

HILLINGDON SCHOOLS FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 30 June 2020 at 2pm via videoconferencing

Voting members

NAME	ORGANISATION	ATTENDANCE
Maintained Nursery (1)		
Ludmila Morris	McMillan Early Childhood Centre	PRESENT
Maintained Primary - Schools (4)		
Rachel Anderson	Dr Triplett's School	PRESENT
Duncan Greig	Breakspear Primary School	PRESENT
Kris O'Sullivan	Deanesfield Primary School	PRESENT
Sophia Shaikh	Grange Park Junior School	ABSENT
Maintained Primary - Governors (4)		
Jim Edgecombe (CHAIR)	Whiteheath Junior School	PRESENT
Tony Eginton	Minet Nursery & Infant School and Hillside Junior School	PRESENT
Phil Haigh	Cherry Lane Primary School and Meadow High School	PRESENT
Jo Palmer	Hillside Infant School and Hillside Junior School	PRESENT
Maintained Secondary (1)		
Liz Horrigan	Harlington School	PRESENT
Maintained Special (1)		
John Goddard	Hedgewood School	PRESENT
Academies (9)		
Aftab Ahmed	Guru Nanak Sikh Academy	PRESENT
Bob Charlton	Charville Primary School	APOLOGIES
Tracey Hemming	Middlesex Learning Partnership	PRESENT
Robert Jones	Haydon School	PRESENT
Helen Manwaring	Swakeleys School	PRESENT
Catherine Modsell	Frays Academy Trust	PRESENT
Peter Ryerson	Guru Nanak Sikh Academy	PRESENT
David Patterson	Queensmead School	PRESENT
Sandra Voisey	Laurel Lane Primary School	PRESENT
Special Academies (1)		
Sudhi Pathak	Eden Academy Trust	PRESENT
Alternative provision (1)		
Laurie Cornwell	The Skills Hub	PRESENT
Private Voluntary & Independent Early Years Providers (2)		
Elaine Caffary	4 Street Nursery	PRESENT
Lesley Knee	Ruislip Methodist Preschool	APOLOGIES
14-19 Partnership (1)		
(vacant)		

Other attendees (non-voting)

Independent Non-Maintained Special School		
Debbie Gilder	Pield Heath School	PRESENT
Shadow Representative (Maintained Primary - Schools)		
Rachel Blake	Whiteheath Infant School	NOT REQUIRED
Shadow Representative (Maintained Primary - Governor)		
John Buckingham	Glebe Primary School	PRESENT
Graham Wells	Colham Manor Primary School	NOT REQUIRED
Local Authority Officers		
Kate Boulter	Clerk	PRESENT
Steve Denbeigh	LA Finance	PRESENT
Vikram Hansrani	Assistant Director, SEND & Inclusion	PRESENT
Dan Kennedy	Director	PRESENT
Peter Malewicz	Finance Manager - Children and Young People Services	APOLOGIES
Sarah Phillips	Place Planning	PRESENT
Graham Young	Lead Finance Business Partner - School	PRESENT

		ACTION
1.	<p>INTRODUCTION & APOLOGIES</p> <p>The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting, which was being held by videoconferencing using Zoom due to Covid-19. Apologies were accepted and recorded in the attendance list (above). The Chair confirmed the meeting was quorate and could proceed to business.</p>	
2.	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 MAY 2020</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2020 were agreed as a correct record.</p>	
3.	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 MAY 2020</p> <p><u>Minute 3 – LAC placements</u></p> <p>GY confirmed that all residential LAC placements, both external and the Borough’s own provision, were with registered providers.</p> <p><u>Minute 6(f) – Healthcare contribution</u></p> <p>VH requested that this be deferred for discussion at the September meeting.</p>	VH
4.	<p>FEEDBACK FROM SUB-GROUPS</p> <p>The Forum NOTED the minutes of the DSG/EY Sub-Group held on 16 June 2020. There had not been a meeting of the High Needs Sub-Group since the last Schools Forum.</p> <p>The following issues from the DSG/EY minutes were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Group had discussed the financial impact of Covid on PVIs and concluded that struggling providers could benefit from business training to assist with sustainability. There was under spend in the Families in Need budget due to settings having been closed during lockdown, and the Forum supported the Group’s recommendation that this budget be used for business training. • The DSG deficit was due to continuing increase in demand for high needs support which out-paced funding and the Group had asked the LA to provide an update to Schools Forum on the capital build and expansion of places in the Borough, as set out in the Sufficiency Plan. VH advised that an update would be provided at the September meeting of the Forum. Sarah Phillips advised that the LA was identifying urgent issues and meeting with schools that term. 	PR VH
5.	<p>ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION</p> <p>(a) ST MARTIN’S DISECONOMIES</p> <p>At its last meeting, the Forum had agreed to invite the Executive Headteacher of St Martin’s MAT to attend the DSG/EY meeting on 16 June 2020 to discuss St Martin’s request for diseconomies funding, which the LA had been negotiating with the school since September 2019. The Executive Headteacher had declined to attend and, in the absence of any further information, the Group had recommended to the Forum that the request as submitted be rejected on the basis that it was unreasonable compared with other schools’ budgets.</p> <p>The Forum considered reports showing the 2019/20 budget submission from St Martin’s, benchmarking against other schools, and which areas of St Martin’s budget the LA had highlighted for review. GY advised the Forum that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was a DfE requirement that the Schools Block growth contingency budget fund the gap between the funding formula and the school’s budget. For the last few years the total growth contingency budget had been around £0.5m and the majority of the funding had gone to St Martin’s. • The funding request from St Martin’s for 2019/20 was £689K which represented a significant increase on the school’s previous requests, which had been around £400K annually. Following challenges from the LA, St Martin’s had reduced the funding request to just below £550K in February 2020 and, in a letter received the previous day, St Martin’s had advised the LA that it was looking at reducing the request further. • The LA had paid St Martin’s £200K diseconomies funding for 2019/20 and had put payments on hold pending resolution of the agreed amount. • A Forum member, who worked for the MAT which included St Martin’s, reported that the Executive Headteacher was working on the 2020/21 budget and had advised that it 	

	<p>was looking much stronger and a reduced diseconomies request would be submitted for 2020/21. The 2019/20 diseconomies request had already been reduced at the request of the LA, and further reduction in the funding provided would have a significant impact on the school.</p> <p>The Forum commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It recognised that St Martin’s was fully entitled to diseconomies funding, however all schools were having to budget very carefully, and diseconomies requests needed to be reasonable and commensurate with other schools’ budgets. • The LA had challenged St Martin’s submission which had resulted in the school submitting a reduced budget in February 2020. Since then the period to which the request related (2019/20) had included a significant period of lockdown when most schools were closed or operating on significantly reduced numbers. The budget submitted by St Martin’s included £339K for supply teaching staff which seemed excessive for this period. • St Martin’s diseconomies request included for £150K MAT contribution. Benchmarking against other schools indicated an average MAT fee of 5% of GAG, which would be £60K for St Martin’s. • An acceptable proposal had not been received from St Martin’s yet and the Forum AGREED that the LA and the school should continue to negotiate a reasonable proposal, for consideration by the Forum. The Forum further AGREED that no further payments should be made to the school until the matter was resolved. <p>(b) SECONDARY GROWTH CONTINGENCY</p> <p>The Forum considered a report which included a business case from Swakeley’s School for growth contingency funding from September 2020 for increase in Year 7 pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forum had agreed a revision to the Growth Contingency Policy for 2020/21 to include the allocation of funding to secondary schools that had agreed to accept pupils in Year 7 above their PAN in September 2020. • Swakeley’s School had expanded its Year 7 PAN from 180 to 240 in September 2018. The business case put forward by the school was that its expansion had helped the LA by providing more secondary places, and, had it not already increased its PAN, the school could have been chosen to accept more Year 7 pupils in September 2020 and would have been eligible for the growth contingency funding which other schools were receiving. <p>The Forum commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swakeley’s had not been entitled to any growth contingency funding for the PAN increase in September 2018 as the expansion was at the request of the school and not the LA. The school knew this when it chose to expand. • The intake of pupils for September 2020 was within Swakeley’s new PAN so did not meet the criteria for funding. • A revision to the Policy would be required to enable the Forum to agree Swakeley’s request for funding, and other schools which had voluntarily chosen to expand could request contingency funding on the same basis. • Place planning needed to be managed carefully to ensure that expansion did not distort the distribution of pupil numbers and create empty places in some schools. • Any decision to change the policy should ensure that it was applied fairly and not disadvantage any school. The Forum AGREED to revisit the matter in September. 	PH
6.	INFORMATION ITEMS	
	<p>(a) DSG MONTH 2 BUDGET MONITORING</p> <p>The Forum considered the Month 2 budget monitoring report 2020/21:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) outturn position was an in-year overspend of £8,333k at Month 2, an increase of £1,158K on the budgeted deficit of £7,175K, due to ongoing pressures in the cost of High Needs placements where significant growth continued. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2020/21 High Needs budget had been increased to take account of projected growth, but it was projected that when the current backlog in cases was added to the estimated in-year growth, the budget would be exceeded. When the £15,002K deficit brought forward from 2019/20 was taken into account, the cumulative deficit carry forward to 2021/22 was £23,335K. <p>The Forum commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the Cabinet meeting where the DSG budget was agreed, the Leader of the Council had indicated that the DSG deficit was a government matter and not something the Council had any control over. The DfE required LAs to have a Recovery Plan explaining the actions being taken to reduce the deficit, however, an in-year surplus would be required to reduce the deficit, and currently funding was not sufficient to cover the cost of demand for High Needs provision, resulting in an increasing deficit. The Forum looked forward to receiving an update from the LA on progress against the Sufficiency Plan at the next meeting. <p>(b) COMPARISON OF 2020/21 BUDGET TO 2019/20 OUTTURN</p> <p>The Forum NOTED a report which provided an analysis of the 2019/20 DSG outturn comparing the expenditure from the previous year to the budget agreed for 2020/21, which highlighted areas where the budget may not be sufficient in 2020/21 along with areas that required additional focus and monitoring. The Forum AGREED that the DSG/EY Sub-Group would consider the report in detail at its next meeting and use it as a basis for the Work Plan.</p>	VH
7.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>None.</p>	
8.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Wednesday 23 September 2020 at 2pm.</p>	

The meeting closed at 3.15pm.