

**THE SOUTHWARK SCHOOLS FORUM
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
Thursday 11th July 2013**

- 1. Attendance and Apologies**

See Annex A. Michael Davern substituted for Betty Joseph as the Trade Union representative and Elizabeth Fleetwood for Sharon Donno as the Nursery School/EY representative. In the absence of the Chair of the Schools Forum, the Vice Chair took the chair for the meeting.
- 2. Declaration of Interests**

Members were asked to declare any pecuniary or other interests they might have that were greater than the interests of other members of the Forum in any matter on the agenda for discussion. There were none.
- 3. Minutes of the Meeting of 21st March 2013**

These were agreed as a true record.
- 4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of 21st March 2013.**
 - 4.1 Education Business Alliance – The Director confirmed that the current arrangements are running for this financial year whilst being reviewed by Darren Coghlan for the next financial year. This is a De-Delegated item and so will come back to the Schools Forum as part of the 2014-15 Budget process.
 - 4.2 Building Schools for the Future and Special Education Units – The Director reported that the previously agreed arrangements for SEN, that were part of the BSF programme, are in either in place or are being put in place.
 - 4.3 Free Healthy School Meals – Craig Voller commented that this was still a concern for schools and its impact on the Ever6 FSM data will cause a high degree of turbulence in some schools funding. Kerry Crichlow reported that a letter had been sent out to schools on the 10th July and it does need Headteachers talking to parents of pupils in Reception explaining the initiative and the need to still declare the statutory eligibility for Free School Meals. Merril Haeusler will be discussing this with secondary school Headteachers especially their concerns over obtaining parents National Insurance numbers. The Local Authority will continue to monitor the situation.
- 5. Dedicated School Grant 2012-13 Outturn**
 - 5.1 A report had been previously circulated that sets out the outturn position of the 2012-13 Dedicated Schools Grant - this had identified an underspend of £1.7m and was seeking the views of the Schools Forum on its future use.

- 5.2 Fay Hammond took members through the report especially the appendix that detailed the major variances, both over and underspends and the reasons for those variances. Elaine Garlick commented that this was looking at the budget for one year only, what was the position on these budgets in previous years and the accuracy of the budget setting? It would be useful to have a trend analysis when setting the budget for 2014-15. Fay Hammond agreed and commented that many were demand driven and yes trends change over time.
- 5.3 It was also noted that some underspends were due to vacancies, for example Early Years Team and whether they were going to be recruited to would impact on the 2014-15 Budget. Jim Eshelby confirmed that one was position was a vacant post and one was a secondment to the Team.
- 5.4 The Schools Forum then explored the options for the use of this underspend. The preference was to distribute it to schools. Fay Hammond then gave information on the rules set down by the DFE for this. No funds could be distributed in-year and so this would have to be added to the 2014-15 budget share. However, this is a one-off so care needs to be taken on the impact to the Formula for beyond 2014-15.
- 5.5 Following a question from David Sheppard, Fay Hammond said that allocating funds through the AWPU (the main funding factor based on pupil numbers) interacts with the calculations of the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG). This meant that schools who had received support through the MFG in the 2013-14 formula would in fact not get any additional funds through adjusting the AWPU rate as they had already received additional funding. Also some schools who were gainers under the new formula had their extra funding capped and this cap would likely apply again in 2014. An appendix to the report showed the impact of the MFG or Cap on each school by allocating the additional monies through AWPU and/or lump sum.
- 5.6 The option most preferred would be through a one-off adjustment to the lump sum as this does not form part of the MFG calculations. The issue is that at the current time the lump sum is universal (the same rate) for primary and secondary schools. The DfE regulation changes, if any, for 2014-15 are still awaited.
- 5.7 The Schools Forum said that they were minded to have the additional funding distributed through an adjustment to the lump sum and asked that the LA model this and bring back the outcome to the December 2013 meeting, as part of the 2014-15 Funding Report.
- 6. Dedicated Schools Grant 2013-14**
- 6.1 A report giving details of the changes to the funding to the Local Authority (LA) through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2013-14 had been circulated with the agenda.
- 6.2 Following the LA making a robust case for additional funding to meet the higher demand for Post 16 High Needs Funding, the DfE had allocated an additional £858k to Southwark. Even with this additional funding the LA believes that this area is still a potential financial risk.

- 6.3 The Schools Forum congratulated the LA for obtaining this additional funding and agreed that it should be allocated to the Post 16 High Needs Budget of the High Needs Block of the DSG.

7. Changes to the Scheme for Financing Schools

- 7.1 A report had been circulated with the agenda that outlined the DfE required changes to the Local Authority's statutory "Scheme for Financing Schools" which applies to maintained schools in Southwark.
- 7.2 Melissa Williamson explained that most changes were at the direction of the DfE and so were required. These included updating the scheme to take into account the recent statutory funding reform changes including delegated budgets to Pupil Referral Units. Further details were given in Appendix A to the report.
- 7.3 The Local Authority also wished to revise the wording on its guidance for schools wishing to manage a deficit and/or take up a Loan.
- 7.4 As required, these changes will be consulted upon with schools and the outcome will be presented to the Schools Forum.

The Schools Forum noted this report.

8. School Funding Reform – DfE Review

- 8.1 A report had been circulated that set out the DfE's national position on school funding and in particular the individual components of the funding formula. This report also compared Southwark's Funding Formula with the DfE's information on other LAs Funding Formula and the proposed changes for 2014-15
- 8.2 Fay Hammond said that the current Southwark Funding Formula is broadly in line with how the national formula is being developed for introduction perhaps in 2015. Even if any changes were needed, their impact would, in general, be negated by the application of the Minimum Funding Guarantee. By Southwark not making major changes will also provide a level of funding stability and predictability for schools which will help them plan for the uncertain financial position from 2016-17 onwards.
- 8.3 The Schools Forum agreed with the overall funding strategy and acknowledges that the implementation of it is sometimes constrained by the DfE regulations.
- 8.4 The Schools Forum then looked at the LA's analysis of the DfE's proposed change to the Mobility Factor of the Formula, whereby a 10% threshold is set, i.e. schools only attract additional funding if the mobility of their pupil population was in fact above the 10% threshold. The principle of a threshold previously existed in the borough's formula. The reason for the change is that the DfE had acknowledged that the current formula criteria does not fit well with targeting funds at the schools with the highest incidences of mobility – funding is spread too thinly over many schools rather than focusing on those with high number of incidences of pupil mobility.

8.5 The Schools Forum reviewed the options available that the LA proposed to consult all schools on, namely to use a single rate for primary and secondary schools (currently £150 and £137 respectively) or discontinue the formula factor and redistribute the funds using the AWPU factor.

8.6 The proposal to consult all schools on these two options was supported.

9. DfE Proposed Changes to Schools Forum Membership

9.1 A report by the clerk had been circulated previously. The DfE was removing the 14-19 Partnership constituency on Schools Forums and replacing it with a requirement to have a representative from an institution providing education to 16-19 year olds, other than schools or academies.

9.2 The Local Authority was proposing to ask Lewisham & Southwark College (LeSoCo) to nominate a person who had knowledge of SEN for this age group.

The Schools Forum agreed with the proposal.

10. Maintained School Balances 2012-13

10.1 A report summarising the provisional information on the level of balances held by maintained schools at the end of the 2012-13 financial year had been circulated. These had risen by £3.4m and, as before, will be subject to scrutiny by the Local Authority under the Balance Control Mechanism for maintained schools.

The Schools Forum noted the report.

11. Summary of School Audits 2012-13

11.1 An information report had been circulated that set out the key recommendations to schools from the previous three years of school audits and centred on payroll controls and the segregation of duties in procurement.

The Schools Forum noted the report.

12. Correspondence - Southwark Cathedral

12.1 The Vice Chair informed members that the Schools Forum had previously approved an application from Southwark Cathedral to Southwark for funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant for their education programme in 2013-14, albeit at level less than they originally requested. Southwark Cathedral had now written requesting that the Schools Forum review the level of funding approved.

12.2 The Chair of the Schools Forum, in agreement with the Vice Chair and the Local Authority, had responded to Southwark Cathedral saying that the decision had been made in a proper way and it would not be appropriate to re-open the issue. It was suggested that as their service covered non-Southwark schools that perhaps they should seek funding from other Local Authorities.

13. Proposal for a Schools Forum Sub Group on High Needs

13.1 The Local Authority asked that the Schools Forum set up a time-limited advisory sub-group, which will include other representatives, to assist the LA to look at the issues around the funding for High Needs pupils and the impact of the Children’s and Families Bill 2013 on SEN funding.

This was supported by the Schools Forum.

14. Pupil Premium

14.1 It was agreed that the Local Authority would provide a paper to the Schools Forum that analysed the spend by schools of the Pupil Premium funding as set out in the templates that schools had completed and submitted to the LA.

15. A.O.B.

15.1 The chair reported that several members were standing down at the end of this academic year. The Schools Forum thanked: David Sheppard, Sharon Donno, Irene Bishop and Canon Grahame Shaw for their contributions to the work of the Schools Forum. The clerk was asked to pass on these thanks to them.

16. Provisional dates for Schools Forum meetings in 2013/14 were noted.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6pm.

**Annex A
SCHOOLS FORUM ATTENDANCE SHEET
11th July 2013**

VOTING MEMBERS

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PRESENT
Lynn Charlton	Primary School Headteacher	Apologies
Craig Voller	Primary School Headteacher	Yes
Keith Fox	Primary School Headteacher	Yes
Jacqui Louis	Primary School Headteacher	Apologies
Elaine Garlick	Primary School Governor	Yes
Vacancy	Primary School Governor	
Sharon Donno	Nursery School Headteacher	Apologies -substitute
Simon Eccles	Special School Headteacher	Apologies
Gillian Reeve	Early Years – Private/Voluntary and Independent Settings	Yes
David Sheppard	Academy	Yes
Mickey Kelly	Academy	Apologies
Mike Antoniou	Academy	Yes
Yomi Adewoye	Pupil Referral Units	Yes
Sister Anne-Marie Niblock	Secondary School Headteacher	Apologies
Dr Irene Bishop	Diocese Board	Apologies
Betty Joseph	Trade Unions	Apologies –substitute Michael Davern

Senior Officers in Attendance

Kerry Crichlow	Director Yes
Fay Hammond	Head of Children’s Services Finance - Yes
Merril Haeusler	Director - Yes

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Jim Eshelby	Yes
David Cross	Clerk