

**Hammersmith & Fulham
Schools Forum – 23 March 2021
Minutes of the meeting**

NOTE: This meeting was held remotely

Present

Voting members	Non-voting members
<p>Primary School Heads Karen Cunningham, St John XXIII Catholic Primary School Michele Barrett, Randolph Beresford and Vanessa Nursery Kathleen Williams, Holy Cross Primary Joe Brown, Old Oak Primary School Claire Fletcher, St Paul's CE Primary</p> <p>Academies and Free Schools Gary Kynaston, Hammersmith Academy (Chair) Daniel Upfield, Ark Swift Academy</p> <p>AP Academies Krishna Purbhoo, Exec Head of TBAP</p> <p>Non-Schools Members Jane Gleasure, Little People (EY PVI)</p>	<p>Schools Representatives Tim Scott, Fulham College Aidan Smith, LA Governor at Jack Tizard</p> <p>Observers Chantelle Thomas-Payne, St John's Walham Green School (School Business Manager) Alex Parker, Business Manager Ben McLaughlin Mark Hopper</p>

Officers

Jacqui McShannon, Director of Children's Services
 Tony Burton, Head of Finance (Children's Services and Education)
 Jan Parnell, Director of Education
 Mandy Lawson, Assistant Director, Education and Disabilities
 Valerie Irolla, Principal Accountant
 Jill Lecznar, Head of Finance (Corporate)
 Phil Tomsett, Head of Early Years
 David Abbott, Head of Governance

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & 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.

It was noted that Clare Wagner was moving on so a vacancy would have to be recruited to after Easter. A member also noted that there was an AP Academy vacancy that needed to be recruited to.

ACTION: Jan Parnell

RESOLVED

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 January 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

2. SCHOOLS BUDGET 2021-22 UPDATE

Tony Burton presented the budget update report which confirmed that the funding allocations proposed and agreed by Schools Forum in January 2021 had been agreed by local authority cabinet decision and confirmed by the ESFA.

The report also proposed the allocation of the available falling rolls funding agreed by Schools Forum for the 2021/22 budget in addition to the remaining allocated falling rolls funding available from the 2020/21 budget.

Tim Scott noted that he had joined the group that discussed the falling roll allocation and he had declared an interest as one of schools he worked for was on the allocation list. Officers accepted that the rules had been equally applied.

RESOLVED

Schools Forum unanimously agreed the proposed allocations and agreed immediate payment of the allocations proposed.

3. EARLY YEARS BUDGET 2021-22

Tony Burton presented the report that updated members on the results of the consultation on the 3 and 4 year olds Draft Budget for 2021/22 and proposed the 2021/22 Final Budget model for approval.

The Chair asked that the overall value of the 6p increase was. He also asked for more information on the recent Government announcement on Early Years funding.

Tony Burton said the overall budget increase was £111k, which represented a fraction of a percent in terms of overall funding levels. The uplift was not in-line with inflation.

Jane Gleasure asked officers to confirm the funding rate for the 2 year old offer. Jill Lecznar, Head of Finance, said it was £6.66p – an increase of 8p.

Jane Gleasure asked for the remittance advice to be clearer about how the figures were calculated.

Jill Lecznar said it wasn't possible to expand remittance advice on the current payment system. Tony Burton added that officers understood the difficulty and the council had been trialling some improvements to remittances across

the service. If those trials were successful officers would be looking to apply them to other areas in the future.

The Chair asked officers to discuss these issues with Jane and others from the PVI sector to see what could be done to improve things.

ACTION: Tony Burton

Michele Barrett asked when schools would receive the Early Years funding. Tony Burton said officers could provide estimates to schools based on this budget process shortly.

RESOLVED

The report was noted.

4. SCHOOLS BUDGET 2020-21 Q3 MONITORING

Tony Burton presented the report which set out:-

- Carry forward balances at 1st April 2020
- Forecast variances in each of the blocks of the Dedicated Schools Grant in 2020/21
- Projected closing balances at 31st March 2021
- Proposed use of £0.382m de-delegated funds brought forward (maintained primary schools only) to provide additional support around transformation costs in schools who experienced a significant fall in roll between October 2019 and October 2020.

Members expressed concern that the same principle was being used as for other falling rolls funding. It would be unfair for some schools to benefit twice while smaller schools that didn't hit the threshold missed out. The factors should be reconsidered.

Officers suggested setting up a working group to look at these issues. Claire Fletcher, Joe Brown and Michele Barrett volunteered for the working group. Jan Parnell to organise the working group.

ACTION: Jan Parnell

RESOLVED

The report was noted, and members requested a working group be set up to work through the issues around additional support to schools with failing rolls between October 2019 and October 2020.

5. HIGH NEEDS BLOCK TRANSFORMATION UPDATE

Tony Burton presented the report on the next phases of the transformation work to bring the high needs block spend to within the annual allocation.

Tony Burton noted that on Friday morning the DfE announced an agreement with five local authorities, including Hammersmith & Fulham, to make a significant contribution to retained deficits. The DfE were writing off £20m of the retained deficit over 5 years which was excellent news – it meant the

schools budget was not constrained by such a large deficit and could invest in the future.

Kathleen Williams asked, in reference to the Education Banding Tool, asked if there was any move towards converting the current system into the new tool. Jan Parnell said she didn't think it would fully move but it was being investigated. A number of headteachers had requested it and there were pilots in place that were aligned with that route. She said she was happy to discuss with colleagues who had questions about it.

6. WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme was noted.

The Chair requested feedback on the two sub-groups.

ACTION: Tony Burton

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

Meeting started: 2.00 pm
Meeting ended: 3.10 pm

Chair

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