

Schools Forum

Minutes

Tuesday 10 November 2020

Present

Voting members	Non-voting members
<p>Primary School Heads Claire Fletcher, St Paul's CE Primary Kathleen Williams, Holy Cross Primary Wendy Aldridge, Sullivan Primary Michelle Barrett, Randolph Beresford and Vanessa Nursery</p> <p>Academies and Free Schools Gary Kynaston, Hammersmith Academy (Chair) Clare Wagner, West London Free School</p> <p>Alternative Provision Academies Krishna Purbhoo, Exec Head of TBAP</p>	<p>Observers Jo Chapman, Business Manager Aidan Smith, LA Governor at Jack Tizard</p>

Potential new members

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

H&F Officers

Jacqui McShannon, Director of Children's Services
Jan Parnell, Director of Education
Tony Burton, Head of Finance, Children's Services & Education
David Abbott, Head of Governance

NOTE: This meeting was held remotely.

1. **WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND MINUTES**

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 Jane Gleasure.

Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed by the forum.

2. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT MONITORING - Q2 2020-21

Tony Burton (Head of Finance, Children's Services & Education) presented the report that gave an update on the 2020/21 quarter 2 budget monitoring position after

updates to the allocation received in July 2020 from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). It also included the forecast accumulated Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) carry forward deficit position in 2020/21.

Tony Burton highlighted the following points:

- There was a £95k overspend on the Central Services DSG from income loss due to Covid-19. Officers hoped to recover it from Central Government.
- High Needs Block – officers expected the deficit to rise to £23m by end of the financial year 2020/21.
- Closed 2019/20 with a £66k surplus on the Early Years DSG. That increased to just under £600k due to retrospective adjustments for 2019/20.

Tony Burton advised schools to speak with his team if they felt they needed financial support.

RESOLVED

The report was noted.

3. PROVISIONAL 2021-22 SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA

Tony Burton (Head of Finance, Children's Services & Education) presented the report on the decisions required for the 2021/22 budget setting process for the provisional Schools Block allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant, following the receipt of provisional funding allocations in Summer 2020 and the Authority Proforma Tool in September 2020.

Tony explained that funding increases would be constrained at circa 1 percent in H&F and may represent a real terms reduction after allowing for cost inflation, particularly on salaries. This represents a real challenge for schools in Hammersmith and Fulham. The final block allocation for 2021/22 due on 18th December 2020 may provide an increase in funding above this level. He also advised schools to plan for the possibility of the 2022/23 financial envelope to also be constrained.

The Council will hold some workshops setting out the key points, asking schools for feedback, running through the modelling on the medium-term assessment, and going through the challenges for schools over next few years regarding setting balanced budgets.

Tony Burton discussed the differences between different funding models and how different factors affected the allocation. He said the workshops would go into this in more detail – but assured members that the recommended model schools should ensure all schools get a roughly equal share of the year on year uplift when using the October 2019 census data. Variations would emerge once the modelling was updated for the October 2020 census cohort in December.

Tony Burton advised that the proposed sub-group on falling rolls funding should only have members from schools who don't anticipate applying to the fund. The Chair agreed and suggested asking for volunteers at the budget workshops. Alan Campbell and Daniel Upfield volunteered for the sub-group.

Tony noted that there was still £223k available for roll falls from September 18/19 and the year up to Oct 2020 and needed to be deployed to schools. The Chair summarised the item and noted that schools were faced with inflation costs and staffing of around 2 to 4 percent so the uplift of 1 percent was a real-terms cut – but the Council and schools were trying to ensure there was as little impact as possible across the borough. He said the workshops had been very affective and encouraged all schools to attend.

The Chair also noted that he was speaking with Jan Parnell about a piece of work on the longer-term impact of staffing and leadership across the authority.

RESOLVED

The report was noted and agreement to proceed to consult with Schools on the recommended model 1 and proposed allocations. The workshops and consultation would cover the models and recommendations made to this Schools Forum.

Members agreed in principle to the proposed continuation of the 0.5% transfer to support the High Needs Block and this should be specifically covered in the workshops and consultation with schools.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Jan Parnell, Director of Education, said that Councillor Larry Culhane, Cabinet Member for Children and Education, had formally announced the launch of the H&F teaching commission. Its key focus was on recruitment and retention of teachers and it was chaired by Denise Fox, Headteacher of Fulham Cross Girls' School.

The Chair added that the recent parking permit changes had made a really positive impact on Hammersmith Academy. It allowed staff to travel how they preferred and had obvious retention benefits.

Meeting started: 2.00 pm
Meeting ended: 3.25 pm

Chair

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