

## **SCHOOLS FORUM**

### **Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 16 November 2021** **at 1.00 pm via Zoom**

**Members Present:** Sue Hammond – Headteacher, Whitmore High School (CHAIR)  
Louise Browning – Headteacher, Norbury School (VICE CHAIR)  
Patrick O'Dwyer – Divisional Director Education Services  
Geraldine Higgins – Headteacher, Sacred Heart Language College  
Sue Maguire – Headteacher, Hatch End High School  
Steven Deanus – Headteacher, Roxeth Primary School  
Chris Briggs – Headteacher, St Joseph's Primary School  
Councillor Christine Robson – Portfolio Holder Young People & Schools  
PK Maselino – Headteacher, The Helix Education Centre  
Lee Helyer – Headteacher, Kingsley High School  
Sash Hamidi – Executive Headteacher, The Pegasus Partnership Trust  
David O'Farrell – Headteacher, St Bernadette's Primary School  
Nick Waldron – Headteacher, Pinner Park Primary School  
Simon Arnell – Headteacher, Avanti House School  
Rashid Benserghin – Headteacher, Roxbourne Primary 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:

Sarah Marriott – Headteacher, Pinner Wood Primary School

The order of the agenda was agreed.

**2** The minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2021 were agreed.

#### **3 Matters Arising**

None

#### **4 DSG Budget Monitoring Quarter 2 2021-22**

JF introduced the report which set out the DSG budget monitoring position at Q2 for 2021-22.

JF explained that the DfE has still not provided an update on the clawback position for 2020-21 or updated the budget for 2021-22.

JF explained that the position on the High Needs Block had improved since Q1 however there is still a projected in-year deficit.

SaH queried the level of deficit compared to other LAs. JF explained that a large proportion of LAs are in deficit and to a greater extent and it is was only at the end of 2020-21 that Harrow hit the 1% trigger where most other LAs, particularly in London, had hit the trigger in previous years.

SM queried how the HNB deficit would impact on the review of ARMs provision. JF explained that it's always the LA's intention to commission appropriately and fairly. Both the reviews of the special schools and mainstream EHCPs had led to additional funding for schools. Whilst the outcome of the review can't be pre-empted, if there is clear objective evidence that additional funding is required then this will be allocated accordingly.

SH queried if there was any progress with a new special school. POD explained that there were no new special schools in the pipeline however there are a number of options for creating additional specialist places currently being explored.

SH queried the level of funding provided to colleges. Is it possible to track a cohort of students from mainstream secondary provision and the cost of the EHCP compared with cost of college provision.

ACTION JF

Schools Forum considered the position on the growth fund and the options for allocating this extra funding in the next financial year.

SM made the point that whilst the additional funding for growth in NOR between censuses is helpful it doesn't track mobility and recognise the cost of supporting a mobile cohort and if consideration could be given to allocating funding for this. PG agreed and pointed out that the mobility factor had seen the biggest reduction in funding compared with the previous Harrow local funding formula, although schools had been protected by MFG.

SH acknowledged this however noted that there is a mobility factor in the NFF for which schools receive funding.

There was a discussion about earmarking funding for SEN and/or special schools but concerns were raised that this would just go to offsetting the deficit rather than providing additional funding. There was also a query about whether the discussion on the use of the £1.1m was deferred to a later date and accepting that this would mean it would not contribute to the NFF in 2022-23.

The following options were proposed

- a) Allocate £0.7m to the 2022-23 schools funding formula and allocate £0.4m to other projects to be determined at a later date
- b) Allocate £1.1m to other projects to be determined at a later date.

Votes:

Option a)	10/14
Option b)	3/14
Abstain	1/14

## **5 Any Other Business**

None

The meeting closed at 2pm