with the cost pressures schools faced this represented a real terms cut. He said officers expected to see similarly constrained funding increases in future which would continue to be challenging for schools to manage.

A forum member asked for clarification about which schools were covered by the de-delegation referenced in recommendation 4. Tony Burton said only maintained mainstream schools would be able to draw on those funds. Officers said they would share detailed information on the charges per school.

ACTION: Tony Burton / Jill Lecznar

RESOLVED

1. It was agreed that the APT for the January 2021 recommended model is submitted to ESFA for 2021/22 school budget shares, with revised NFF rates for local factors in appendix 1 and with an MFG value of 0.5% per pupil positive.
2. Schools Forum agreed a proposal to continue to transfer 0.5% of the total Schools Block to the High Needs Block in 2021/22. This equates to £0.528m based on the final allocation.
3. Schools Forum agreed a proposal to top-slice the 2021/22 Schools Block to the value of £0.200m or 0.18% of the total for the Falling Rolls protection fund in 2021/22.
4. Maintained school representatives on Schools Forum agreed to the proposed de-delegated budgets proposed for 2021/22 in Table 3 totalling £695,800.
5. Maintained school representatives on Schools Forum agreed to the proposed Education Functions budgets proposed for 2021/22 in Table 4 totalling £273,400.
6. Schools Forum agreed the proposed 2021/22 allocation of the Central Services Schools Block totalling £3.313m per table 5.

4. EARLY YEARS BLOCK BUDGET UPDATE 2021/22

Tony Burton, Head of Finance – Children’s Services & Education, presented the report that updated the forum on the Initial Allocation of Early Years Block funding for 2021/22 based on January 2020 census numbers and explained the impact of this on the participation model for all providers.

Jacqui McShannon, Director of Children’s Services, noted that officers were aware of concerns around funding being allocated based on the census and said she was working with colleagues across London to lobby for funding to be based on capacity.

RESOLVED

1. Schools Forum agreed the draft 2021/22 Early Year budget including an increase to the base rate from £6.20 to £6.26 and proposed hourly rates for deprivation detailed in Appendix 1 subject to consultation. Detailed work will be done with the Maintained Nursery Schools to set up Service Level Agreements in order to commission work to provide training, build networks and disseminate best practice to the early years sector. This will also include work to ensure their ongoing financial sustainability.
2. Schools Forum noted that the uncertainty of the numbers in January 2021 means that there is a potential to overspend in 2020/21 and this would need to be met from the 2020/21 allocation, contingency budget or carried forward to 2021/22 as a deficit.
3. Schools Forum noted the proposed timescales for Budget Consultation to Maintained Nursery Schools, Primary Schools with Nurseries, PVI

providers and Childminders and the approval of final budget for Early Years Block set out in table 6 of the report.

5. HIGH NEEDS BLOCK UPDATE

Tony Burton, Head of Finance – Children’s Services & Education, presented the report that updated on the allocation of the FY 2021/22 Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs block (HNB) funding formula and factor distributions.

The Chair asked officers to expand on the EHCP top-up reduction and what was expected from the SEN sufficiency review.

Tony Burton said the budget reflected the funding allocation from the DfE. Jan Parnell added that officers were looking at support services and alternate provision. Sufficiency work was ongoing, and the Council was working on a number of workstreams that would come to Headteacher consultation forums over the spring term. She said Headteachers would be a key part of shaping services – the Council wanted a partnership approach.

Jacqui McShannon noted that the DfE was working closely with the Council on the High Needs Block recovery plan and feedback had been positive.

RESOLVED

1. To note the place funding commissioning proposals to increase commissioned numbers for FY 2021/22 and the associated increase in HNB block expenditure.
2. To note the forecast overspend for FY 2021/22 and forecast accumulated deficit balance at the end of FY 2021/22.
3. To note the requirements of the DSG management plan and the discussions being held with the DfE.

6. WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme was noted.

Meeting started: 2.00 pm
Meeting ended: 3.00 pm

Chair

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