

**THE SOUTHWARK SCHOOLS FORUM
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
Thursday 18th January 2018**

- 1. Attendance and Apologies:** See Annex A
- 1.1 The meeting welcomed Laura Johnson as the Maintained Community Primary School Governor representative. In the absence of the Chair the Vice Chair took the chair of the meeting. The Head of St Saviours & St Olaves substituted as the Maintained Secondary School Headteacher representative. The Head of St John's Rotherhithe substituted for the Diocese Boards representative.
- 2. The meeting was quorate**
- 3. 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. There were none.
- 4. Minutes of the Meeting of 7th December 2017**

These were agreed as accurate
- 5. Matters Arising from Minutes**
- 5.1 Headteacher Rep on School Place Planning Panel: The Director reported that nominations were being sought.
- 5.2 Behaviour Support Service – Secondary - Quality Control: Assistant Director, Jenny Brennan updated the measures in place for both primary and secondary schools and her offer to talk through personally any issues Headteachers may have.
- 5.3 Assessment of Eligibility for FSM Applications – The Vice Chair, as requested at the previous meeting, distributed details and the cost of the service offered by a private provider. This showed the cost for a primary academy was £325 compared to the LAs De-Delegated charge of £19.97 per pupil. The LA said that their charge included training for school staff.
- 6. Budget Monitor – 2017-18 Dedicated Schools Grant**
- 6.1 A report had been circulated prior to the meeting that gave the financial position as at 31st December 2017 for the 2017-18 Dedicated Schools grant (DSG) and this updated Members on the options to be used to reduce spend.
- 6.2 The probable deficit of £3.5m was confirmed and the proposals set out in Appendix C of the report were noted and the proposed Working Group was supported. It was agreed that the £0.5m projected deficit in the 2017-18 schools block will be carried forward to 2018-19.
- 6.3 The provisional 2018-19 DSG allocation of £315.2m was noted and the comparison with 2017-18 showed a higher level of academy recoupment (the funding that goes direct to academies & free schools, including growth and per place funding for high needs).

- 6.4 What was concerning to all was that the government funding had not taken account of the inflationary increases applied by the government to the DSG allocations. The LA reminded Members that the figures were still provisional and that it is likely adjustments will be made during the year especially where they are based on take-up or revised actuals.
- 6.5 The LA confirmed that the omission of the secondary school pupil premium value of £935 in paragraph 8.2 was an error.
- 6.6 The 0.5% transfer from the 2018-19 Schools Block to the High Needs Block that the Schools Forum had agreed in October 2017 and confirmed in December 2017 will decrease school budgets.

The report was noted.

7. The Schools Budget 2018-19 – Central Retentions and De-Delegations

- 7.1 This previously circulated report gave details of the key decisions to be made in order that the schools' budgets can be finalised. Once again, these were originally set out in December 2017 and were discussed in full at that meeting.
- 7.2 From the previous meeting, a key decision needs to be made about the de-delegated Maternity Cover Scheme for maintained primary and secondary schools. This was running a projected deficit of around £200k this financial year and would have to be carried forward to next year. The LA was asked to make proposals to address this issue and propose a scheme that would be in-balance. It proposed that the cash level of the de-delegated budget remained the same but the claims were reimbursed at a level of 70%.
- 7.3 Members asked that the change be fully explained to schools and the Diocesan rep asked that account is taken of the maternity cover applications that cover two financial years and that they be honoured at the current year's rate as schools would have already budgeted for that reimbursement.
- 7.4 It was also noted that the cost of the Trade Union Facility Time was £17k higher due to late claims from 2017-18 being carried over to 2018-19. The Schools Forum was concerned that the accounting rules that schools had to follow regarding accruals were not applied to this budget especially as the LA knows which schools are eligible to claim.
- 7.5 The Schools Form then moved to formally approving the LA's proposals for De-delegated budgets in 2018-19. The detail of which each covered was distributed with the papers at the December 2017 meeting, discussed and indications given to the LA as to what the Schools Forum was minded to decide.
- 7.6 As the De-delegated budgets related to LA maintained primary and secondary school budgets only – then only those representing those contingencies could vote.
- 7.7 Contingencies to cover schools in financial difficulties at a rate of £41 per pupil for maintained primary and secondary schools:

In favour	6
Against	0
Abstentions	0

- 7.8 Behaviour Support Services maintained secondary schools:
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|-------------|---|
| In favour | 0 |
| Against | 1 |
| Abstentions | 0 |
- 7.9 Behaviour Support Services maintained primary schools:
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|-------------|---|
| In favour | 4 |
| Against | 0 |
| Abstentions | 1 |
- 7.10 Behaviour Support Services – Summerhouse. The LA proposed that the figure in the report for the de-delegated budget be increased for maintained primary schools by £50k to £1.132m which equated to an increase of £6.85 per pupil. This was unanimously agreed by the maintained primary school representatives and then formally voted on approving the de-delegation of the budget:
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|-------------|---|
| In favour | 5 |
| Against | 0 |
| Abstentions | 0 |
- 7.11 The eligibility checking of Free School Meals – primary only. This had been reduced by £47k compared to the previous year and included working with schools to ensure maximising applications:
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|-------------|---|
| In favour | 5 |
| Against | 0 |
| Abstentions | 0 |
- 7.12 The movement of the previously de-delegated budget for Licences and Subscriptions negotiated by the DfE to the Central Block was noted. It was confirmed by the LA that this arrangement also covered other categories of schools and academies.
- 7.13 Staff Supply Costs – Maternity: this scheme had been revised so as to match the payments made to primary and secondary schools to the income raised from de-delegation. This meant that the projected pay out to claimants would be around 70% of the actual claims.
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| In favour | 6 |
| Against | 0 |
| Abstentions | 0 |
- 7.14 It was also noted that the issue of using the funds to cover nursery and special schools could not continue as the different categories of schools were funded from different blocks of the Dedicated Schools Grant. However, if similar schemes were to be introduced, including one similar to schools in financial difficulties, then the LA may wish to do so from the relevant Block.
- 7.15 Staff Supply Costs – Trade Union Facility Time: this had a one-off increase from £78k to £95k for 2018-19 as explained in paragraph 7.4.
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| In favour | 1 |
| Against | 0 |
| Abstentions | 5 |

- 7.16 Details of the submission to the ESFA of the 2018-19 schools funding formula were set out in the appendices to the report and were in the format required by the ESFA. The formula had been scrutinised at the previous meeting.
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| In favour | 6 |
| Against | 0 |
| Abstentions | 2 |
- 7.17 The LA explained that the introduction of the new “Central Block” to the DSG and that the previous relevant activities funded from the Schools Block were required to be moved there. This was predominantly the “LA duties for all schools”, the detail of which was set out in Appendix A. This was noted and agreed.
- 7.18 There were a number of other areas of the Central Block that required the monies to be allocated to them to be formally approved by the Schools Forum. The first of these was Central Block –Funding for Places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils – a range of vulnerable children who do not have EHCPs that Southwark is responsible for.
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| In favour | 9 |
| Against | 0 |
| Abstentions | 2 |
- 7.19 Central Block – Funding for Statutory responsibility for Admissions:
- | | |
|-------------|----|
| In favour | 11 |
| Against | 0 |
| Abstentions | 0 |
- 7.20 Central Block - Servicing of Schools Forum and its Committees:
- | | |
|-------------|----|
| In favour | 11 |
| Against | 0 |
| Abstentions | 0 |
- 7.21 Central Block – Licenses & Subscriptions –previously approved under paragraph 7.11
- 7.22 The Schools Forum then moved on to those funds that the LA required to be top sliced from the Schools Block – the Growth fund and the Falling Rolls fund. A number of members were concerned that the LA is requiring funds for funding growth when there a number of schools whose rolls are declining. The LA explained that its statutory responsibility for place planning was for the borough which is divided into planning areas and not individual schools.
- 7.23 The LA further explained that in addition there was parental choice and that Free Schools can be opened that the LA has never planned for. Headteacher representatives explained that some of their colleagues were having to vertically group classes as effectively their schools have become 1 and 1/2th form of entry and even this was difficult as there are statutory requirements regarding class sizes of Key Stage 1.
- 7.24 The Schools Forum requested that when the LA draw up the revised criteria for the Growth fund and the Falling Rolls fund to submit to the next meeting of the Schools Forum that account is taken of this issue. The LA explained that the DfE has set down the criteria for these funds which do not give a great deal of discretion but this will be explained.

- 7.25 The LA said it would include in its budget monitoring reports to the Schools Forum details of the expenditure from these two funds and that any underspend would be carried over. The Schools Forum then voted on whether to agree to the top slicing of the Schools Block for these funds.

Growth Fund:

In favour	4
Against	1
Abstentions	6

Falling Rolls Fund:

In favour	8
Against	0
Abstentions	3

- 7.26 The final part of the report related to the Central Retentions of the Early Years Block. Rebecca Sherwood, asked about the spend on the Early Help Service, a verbal breakdown was provided which emphasised that it is an integrated service covering the 0-18 age range, Rebecca's concern was that funds intended for early years were being spent on children of other ages.

- 7.27 The LA gave details of the number of children and families supported that illustrated the number of early years cases addressed. Also the amount used from the Early Years block was being reduced so the borough was putting in funds from other sources, subject to approval of the Council budget.

- 7.28 The Schools Forum then voted on the proposed retentions of the early years block.

In favour	10
Against	0
Abstentions	1

- 7.29 The move of the licenses and subscriptions from the de-delegated part of the Schools block to the Central block, as set down by the DfE results in the move of £110k between the blocks – this was noted and agreed.

8. Schools Funding Formula 2018-19

- 8.1 The report on the Schools Funding Formula for 2018-19 had been previously circulated to members including copies of the formal Authority Proforma Tool (APT). The formulaic values had been scrutinised at the December meeting and the APT reflected what was previously agreed.

- 8.2 The LA stressed the impact of the need to fund the growing number of free schools and the pupils not on the school census – previously funded by the ESFA, and the increase in school NNDR (business rates).

- 8.3 The submission of the 2018-19 APT was unanimously agreed by the Schools Forum.

- 8.4 The LA highlighted that there was a probable unallocated DSG of £0.79m – termed "Headroom". There were a number of options to its use; the LA preferred the one where the Headroom is used to assist with the likely High Needs Block deficit position. This the Schools Forum unanimously agreed with.

9.0 Any Other Business

- 9.1 Rebecca Sherwood asked that when setting the schedule of meetings, which is done a year in advance that account is taken of DfE Census days as well as there are statutory deadlines for submitting data.

10. Date of Future Meetings

22 March 2018, 17 May 2018, 12 July 2018

Annex A**SCHOOLS FORUM ATTENDANCE SHEET**

18th January 2018

VOTING MEMBERS

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PRESENT
Anita Gallagher	Primary School Headteacher	Yes
Manda George	Primary School Headteacher	Yes
Pia Longman	Primary School Headteacher	Yes
Gregory Doey	Primary School Headteacher	Yes
Laura Johnson	Primary School Governor	Yes
Vacant	Primary School Governor	
Rebecca Sherwood	Nursery School Headteacher	Yes
Simon Eccles	Special School Headteacher	Yes
Nicola Howard	Early Years – Private/Voluntary and Independent Settings	Yes
Steve Morrison	Academy	Yes
Mickey Kelly Simon Wattram	Academy shared	Yes Apologies
Vacant	Academy	
Maria Rodrigues	Special School Academy	Apologies
Yomi Adewoye	Pupil Referral Units	Apologies
Sister Anne-Marie Niblock	Secondary School Headteacher	Substitute – Head SSSO
Kieran McIntosh	FE SEN	No
Catherine May	Diocese Board	Substitute Head of St John's Rotherhithe
Betty Joseph	Trade Unions	Yes

Senior Officers in Attendance

Nina Dohel	Yes
Jenny Brennan	Yes
Terry Segarty	Yes
Russell Dyer	Yes
Kamaljit Kaur	Yes
David Cross	Clerk