

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
SCHOOLS FUNDING FORUM
CEME, RAINHAM**

22 October 2015 (8.30 – 11.25am)

Present:

Head Teachers

Nigel Emes (Chair) (Primary)
Emma Allen (Special)
Margy Bushell (Primary)
Malcolm Drakes (Primary)
Julian Dutnall (Secondary Academy)
Bill Edgar (Secondary)
Chris Hobson (Primary)
Gary Pocock (Special Academy)
Tim Woodford (Academy)
Matt Dineen (Primary)

Governors

Sheila Clarke (Primary)
John McKernan (Academy)
Bernard Gilley (Primary) Derek Smith MBE (Secondary)

Non School Reps

Maria Thompson (Post 16)

**Trade Union
Representatives**

John Giles (UNISON)
Ray Waxler (NUT)
Keith Passingham (NASUWT)

Officers in Attendance

David Allen
Mary Phillips
Thelma Bartlett
Susan Sutton
Paul Tinsley
Agatha Williams

130. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS OR OBSERVERS

Apologies were received from Katrina Karwacinski, Kirsten Cooper, Daren Jackson, David Denchfield and Simon London.

Matt Dineen was in attendance substituting for Kirsten Cooper.

131. TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

John McKernan had given his apologies for the previous meeting, but they had not been recorded. With that change, the minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 24 September 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

132. MATTERS ARISING

The Forum was informed that two Freedom of Information (FoI) requests had been received; also the Romford Recorder had made enquiries regarding the minutes and agenda items of School Funding Forum meetings. The Forum was reminded that meetings were open to the public and agenda and minutes published on the Council's website.

Item 121 refers - Allocation of the DSG Balance Carried Forward From 2014-15

DA had emailed members following the last meeting responding to concerns expressed about timescales for the appointment of the Assistant Educational Psychologists and the distribution of the additional resource to schools. On the basis of the response the Forum agreed to implement the proposal to allocate £125k of the DSG underspend towards the costs of the conversion of statements to EHC Plans.

133. DSG CONTRIBUTION TO SUPPORT VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

Thelma Bartlett presented the proposal for supporting vulnerable children as the Forum had requested further information at a previous meeting. The proposal was to bring together in one accessible place the services that are available to support schools with vulnerable children and families. The development of a portal would be a more efficient way for schools to find out which services could provide support including from the voluntary sector. It was anticipated that supporting families early would reduce demand and associated costs later on. This was different from the local offer which was a list of provision available to parents and carers. The new portal would be for professionals involved with the children. Monitoring would include the number of users, the number of families reached and the number of voluntary organisations and other services being accessed. After initial set and development costs it would need only a small resources to maintain the portal. This project would link with the work of the cluster navigator post which was funded centrally.

After consideration the Forum agreed unanimously to use £70,000 of the balance carried forward from the 2014-15 centrally held DSG to support vulnerable children.

134. SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP FUND

Susan Sutton presented the proposal to consider the retention of a central budget from the DSG to support schools through partnership arrangements with other schools. It was explained that the LA brokers support for schools with identified weaknesses as part of the strategy to help with their improvement. The funding is now costed depending on the support required and progress is monitored through progress review meetings. Over the last two years 22 schools had been supported and the progress made by each was noted. Schools must commit to robust challenge before being allocated funding. Secondary schools were also eligible for support and there would be further discussions between the LA and the Teaching Schools to clarify processes. In 2015-16 and previous years the allocation had been £236k and this was being reduced to £200k for 2016-17.

The Forum agreed unanimously to the retention of a central budget of £200,000 in financial year 2016-17 to support school partnerships.

135. TRADE UNION FACILITY TIME

A report was considered from the Trade Union Facility Time Working Group which had met on 13th October. The Forum was informed that a great deal of preventative work was undertaken by TU representatives, which resulted in cases not going to court, thereby saving money in the long run. Keith Passingham, Ray Waxler and John Giles each described their high workloads and the benefits to schools of their work and the risks of further reductions in facility time. Also TU representatives attended a large number of re-structuring and other meetings which appeared to go unnoticed and took up a great deal of time. It was suggested that the time spent at meetings, taking/making phone calls and consultations should be recorded and logged by TU representatives for the sake of transparency. Keith Williams and Keith Passingham were working together on this. The Forum agreed that working relationships between schools and the trade unions were good in Havering. There was some confusion at school level about the support that staff received from this resource rather than an “entitlement” from paying their union subscriptions.

The Forum was asked to vote on the reviewed charges as following:

Charges	£4.00	£3.50	£3.00
Number of Votes	5	10	0

It was therefore agreed that the cost to schools would be reduced to £3.50 per pupil for financial year 2016-17.

136. DE-DELEGATION OF BUDGETS FOR CENTRAL SERVICES

At their last meeting the Forum had decided on de-delegation of a number of budgets to retain central services for 2016-17 and was asked to make a

decision regarding the de-delegation of budgets for trade union facility time and general insurance. A letter was circulated, jointly signed by national trade union officials recommending the continuation of de-delegation and academy buy back. After discussion the Forum agreed to the de-delegation proposals for trade union facility time and general insurance for both maintained primary and secondary schools, with one member abstaining from the vote.

DA advised that a further report would be presented at a future meeting giving options for delegation of insurance from 2017-18 in line with most other LAs.

137. SECTION 251 2015-16 BENCHMARKING

Three papers were tabled providing Havering’s planned expenditure on Children’s Services benchmarked against other London LAs.

- (i) The first paper showed that LBH funding allocated to schools through the pupil-led factors of the formula was, at 91.4%, in excess of the 80% minimum requirement of the DFE. For the AWPU values, Havering’s was presented as follows:

		Primary	KS3	KS4
LBH	2015-16	£3,074	£4,542	£4,740
Outer London	Average	£3,160	£4,263	£4,777
Outer London	Ranking/19	14	3	12
Stat Neighbours	Average	£2,929	£4,081	£4,459
Stat Neighbours	Ranking/10	4	1	3
England	Average	£3,014	£4,186	£4,711
England	Ranking/150	45	23	49

The minimum AWPU values were £2,000 for primary and £3,000 for KS 3 and 4.

For FSM values Havering’s were presented as follows:

		Primary	Secondary
LBH	2015-16	£1,252	£2,261
Outer London	Average	£1,032	£1,544
Outer London	Ranking/9	3	2
Stat Neighbours	Average	£556	£834
Stat Neighbours	Ranking/8	2	1
England	Average	£1,162	£1,519
England	Ranking/70	23	14

- (ii) The second paper showed a comparison of funding by the DFE to local authorities

		Schools Block per Pupil	Early Yrs Block per Pupil
LBH	2015-16	£4,719	£3,980
London	Median	£5,349	£4,898
London	Ranking/32	27	25
Stat Neighbours	Median	£4,433	£3,776
Stat Neighbours	Ranking/11	1	4
England	Median	£4,529	£3,776
England	Ranking/150	43	78

From the DSG funding allocated, local authorities allocated funding to schools and to some central areas. A comparison to other LAs was presented as follows:

		ISB* per Pupil	Early Yrs max hourly rate
LBH	2015-16	£4,423	£4.10
London	Median	£5,039	£4.10
London	Ranking/32	25	16
Stat Neighbours	Median	£4,187	£3.77
Stat Neighbours	Ranking/11	3	3
England	Median	£4,360	£3.78
England	Ranking/150	64	36

*ISB is the funding allocated to schools through the formula

Havering allocated 97.44% of its Schools Block to schools against averages for London and England of 97.06% and 97.96% respectively. When including the pupil growth and falling rolls funds the % increased to 99.37% for Havering against averages for London and England of 98.41% and 98.6% respectively.

For High Needs expenditure comparisons were as follows:

		Total per pupil	Top up funding per pupil	AP per pupil	Central services
LBH	2015-16	£241	£203	£7	£29
London	Median	£428	£338	£8	£53
London	Ranking/32	32	32	18	28
Stat Neighbours	Median	£288	£228	£6	£52
Stat Neighbours	Ranking/11	11	7	5	9
England	Median	£301	£243	£5	£48
England	Ranking/150	127	106	64	127

Key areas of the central (non DSG funded) expenditure were shown as follows:

		School improvement per pupil	Stat & Regulatory duties	Supply of school places
LBH	2015-16	£26	£45	£6
London	Median	£27	£48	£3
London	Ranking/32	18	18	7
Stat Neighbours	Median	£26	£35	£2
Stat Neighbours	Ranking/11	6	5	3
England	Median	£28	£41	£2
England	Ranking/150	79	69	18

		SEN admin	Home to school transport	Central services	Ed Psychs
LBH	2015-16	£16	£65	£29	£17
London	Median	£15	£110	£53	£14
London	Ranking/32	15	28	28	14
Stat Neighbours	Median	£9	£117	£52	£12
Stat Neighbours	Ranking/11	3	9	9	2
England	Median	£12	£118	£48	£14
England	Ranking/150	39	132	127	40

- (iii) The third paper was the detailed benchmarking data produced by the DFE from LAS' section 241 statements. The relevant comparative data had been extracted and included in the second paper (see above). The detail also included LA expenditure on Children and Young People services such as fostering and adoption and safeguarding.

The Forum noted all of the benchmarking data presented.

138. SCHOOL AND EARLY YEARS FINANCE REGULATIONS 2015

The Forum considered a DFE consultation on changes to the Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations 2015. As well as some minor updating of dates and funding levels the proposed changes were as follows:

- (i) Underspent falling rolls fund or new schools fund will be able to be carried forward to the following year for the same use
- (ii) The option to fund place-based 2 year old provision is to be limited to SEN children and children in need.
- (iii) The definition of amalgamated schools is to be expanded to provide LAs with greater flexibility in funding schools when one closes and another has its age range extended.

- (iv) LAs will be allowed to authorise expenditure in respect of special academies and alternative provision academies where it is unreasonable for the expenditure to be met from the general annual grant

It was agreed that there were no objections to register with the DFE before the deadline for responses on 13th November.

139. HIGH NEEDS FUNDING 2016-17

The Forum was asked to note the DFE's approach to funding High Needs expenditure in 2016-17. The results of the Government Spending Review will not be known until later in the year so the DfE is not able to commit to funding growth in high needs places. LAs had therefore been advised to assume that there will be no additional high needs funding in 2016-17, that the 2016-17 high needs block will be based on 2015-16 academic year place numbers and that there will be no change to the remainder of the high needs block.

140. FUTURE MEETINGS

Meeting to be held at CEME at 8.30am on:

10 December 2015

21 January 2016

17 March 2016

28 April 2016

23 June 2016

129. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

Chairman