

**Meeting of the Schools Forum**

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2010**

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

**Attended**

Members: Jeanette Adak (Head, Monkfrith)  
Tim Bowden (Head, Holy Trinity)  
Chris Brook (Barnet LNI)  
Lisa Clarke (Head, Brookhill Nursery)  
Catrin Dillon (Martin Primary)  
Paul Ferrie (Head, Ravenscroft)  
Patricia French (St Mary's High)  
Kim Garood (Governor, Church Hill Primary School)  
Jenny Gridley (Head, Oakleigh)  
Jonathan Hewlings (Governor, East Barnet)  
Alan Homes (NASUWT)  
Gilbert Knight (Governor, Oakleigh)  
Seamus McKenna (Head, Finchley Catholic)  
Keith Murdoch (Woodhouse)  
Clare Neuberger (Head, Menorah Foundation)  
Dee Oelman (Head, St Mary's & St John's)  
Elizabeth Pearson (Governor, Livingstone)  
Helen Schmitz (Head, Cromer Road)  
Anthony Vourou (Governor, St John's N11)  
Kate Webster (Head QE Girls)

LA Officers: Nick Adams (Schools Finance Services Manager)  
Carol Beckman (School Funding Manager)  
Graham Durham (Assistant Director, Inclusion)  
Robert McCulloch-Graham (Director of Children's Service)  
Linda Parker (Strategic Finance Manager)  
Mick Quigley (Principal Inspector, Children's Service)  
Val White (Assistant Director, PPP)

Clerk: Mark Callaghan (School Resources and Support Officer)

Consultant: Geoff Boyd

**Not Present**

Members: Derrick Brown (Governor, Ashmole)  
Jo Djora (Head, Coppetts Wood)  
Jayne Franklin (Head, Childs Hill)  
John Marincowitz (Head, QE Boys)  
Angela Murphy (Head, Bishop Douglass)  
Stephen Parkin (Governor, St Mary's High)  
Geoffrey Thompson (Head, Mill Hill High)  
Angela Trigg (London Academy)  
Sarah Vipond (Early Years Working Group)  
Michael Whitworth (Wren Academy)

LA Officers: Nigel Bell (Senior Asset Manager)  
Chris Malyon (Assistant Director of Finance)  
Andrew Travers (Deputy Chief Executive)  
Terry Redmayne (Deputy Director of Children's Service)  
Olaolu Yerokun (Contracts Officer)

Other: Cllr Andrew Harper (Cabinet Member for Education, Children & Families)

### **1. Welcome and apologies for Absence**

MQ welcomed new members Kim Garrod, Catrin Dillon, Patricia French, Geoffrey Thompson, Seamus McKenna, Chris Brook and Michael Whitworth to the Forum.

MQ announced that John Marincowitz is retiring as Chair of the Forum and acknowledged his exemplary service. Also Stephen Parkin, Derrick Brown, Lisa Clarke and Ken Huggins are leaving the Forum. All departing members were thanked for their contributions to the forum.

**A:** Letters of thanks to be issued to departing members – MQ/CB

Apologies were received from Sarah Vipond, Michael Whitworth, Cllr Andrew Harper, Jayne Franklin and Nigel Bell.

### **3. Declarations of interest**

None received.

### **4. Minutes of previous meeting: 05<sup>th</sup> October 2010**

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

**A:** JA to be recorded as present in the minutes of the previous meeting.

### **5. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2010/11**

MQ requested nominations for Chair, noting that the Forum must be chaired by a member to be a legitimate meeting. CB explained the role of Chair to members, and the support which is provided.

GK asked whether there is there a preference regarding the new Chair's status as headteacher or governor? MQ – Confirmed that there are no status requirements.

DO nominated GK. The nomination was seconded by EP without contest. GK accepted the nomination.

GK assumed Chair of the meeting and requested nominations for Vice Chair.

EP nominated AH. The nomination was seconded by TV without contest. AH accepted the nomination.

## **6. Matters arising**

Minute 8 – AOB – AH asked for feedback on the potential cost for maintaining the estate as BSF (Building Schools for the Future) has been withdrawn. VW advised that the Local Authority is waiting for clarification on this, and what their role will be.

Minute 6.2 AH requested clarification regarding the future of the Children's Trust. RMG advised that the Children's Trust is no longer a statutory requirement. Cllr Harper chairs the Children's Trust and it is felt to be well supported. It is a substantial resource which is currently seeking more high level membership.

Minute 6.2 – AH requested clarification regarding the cost of children placed outside of the Borough in conjunction with a predicted 11% pupil growth and a capital programme reduction of 60%. VW advised that bulge years are factored into the funding formula, and that the Local Authority is waiting for further clarification from central government in respect of the settlement for capital expenditure.

## **Items for Consultation**

### **7. Finalised Terms of Reference**

**Carol Beckman**

CB presented a paper to the members, noting apologies for unclear phrasing in item 3.2.

**A:** Item 3.2 in the Terms of Reference to be amended – CB.

CB advised that membership of the Forum is almost full, but that a secondary governor is required from a secondary Foundation or Trust school (Hendon or Whitefield, as Mill Hill High already has representation).

**A:** Members to suggest potential member candidates from Hendon or Whitefield to CB.

### **7.2.1 School funding consultation responses and proposals**

**Linda Parker**

CB presented a paper to the members and summarised the consultation questions.

Members agreed with the consultation recommendations to:

1. Proceed with the proposed EY funding formula on the condition that it is reviewed regularly.
2. Start-up funding for new schools should not be extended.
3. Funding for 2011/12 should be distributed as closely as possible to 2010/11 to avoid disruption and to maintain fairness.

CB confirmed that if there is a Minimum Funding Guarantee, then the Standards Funds will also be protected.

AH noted that there is a meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> December of the Schools Funding Information Group to consider which Standards Funds Grants should go into the DSG. AH questioned whether inclusion of the Specialist Schools grant would lead to a reduction in allocated funds? CB advised that current information indicates that funds will be allocated on the same basis as this year as part of the School Development Grant.

JG stated that special school colleagues have raised whether funding will be received in the same way. CB confirmed that this will be the case.

### **7.2.2 DfE Consultation on School Finance Regulations 2011**

**Carol Beckman**

CB presented a paper to the members, and explained the background behind the consultation. Barnet already meets most of the proposed regulations.

There is a lack of clarity regarding funding for excluded pupils if exclusion restrictions are removed for undisciplined pupils. The Local Authority would not want to change the current process. AH stated that the White Paper suggested that PRUs will be encouraged to become Academies, and noted that the cost per excluded pupil could be £40 to £50,000.

NA advised that there is a lack of clarity regarding the powers of a Local Authority in relation to delegated budgets if there is a conflict between raising standards and community facilities. AH stated that it is a speculative issue as to what the relationship will be between a Local Authority and community facilities.

### **7.2.3 Carbon Reduction Commitment Update**

**Nick Adams**

NA provided a summary of the paper, advising that following the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), CO2 allowances have to be bought and it now works as a straight forward tax. The sale of carbon allowances has been put back to 2012. Clarification is required as to whether the Local Authority can charge schools, but all Barnet buildings produce CO2 so this may become the case. There is an emphasis on all parties involved to reduce emissions. It is important that CO2 levels continue to be monitored and energy bills are submitted to establish a full picture.

GK asked what the monetary value of the tax is likely to be? NA advised that it stated in the previous paper that it would be approximately £2000 per primary school and £6000 per secondary school. GK commented that it would be unfair to penalise the schools with the highest CO2 emissions, and it would be a fairer option to average the cost across all schools.

KW raised concern regarding schools sited in buildings which are likely to produce higher CO2 levels due to poor condition.

AH stated that the removal of BSF and capital funding means that it is unfair that those schools should have to meet these charges.

PF stated that the impact of community use needs to be considered.

RMG advised that inequalities would be balanced by the use of historical data and GB advised that since emissions are measured against the status quo, schools will not be penalised unless CO2 levels rise. JG reiterated that reductions from the status quo may not be achievable in older buildings. RMG stated that the historical information is not available, but it may be the case that having an old building could be advantageous as there is more opportunity to reduce CO2 levels.

JG raised concern that it is difficult to measure fair use and what can be reduced without affecting pupils. LC advised that it is difficult for nurseries to reduce emissions as they have to keep the door open at all times.

TB commented that there could be a tie-up between emissions and energy certificates. LC stated that not all settings were required to have an energy certificate depending on their size.

**A:** NB to attend the next meeting to provide clarification.

#### **7.2.4 Barnet Council Budget Consultation**

**Val White**

VW gave a presentation explaining budget cuts for the Local Authority providing a breakdown of cuts to the Children's Service.

EP asked what proportion of Children's Centre budget has been reduced? VW advised that it is a 30% reduction.

HS requested clarification regarding cuts to Behaviour Support. VW provided clarification and advised that 3 out of the 5 existing posts are likely to go.

VW explained that formal consultation will take place over the next 8 weeks for the major funding changes to the Service.

RMG explained the proposed investments into the Service, placing a focus on early intervention and Multi Agency Groups to develop a Service Team to look target low end cases and prevent escalation. Birmingham City Council have implemented a similar procedure on a wide scale. SM stated that the investments will most likely look after the same people under a different banner.

VW stated that the funding briefing scheduled for 15<sup>th</sup> December may be deferred until January when further information is available regarding the settlement. The forum agreed that this would be appropriate.

VW noted that other parts of the council may approach schools with consultations, but that they are separate to the Children's Service consultation.

VW advised that 550 at risk letters were issued to staff in the Children's service on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2010. It is likely that 200 staff will be made redundant, 100 of which will be compulsory redundancy. EP asked for clarification for workers in her Children's Centre. VW advised that the position will become clear for staff at risk by February, although they will get a better idea of their individual risk closer to the date.

**A:** PowerPoint presentation to be uploaded to the website with a link in the minutes.

JH requested that percentage change be included in the figures circulated.

## **8. Items for Information**

### **8.1 Contracts Affecting Schools**

**Ola Yerokun**

VW presented a paper to the members. No comments were raised.

### **8.2 DSG 2010/11**

**Linda Parker**

LP presented a paper to the members providing a summary of the report, noting that overspend has improved slightly due to funding of SEN pupils in academies and FIMAS withdrawal. Any over/underspend is automatically carried over to the next financial year.

GD stated that there has been a large increase in the number of children requiring places at special schools in the borough which means that more recoupment needs to be paid.

### **8.3 Government announcements and DSG 2011/12**

**Geoff Boyd**

GB provided a summary of the White Paper and the Comprehensive Spending review highlighting the impact on the DSG. There is a 0.1% real terms increase in schools budget spending to take into account inflation and pupil growth rates. The pupil premium is in addition to this. Although the mainstreaming of grants should have a neutral impact on schools budgets, the squeeze on Local Authorities is likely to place pressure on schools, particularly the Individual Schools Budget. The Forum also needs to be aware of additional pressure through job cuts within the Local Authority which may mean services previously provided by Barnet will now have to be undertaken by individual schools. In addition to this, the budget for Academies will be taken straight out of the DSG without a percentage being retained by the Local Authority.

AH asked whether Barnet Local Authority will make a response be made to the white paper and if the Forum was the only opportunity members would have to comment? RMG confirmed that a joint response will be made with London Directors, and that headteachers and schools will also be able to feed their response through their individual Directors.

MQ stated that although the removal of money will impact the level of services the Local Authority can provide to schools, there will remain a commitment to work in partnership with schools under the new relationship. RMG added that the Local Authority will retain its strategic relationship.

TV left the meeting at 5.55pm.

AH noted that the Green Paper on SEN and Disability will be crucial. He also raised concern regarding how £1bn of efficiencies will be made in schools.

**A:** Further comments on the White Paper and the Comprehensive Spending review to be forwarded to CB.

#### **8.4 Exceptional Additional SEN funding scheme**

**Graham Durham**

GD presented a paper to the members and explained the process of the AESEN funding panel. Accommodating pupils with additional special needs at schools such as Oak Lodge and Northway is an efficiency saving as it is considerably cheaper than the alternative provision.

Due to the rate and level of complexity of pupils coming into Barnet, there is a shortfall against the applications to the panel for 2010/11. The available options are to:

1. Meet the increase
2. Distribute the grant proportionally
3. Put the grant into a formula

JG stated that the pupils which are being discussed have very sensitive and complicated medical needs and challenging behaviour. Schools are willing to do the work to accommodate these pupils, but require the support to do so.

DO stated that the money saved and work that has been done to educate such pupils in schools within the Borough is exemplary.

**A:** The forum agreed to continue the funding in accordance with current procedures at present, but to bring back options to the group as to how this need can be supplemented.

### **8.5 School Balances – Amounts Deferred and Assigned**

**Nick Adams**

NA presented a paper to the members noting that there were a variety of reasons for deferred projects as had been reported previously and reasons for projects completion or being in progress. The report was noted.

### **8.7 Update on School Organisation**

**Val White**

VW presented a paper to the members. No comments were raised.

### **8.8 Early Years Progress Report**

**Carol Beckman**

CB presented a paper to the members. No comments were raised.

## **9. AOB**

No items raised.

Meeting closed at 6:10pm

### **Dates for future meetings**

1 <sup>st</sup> February 2011	4.30pm (with briefing at 4pm)
10 <sup>th</sup> May 2011	4.30pm (with briefing at 4pm)
12 <sup>th</sup> July 2011	4.30pm (with briefing at 4pm)