

**THE SOUTHWARK SCHOOLS FORUM
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
Thursday 21st March 2013**

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- 1. Attendance and Apologies**
See Annex A. Michael Davern substituted for Betty Joseph as the Trade Union representative.
 - 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.
 - 3. Minutes of the Meeting of 31st January 2013**
These were agreed as a true record. The Chair asked if these were still available publicly on the Council website, the clerk confirmed that they were and that, if sufficient time, the papers for the next meeting are also published there. In addition papers are sent electronically to the Headteachers Executive. Fay Hammond said that she would notify the schools of the link to the relevant section of the Council website.
 - 4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of 31st January 2013.**
 - 4.1 Education Business Alliance – this will be brought back to a future meeting in the summer term.
 - 4.2 Building Schools for the Future and Special Education Units – Jim Eshelby reported that the Local Authority was currently reviewing this and a paper will be brought to a future meeting of the Schools Forum.
 - 4.3 It was confirmed that the issue raised at the previous meeting regarding a reconciliation of the changes to the Delegation totals in the Dedicated Schools Grant was included in item 4 (section 7) of the agenda.
 - 5. School Budgets 2013-14 - Update**
 - 5.1 A report had been previously circulated that updated the Forum on the issues related to schools budgets for 2013-14 that has arisen since the previous January meeting of the Schools Forum. The main points are detailed below.
 - 5.2 Originally the agreed principle was that the “cost” of the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) protection would be met from capping those schools that gained from the formula changes and that the cap would be 1.8% (i.e. no school could gain more than that).
 - 5.3 However, when the MFG had to be re-calculated to take account of those schools with SEN units, the 1.8% cap was unaffordable and therefore had to be reduced to 0.8% so that the MFG was still cost neutral.

- 5.4 The rates for Early Years were previously expressed as “per pupil” this should have been Full Time Equivalent (FTE) – this was amended when the actual budgets were distributed to schools.
- 5.5 The transitional funding arrangements for the vacant places in Southwark’s Special Schools were considered too complex especially in relation to other LA’s use of the provision. Therefore this transitional arrangement was expanded to including transitional funding for all vacant places, this change provided an increased level of transition funding to the special schools. However there are no further funds available for any other protection. This is in place for 2013-14 only and will be monitored throughout the year.
- 5.6 Details of the individual schools budget allocations for Devolved Formula Capital and the draft Pupil Premium allocations were now available and had been shared with schools.
- 5.7 The Schools Forum noted the report.

6. Dedicated Schools Grant 2013-14

- 6.1 A report had been previously circulated to the Schools Forum setting out the changes to the 2013-14 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), as published by the DfE on 19th December 2012, this highlighted the various associated issues and risks.
- 6.2 Fay Hammond summarised the report for the Schools Forum and stressed that a key funding risk is that of the newly transferred post 16 funding responsibilities to Local Authorities. This was, to some extent, offset by the new funding for 2 year olds 15 hour free entitlement, this, however, would probably not be the case for future years as the this funding moves to actual pupil numbers rather than DfE projections.
- 6.3 As a consequence a £500k contingency has been created within the High Needs Block to address issues during the year as they arise.
- 6.4 The level of Reserves in the DSG is currently £2m (1% of the total DSG). This is likely to increase by a further £0.5m by the end of the 2012-13 financial year and it was proposed that these are maintained at that level for 2013-14.
- 6.5 Copyright Licences – The DfE has announced that from April 2013 they will manage a national Copyright Licence (CLA) for all state maintained schools (this includes academies) and also a new Music Publishers Association. This is estimated as a £100k top slice to Southwark’s DSG. The chair pointed out that the new Music licence does not appear to cover collective worship, Fay Hammond said she would raise this query as part of Southwark’s response to the DfE Funding Review Consultation.
- 6.6 The Schools Forum noted the report.

7. Changes to the Scheme for Financing Schools

- 7.1 There was no report and the Local Authority confirmed that this will be brought to a future meeting of the Schools Forum.

8. Funding for Temporary/Permanent Expansion to Classes

- 8.1 The report setting out the process and criteria for allocating additional in-year funding to primary schools and academies to meet their costs for increasing their pupil numbers had been circulated with the agenda. Fay Hammond confirmed that this would also apply to Free Schools.
- 8.2 Details in the report showed that the “growth fund” for 2013-14 needs to be £700,000 to resource up to an additional 13.5 additional forms of entry already identified from September 2013 onwards including a small reserve of £154,000 for any further expansion needed.
- 8.3 Following a question the LA agreed that this should also refer to secondary age pupils and with an “equivalent” level of funding. The Chair commented that if the LA is responsible for the overall strategy for providing places then this can be undermined by the government permitting institutions to expand without reference to that strategy including permitting new Free Schools to be set up.
- 8.4 The Schools Forum then voted on whether to agree to the proposed arrangements for the allocation of the Growth Fund:
In favour 8, Against 0, Abstentions 0

9. Government Review of School Funding Arrangements 2013-14

- 9.1 The Local Authority had prepared a draft response to the government’s consultation on the new school funding arrangements which had been circulated with the agenda and asked the Schools Forum for its comments. The following additional comments were made.
- 9.2 On question 4 relating to prior attainment, Keith Fox commented that the Early Years Foundation Stage was moderated. Also considered was that at Key Stage 3 a pupil would not attract additional funding unless s/he did not reach the required level in both English AND Maths at Key Stage 2. Fay Hammond felt that it would allow better targeting of resources if it was English OR Maths.
- 9.3 Questions 6,7 and 8. Fay Hammond said that the change to a universal lump sum for all primary and secondary schools had caused a lot of funding turbulence. Keith Fox said that more clarity would be needed in the response regarding applying a “taper” in relation to roll and that “certain size” schools would need to be more clearly defined.
- 9.4 The Schools Forum, for question 18, identified that schools may have falling rolls in the short term where there are large re-generation projects taking place, as currently in Southwark.
- 9.5 The Schools Forum also commented that schools should be provided with detailed data identifying those pupils that attracted funding, including Pupil Premium, to the school based on “Ever 6” eligibility for free school meals. This way they could better evidence the impact of the strategies the school has devised upon raising their particular attainment.

- 9.6 The Schools Forum thanked the Local Authority for drafting the consultation response and with their suggestions adopted agreed that the response include the Schools Forum endorsement.

10. Children’s Services Budget 2013-14

- 10.1 This was an information report, circulated with the agenda, on the non-DSG budgets of the Children’s Services Directorate.
- 10.2 The Schools Forum raised the concerns of schools regarding Southwark’s funded initiative of Free Healthy School Meals. It was confirmed that currently all Year R up to Year 4 receive a free meal and that in September this will be extended to Years 5 and 6.
- 10.3 This is impacting on schools where some parents do not feel they need to complete the relevant form showing they are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) which is also used as an indicator of the level of pupil social deprivation at each school – i.e. social deprivation is being understated. Secondary schools feel that it is not their place to collect national Insurance numbers.
- 10.4 Kerry Crichlow said that there is a LA Working Group, which includes a Headteacher representative, reviewing the impact that this initiative has had on schools data collection. One aspect that they are aware of is that the school pupil data software is not picking up the distinction between the two categories of free meals.
- 10.5 David Sheppard commented that in general it is sometimes difficult to get parents to claim for what is their entitlement. Fay Hammond said that the DfE does not check or moderate the social deprivation free school meals data supplied by each school from its termly census and that the use of “Ever 6 which identifies all those stated as eligible for FSM over the previous 6 years, it is flawed if the source data is inaccurate.
- 10.6 Kerry Crichlow said that schools and the Schools Forum would be kept informed.

11. Dates of Next Meetings

- 11.1 May 16th 2013 and July 11th 2013 - These were noted.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.45pm.

Annex A**SCHOOLS FORUM ATTENDANCE SHEET****21st March 2013****VOTING MEMBERS**

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PRESENT
Lynn Charlton	Primary School Headteacher	Apologies
Craig Voller	Primary School Headteacher	Apologies
Keith Fox	Primary School Headteacher	Yes
Jacqui Louis	Primary School Headteacher	Apologies
Elaine Garlick	Primary School Governor	Yes
Canon Grahame Shaw	Primary School Governor	Apologies
Sharon Donno	Nursery School Headteacher	Apologies
Simon Eccles	Special School Headteacher	Yes
Gillian Reeve	Early Years – Private/Voluntary and Independent Settings	Yes
David Sheppard	Academy	Yes
Mickey Kelly	Academy	Apologies
Mike Antoniou	Academy	Apologies
Yomi Adewoye	Pupil Referral Units	Yes
Sister Anne-Marie Niblock	Secondary School Headteacher	Yes
Dr Irene Bishop	Diocese Board	Apologies
Betty Joseph	Trade Unions	Apologies - substituted by Michael Davern

Senior Officers in Attendance

Kerry Crichlow	Assistant Director - Yes
Fay Hammond	Head of Children's Services Finance - Yes
Merril Haeusler	Deputy Director Apologies
Jim Eshelby	Assistant Director - Yes
David Cross	Clerk