

**THE SOUTHWARK SCHOOLS FORUM
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
Wednesday 12th October 2011**

1. **Attendance and Apologies**
See Annex A. Lynn Charlton substituted for Liz Robinson who was absent on maternity leave.
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. None were declared.
- 3.1 **Election of Chair:** Nominated, Sister Anne-Marie Niblock, there being no other nominations, Sister Anne-Marie Niblock was elected as Chair.
- 3.2 **Election of Vice Chair:** Nominated, Sharon Donno, there being no other nominations, Sharon Donno was elected as Vice Chair.
4. **Minutes of the Meeting of 13th July 2011**
With the addition of “in 2014” at the end of paragraph 11.2, these were agreed as a true record. There were no matters arising that were not already on the agenda. It was noted that the item on SEN and Best Value was deferred to the next meeting.
5. **Dedicated Schools Grant 2010-11 Outturn and Proposals for the Underspend and Final Allocation by the DfE for the 2011-12**
 - 5.1 Fay Hammond introduced her report that had been previously circulated to members. This highlighted in Annex A the key variances at Outturn for the 2010-11 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Budget which included the Funding of the Free Entitlement for 3 year olds in the Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) sectors and Schools in Difficulty amongst others. This amounted to a total underspend of £2.083m.
 - 5.2 The DfE had now finalised the DSG for Southwark and this is £198.76m in 2011-12 and represented £2.15m more than anticipated, mainly due to pupil numbers being higher and the absorbing into the DSG of previous grants such as Standards Funds.
 - 5.3 Fay Hammond drew members’ attention to the detailed explanations given by the Local Authority (LA) for how the overall unallocated sum of £4.2m should be managed. In summary this was:
 - a) £0.5m held as a contingency centrally held to be used for increasing SEN costs, mainly out borough.
 - b) £0.225m to be allocated to schools who were having to take “bulge” classes in the year
 - c) £2m to act as a cushion for 2012-13 as the funding mechanism is known to be changing but with uncertainties to exactly how, and, the possible repayment of standards funds to the DfE.

- d) £1.475m to be allocated to schools and EY providers by the funding formula.
- 5.4 The Chair reminded the Schools Forum that under Building Schools for the Future some schools were having SEN Resource Units. Yvonne Ely said that not only were the SEN numbers increasing but the needs were more complex. This was supported by Mickey Kelly who felt that a further review was needed, Merril Haeusler agreed and hoped this will happen later in the year with Headteachers and Governors represented. Annex B of the report gave the details of where the budget pressures were in SEN.
- 5.5 Many had noted the increase in primary school reception pupil numbers which was widespread across London. However, there were still some schools with vacancies.
- 5.6 Following questions from Mark Parsons and Mickey Kelley on the contingency proposals, Fay Hammond confirmed that it represented about 1% of the DSG which itself represented only a 1% change in pupil numbers. Also, as with 2010-11, reports on how these contingencies were used would come to the Schools Forum and should any of the contingencies not be used, then this is ring fenced to the DSG.
- 5.7 The Schools Forum debated whether in fact the distribution of the extra funding to schools should be 2011-12 rather than 2012-13, this change to 2011-12 was agreed to by the Deputy Director.
- 5.7 Schools Forum members then voted on the LA proposals:
- a) Centrally held DSG and contingencies:
In favour 16, Against 0, abstentions 0
 - b) An overall DSG Contingency of £2m:
In favour 16, Against 0, abstentions 0
 - c) £1.475m additional allocation to schools and EY providers in 2011-12 through the AWPU, per hour and place elements of the formula:
In favour 16, Against 0, abstentions 0

6. Funding of the New Technologies Centre (Ex City Learning Centre)

- 6.1 The paper, written by Nick Wilkins, was introduced by Irene Bishop and set out the need that the Excellence in Southwark Management Committee had identified for a continuing, but improved, service that the previous City Learning Centre had provided.
- 6.2 This proposal, in outline, had been previously discussed and supported by the Schools Forum. Following a more detailed needs analysis having been carried out, and then costed, a further £48,550 was requested. This will enable more equipment to be purchased and staff to be retained.
- 6.3 Some felt that perhaps a more pro longed commitment should be given to avoid a request every year and so giving more stability. Mickey Kelly felt that perhaps “pump priming” funding should be identified. Grainne Grabowski said that in fact her school did not use the provision.

- 6.4 The Clerk clarified that as this was to be a contribution to Combined Budgets, then that commitment can only be given year on year and has to be proposed by the LA.
- 6.5 Merril Haeusler said that the Children Services Senior Management Team (SMT) had discussed this paper and felt that some issues were still to be addressed. For instance, the staff could not be employed by the LA, they would have to be employed by a school and probably be on short term contracts as if there were redundancies those costs would be picked up by that school or group of schools. The equipment was still the LA's for all schools - so its use would need to be monitored. The use of Cator Street would have to be through their usual booking system and the LA needed to be certain that it is something wanted by schools.
- 6.6 Some felt that there were still questions to be answered, David Sheppard thought that a business model for 2012-13 and beyond should be drawn up and come back to the Schools Forum.
- 6.7 The Schools Forum then voted on whether to allocate £48,850 in 2011-12 for the New Technologies Centre initiative:
In favour: 14, Against 3, Abstentions 0

7. Southwark Education Partnership

- 7.1 A paper prepared by Nick Tildesley on behalf of the Headteachers' Executive had been circulated to the Schools Forum, however it was explained that it should be considered as work in progress as there were areas that Southwark's Headteachers were still working on and some points that required clarification still. This had led to some confusion as to whether it would be on the agenda of the meeting or not. It was hoped to bring back the re-worked paper to the December meeting.
- 7.2 Sister Anne-Marie Niblock said that from a secondary Headteachers perspective there was not a great deal of support from secondary schools as they often work quite differently, as do academies, compared to primary schools. Grainne Grabowski questioned how in fact would this proposal actually would work with the Local Authority in providing school improvement development to schools.
- 7.3 It was stated that Headteachers from special schools were keen to be part of the Partnership, although all acknowledged that there was more work to be done. Fay Hammond commented that the LA's financial regulations would need to be checked and adhered to, Mark Parsons said he would like to see more on quality assurance and Sister Anne Marie asked as to what role the "buy back" of services would play.
- 7.4 The Schools Forum asked that legal advice on the content of the paper to the December meeting be available at that meeting.

8. School Funding Formula Changes for 2012-13

- 8.1 A) Early Years. An update by Neil Gordon-Orr of the outcome of the consultation as part of the current review had been previously circulated with the agenda.

- 8.2 Overall this had proved inconclusive with no real consensus on the proposal to re-distribute full time places in nursery classes between schools. There would appear, however, to be support for continuing funding full time places.
- 8.3 The LA recommendation to schools would be that schools continue their current pattern of full and part time places for 2012/13, although the LA would support schools reducing full time places where there is an overall excess of demand and they wish to provide places for more children.

The possible impact on the current changes on both primary and nursery schools will be looked at as part of the funding proposals for 2012-13.

- 8.4 B) Funding of Bulge Classes for 2012-13. A report had been circulated by Fay Hammond setting out the proposal to maintain the level of funding required for bulge classes at the same level as 2011-12 i.e. £465k. Following a question from Nick Tildesley, it was confirmed that the paper was setting out the proposal that will be built into the 2012-13 DSG Budget that will go to the Schools Forum in spring.
- 8.5 The report also set out details of the allocations during the 2011-12 financial year and the strategy agreed by the then Executive in 2009. Due to the number of late parental applications for September 2011 some bulge class options from future years had to be brought forward to 2011.
- 8.6 This was noted.
- 8.7 C) Ex Standards Fund Grants. A paper had been circulated that set out the proposals for those grants that had not been reviewed prior to the 2011-12 funding distribution to schools. Two would be distributed using AWPU, one by social deprivation factors and the other was subject to the projects yet to be proposed by the Excellence in Southwark Steering Group.
- 8.8 The Chair pointed out that there are still targets being set for Specialist Schools and Higher Performing Specialist Schools, Language Colleges funding was in fact not just a per pupil amount. David Sheppard pointed out that funding to schools was not now ring fenced to one specific activity.
- 8.9 The Leadership Incentive Grant would appear, in principle, to be able to be distributed using the social deprivation index. Some schools were actually offering diplomas, some were not.
- 8.10 Fay Hammond thanked members for their comments and the proposals for distributing the Excellence in Southwark funding will be brought to the Schools Forum in December.
- 8.11 D) Special Schools Funding Review. A report by Fay Hammond and Yvonne Ely had been circulated to the Schools Forum. This explained that the principles that underpinned the special schools funding formula in 2008 were being reviewed with the focus on the “banding values” in special schools.
- 8.12 Following a meeting in September with Headteachers of Special Schools, there were concerns expressed over the data being used and regrettably no clear agreement could be reached over the revised principles to be used. Therefore, further meetings are required. It was agreed that Maddy Webb and Elaine Garlick from the Schools Forum will join the Review Group.

- 8.13 E) Premises Formula Factors. Fay Hammond explained that it was not now possible to carry out the in depth review in time for implementation in 2012-13. The data however the LA holds is now better and the options available for 2012-13 will be brought back to the Schools Forum.

9. Schools Forum – Constitution and Practices

- 9.1 Merril Haeusler explained that the paper circulated clearly set out the process for agenda setting etc., however she wished to have a “round table” meeting with Schools Forum members to look at the actual purpose of the Schools Forum, its protocols, reports etc in order to take stock of the current complex issues schools and the LA face.

- 9.2 This was agreed and Mark Parsons asked that a legal view is sought on the role, purpose and procedures of the Schools Forum. Members agreed that this would be a good way forward and once a date had been set all members would be asked if they wished to participate. Outcomes would be brought back to the December meeting.

10. DfE Consultation on the Future of the DSG

- 10.1 An information report had been circulated by Melissa Williamson which was noted.

11. School Balances 2010-11

- 11.1 The Schools Forum noted the information report from Melissa Williamson that updated members on the outcomes of applying the balance control mechanism for 2010-11.

12. Dates of Next Meetings

December 8th 2011
January 26th 2012
March 15th 2012
May 17th 2012
July 5th 2012

Venue Rye Oak School

Annex A**SCHOOLS FORUM ATTENDANCE SHEET**12th October 2011**VOTING MEMBERS**

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PRESENT
Nick Tildesley	Primary School Headteacher	Yes
Mickey Kelly	Primary School Headteacher	Yes
Teresa Nouri	Primary School Headteacher	Yes
Virginia Bridge	Primary School Headteacher	Yes
Liz Robinson	Primary School Headteacher	Represented by Lynn Charlton
Maddy Webb	Primary School Headteacher	Yes
Mark Parsons	Primary School Headteacher	Yes
Grainne Grabowski	14-19 Representative	Yes
Pauline Sacre	Vulnerable Children	Apologies
Pat Tyler	Diocese Board	Yes
Gillian Reeve	Early Years – Private/Voluntary and Independent Settings	Yes
Sharon Donno	Nursery School Headteacher	Yes
Michael Davern/Betty Joseph	Teachers Unions	Apologies
To be nominated	Support Staff Unions	
David Sheppard	Academy	Yes
Cathy Loxton	Academy	Apologies
Elaine Garlick	Primary School Governor	Yes
Canon Grahame Shaw	Primary School Governor	Yes
Teresa Neary	Special School Headteacher	Yes
Dr Irene Bishop	Secondary School Headteacher	Yes
Sister Anne-Marie Niblock	Secondary School Headteacher	Yes

Senior Officers in Attendance

Kerry Crichlow	Assistant Director
Fay Hammond	Head of Children's Services Finance
Pauline Armour	Assistant Director - Apologies
Mike Smith	Assistant Director - Apologies
Merril Haeusler	Deputy Director
David Cross	Clerk

Apologies from Councillor McDonald