

Meeting of the Schools Forum

Tuesday 5th October 2010

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

Attended

Members:	<p>Alan Homes (NASUWT) Clare Neuberger (Head, Menorah Foundation) Dee Oelman (Head, St Mary's & St John's) Angela Trigg (London Academy) Elizabeth Pearson (Governor, Livingstone) John Marincowitz (Head, QE Boys) Jayne Franklin (Head, Childs Hill) Kate Webster (Head QE Girls) Keith Murdoch (Principal, Woodhouse College) Angela Murphy (Head, Bishop Douglass) Jo Djora (Head, Coppetts Wood) Mick Quigley (Principal Inspector, Children's Service) Tim Bowden (Head, Holy Trinity) Jeanette Adak (Head, Monkfrith)</p>
LA Officers:	<p>Robert McCulloch-Graham (Director of Children's Service) Terry Redmayne (Deputy Director of Children's Service) Val White (Assistant Director, PPP) Graham Durham (Assistant Director, Inclusion) Linda Parker (Strategic Finance Manager) Carol Beckman (School Funding Manager)</p>
Clerk:	Sarrosch Malik (School Resources and Support Officer)
Consultant:	Geoff Boyd

Not Present

Members:	<p>Derrick Brown (Governor, Ashmole) Jonathan Hewlings (Governor, East Barnet) Anthony Vourou (Governor, St John's N11) Lisa Clarke (Head, Brookhill Nursery) Helen Schmitz (Head, Cromer Road) Stephen Parkin (Governor, St Mary's High) Jenny Gridley (Head, Oakleigh) Paul Ferrie (Head, Ravenscroft) Sarah Vipond (Early Years Working Group) Gilbert Knight (Governor, Oakleigh)</p>
LA Officers:	<p>Andrew Travers (Deputy Chief Executive) Chris Malyon (Assistant Director of Finance)</p>
Other:	Cllr Andrew Harper (Cabinet Member for Education, Children & Families)

1. Welcome and apologies for Absence

JM welcomed Paul Ferrie (in his absence) as a new member of the Forum, in place of Teresa Tunnadine. Apologies were received from Stephen Parkin, Helen Schmitz, Paul Ferrie, Cllr Andrew Harper, Jonathan Hewlings and Derrick Brown. JM recorded his thanks to Hazel Godfrey and Ken Huggins for their long-standing contribution to the Schools Forum.

2. Declarations of interest

None received

3. Minutes of previous meeting: 13th July 2010

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

4. Matters arising

Minute 5.3 - EP said that the recommendation for the commencement of term of office for Schools Forum members being 13th July 2010 would not be suitable as this is also when Governors are re-elected. JM included a message from Stephen Parkin that clarity was needed in the Terms of Reference. RM-G said this would be put together and brought to the next meeting.

Minute 5.4 – on agenda

Minute 5.6 – covered by tabled paper

Minute 5.8 – on agenda

Minute 6.1 – on agenda

BSF

Follow on discussion from last meeting, the process of completing the formal financial closedown of the BSF scheme is nearly complete. AM asked if the Schools Forum had agreed to carry forward the underspend to BSF. LP explained the carry forward was agreed in the May meeting. After that it was agreed the underspend would be used for Harnessing Technology to ensure stability for schools.

6. Items for Consultation

6.1 Composition of the Schools Forum

Carol Beckman

CB presented the paper showing the current membership of the Schools Forum and the proposed changes. She explained why the changes are recommended and what appointments are required. The members were asked if they would like to decide amongst their own groups. AM agreed and EP suggested that it would be best to go through the LA for Primary Governors. MQ said he would discuss a replacement Nursery Head. CB also asked if members would want to change the Terms of Reference to address the issue of long term absence of members. She suggested that if members miss more than two meetings they should be contacted and if three meetings are missed they may be replaced.

The Schools Forum unanimously agreed to the proposal.

JM added that the Academies want to maintain cordial relations with the LA. RMG welcomed that comment.

6.2 Dedicated Schools Grant 2010/11

Linda Parker

LP presented the report showing the final Schools Budget 2010/11 which was submitted to the DfE in August 2010 via the Section 251 data return. LP explained a couple of slight realignments were needed to line 1.1.2 and 1.2.2, however the total remained the same. The Schools Forum was asked to agree to these changes now that details have been provided.

The Schools Forum was asked to approve an increase of £177k for Combined Services. RMG explained that the progress had been good with the Multi Agency Groups (MAGs) up and running by the end of the month. He said the operation of CAF needed further support to realise the full benefits. He added that the effective operation of CAF's would help reduce the pressure for high cost acute services (children in care, excluded pupils, SEN etc). The programme MAGs will be targeting two main groups – those identified by schools and other universal services and those children at risk of requiring social care support.

RMG explained that it is anticipated that an investment now in effective early intervention and prevention structure, would result in a saving in 3rd year. Once the transfer of Domestic Violence services into the Children's Service takes place, this will bring control of an £1.2m spend on services. He added that the extra resources from all the agencies supporting families are represented on the MAGs and this funding has enabled Barnet to set all this up.

AH asked if there will be any grant reductions within preventative services. RMG explained that a number of services were at risk including Youth and Connexions. He said that the Youth Service will work with the main providers and the remaining youth workers will be targeting particular children. He added that they would be taking a more multi-disciplinary approach. The Children in Care and SEN budgets would need to be protected as these budgets are volatile.

AH asked if the pupil premium money would go to schools to be used to support multi-disciplinary work. RMG explained that schools are currently carrying out preventative work, however if the pupil premium would help then it should be used. AM asked what the original amount was. LP replied it was £457k which includes the £177k. AM commented that this was a big increase and asked what the breakdown was. RMG said that the overall budget is much more than £177k, however the £177k has provided the opportunity to set things up.

AM said she was still not clear of what the money is being used for and there is not enough information available to make a decision. RMG explained that the information could be provided later. AM wanted to know the breakdown on the different parts of the project. RMG told the Schools Forum that 3 CAF advisers have been appointed who will be filtering and redirecting CAFs. The money supports the whole the project and this will benefit every school in the authority.

JD expressed her concern that many hard to reach families would not engage with the CAF. She wanted to see data on how many CAFs had come in from different places. RMG explained that Barnet has had 700 CAFs in total of which 400 were active. This was not as much in comparison to other smaller LAs who would expect 1500 per year. Parental lack of permission is currently a problem, however we hope the Eileen Munro Review will help some of this. RMG gave further details of the current structure. The LA has not yet put a cost to the time but MAGs will have staggered meetings held monthly i.e. one meeting every week. MAGs are currently aligned with the 4 Learning Network Boards, however this might change to 3 sectors.

VW added that the purpose was to introduce a sustainable model. The LA is looking for sustainability and a contribution from all areas including schools. JM asked if the increase would breach the CEL. LP replied that this would not breach the CEL as this issue is around the use of funding. AH asked what would happen with future funding. RMG answered that the Children's Trust is taking a lead role and are very pleased to have Health, Police Officers, Housing etc involved, however the cost needs to be considered. Currently a quarter of Children's Service money is spent on 2% of the population.

GD commented on the £177k. There are currently 7 children placed outside of borough because Oakhill is full, at a cost of £40k-£53k each. If there was this early intervention structure in place it might have helped reduce this cost. Each Child in Care costs £48k but children with emotional and social difficulties cost even more. Pupil growth of 11% is expected without any additional money available therefore schools will have to pay more out of their budgets to meet this.

AM said that she would still want to see a cost analysis programme which would allow her to vote. AH added that the LA would need to monitor, evaluate and show cost benefit analysis.

LP added that the DSG does not show recoupment of the academies, which the LA will know by next Schools Forum.

The Schools Forum voted and agreed to the proposals, but would still wish to see feedback on the initiative.

6.3 DfE Consultations on School Funding

Carol Beckman

LP presented the paper to the Schools Forum. The consultation ends 18th October and the paper gave a draft of the LA's response. Schools Forums can combine their response with the LA's or submit their own.

LP raised a couple of issues around funding for SEN in the first two academies following on from a meeting held yesterday. She explained that the London and Wren Academies receive funding for the first 10 hours with all statements, where as others schools do not. The schools involved were only made aware of this last week as they had not received a detailed breakdown of how their funding had been arrived at. It would not be reasonable to change this mid-year and the LA instead proposes to make the change from September 2011 and existing funding should continue for these two academies until then.

LP told the Schools Forum that the consultation talks about changes around the national formula and allocation, and does not look at the quantum of available cash. LP added that information has only just come out from the Institute of Fiscal Studies that the schools budget might reduce 10-20% in the next 4-5years. This advice is not guaranteed but it might be worth considering the management of a reduction of 2.5% every year.

JM said this information is helpful. LP mentioned that there may not be a drop in funding, but grants and other things around the periphery. JM agreed, commenting on pension contributions being one way of reducing school budgets.

TB asked if the LA is sure about the 2.5% reduction. LP replied that having spoken to the Director of Finance nothing has been announced however it would be wise to start looking at budgets now. KM added that the Association of Colleges (AoC) are talking about a cut of up to 3% per year. LP said the Teachers Pay Award is the last one of 3 years. AH further explained that the freeze would be on basic pay but no limitation on incremental drift.

AM asked about the deprivation factor for the Pupil Premium. LP replied the consultation paper provides information. CB mentioned that if the LA were to be funded on FSM there would not be too much problem but we are aware FSM is not a good measure for individual schools. We believe the pupil premium would work better if IDACI is used instead of FSM.

JM asked the Schools Forum if they agreed with the proposal.
The Schools Forum endorsed the proposal unanimously.

6.4 Consultation with Schools Funding Formula 2011/12

Carol Beckman

CB told the Schools Forum that a large consultation on the formula was planned but she suggested it would be best to leave it for a year until we know more. There are three issues presented in the paper which need addressing.

JM agreed with the scope of the consultation. AM commented that more detail should be provided for the third question. RMG said the LA would try and provide more detail. CB added that she tried to keep the paper succinct.

The Schools Forum agreed to the scope of the consultation with schools.

7. Items for Information

7.1 Contracts Affecting Schools

Ola Yerokun

VW updated members with the response from schools about extending the cleaning contracts. Overall there was a 26% response of which 89% were satisfied with the quality and price of the contract. Only one school has since stated their intention to be excluded from the contract extension.

7.2 Early Years Progress Report

Carol Beckman

CB presented the report to the members to keep them informed of the progress of the Single Funding Formula. So far the formula has been introduced to the PVI's, which is working fairly well considering they are not used to having a formula. A lot of work is being carried out with them including workshops, provider visits and drop in sessions.

8. AOB

The forum asked that the next agenda should include information on the direction that Careers and Youth & Connexions are going. RMG said it would be helpful to wrap this up within a wider paper on the future of Children's Services. There are several anxieties from Secondary Heads meeting.

JM added that the Forum would want to know any extra information on impact on budget cuts. RMG agreed to put together a report on Children's Services and the Council.

AH asked for feedback on the potential cost for maintaining the estate seeing that BSF has been lost.

Dates for future meetings

7 th December 2010	4.30pm (with briefing at 4pm)
1 st February 2011	4.30pm (with briefing at 4pm)
10 th May 2011	4.30pm (with briefing at 4pm)
12 th July 2011	4.30pm (with briefing at 4pm)

