

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
SCHOOLS FUNDING FORUM
CEME
7 November 2019 (8.30 - 10.25 am)**

Present:

Representative Groups

Head Teachers: Emma Allen, Special
Margy Bushell, Primary
Kirsten Cooper, Primary
Georgina Delmonte, Primary
David Unwin-Bailey, Primary

Governors: Dave Waters, Primary

Primary: David Denchfield
Kate Ridley-Moy

Secondary: Denise Broom
Simon London
Keith Williams (Chair)

Early Years PVI Sector: Mark Halls

Trade Unions: Peter Liddle, Support Staff

LA Officers Trevor Cook
Caroline Penfold
David Allen

14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS OR OBSERVERS

Apologies were received from Hayley Durrant (primary head teacher) Bernard Gilley (primary governor) Vicki Fackler (special schools) and John Delaney (Trade Union- NEU).

15 TO AGREE THE NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25TH SEPTEMBER 2019

The minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 25 September 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

16 **MATTERS ARISING**

The following matters arose from the minutes of the previous meeting:

Minute 5, Government Announcements on Additional School Funding – The deadline for submission to the DfE of the LA's formula to allocate funding to schools was 21 January. Final ratification by the Schools Funding Forum of the formula and local political approval would take place following consultation with schools.

Minute 6 – DfE Consultations Relating to 2020-21 Funding – It was confirmed that the response to the consultation on the Risk Protection Arrangements for schools insurance had been submitted.

Minute 8 – De-delegation of Funding from Maintained Schools 2020-21 – A decision was still to be made on attendance & behaviour de-delegation. David Allen conveyed clarification from Penny Denny, Attendance & Behaviour Support Manager, of the entitlement to support and on the basis that the service's offer was re-worded, de-delegation was agreed by the Forum for maintained schools.

Minute 10 – Elective Home Education Transfer of Funding between Schools – Noted that the reduction of Olive Academy's places from 64 to 40 was correct in relation to its capacity for permanently excluded pupils. To retain the expertise at Olive and avoid redundancies, other strategies would be developed in support of schools and as an interim measure places be reduced from 64 to 50.

Minute 11 – DfE Consultation – Financial Transparency of Local Authority Maintained Schools and Academy Trusts – It was confirmed that a response to the consultation had been submitted.

17 **SCHOOLS FUNDING 2020-21**

The Forum was asked to consider proposals for allocating Schools Block funding. Havering had adopted the national funding formula rates and the Forum would therefore need to decide the level of minimum funding guarantee and the level of cap applied to schools that would receive more funding under the formula.

Verified data from the October 2019 census would be available in December for calculation of final funding for 2020-21 and until then, all figures were based on October 2018 data. Rates (NNDR) funding had increased slightly whilst growth and falling rolls funding had reduced by £868k. The overall schools block had increased by £5.9m but until the level of additional needs to be funded in schools was available from the final data, the affordability of the overall formula would remain uncertain.

School funding options took into account that the minimum level of protection was 0.5% per pupil more than the current allocation for schools. The maximum protection level permitted by the DfE was 1.84%.

Due to the new DfE formula, the pupil growth and falling rolls fund would reduce next year from £2.5m to £1.6m. £2.5m was still needed, however, for this fund in Havering. Schools with bulge classes were protected up to 28 pupils if the bulge class did not fill. Four new primary expansions were expected in September 2020 and there were also eight expansions to be funded from previous years, seven new bulge classes and eight unfilled bulge classes from previous years. There was also one new secondary expansion expected and eight expansions from previous years.

Pressure on primary schools would be kept under review as officers wished to avoid putting in unnecessary bulge classes. Expansions could also depend on new housing developments going to schedule. Some schools were also under number and it was hoped to make further efforts to fill these. Some £254k was currently spent to assist schools with falling rolls as well as £500k support for schools with consistently low numbers in some year groups.

Other boroughs used similar formulas but there was no standard method of making these calculations. If falling rolls continued at a school, discussions would take place about capping their PAN at a lower number. Only two redundancies had been required due to falling rolls and these costs would be covered by the Local Authority.

A series of options for different levels of cap and minimum funding guarantee were presented to the Forum. A total of £178m was available to be distributed to schools and each option showed the number of capped schools and the number of schools receiving the minimum funding guarantee. The extra funding retained under each option for next year was also shown. The Forum was also asked to agree any top up of the pupil growth/falling rolls funding and any transfer from the schools block to the high needs block.

The impact on individual (anonymised) schools was also presented and it was noted that some schools received more funding per pupil due to embedded grants or being in areas of high deprivation. The Local Authority had previously applied for the disapplication of the Minimum Funding Guarantee in order to reduce the level of embedded grants but this had been refused. A new disapplication could however still be applied for by 28 November. It was noted that information on the levels of academy reserves could not be accessed as academy accounts were published at Trust level. The Forum agreed to apply for the disapplication of funding for 'secondary school 18' and the two other schools with continued protection on the tabled papers with funding per pupil to be reduced over a three-year period.

The Local Authority was required to consult with schools on the options for allocation of funding. The Forum therefore agreed to consult with schools on

funding options B and E as presented. Options C and D were discounted as they did not leave sufficient funds to support the falling rolls and high needs shortfalls. It was noted that Option F was to move to the 2021-22 minimum pupil level for primary of £4,000 but would require approval by the DfE.

The Forum also agreed unanimously to transfer £500k to the high needs fund and up to £800k to the pupil growth and falling rolls fund. It was noted based on projections £0.5m would still be required for the falling rolls fund in 2020-21.

It was further agreed that a consultation with schools on the two proposed options should commence as soon as possible with responses to be considered at the Forum's next meeting on 17 December with final ratification at the 16 January 2020 meeting. The consultation would therefore close on 9 December.

18 HIGH NEEDS FUNDING 2020-21

Havering had been allocated an extra £4m of additional national funding for the high needs block. This was the second highest percentage rise in London but Havering still had the lowest funding per pupil in London. The high needs funding formula was to be reviewed by the DfE.

A high needs overspend of £2.3m had been forecast for Havering for 2019-20. This included an underspend of £1.1m carried forward from the Dedicated Schools Grant so there was in fact a total overspend of £3.5m against the high needs allocation. Pupil numbers in Additionally Resourced Provision were expected to increase next year and the overspend would continue to be monitored. Updates on the position would be brought to future meetings of the forum. The new Special School would help the situation but this would not open until September 2021 due to delays in the planning process.

The Forum noted the additional high needs funding for financial year 2020-21 and noted the year forecast of expenditure for financial year 2019-20.

19 CENTRAL SCHOOL SERVICES BLOCK 2020-21

Indicative funding for the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) was set out for the Forum. Final figures would be available once the new pupil numbers had been received.

The Forum noted the allocation of CSSB for 2020-21.

20 EARLY YEARS FUNDING 2020-21

It was noted that hourly rates for the Early Years funding block had increased by £0.08 per hour. This would be discussed with the Early Years Provider Reference Group and the outcome brought to the next meeting of the Forum.

The Forum noted the allocation of Early Years funding for 2020-21.

21 NEXT MEETINGS

The next meetings of the Sub-Committee had been arranged as follows:

17 December 2019
16 January 2020
19 March 2020
18 June 2020

All meetings to start at 8.30 am at CEME.

22 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business raised.