

Schools Forum

Minutes

Tuesday 14 November 2023

PRESENT

Voting members	Non-voting members
School Members Elisabeth Stevenson (Lady Margaret School) Anne-Marie (Thames Federation) Dave Colins (Brackenbury School) Imogen Lavelle (The Good Shepherd) Joe Brown (Old Oak Primary) Karen Cunningham (St John XXIII Catholic Primary) Imogen Lavelle (The Good Shepherd) Kathleen Williams (Holy Cross Primary) Michele Barrett (Randolph Beresford / Vanessa Nursery)	Observers Alex Parker Aiden Smith
Academies and Free Schools Sally Brooks (Fulham Cross Academy and Fulham College) Daniel Upfield (Ark Swift Primary Academy) Gary Kynaston, Hammersmith Academy (Chair)	
Non-Schools Members Jane Gleasure (Little People, Early Years)	

Officers

Jacqui McShannon (Director of Children's Services)
Peter Haylock (Director of Education and SEND)
Tony Burton (Head of Finance for Children's Services and Education)
Irolla Valerie (Principle Accountant)
Daryle Mathurin (Strategic Lead - Education, Assets and Operations)
Satwinder Saraon (Strategic Lead for Education, Early Years and Transformation)
Ozioma Onwochei (Principal Accountant)
Anjeli Chadha (Principal Accountant)
Caroline Baxter (Finance Manager)
Jayne Howorth (Strategic Lead, SEND)
Harriet Bour (Assistant Committee Coordinator)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

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

Aidan Smith noted that the first paragraph of point 8 on page 6 was mentioned twice.

3. HIGH NEEDS TRANSFORMATION UPDATE 2023/24 QUARTER 2

Gary Kynaston, Hammersmith Academy (Chair), began the meeting by congratulating Tony Burton (Head of Finance for Children's Services and Education) on his work and the work of his team around the rework of the budget, the relaunched consultation, and budget information workshops provided for schools. The Chair also highlighted that the Census data might change the school level allocations and total final funding on the school's block. Additionally, the Chair noted the pressures on Local Authorities and schools from constrained funding within the wider economic context.

Peter Haylock (Director of Education and SEND) presented the report that provided an update on the current position and progress of the transformation program across the High Needs Block.

The Chair highlighted that the bidding process was due to be released in January. The Chair asked for clarification on the bidding process and the associated time scales. Daryle Mathurin (Strategic Lead - Education, Assets, and Operations) confirmed that schools would be briefed ahead of the bidding process in January. Daryle Mathurin reassured the forum that school partners would be clear on expectations.

Dave Colins (Brackenbury School) highlighted that there had recently been some confusion around the bidding process in recent headteacher forums. Dave Colins suggested if a further briefing could be sent to schools for further clarification. There seemed to be additional capacity in mainstream schools and not special schools.

Daryle Mathurin informed the forum that officers had been working in collaboration with Headteachers. Daryle Mathurin also confirmed that officers had been engaging with schools where there was an existing pilot.

The Chair suggested that officers provide a short briefing note that would clarify the purpose and requirements of the bidding process.

ACTION: Daryle Mathurin

RESOLVED

The Schools Forum noted the report.

4. SCHOOLS BLOCK TO HIGH NEEDS BLOCK TRANSFER DISAPPLICATION REQUEST

Tony Burton (Head of Finance for Children's Services and Education) presented the report and its recommendations. The recommendations outlined that the Schools Forum approved the 1% disapplication request from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block for the 2024/25 financial year.

Tony Burton highlighted that five consultation responses were received in total. The five responses included mainstream primary and secondary schools and one non-mainstream school. The majority of responses from the consultation were positive. Comments were made around the need for continued support for the High Needs Block in the borough to make it sustainable.

The consultation response from the non-mainstream school outlined that they were unsure around the national picture and sustainability of the High Needs Block as a whole.

RESOLVED

The Schools Forum approved the following recommendations:

Schools Forum approved the 1% disapplication request from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block for the 2024/25 financial year

5. SCHOOLS BLOCK MAINSTREAM BUDGET 2024/25 UPDATE

Tony Burton (Head of Finance for Children's Services and Education) presented the report and its recommendations. This sets out the updated provisional modelling for mainstream school budget shares 2024/25 following the funding allocation correction notified by the Department for Education in October 2023.

Joe Brown (Old Oak Primary School) asked officers to explain what growth means? Tony Burton responded that the Department of Education and the Education and Skills Funding Agency define growth as not growing schools. In December 2023 the final allocation will take place. When the Census is known on a national level, the department from the Education and Skills Funding Agency can allocate additional growth funding into the baselines for Local Authority funding levels. This is dependent on the national position and what is affordable within the school's budget after the national Census update has taken place.

Tony Burton also highlighted that the timescales are tight in January. It was important that the Schools Forum was clear about how funding was allocated through this model ahead of funding being received.

Peter Haylock (Director of Education and SEND) emphasized that the key factor for the Schools Forum to remember is that the forum was agreeing on a principal and not a funding amount.

RESOLVED

The Schools Forum noted the report.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Peter Haylock (Director of Education and SEND) highlighted that the discussion with Queensmill School was still ongoing.

Meeting started: 2:05pm

Meeting ended: 2:54pm

Chair

Contact officer: Harriet Bour
Governance and Scrutiny
E-mail: Harriet.Bour@lbhf.gov.uk