

Meeting of the Schools Forum

Tuesday 6th October 2009

(4.00 pm, Sapphire Room, Emerald Suite at NLBP)

Attended

- Members:
- Alan Homes (NASUWT)
 - Anthea Abery (Head, Rosh Pinah)
 - Jo Djora (Head, Coppetts Wood)
 - Elizabeth Pearson (Governor, Livingstone)
 - Gilbert Knight (Governor, Oakleigh)
 - Derrick Brown (Governor, Ashmole)
 - Jayne Franklin (Head, Childs Hill)
 - Jeanette Adak (Head, Monkfrith)
 - John Marincowitz (Head, QE Boys)
 - Johnathan Hewlings (Governor, East Barnet)
 - Kate Webster (Head QE Girls)
 - Ken Huggins (Governor, The Compton)
 - J Goring (Bishop Douglass – sub for Angela Murphy)
 - Mick Quigley (Principal Inspector, Children’s Service)
 - Lisa Clarke (Head, Brookhill Nursery)
 - Stephen Parkin (Governor, St Mary’s High)
- LA Officers:
- Robert McCulloch Graham (Director of Children’s Service)
 - Paul Lawrence (Head of Insurance)
 - Carol Beckman (School Funding Manager)
 - Denise Murray (Strategic Finance Manager)
 - Nick Adams (School Services Finance Manager)
 - Linda Parker (Strategic Finance Manager)
 - Val White (Assistant Director, PPP)
 - Graham Durham (Assistant Director, Inclusion)
 - Clare Gray (School Resources and Support Officer)
- Observers:
- Lucy Salaman (LSC Partnership Manager)
 - Elaine Runswick (16-18 Commissioning Board)
- Consultant:
- Geoff Boyd (Consultant)
- Clerk:
- Sarrosh Malik (School Resources & Support Officer)

Not Present

- Members:
- Helen Schmitz (Head, Cromer Road)
 - Gary Tucker (Head, Christ’s College Finchley)
 - Hazel Godfrey (Governor, Broadfields)
 - Dee Oelman (Head, St Mary’s & St John’s)
 - Lynda Walker (Head, Oak Lodge)
 - Anthony Vourou (Governor, St John’s N11)
 - Kevin Hoare (Head, Finchley Catholic)
 - Sarah Vipond (Early Years Working Group)

Tim Bowden (Head, Holy Trinity)

Observers: Cllr Fiona Bulmer
Angela Trigg (London Academy)

1. Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Bulmer, Lynda Walker, Dee Oelman, Gary Tucker, Tim Bowden, Sarah Vipond, Helen Schmitz and Anthony Vourou.

2. Minutes of previous meeting (7th July 2009 2009)

SP said that at the last meeting he mentioned he would send a Thank You card to Mary Karaolis of Ravenscroft.

3. Matters Arising (On Agenda)

Members were provided information on the following items. No further questions were asked.

4.1 – Barnet Catering Service

4.2 – Contracts 'not accessible to schools'

4.5 – Free milk in schools

4.6 – Conditions survey and measurement of schools

4.7 – DFC Loans to the LA

4.3 – Insurance

Paul Lawrence (Head of Insurance) introduced himself to the members. He went through the paper he provided to the members before the meeting. He explained that he does not have any flexibility to vary rates during the period.

SP asked if it would be possible to provide figures for the square metre costs of rebuilding. PL explained that the finance officers would be able to provide the figures. PL told the Forum that schools who buy out of Barnet can come back at any time.

JM asked if all schools have the opportunity to get quotes. PL explained that schools do have the opportunity, however a quote they may get directly may only be for a short term polciy, whereas Barnet have 3-5 year agreements.

JM wanted to know if the LA is responsible for community schools and where the the money comes from. LP said that it is taken from the retained amount of the DSG. JM asked how that would effect VA and Foundation schools. DB added that this would be an unfair allocation of resources for VA and Foundation schools. LP explained that the formula is based on this. She suggested that the formula could be changed at the next review.

AH asked whether Barnet or an external company deal with tree root insurance. PL replied that the LA uses both internal and external insurers but it is mainly self financing. PL said that schools do not have to meet any excess as the authority effectively takes on the risk.

SP asked if schools are approached to see if they would like to buy in. PL said this was done 2 years ago and now it is time to repeat this. He explained that there is no flexibility with prices. AH asked if PVIs would be covered. PL said it would be down to ownership.

JM thanked Paul Lawrence for attending the meeting.

4.4 – Cost of Admissions Section

GD presented the paper on costs of admissions section. He explained that the admissions team have been used a lot this year. They have commissioned 158 new places this September and there is a current challenge with Year 1 and 2 places as well as a need for more reception places because of continuing growth. GD said the admissions team should work very hard and provide good value for money.

SP added that the admissions team should be thanked for their work. Regarding the extra class at Deansbrook, he asked what funding would be available to reinstate facilities when they return to their normal place numbers.

Place Planning

GD said that according to the current population estimates, an extra 24 forms of entry will be needed over the next 4 years. He added that the LA will be meeting with Heads to address this issue. GD thanked the primary schools who have helped already.

VW gave a presentation on Pupil Place Planning. VW said that Barnet's projections are much the same level of expertise as in other LAs. She explained that West Hendon and Colindale are the pressure area as this is where the regeneration will happen. There are currently no places in any year within a 2 mile radius of Colindale. Housing projects often slip so it is difficult to get the timing right. It is also difficult to meet parental preference due to religious diversity.

VW used graphs to show trends in birthrate which started to increase in 2004. She added that the recession may have affected Barnet because the people who often move out of Barnet as they start families have stayed. Approximately 80% of the number of babies born actually start in schools 4 years later and this percentage is on the increase. VW expressed her concerns about hotspots to the east, west and central areas. There are currently no obvious solutions although eventually there will be 3 new schools opening.

VW said that the gap between demand and supply is getting wider. She wanted to reiterate thanks to the schools that have expanded. Parkfield has a rebuild; Colindale will be rebuilt as a 3 FE and has taken an extra FE in advance. She said that a permanent solution is wanted where

possible but this would be very expensive.

JD asked whether schools that have already expanded will be asked to again. VW replied that this would not happen because schools do not have the space. There is demand where there are no school places. VW explained that a site by site analysis would be needed for cost effectiveness.

VW told the Schools Forum that this is a London wide issue. The Government have put up more money but we are not confident of getting anything and even if we did it would only be about £2m. AH asked if the BSF programme could help. VW said the LA would look at this, however there is not a lot of potential. Revenue funding could help if we are given money out of the contingency until PLASC triggers more money.

VW gave details about Year 7 classes in secondary schools. She said that there are surplus places in near future but they would be needed again by 2017, so we would not remove places on a permanent basis.

4.8 – Post 16 Funding (LSC Transfer)

Elaine Runswick talked to the Schools Forum about the Post 16 Transfer. She said the ASCL Bill has not yet got Royal Assent, this is expected in November 2009.

ER explained that all post 16 funding will move to LAs. There is a regional planning group where all 32 boroughs are represented. She said that there had also been local conversations. Last year Martin Baker shadowed the meetings with the 3 providers in Barnet.

ER said that this year is the Transition Year. She said that the Regional Planning Group has issued documents to help with the planning. She added that staff from the LSC will come to the LAs to help. Barnet will have 3 members of staff come from the LSC and money for 2 more which will come in April. The LA have set up a commissioning group to facilitate the transfer.

JM asked whether the formula will change during the transition process. LS replied that there will be no change to the formula, the only change will be the people calculating the funding. JM asked if the schools would receive the money in the same way as before. ER explained that the LSC will be responsible for the 2010/11 allocations and after that the LA would be fully responsible. The funding methodology will still be owned by YPLA, therefore schools will not see any difference from a funding point of view.

GD said that an assistant director would be needed for this work to deal

with the many issues. It would need to be discussed at a senior level. AH expressed his concern about additional costs if not fully funded.

5. Items for Agreement

5.1 Nursery funding formula from 2010

CB reported to the Schools Forum that a consultation was circulated to both schools and PVI providers in May requesting response by 31 August. There were questions on each element of the proposed funding formula. CB said that a total of 28 responses were received from 200 providers.

Sheila Abbott is working on the operational issues, initially with the Phase 1 pilot which started in September JD asked if the pilot schools the issues. JF replied that they had met with Sheila Abbott. CB added that all the phase 1 providers were given extra start up money.

CB explained the proposed formula which utilises both DSG and Standards Funds. JD commented that there is an equality issue for settings who are full but need to be flexible. CB replied that additional funding for flexibility is intended to recognize that flexibility impacts on capacity.

EP told the Schools Forum that all LAs nationally have to make these changes and advised they should accept this formula and review it later if need be.

JM asked the Schools Forum if they agreed to the proposal to recommend the formula to elected members.

Schools Forum agreed unanimously.
Proposer – EP
Seconder – KH

6 Items for Information

6.1 Report of the Early Years Working Group (30th Sept 2009)

CB reported back to the Schools Forum after the EYWG met on 30th September. The two items discussed were progress with Phase 1 and the outcome of the consultation on the Single Early Years Funding Formula.

CB said that Sheila Abbott is very pleased with the Phase 1 progress. EP said that the PVIs are concerned about top-up fees and maintained nurseries are concerned about maintaining quality.

6.2 Building Schools For the Future – Update October 2009

VW updated the Schools Forum on the progress of the BSF programme. She said that the LA are now in the programme officially after attending a meeting today. She added that the process will be expedited in case of a Government change. LA hopes to be on site by April 2012.

AH asked if secondary surplus places can be used to help primaries. VW replied that all possibilities are being looked at.

6.3 Mid Year adjustments and comparative school funding

CB explained that to help schools with their September forecasts, we have issued updated budget shares as well as the usual standards funds updates. CB presented a sheet showing the current funding per pupil for all schools compared to their final funding for 2008/09.

7 Any Other Business

None.

8. Dates of future meetings

8.1

Tue 24 th Nov 2009	4.30pm (with briefing at 4pm)
Tue 2 nd Feb 2010	4.30pm (with briefing at 4pm)
Tue 18 th May 2010	4.30pm (with briefing at 4pm)
Tue 13 th July 2010	4.30pm (with briefing at 4pm)