

## **SCHOOLS FORUM**

### **Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 15 October 2019** **at 1.00 pm at Whitmore High School**

**Members Present:** Sue Hammond – Headteacher, Whitmore High School (CHAIR)  
Pam Virdee – Headteacher, Longfield School (VICE CHAIR)  
Rebecca Hastings – Headteacher, Cedars Manor School  
Sue Maguire – Headteacher, Hatch End High School  
Anne Monahan – Headteacher, St Anselm's Primary School  
Geraldine Higgins – Headteacher, Sacred Heart Language College  
Paul Gamble – Headteacher, Harrow High School  
Christine Robson – Portfolio Holder, Young People & Schools  
Louise Browning – Headteacher, Norbury Primary School  
Patrick O'Dwyer – Div. Director Education Services (Special Needs Services)  
David O'Farrell – Headteacher, St Bernadette's Primary School  
Jo Daswani – Headteacher, Whitchurch Primary School  
Clare Tarling – Finance Director, Pinner High School

**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:

Rutinder Mahil-Pooni – Headteacher, Kenmore Park Infant School  
Mike Baumring - Headteacher, Kenmore Park Junior School  
Nigel Hewitt – AHGB

The order of the agenda was agreed.

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2019 were agreed

#### **2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Sue Hammond was nominated and elected as Chair for this academic year.

Pam Virdee was nominated and elected as Vice Chair for this academic year.

#### **3. Matters Arising**

a. School Place Planning & Admissions

SH confirmed that secondary heads agreed to work with the LA to look at possible solutions for pressures on Y7 in September 2020. PG will continue this with the secondary heads and the LA.

#### **4. 2020-21 Budget Setting & Formula Review**

JF introduced the report which set out the provisional school funding arrangements for 2020-21. Schools Forum noted that at the time of writing the report did not contain any detailed funding implications or allocations as these had not been published. However, they had subsequently been published and JF provided a verbal update at the meeting.

JF updated Schools Forum on the new Primary & Secondary Units of Funding (P/SUFs) and estimated that this would increase the overall funding available by around £5m based on the October 2018 census.

The main change to the formula will be the introduction of a new formulaic methodology for calculating Mobility funding. JF explained that the funding rates in the NFF are significantly lower than those currently used in Harrow's local formula.

A discussion took place around the indicative implications for schools of bringing the Harrow funding formula in line with the NFF. For some schools there will be a reduction of over £200k. However, these schools will be protected by the Minimum Funding Guarantee.

For the purposes of the schools funding consultation it was agreed that there needed to be indicative calculations so that schools can understand the implications of the change in methodology and funding for Mobility when responding to the consultation.

JF agreed to provide calculations based on the October 2018 census of the current and proposed factor values.

JF explained that the Minimum Funding Guarantee will also need to be consulted on but ultimately will be subject to affordability of the overall School Funding Formula.

JF explained that the consultation on mobility and MFG will be issued after half term and consult with SH re wording.

ACTION JF

DOF raised the issue of a reduction in pupils eligible for Free School Meals due to a reduction in eligibility and seemingly due to a number of families not applying for FSM. DOF agreed to draft a few bullet points, supported by the primary heads, for SH as chair of Schools Forum to take forward.

ACTION DOF/SH

## **5. 2019-20 DSG Budget Monitoring**

JF introduced the report which set out the quarter 2 budget monitoring report for 2019-20.

The report highlights a projected HNB overspend of £4.1m and a small underspend on the Schools Block of £127k in relation to the Growth Fund.

### **Early Years**

JF explained that the current forecasts are to budget and an adjustment has been made to the budget to reflect the January 2019 census data. There has been an overall net increase in early years budgets for 2019-20.

### **High Needs Block**

JF explained that the HNB budget had been set at a deficit of £3.3m to reflect the projected shortfall on the overall allocation for 2019-20. The projected overspend is now expected to actually be £4.1m due to an increase in the requirement for post 16 provision and a number of movers in.

JF explained that the forecasts included possible placements for known young people that could happen as well as some capacity for overall growth.

### **Growth Fund**

JF explained that there will be an underspend on the growth fund of £127k due to reallocation from the DfE for growth funding previously allocated to academies by the LA.

### **Contingency**

The report set out the likely impact on the contingency and the updated position in relation to Early Years. There had been anticipated claw back for 2018-19 to reflect the January 2019 census. JF explained that there was now approximately £1.7m in the contingency which is not earmarked at present.

The report set out four areas that had previously been discussed in relation to possible uses of the contingency.

Schools Forum broke into small groups to discuss possible options for use of the contingency.

The groups fed back and the majority of groups supported a combination of contributing to the school funding formula in 2020-21, supporting schools with falling rolls and providing transitional funding to schools to mitigate the realignment of the £6ks for mainstream EHCPs from the HNB to the Schools Block.

The following two proposals were made:

#### **Option A:**

- £1m for 2020-21 Schools Funding Formula
- £350k for falling rolls
- £350k for mainstream EHCPs

#### **Option B:**

- £1m for 2020-21 Schools Funding Formula
- £700k for mainstream EHCPs

Schools Forum voted in favour of Option B in a majority of 8 votes to 3.

### **Any Other Business**

POD thanked Schools Forum for their contribution to the Local Area Review.

### **Next Meeting and Agenda Items**

The next meeting will take place on 19 November 2019 at Whitmore High School

The meeting closed at 2.50pm

### **Future Dates**

19 November 2019  
14 January 2020  
10 March 2020

5 May 2020  
7 July 2020