

Schools Forum

Minutes

Tuesday 5 March 2024

PRESENT

Voting members	Non-voting members
School Members Anne-Marie (Thames Federation) Dave Colins (Brackenbury School) Kathleen Williams (Holy Cross Primary) Michele Barrett (Randolph Beresford/ Vanessa Nursery) Imogen Lavelle (The Good Shepherd)	Observers Katie Beardsworth Aiden Smith Jacqueline Munro
Academies and Free Schools Gary Kynaston, Hammersmith Academy (Chair)	
Non-Schools Members Jane Gleasure (Little People, Early Years	

Officers

Peter Haylock (Director of Education and SEND)
Tony Burton (Head of Finance for Children's Services and Education)
Irolla Valerie (Principle Accountant)
Satwinder Saraon (Strategic Lead for Education, Early Years and Transformation)
Caroline Baxter (Finance Manager)
Anjeli Chadha (Principal Accountant - Corporate Finance)
Amrita White (Committee Coordinator)

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies of absence were received Daniel Upfield and Alex Parker

2. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

3. **FINAL EARLY YEARS FUNDING 2024/25**

Tony Burton (Head of Finance for Children's Services and Education) presented the item that covered the final allocation of early years Block funding for 2024/25 based on January 2023 census numbers as agreed by Cabinet on 12th February 2024 and following consultation with the sector in January and early February.

The proposals were presented at early years workshops held on 18th January for maintained nurseries and primaries with nursery provision and on 22nd January for the private, voluntary, and independent sector including childminders.

RESOLVED

The schools Forum noted the report

4. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT MONITORING Q3 2023/24

Tony Burton (Head of Finance for Children's Services and Education) presented the report which covered the 2023/24 quarter 3 budget monitoring position after updates to the allocation received in July 2023 from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). It also included the forecast accumulated Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) carry forward deficit position with respect to the High Needs Block (HNB). The retained HNB deficit at 31/03/22 was £4.749m after receipt of £17.55m of agreed safety valve funding since the commencement of the agreement.

In response to a question asked by the Chair, Tony Burton explained that the retained deficit was forecast to reduce to £3.193m at 31/03/24 following the receipt of £1.5m further safety valve funding in 2024/25 financial year. Further information regarding the provisional funding allocations for 2025/26 would be brought to the July schools forum.

Referring to the proposed allocation from 2023/24 falling rolls provision, the Chair noted that the methodology employed deemed reasonable and was happy for this to be progressed.

The Chair asked for further clarification to be provided on any feedback from the early year workshops. Tony Burton noted that there was good attendance of over 60 providers at the workshops with representatives from all areas of the early years sector. He provided a summary of the headline takeaways noting that the under 2's offer compared more favourably than to other neighbouring local authorities.

Satwinder Saraon (Strategic Lead for Education, Early Years and Transformation) noted that the workshops and survey conducted were relatively well received.

RESOLVED

The schools Forum noted the report and approved the falling rolls funding proposed 2023/4 budget.

Meeting started: 2:00pm
Meeting ended: 2:30pm

Chair

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