

Meeting of the Schools Forum

Tuesday 10th May 2011

(4.00 pm, Conference Room 2, Building 2 NLBP)

Attended

- Members:
- Jeanette Adak (Head, Monkfrith)
 - Tim Bowden (Head, Holy Trinity)
 - Chris Brook (Barnet LNI)
 - Paul Ferrie (Head, Ravenscroft)
 - Jayne Franklin (Head, Childs Hill)
 - Patricia French (Governor, St Mary's High)
 - Kim Garood (Governor, Church Hill Primary School)
 - Jenny Gridley (Head, Oakleigh)
 - Alan Homes (NASUWT)
 - Gilbert Knight (Governor, Oakleigh)
 - Andrew Macalpine (Governor, Hendon School)
 - Seamus McKenna (Head, Finchley Catholic)
 - Keith Murdoch (Principal, Woodhouse College)
 - Clare Neuberger (Head, Menorah Foundation)
 - Dee Oelman (Head, St Mary's & St John's)
 - Elizabeth Pearson (Governor, Livingstone)
 - Helen Schmitz (Head, Cromer Road)
 - Geoffrey Thompson (Head, Mill Hill High)
 - Anthony Vourou (Governor, St John's N11)
 - Kate Webster (Head, QE Girls)
 - Michael Whitworth (Principal, Wren Academy)
- LA Officers:
- Nick Adams (Schools Finance Services Manager)
 - Carol Beckman (School Funding Manager)
 - Brian Davis (Principle Educational Psychologist)
 - John Hooton (Deputy Director of Finance, Barnet)
 - Robert McCulloch-Graham (Director of Children's Service)
 - Jay Mercer (Deputy Director - Children's Services)
 - Linda Parker (Joint Head of Finance Children and Adults)
 - Mick Quigley (Assistant Director Schools and Learning)
 - Kerry-Anne Smith (Joint Head of Finance Children's & Adults)
 - Val White (Assistant Director, PPP)
- Clerk:
- Mark Callaghan (School Resources and Support Officer)
- Consultant:
- Geoff Boyd (Independent Consultant)

Not Present

- Members:
- Jane Chew (Head, St Margaret's Nursery)
 - Catrin Dillon (Governor, Martin Primary)
 - Angela Trigg (Principal, London Academy)
 - Sarah Vipond (Early Years Working Group)
- LA Officers:
- Andrew Travers (Deputy Chief Executive)
- Other:
- Cllr Andrew Harper (Cabinet Member for Education, Children & Families)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence	
<p>GK opened the meeting and noted that there has been some concern regarding the recording of the previous Schools Forum meeting. GK added that it would be useful if this uncertainty could be resolved, and would like to ensure that everyone present has the opportunity to express their concerns.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Cllr Andrew Harper, Jane Chew, Catrin Dillon and Jenny Gridley.</p>	
3. Declarations of interest	
None received.	
4. Minutes of previous meeting: 1st February 2011	
<p>PFR noted that Stephen Parkin is listed on the membership list but is no longer a member of the Forum. He should also be removed from the email distribution list for the Forum papers.</p> <p>Members of the Forum raised concern about the timing of the issuing of the papers for the meeting. The timing of agenda papers was part of a discussion in agenda item 6.2.</p> <p>KW raised her concern that the minutes did not reflect the tenor of the discussions that took place during the meeting when there was a lot of debate that was not resolved. She stressed the importance of making sure that all members can take part in a full and proper debate, and that clear and full responses to questions are provided by the local authority. GK acknowledged that some other members felt the same and that consideration needs to be given to the appropriate level of supporting information in the papers (see item 6.2 below).</p> <p>A: MC to remove Stephen Parkin from the membership and distribution lists for the Forum.</p>	
5. Matters arising	
<p>AH requested an update on the issue of redundancies. VW noted that issues relating to the circumstances in which the LA funds redundancies in schools would arise under 6.6 below. She confirmed that she had checked with corporate colleagues and that at that stage, there had been no notification of any redundancies in schools arising from the budget reductions. Within the council, the cost of funding redundancies for staff leaving in March 2011 has been substantial. The council will be working to have no further redundancies from April 2012, instead it is aiming to reconfigure services and redeploy staff to achieve the necessary savings. It will be expected that where schools are looking to the LA to fund redundancies, schools will adopt a similar approach. KW noted that this is important information and asked how it will be passed on to schools. VW stated that this information can be put into the Schools Circular so it is passed on to all schools.</p> <p>A: VW to produce an article for inclusion in the Schools Circular on the authority's approach to managing cost savings to reduce redundancies in schools.</p>	
5. 1 Actions from previous meeting	
<p>GK listed the actions from the previous meeting. The Forum was updated on outstanding actions as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item 1 - Letter of thanks to be issued to Jonathan Hewlings thanking him for his support, leadership and interest – RMG confirmed that a letter has been sent. • Item 4 - MC to record CD as present in the minutes of the previous meeting – CB confirmed that the minutes of the previous meeting have been amended to record CD's presence. • Item 5 – VW to raise the issue of contingencies for redundancies in schools with the corporate centre – update on action provided in item 5. • Item 6.1 - RMG to look into the possibility of issuing a letter to the YPLA from the LA stressing the importance of receiving funding information as soon as possible – RMG confirmed that this has been actioned verbally, noting that the future of the YPLA is currently uncertain. • Item 6.2 - GK to speak to GB regarding whether there should be a ceiling above which detail should be provided for funding proposals to the Forum – GK advised that this will be part of the wider debate on information provided by the authority to the Forum. • Item 7.1 – Items 1.1.5 and 2.2 in the Schools Forum TOR to be amended – CB advised that this action will be incorporated into the review of the Forum's Terms of Reference in the working group 	

as proposed in item 6.2 on the agenda of the May meeting.

6 ITEMS FOR CONSULTATION/DECISION

6.1 Early Intervention Strategy

Jay Mercer

JM thanked the Chair for the opportunity to address the Forum to provide further information on investment in early intervention work. JM delivered a presentation to the Forum highlighting the following aspects of early intervention:

The publication of the Graham Allen report has highlighted the impact of neglect, changing government and political opinions towards the importance of early intervention, particularly on a local level. The cost of early intervention can vary from £1000 for a parenting programme up to £125,000 to place a child in a children's home for a year, depending on the level of intervention required. Alongside the generic issue of investing early to save money in the long run, is the fact that there is a fast growing population in Barnet, and if there is not sufficient investment in early intervention now, then the disparity will become far greater in the future. Current planning documents predict a 23% growth in 0 to 9 year olds in the next five years. In addition to this there is also an increase in special needs and social care referrals. Although Barnet has comparatively low numbers of children in care compared to national levels, there are still significant numbers.

There is a lot of terminology related to early intervention. The presentation summarised the triangle of need which explained the process for intervention. The strategy is to intervene at all levels, but the higher up the triangle the intervention is, the higher the cost becomes.

There are currently 180 Common Assessment Frameworks (CAF) for all schools in the borough, a rate of just less than 2 per school. There is a need to make sure the CAF can work efficiently without disturbing the other work which has already been done.

A partnership approach is being developed where the Children's Service is working at 2 different levels, tackling cases with higher need as well as Family Intervention officers focusing on levels 2 and 3. The aim is to expand from working with 10 to 100 families at the higher level of need.

Two case studies were shown. A successful case where the Family Intervention Programme (FIP) provided fast tracked appointments and home tuition etc. Incidents of anti-social behaviour and offending reduced significantly and the family is no longer subject to intervention. An initial intervention cost of £7,000 led to an overall saving in 'avoidable costs' of £604,588. Also an unsuccessful case with a Child in Need, where the parents were unwilling to work with the authority, the key risk factors were not addressed and the children ended up being taken into care. RMG noted that the children involved in the unsuccessful case are now in Barnet schools with the associated financial costs this entails.

This work is funded primarily by council funding with contributions from the schools budget and partner agencies. The work is supported by a range of work already going on in schools. The governance is through the Children's Trust Board. It is anticipated that the intervention work will make a significant saving in the future.

JM offered to circulate the presentation to the Forum for reference.

SM asked what assumptions are made about success regarding the interventions. JM explained that the authority is currently putting together a model to assess the effectiveness of the costs, but national research shows that at a high level an investment of £1 saves £6, so Barnet are working to a rule-of-thumb of £1 invested for £2 saved. RMG added that there is a toolkit available to assess the impact. He noted that he attended a meeting to discuss the outcome of the Graham Allen report, which highlighted that everything is subject to a government cost benefit analysis, even down to examinations.

AH raised the issue of the recent local authority redundancies, stating that the Union has concerns that this will impact on the service that can be provided by the Children's Service. RMG stated that these were cuts which had to be made although the authority did not want to. Barnet are a pilot in community budgets, where all services are working together with the aim of not only reducing costs, but also to providing better services. The Graham Allen report recognised 19 programmes which should be rolled

out by local authorities, and FIP is one of these which addresses costs. A saving of £2m in the 3rd year of the budget has been identified, and if this is not met, then the savings will have to be made elsewhere.

JM left the meeting at 16:49.

A: Presentation on Early Intervention to be circulated to the Forum – MC

6.2 Headteacher Proposals regarding Schools Forum – including training for new members

Paul Ferrie

PF presented a paper proposing recommendations from secondary headteachers, which have arisen since the discussions which took place at the last meeting. The first 3 proposals relate to the CEL and the remainder relate to the general operation of the Forum. PF asked to delay discussion of the first 3 points relating to the CEL to a later agenda item.

The aim of the remaining proposals is to find a way where headteachers can have effective communications and consultation in the Forum. There have been issues particularly with the papers for the May Forum which were received on the Friday afternoon before the meeting, which did not provide enough time to read them. The paper recommended that papers are issued 10 working days prior to the meeting with all the necessary details that everyone can read and understand.

One of the recommendations in the paper is for the Terms of Reference for the Forum to be looked at. PF noted that these are difficult times with many complex issues and many schools are becoming academies.

SM stated that he agreed with PF's comments, adding that he felt that due to the high turnover of Forum members lately, the group is underpowered to make decisions.

RMG thanked the group for very helpful recommendations and acknowledged that it is important to the authority to have a good relationship with the Forum, and there needs to be debate to achieve this. The LA wants to get this right.

VW noted that the 10 day agreement to issue the papers may mean some updates to papers may have to be tabled as they are dependent on budgetary information from third parties (e.g. schools and DfE). It is sometimes a balance of providing papers well in advance with draft information or delaying papers to await confirmed data. VW confirmed that any papers that needed to be tabled would be updates and revisions, not new items.

PF asked whether it would be possible to schedule the Forum meetings to tie in with dates that affect papers. VW advised that meetings are scheduled to accommodate this as far as possible, but meetings are part of a cycle that is dependent on the provision of information from elsewhere. For example, confirmed pupil figures are due from the DfE at the very end of June and allowing for the modelling and a 10 day turnaround in papers would require setting a Forum in the last week of term.

GK stated that it would be useful to have year-on-year comparisons in papers requesting financial decisions. He felt that headteachers and governors don't have the time to analyse the figures, and there are sometimes times when the way figures are presented could be improved. LP felt it would also be useful to have an expectation of some knowledge of schools funding when writing papers to make sure that everyone understands the contents. Assistance can be provided outside of the formal meetings to induct new members to the forum.

The meeting added that it is important that all members of the Forum leave the meetings with a shared agreement of actions and decisions made and that a working party should be established to look at a number of issues in relation to the operation of the forum.

AH commented that the working party should also identify a time-line to reconcile differences between the council's budget setting process and schools budget setting.

The Forum discussed the venue for meetings. PF suggested that the Forum could be held at a school where there is more space. PFR noted that the public are entitled to attend so it is useful to have a central location. CM added that it is also useful to have a venue with good parking facilities. GK

acknowledged that the current venue is good and the room for the meeting is a big improvement on the previous meeting. CB advised that appropriate rooms for the Forum have now been booked in advance at NLBP. The group agreed to continue to hold meetings at NLBP in appropriate rooms.

The group agreed to form a working party to hold 2 meetings prior to the next Schools Forum. VW volunteered to Chair, with PF, TB, EP, CB, MW also co-opted to the group. RMG added that it may be useful to schedule a 3rd date in for November after the results of the schools funding consultation which may affect the future of the forum.

A: Issues discussed in item 6.2 to be discussed by the working party prior to the July Forum meeting.

**6.3 Dedicated Schools Grant 2010/11 – Centrally Retained Budget
Outturn and School Balances**

Val White/Linda Parker

VW/LP presented a paper on Centrally Retained Budget Outturn and School Balances.

NA advised that there has been an increase in school balances with no primary schools having a deficit at the end of the year. Some primary schools had a recovery plan, but all had achieved the plan. Only 1 secondary school had a deficit at the end of the year, but it is now taking steps to address this. One reason for higher balances is that there is no clawback now so schools are not rushing to spend money by the end of the year. Also the authority had been advising schools to adopt good practice and prepare for financial difficulties. There are currently 2 schools with an 'excessive' balance but these schools have exceptional circumstances.

VW stated that there is now an underspend on the centrally retained budget outturn of £2.35 million from payments to 3 and 4 year old providers; special educational need (SEN) recoupment; and school contingencies (primarily related to the adjustment for statement top-ups).

CB explained that there have been a number of reasons for the underspend in payments for 3 and 4 year olds. Budgets were set when there were lots of unknowns around these payments and care was taken to set budgets so that the authority could deliver what parents and the government wanted. It was also unknown what flexibility level providers would choose, which has a large financial impact, as well as allowing for a rising number of children which has not materialised to the same extent as Reception age children. Also 6 of the biggest providers decided to withdraw, which provided savings in excess of £420,000. Initial budget setting was very cautious, and it was not until after the census in January 2011 that the true cost of provision was established and the underspend could be identified. DO asked whether Barnet is now in a position to be less cautious? CB confirmed that this is the case. KW asked whether the caution prior to the census was figured into the budget and if this now has an impact on this year's budget? CB said yes, the budget is the total of individual estimates for each school or setting. The Under 5s budget, previously separate, is now included in the total Individual Schools Budget (ISB). KW asked whether there will now be an underspend for this year as well? CB advised that we would not expect this but there is a small contingency for unexpected changes.

RMG asked the Forum whether they understood how the underspend was made up? PF asked for clarification as there was an underspend last year, but this year the authority want to spend more money. CB explained how the ISB is constructed and that it doesn't include payments to independent special schools or to academies. Previously the ISB only included funding that went to maintained schools, but since April 2011, private voluntary and independent early years settings (PVI's) are now in the ISB as well as SEN statements for academies and there is more pressure on the ISB. LP explained that Section 251 is the government regulation return for how local authorities spend their schools budgets which has standard line definitions across the country, and the government has now put all ISB spending on a single line.

AM asked why the private providers withdrew from the scheme? CB explained that it was because a lot of them disliked the way they had to invoice for payments as they could no longer use the funding for 3 & 4 year olds as a discount on the invoice to parents. GB stated that it meant they had to adhere to additional rules which they did not like and EP added it meant that as the entitlement rose to 15 hours per week, settings open for 3 hours per day could not charge a variable rate for the last half hour anymore.

LP advised that the underspend on SEN has arisen through work conducted to review outstanding

liabilities. The majority of this consists of other local authorities not billing Barnet or billing less than expected and disputed cases resolved at lower levels. Without this, the net overspend would have been over £700,000 so the offset net position is £806,000. LP reiterated that the review was a one-off. TB noted that this was well done to all concerned.

PF asked how the underspend compares to the previous year? LP advised that there was an underspend of £1m last year which was the highest underspend since the introduction of the current school funding system. It is not unusual for a local authority to have this level of underspend. DO asked for clarification around the level of SEN underspend? RMG noted that it was through the exercise relating to our cross borough and external placement debtors that the underspend had been identified this year. JA asked for clarification that this part of the underspend was money clawed back from somewhere else? RMG confirmed that this is the case reiterating that it is a one off. PF asked why this exercise had not been conducted before? VW explained that BD is a new manager and the review of liabilities was part of the process of bringing procedures up to date.

GK stated that the Forum should consider that the budget is now in a position where there is £2.3m underspend. TB stated that he did not feel that the Forum was in a position to consider how this should be spent until the item on the CEL (6.4) had been considered and the Forum had heard from GB.

6.4 DSG 2011/12 Schools Budget – (Formal acceptance of budget in July)

Val White/Linda Parker

Variations in the schools budget were explained to the Forum.

Since the last Forum meeting one of the significant changes to the schools budget has been the release of the YPLA allocations and an update on the pupil numbers from the January schools census. There has been an increase in pupil numbers of 154 which equates to £880,000. The figure will not be finalised until the June census which is why the final budget figure will not be given until the July Forum meeting.

There has been an increase in expenditure due to purchase of the carbon reduction allowance which has been discussed at the Forum on a number of prior occasions. The DfE has recently issued guidance which allows for purchase of allowances to be made for the 2011/12 financial year from the centrally retained part of the budget.

The budget also incorporates updates from the contingencies and the outturn for the last financial year and there is now a better understanding of how academies are to be presented after completing Section 251. The recoupment model for academies converting during this year is also known now which will have a very significant impact on the CEL. Funding for converting academies will be deducted from the ISB therefore immediately reducing it from the previous year.

LP explained how the CEL is calculated – that the centrally retained budget is not allowed to increase by a higher percentage than the overall Schools Budget. Two developments particularly impact the CEL this year: the overall Schools Budget is going to decrease due to the funding for academies and the accounting requirements for the mainstreaming of standards funds.

DO asked what the impact would be for next year if the CEL is breached next year? GB advised that whatever the CEL is breached by in one year, it raises the barrier for the next year. GB stated that he does not agree it is inevitable that there will be a breach of the CEL because of academy funding. If ISB reduces by 10% and central expenditure reduces by the same proportion, the CEL would not be breached.

DO reminded the meeting that at the last meeting it was agreed to try to utilise any additional funding to rebalance the CEL. LP explained that cost projections based on Barnet children with SEN actually receiving support now indicate an additional £500k is required.

LP stated that the underspend could potentially be used to avoid a breach of the CEL, but this would mean a very different budget as a large proportion of centrally retained budget is spent on SEN, so unless these commitments could be met elsewhere, there would be an overspend which would be carried forward to the following year. SM stated that breaching the CEL does not sound sustainable as it implies that the situation will get worse year on year. AM asked what the legal position is regarding

breaching the CEL and who has the decision making power. LP advised that it is the Schools Forum which makes the decision. If the Forum is unable to agree to a breach of the CEL then the local authority can refer it to the Secretary of State for a final decision.

LP advised that this is likely to be the last year of the current funding arrangement and that next year there could be a whole new funding arrangement for schools. RMG is on a Government task group as part of the funding consultation and he stated that when the coalition government came into power, they felt that the current funding formula was over complicated.

VW stated that the CEL is a control mechanism, and the important debate is whether, as a group, we are putting the money in the right place to achieve the desired outcomes for Barnet's children and young people. RMG pointed out there are a whole range of statutory duties such as SEN that requires funds to be held centrally and stressed his intention of complete transparency and keenness to address any aspect of the budget or the proposals that members would like clarified.

GK stated that it comes back to the issue of detail. Officers understand the figures very well, but members do not understand to the same level and only deal with the budget for an hour or two every other month. From this point of view, the budget looks complicated and members of the Forum do not have a clear understanding of the situation to approve.

PF suggested that GB provides a holistic picture of the schools budget at the start of the next meeting. PF and TB noted that all headteachers want to avoid the CEL being breached. VW stated that the authority also does not want to breach the CEL and re-iterated that there is no intention of withholding information. The level of information provided this year was in line with previous years and the aim was to pull out the key issues for members to consider.

GB stated that he is not convinced that Forum members should have to go into that level of detail. The starting point should be that the LA should be able to manage on the same level of money year on year without exceptional circumstances. GB stated that the authority has masked considerable increases on budgets that have not been discussed. The retained expenditure in 2010/11 was £19m and £21m in 2011/12. VW noted that at the February meeting a paper was presented which went through all of the changes in the budget down to £10,000, and changes highlighted in this meeting relate to additional information. RMG advised that some factors change from year to year as evidenced by the 23% rise in pupil numbers over the next 5 years highlighted in JM's presentation. It is important that the correct level of detail is explored, but it is the principles that are important to be agreed on. The LA needs to know the pressures facing schools and it is job of the LA to let schools know what the LA pressures are in meeting the needs of children. There have been many years of trust in Barnet, the financial climate is changing and both the local authority and schools need to work together.

PF asked whether the Forum have to agree the use of the underspend by the July meeting? VW confirmed that this is the case as the July meeting will approve the final schools budget. Members felt a better understanding of the bigger picture is required before the use of the underspend can be agreed on.

Meanwhile VW outlined the LA proposals for the use of the underspend.

Schools contingency: BD is leading a piece of work around matching places and pupils and suggesting where schools are finding transition challenging. One option is to add money to this budget and also to the contingency to pay for the cost of additional pupil places to meet demographic pressures.

Revenue contribution to capital delegated to schools; a one-off allocation to schools on a per pupil basis including VA, Academies and special schools in recognition of the reduced capital allocations.

Revenue contribution to capital: permanent primary places, as a contribution to a large scale capital investment programme. VW presented the demographic pressures and outlined the mix of temporary and permanent expansions undertaken and in the pipeline. The case for investing in more permanent provision was inescapable. Increasing use is being made of the Fair Access Protocol to place pupils and this is costly on the revenue budget, as is ghost funding pupils where temporary expansions do not fill. KW acknowledged that the figures speak for themselves and it is not possible to argue with the identified

need. However, the proposal is to use money from revenue, and her understanding of revenue is that it is money to spend on children in a given year. VW stated that this is a valid argument which has to be balanced. The authority is trying to get a package of funds together from a range of sources. LP advised that it is not possible to charge borrowing costs to the schools budget, but it is possible to use the underspend as an opportunity to invest in this need. LP added that the authority is investing over £20m itself in this. KW raised concern that revenue money is for children across the borough, and although some of them might not have school places, all schools are experiencing budgetary pressures and there is an issue of transferring this revenue money to particular projects. There is a long history where schools have needed capital funds which they have not received. KW felt there is a risk of 'robbing Peter to pay Paul' with the schools budget. GK noted that this is going into capital, which is going into the CEL. RMG pointed out that if this money was to go into the ISB it would only equate to around £7,000 per primary school as opposed to targeting an identified need.

JF asked for clarification regarding what the money would be contributing to? VW advised that the money would go towards providing 7 new forms of entry. SM stated that need outstrips the ability of available funds. An option would be to combine all of the underspend and distribute it to schools. RMG stated that there is statutory duty on the authority to provide places, so if the underspend is not spent on this, there will be costs elsewhere such as ghost funding. PF asked where the money to fund these places should come from. RMG advised that the grant from the central government does not cover all of the places the authority has to provide. What is being proposed is to use some of the underspend for this as a way to make the best use of both revenue and capital resources. The money could have a big impact on funding pupil places, whereas if it was devolved to schools it would only have a very small impact on the ISB. JH added that the authority received a capital grant of £9m in 2011-12 whereas identified need is £40m, and this is a budget that is continually reducing. AH commented that the authority needs to raise representations to the appropriate authority that the basic funding is not enough. RMG stated that the authority is putting forward what it feels is a balanced use of the funding, and the consequence of not investing in pupil places for schools is great.

TB requested confirmation that the proposal in item 3.3 is for all schools including VA. VW confirmed that it is.

KM reiterated the importance of a holistic view of the schools budget, as there are other options which could have been used to balance the CEL or alternative uses for the money which had to be teased out. RMG stated that the budget options are infinite and what has been put forward is a recommendation from officers which it is believed is the best way forward in terms of pressures.

VW stated that getting an agreed and finalised schools budget is an iterative process and acknowledged that this can make it difficult to see 'in the round'. VW suggested having a meeting prior to the July Forum where the budget, as currently proposed, is set out in full and giving an opportunity for members to ask detailed questions. Members agreed that this would be a helpful way forward. SM stated that he would like the meeting to look at options for the underspend rather than a single proposal, and to consider 3 or 4 from which a decision could be made. DO stated that headteachers may be better placed to agree the use of the underspend if the division was more like 50/50 for the schools budget.

GT and AV left the meeting at 18:00.

The Forum agreed to hold an extraordinary meeting of the Forum to clarify all of the options for the budget and options for the underspend and look at it as a whole. PF stated that GB's input would be useful for this.

TB suggested that the budget issues could usefully be raised at director's meetings. RMG added that they could also be discussed at governors meeting.

A: Extraordinary meeting of the Schools Forum to be arranged prior to the July meeting to clarify the options for the schools budget and use of the underspend.

6.5 School Funding Reform – DfE Consultation

Carol Beckman

CB advised the group that the response to the consultation has to be submitted by 25th May 2011.

A: Comments on the School Funding Reform consultation to be sent to CB by the end of week

commencing 16 th May.	
6.6 Scheme for Financing Schools – Changes	Nick Adams
<p>NA presented a paper highlighting the changes to the Scheme in response to the DfE guidance, which included some minor alterations and some large changes such as getting rid of the clawback FMSiS.</p> <p>The only comment received in response to the changes related to the banking situation and the DfE guidance that all banks used must meet the authority's Treasury Management Policy, and includes both investment and current account banking.</p> <p>SM stated that he is from one of the 4 schools who bank with Allied Irish and there is confusion as to why they are on the list as their compensations are at least as strong as those for English banks. JH advised that this is a procedure which the authority has been forced to comply with. SM asked whether it is guidance or instruction. NA confirmed that it is guidance but it would be very difficult if the authority does not comply with it. JH advised that the council sets a strategy determining which banks we can use including which countries we can bank with and the strength of their economies. Our advisers have strongly advised the LA to avoid Ireland. SM stated that Allied Irish are governed by UK banking laws, and there is a double indemnity through both the Bank of England and the Bank of Ireland. JH stated that the advice is that Allied Irish are not covered and this will be reinvestigated.</p> <p>SM requested that if the advice is the same that sufficient time is given to the schools involved to move accounts. JH – confirmed that sufficient time would be given.</p> <p>A: JH to re-investigate whether Allied Irish could be included in the authority's Treasury Management Policy.</p>	
7 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION	
7.1 Schools Financial Value Standard	Nick Adams
Noted.	
7.2 Exceptional Additional SEN funding	
No issues Raised	
7.3 Contracts Affecting Schools	
No issues raised.	
8 Any Other Business	
JF advised the Forum that this will be her final meeting as she is leaving the Forum. GK thanked JF on behalf of the Forum for her contribution.	

Dates for future meetings

14 th July 2011	4.30pm (with briefing at 4pm)
29 th September 2011	4.30pm (with briefing at 4pm)
7 th December 2011	4.30pm (with briefing at 4pm)
1 st February 2012	4.30pm (with briefing at 4pm)