

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
SCHOOLS FUNDING FORUM
CEME, Rainham
12 March 2015 (8.30 – 9.30am)**

Present:

Head Teachers	Nigel Emes (Chair) (Primary) Chris Hobson (Primary) Margy Bushell (Primary) Kirsten Cooper (Primary) Bill Edgar (Secondary) Simon London (Secondary Academy) Emma Allen (Special)
Governors	Tracey Walker (Primary)
Non School Representative	Maria Thompson, Post 16
Officers in Attendance	Mary Pattinson (LBH) David Allen (LBH)

The Chairman reminded Members of the action to be taken in an emergency.

81 TO AGREE THE NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 JANUARY 2015

The minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 15 January 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

82 MATTERS ARISING

Mary Pattinson reported that the process of reviewing SEN projections had commenced. The SEN strategy would be drawn up in the summer term and this would be written in consultation with stakeholders, including the children themselves.

A presentation on alternative provision proposals would be presented to the secondary head teachers' meeting due the following week.

83 FINAL SCHOOL FUNDING ALLOCATIONS 2015-16

The final funding allocations for primary and secondary schools had been issued on 27 February including funding from the early years and for high needs block. The deadline for special school budgets was 31 March. The covering letter sent with draft budgets on 12 February set out the decisions made by the Funding Forum during the year such as: increases to the early years hourly rate, the central retention of DSG or pupil growth, school admissions etc., de-delegaton and the value of the funding factors.

A total of £193 million of Dedicated Schools Grant had been committed and the 2016/17 cycle would start next term. National requirements would also have to be complied with.

84 EMPLOYER PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS

It was noted that a 2.3% increase in employer local government pension scheme contributions would take effect from 1 April 2015 with a further 1.9% increase scheduled from 1 April 2016. There was also a 2.38% increase in teachers' pensions due from September 2015 and higher national insurance contributions expected from April 2016.

The above pension increase together with the effects of incremental performance pay rises and a 1% inflation rise meant that school staffing budgets were having to increase by 5-6%. This was having a significant impact on school budgets that heads were finding difficult to accommodate.

It was agreed that this was a major concern and that cutting staffing impacted on morale and on the ability of the school to do it job. There were few incentives to work in Havering and staff overworking simply led to higher levels of absence.

The higher number and complexity of SEND children also impacted on budgets and this showed why a SEND strategy was needed.

It was suggested that the Forum could revisit the idea of groups of schools sharing staffing as sometimes seen in rural areas. One Havering school did already share support staff with the sixth form college.

85 CAPITAL FUNDING

Whilst this was not directly part of the remit of the Forum, the settlement received by the Local Authority would impact on schools through the amounts of condition funding and devolved capital funding received. It was noted that Havering was in the top quartile for building condition needs per pupil and that only the playing fields category was considered to have low needs at present. Havering had received around £2.3 million for core needs

and an additional £535,000 for high needs issues. The asset management would be setting priorities for this funding.

The funding for basic needs for 2017-18 had been announced at £16.75m. This was to fund the expansion of schools to meet the forecast increase in places of 207 primary and 531 secondary. It was noted that there was no extra allocation for buildings for special needs. This budget would therefore also have to be used for special needs building provision, which was significant in Havering.

Four of fourteen bids from Havering had been accepted under the Primary Schools Building Programme as well as separate bids from Hall Mead and Redden Court. None of the successful bids related to full rebuilds of any schools and all projects would be funded and managed by the Education Funding Agency rather than the Council.

It was noted that any further new schools would have to be funded by the Local Authority from the basic needs fund. The Council was also required to supply the land for the school free of charge.

The issue of secondary school place planning would be discussed by the secondary head teachers group.

86 **CAPITALISATION OF TWO-YEAR-OLD FUNDING**

It was explained that an application had been made to the Department for Education (DfE) to capitalise unspent grant for 2 year old provision was to increase provision for early years in maintained schools. The funding for 2 year olds had been relatively generous and was intended to support Havering 1,128 places from September 2014. Not all of these places had, however, been taken up on a full time basis, leading to an underspend of approximately £1 million.

There was therefore an opportunity to capitalise this. Bids being considered were likely to be on the condition of provision from 8am to 6pm although the private sector could provide some of this. The £1 million would be in addition to the £422,000 of previously available capital funding was being allocated to the Hacton, Suttons and Mawney Schools PSBP projects.

Other new information was that provision for two-year olds could now be made without obtaining a separate OFSTED registration and childminders could operate in non-domestic settings.

The criteria for deciding on the locations of any new nurseries would need to be established. There had not however been any commitments to specific schools as regards funding. Decisions re funding would be made in March/April and the proposed criteria for the nurseries would be brought to the Forum for approval.

The Forum unanimously **AGREED** to:

(1) Endorse the application to the Secretary of State to dis-apply the regulations to allow this Local Authority to increase its centrally-retained capital funding by up to £1 million from revenue account within DSG, in order to support the establishment of new nursery provisions and the expansion of existing nurseries on school sites, including where schools are also being proposed for expansion as a result of the rising numbers of Primary aged pupils;

(2) Note that if this application is successful, detailed criteria for prioritising the use of this funding will be developed and reported to the Forum and that the Forum will be updated on progress;

(3) Note that the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill contains provision to enable schools to provide Early Education and Childcare for all 2 year olds without the need to obtain separate Ofsted Registration; to enable Childminders to work on non-domestic premises and to enable Early Years Providers to obtain Ofsted Registration for multiple sites;

(4) Note that Officers will support schools and PVI Settings/Childminders in feasibility of delivering Early Education and Childcare for 2 year olds and for delivery from 8am to 6pm.

87 PYRGO PRIORY ACADEMY

It was noted that this school became an Academy on 1 February 2015.

88 NEXT MEETINGS

23 April 2015
18 June 2015

Both meetings to be held at CEME at 8.30am.

89 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

Chairman

