

HILLINGDON SCHOOLS FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 26 June 2019 at 2pm at the Civic Centre

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	APOLOGIES
Maintained Primary - Governors (4)		
Jim Edgecombe (CHAIR)	Whiteheath Junior School	PRESENT
Tony Eginton	Minet Nursery & Infant School and Hillside Junior School	APOLOGIES
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	APOLOGIES
Maintained Special (1)		
John Goddard	Hedgewood School	PRESENT
Academies (9)		
Bob Charlton	Charville Primary School	PRESENT
Joan Greening	Northwood Academy	APOLOGIES
Tracey Hemming	Middlesex Learning Partnership	PRESENT
Robert Jones	Haydon School	APOLOGIES
Helen Manwaring	Swakeleys School	PRESENT
Peter Ryerson	Guru Nanak Sikh Academy	PRESENT
David Patterson	Queensmead School	PRESENT
Sandra Voisey	Laurel Lane Primary School	APOLOGIES
(one vacancy)		-
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	APOLOGIES
Lesley Knee	Ruislip Methodist Preschool	PRESENT
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	NOT REQUIRED
Mr Graham Wells	Colham Manor Primary School	NOT REQUIRED
Local Authority Officers		
Kate Boulter	Clerk	PRESENT
Steve Denbeigh	LA Finance	PRESENT
Emily Ellington		PRESENT
Dan Kennedy	Director Housing Environment Education Performance Health & Wellbeing	PRESENT
Peter Malewicz	Finance Manager - Children and Young People Services	PRESENT
Graham Young	Lead Finance Business Partner - School	PRESENT

		ACTION
1.	<p>APOLOGIES</p> <p>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>MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>PM advised that there had been two nominations for the three academy representative vacancies and therefore David Patterson and Sandra Voisey were automatically appointed without need for a ballot. Since a number of rounds of nominations had failed to fill all vacancies, the Forum AGREED that the Chair and Vice-Chair would consider approaching candidates for co-option to fill the remaining vacancy.</p>	JE/PH
3.	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 MAY 2019</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2019, and the confidential annex, were agreed as correct records.</p>	
4.	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 MARCH 2019</p> <p><u>School place planning update</u> DK reported that the annual refresh was taking place which took account of changes such as birth rate, population and housing. This information would be submitted to the ESFA by the end of July. Significant changes were not expected. It had been observed that primary pupil numbers were declining and secondary numbers were rising, and it was anticipated that this trend would continue for 5-7 years before secondary number stabilised. Factors affecting pupil numbers and distribution were parental demand and rising numbers of pupils with SEND.</p> <p>The consultant engaged by the LA to look at place planning had visited most schools to discuss individual issues and their report on the position for next year was expected to be completed by 5 July 2019. Recommendations would go to Council Members on capping or reducing some primary PANs, whilst mindful to ensure it did not result in a shortage of places.</p> <p>Forum members reported that schools were very keen to get feedback from the consultant as soon as possible as the impact on schools was huge. DK advised that a further update would be provided to the next meeting.</p> <p>Forum members commented that two secondary schools had voluntarily increased their numbers without informing the LA which had created significant additional work for the LA Admissions team and diverted resource from the service provided to all schools. The LA should consider surcharging the schools.</p> <p><u>Implications of Heathrow expansion</u> PH reported that the Heathrow Airport Expansion Consultation, running from 18 June to 13 September 2019, proposed demolishing Harmondsworth School and rebuilding it on a disused golf course along the Stockley Bypass. The proposed new site was not within the school's current catchment area, and was already served by several existing schools which together had around 90 surplus places. Parents who might have considered sending their children to Harmondsworth were likely to choose other schools because of the planned demolition, which would have an immediate impact on the school's numbers. Instead of rebuilding in an area saturated with primary schools, the LA should seek compensation for the building and redundancy costs.</p>	<p>DK</p> <p>DK</p>

	<p>DK advised that the LA had not been asked for its view on the proposal before the consultation was published. The Forum requested DK provide a update on the LA's position at the next meeting, and clarification of the risk to the DSG if the LA or Heathrow failed to underwrite any costs if a school was adversely financially affected by the planned airport expansion.</p>	DK
5.	<p>FEEDBACK FROM SUB-GROUPS</p> <p>(a) DSGWG</p> <p><u>(i) Minutes of meeting held on 12 June 2019</u> The Forum received the unconfirmed minutes of the DSG Working Group held on 12 June 2019.</p> <p><u>(ii) Deficit Recovery Plan</u> The public was excluded from the discussion of this confidential item and it is minuted separately.</p> <p><u>(iii) Clawback Mechanism</u> The public was excluded from the discussion of this confidential item and it is minuted separately.</p> <p><u>(iv) MFG Disapplication</u> The public was excluded from the discussion of this confidential item and it is minuted separately.</p> <p>(b) HIGH NEEDS GROUP The High Needs Group had met on 18 June 2019 and the minutes were not yet available. PH reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hedgewood and Meadow had additional pupils for September which would put an additional £450K cost to the DSG. • Independent providers in the Borough had significant numbers of out-of-borough pupils, and Hillingdon children were having to go out of borough for places. This was permitted practice as there was no differentiation if a child had an EHCP. 	
6.	<p>INFORMATION REPORTS</p>	
	<p>(a) DSG DEFICIT RECOVERY PLAN - FEEDBACK FROM DfE MEETING 14 JUNE 2019</p> <p>The Forum considered a report on feedback from a meeting between the DfE/ESFA and school finance leads from all London local authorities held on 14 June 2019.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently 60 out of the 152 LAs had a deficit on their DSG at the end of 2017/18, of which 32 had a cumulative deficit of more than 1% of the 2018/19 DSG allocation requiring submission of a recovery plan. It was anticipated that the number of LAs reporting a deficit would increase. • LAs had been informed at the meeting that there was the option to extend the recovery time to five or seven years, where the LA could demonstrate that three years was insufficient. This had not been made clear in the guidance and officers had been working to a three year plan. Officers had been advised to submit the three year plan as a starting point and then enter into dialogue with the DfE to determine whether a five or seven year recovery plan was needed. • A response from the DfE was expected before the 2020/21 budget was set. 	

	<p>(b) BENCHMARKING DATA - SOCIETY OF LONDON TREASURERS</p> <p>The public was excluded from the discussion of this confidential item and it is minuted separately.</p>	
	<p>(c) SEN2 DATA ANALYSIS</p> <p>The Forum considered a report which provided a data analysis of the number and placement of children and young people with an EHCP in England in 2017 and 2018. It showed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An 11% increase in the total number of children and young people with an EHCP nationally. • A 16% increase in new EHCPs issued. • The areas where growth was greatest was in 0-5 and post-19. • Hillingdon was generally aligned with national trends. • There had been a decrease to 38% of SEND children educated in mainstream schools. • The national figure for compliance with the twenty week deadline was 60%. In London the average was 58% and in Hillingdon it was 56%. Hillingdon acknowledged it did not have capacity to meet demand and had been working to improve the figure and believed it was currently operating at over 60%. • The number of tribunals in Hillingdon had declined to the lowest in six years. • In Hillingdon, the vast majority of requests for EHCPs came from schools rather than parents. • The reasons for the increase in the number of children and young people with an EHCP were being explored nationally and were believed to be due to a number of factors including the implementation of the Children and Families Act, school resources becoming exhausted and learning needs becoming more complex. <p>Member of the Forum commented it was essential that staff in the LA's SEN information team gave accurate advice to parents on the requirements for an EHCP, to help manage expectations.</p>	
	<p>(d) SEND CAPITAL</p> <p>EE reported that there was just over £5million capital for development of SEND provision. The LA had consulted with schools, families and other stakeholders and the plan for capital spend had been published, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of Hedgewood School • Expansion of Moorcroft. • Expansion of SEND provision at Uxbridge College. • The creation of two additional SRPs at Ruislip High. • The development of the satellite special school hub model. <p>The Forum welcomed the progress being made towards increasing the capacity of SEND provision in Hillingdon.</p>	
7.	<p>DSG BUDGET 2019/20</p>	
	<p>(a) SCHOOLS THREE YEAR BUDGET PLANS</p> <p>The Forum considered a report which provided an update on the financial position of all maintained schools over the three years from 2019/20, with particular focus on those schools causing financial concern.</p> <p>As at 1 April 2019, maintained schools had total surplus revenue balances of £11.2 million. Based on the three year budget plans, schools were anticipating that over the next three years their balances would reduce significantly and the majority of schools were predicting</p>	

	<p>deficits in 2020/21 and 2021/22.</p> <p>In 2019/20, schools were projecting a £6m (54%) reduction in balances. A similar pattern had been reported in previous years, where schools projected a significant reduction in balances, but total school balances had not reduced over the period 2012/13 to 2018/19. Officers were challenging schools that consistently budgeted much higher than the previous years' outturn position.</p> <p>The LA Finance team had RAG rated schools based on their 2018/19 outturn position and three year budget plans. Schools that ended 2018/19 in deficit or set a budget with a balance less than £75k were rated 'red' would receive close monitoring. In 2019/20 all but five schools had set a budget with an in-year deficit and those schools would be supported to review income and expenditure in order to ensure that future budget plans were financially sustainable.</p> <p>It was evident that the majority of schools were forecasting a worsening financial position, and the LA Finance team was considering ways in which it could increase visibility of maintained school finances, to enable earlier identification of emerging issues and minimise the risk of a school encountering serious problems. Already the additional support for schools had increased the workload of the LA Finance team and this would be kept under review to ensure it was adequately resourced.</p> <p>Members of the Forum commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuts being made by schools would eventually impact on outcomes. • Increasing staff costs and declining pupil numbers were the main reasons for schools forecasting a deficit. • If a school appeared to have excessive spend on staffing for its size, the LA Finance or School Improvement team should offer advice to the school on an appropriate level of staffing based on benchmarking against other schools. 	
8.	<p>DSG BUDGET 2020/21 - AREAS TO REVIEW</p>	
	<p>The Forum considered reports on the following areas proposed for review:</p> <p>(a) 2% THRESHOLD</p> <p>Local authorities were able to provide additional funding outside the main funding formula for mainstream schools on a consistent and fair basis where the number of pupils with SEND and/or high needs could not be reflected adequately in the funding they received through the local funding formula. In Hillingdon the 2% threshold mechanism recognised those mainstream schools that had a disproportionate number of pupils with SEN. The mechanism distributed additional funding to schools where the number of pupils with an EHCP was more than 2% of the total pupil population. The additional funding allocated was £6k for each pupil over the 2% which was funded from the High Needs Block.</p> <p>The introduction of Extra Support Funding (previously Early Intervention Funding) had raised the question whether pupils in receipt of Extra Support Funding should be included in the calculation for the 2% threshold. The financial impact of including these pupils in the 2% threshold mechanism indicated that, if Extra Support Funding pupils were included, the annual funding required would increase by over £200k.</p> <p>The Forum AGREED that the DSG Working Group would consider whether: (i) Extra Support Funding pupils should be included in the 2% calculation, and (ii) a change to the 2% threshold mechanism needs to be implemented.</p>	

	<p>(b) 2 YEAR OLD FREE ENTITLEMENT BASE RATE</p> <p>Local authorities were funded to provide 15 hours free childcare to the 40% most disadvantaged two year olds in the area. This was funded through the Early Years block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) with the rate received by Hillingdon currently £5.92 per hour. The actual rate paid to providers for providing the free entitlement to two year olds in Hillingdon was £6.00</p> <p>The Forum ARGUED that the DSG Working Group would consider whether to consult with stakeholders on the proposal to reduce the hourly rate paid to providers for the two year old free entitlement to the funded rate of £5.92 per hour.</p> <p>(c) CENTRALLY RETAINED BUDGETS</p> <p>It was AGREED that a report on this would go to the DSG Working Group for consideration.</p>	
9.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>None.</p>	
10.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The next meeting of the Schools Forum would be held in the Civic Centre on Thursday 26 September 2019 at 2pm.</p>	

The meeting closed at 4.05pm.