

SCHOOLS FORUM

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 6 March 2018 **at 1.00 pm at Whitmore High School**

Members Present: Rutinder Mahil-Pooni – Headteacher, Kenmore Park Infant School
Sue Hammond – Headteacher, Whitmore High School (CHAIR)
Ian Noutch – Academy High School Finance Manager
Sue Maguire – Headteacher, Hatch End High School
Anna Smakowska – Headteacher, Woodlands School
Anne Monahan – Headteacher, St Anselm's Primary School
Pam Virdee – Headteacher, Longfield School (VICE CHAIR)
PK Maselino – Headteacher, The Helix Pupil Referral Unit
Geraldine Higgins – Headteacher, Sacred Heart Language College
Cllr Christine Robson – Portfolio Holder
Claudia Calogero – Governor, Hillview Nursery School
Keven Bartle – Headteacher, Canons High School
Jo Daswani – Headteacher, Whitchurch Primary School
Tracie Doe – Early Years PVI representative
Patrick O'Dwyer – Div Director Education Services (Special Needs Services)

Officers in Attendance: Jo Frost - Finance Business Partner

SH opened the meeting.

1. Apologies and Order of the Agenda

Apologies were received and accepted from:

Lisa Michael – Governor, Shaftesbury High School
Sarbdip Noonan – Principal, Stanmore College
Louise Browning – Headteacher, Norbury Primary School
Rebecca Hastings – Headteacher, Cedars Manor School
Mike Baumring – Headteacher, Kenmore Park Junior School

The order of the agenda was agreed.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 16 January 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2018 were agreed as an accurate record

KB expressed concern that a schedule of schools still receiving protection at the Minimum Funding Guarantee was agreed to be circulated with the minutes of the 16th January as it could be viewed to be 'naming and shaming' those schools. KB also expressed an initial concern that there had been no early discussion about the level that the MFG would be set at. He then acknowledged that it was discussed at a Schools Forum meeting he had not attended. In addition KB felt it was unfair that schools which gained above the cap were not also highlighted.

3. Matters Arising

a. High Needs Block

It was acknowledged that the first meeting of the SEND Strategy Group, led by Johanna Morgan, had taken place.

Schools Forum stressed the importance of both groups considering the funding pressures and requested an update on the progress of the group and the HNB review the LA is undertaking, in

May.

Action POD

AS raised the point that the demand for special schools and provision particularly in the primary sector is increasing and therefore increasing provision is essential as well as providing support and training to mainstream schools to manage some of the increase in demand and complexity of need.

4. DSG Budget Setting 2018-19

JF introduced a report which set out the latest 2018-19 DSG settlement and details of the 2018-19 school budgets submitted to the DfE on 19th January 2018.

The report summarised the DSG allocations and funding blocks which Schools Forum agreed in January.

JF stated that there had been minimal changes to the overall figures and individual school budget allocations since the figures provided in the January Schools Forum report except that funding for business rates had been updated. These revised figures had been provided by the rates team. The minor impact of the DfE's error in the FSM dataset was also corrected.

JF confirmed that the formula, as supported by Schools Forum, had been agreed by the DfE, Harrow Cabinet and Harrow Council in February. School Budget Packs were distributed on 28th February.

Early Years Single Funding Formula 2018-19

JF set out the outcome of the EYSFF consultation carried out in December. All respondents supported the proposal to increase the funding rates to reflect the new allocations to the LA, and to keep the ratio of formula factors the same as in 2017-18. Therefore the proposal as set out in the consultation and in Table 4 of the report has been approved by Harrow Cabinet for 2018-19.

Census data set

A number of schools have raised queries regarding the numbers of children eligible for different factors in the funding formula in their schools. It was agreed to share the October 2017 census data set used for the calculation of the funding formula with schools

Action JF

Schools Forum thanked JF and her team for their work in producing the school budgets.

5. DSG Budget Monitoring 2017-18

JF introduced a report which set out the latest 2017-18 budget monitoring position. The report shows an improved position as at Q3 compared with Q2 and highlights a likely underspend on the growth fund and high needs block by the end of the year. This will partially offset the requirement to fund the full formula deficit from the schools brought forward contingency balance.

Schools Forum requested a final report from Early Years in respect of the ring-fenced Early Years 2 year old project funding. The business case for the funding included a number of KPIs around provision and participation. The report needs to demonstrate achievements against these KPIs.

Action POD

Any Other Business

POD provided two updates

- Paul Hewitt (currently Divisional Director of Children and Young People Services) has been confirmed as the Interim Director of Children's Services and is expected to be confirmed as the Corporate Director of People Services, to replace Chris Spencer, subject to ratification
- Line management responsibilities for the HSIP and the Early Years Team including the Family Information Service, transferred to POD from 1st March 2018.

Next Meeting and Agenda Items

The next meeting will take place on 15th May 2018 at 1.00 pm at Whitmore High School.

Agenda items to include:

- DSG Budget Setting 2018-19
- DSG Budget Outturn 2017-18
- Update on SEND strategy and review of High Needs
- Final report on Early Years Project outcomes

The meeting closed at 1:40pm