

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
SCHOOLS FUNDING FORUM  
CEME  
28 April 2016 (8.30 - 10.50 am)**

**Present:**

**Representative Groups**

**Teachers:** Emma Allen, Special (EA)  
Margy Bushell, Primary (MB)  
Kirsten Cooper, Primary (KC)  
David Denchfield, Primary (DD)  
Bill Edgar, Secondary (BE)  
Nigel Emes, Primary (Chairman) (NE)  
Chris Hobson, Primary (CH)  
Simon London, Academy (SL)  
Gary Pocock, Academy (GP)  
Keith Williams, Academy (Vice-Chairman) (KW)  
Tim Woodford, Academy (TW)

**Governors:** Sheila Clarke, Primary (SC)  
Bernard Gilley, Primary (BG)  
John McKernan, Academy (JM)  
Derek Smith MBE, Secondary (DS)

**Non-School  
Representatives:** Maria Thompson, Post 16 (MT)  
Joanna Wilkinson, Early Years/PVI Sector (JW)

**Trade Unions:** Ray Waxler, NUT (RW)

**Officers in Attendance:** David Allen (DA)  
Dennis Brewin (DB)  
Trevor Cook (TC)  
Sue Imbriano (SI)  
Paul Tinsley (PT)

**167 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS OR OBSERVERS**

Apologies were received from Wayne Chertien, Malcolm Drakes, Julian Dutnall, Daren Jackson and John Giles.

**168 TO AGREE THE NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 MARCH 2016**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendments:

Minute 164 – Final paragraph of section1 (Proposals for a schools national funding formula), second line to read ‘on behalf of the Council’ rather than as stated.

Minute 166 – Second paragraph, third line to read ‘their opposition’ rather than as stated.

169 **MATTERS ARISING**

It was noted that the issue of the timing of payments was recognised and had been raised at the Council.

170 **ALLOCATION OF THE DSG CARRIED FORWARD FROM 2015/16**

It was noted that the DSG account had been closed earlier than usual. A total of £1.324 million was unspent, principally due to some agreed projects not having started.

The projects had been funded from DSG underspends carried forward from the previous financial year. They included projects for vulnerable two-year olds which had started late but had proved successful. Additional Resource Provisions, a budget to pay late recoupment claims from other LAs and adjustments to business rates.

Early years and high needs were overspent while the schools block was underspent by £874k. The overspend in Early Years was partially due to the mismatch in the payments made during the year for which Early Years Grant was not received until the following financial year. DA would bring to the next meeting a breakdown of the high needs overspend.

The underspend in pupil growth was due to the late start of the anticipated bulges and expansions in pupil numbers. The School Partnership budget had underspent and had been reduced for 2016-17. It was noted that a payment had been missed for the public private partnership applied for three schools for energy conservation work; these arrangements were ending in about two years’ time. The budget for termination of employment costs was not spent and was no longer included in the 2016-17 budget. There was a slight overspend on the School Admissions budget. From the de-delegated budgets there had been a missed payment on the trade union facility time budget and an underspend in the budget to support schools in financial difficulty which would be needed in 2016-17.

Carry-overs requested for 2016-17 were for the continuation of the vulnerable two year olds project, the residual costs of the case officers and assistant educational psychologists for EHCPs, funding to support Additional Resource Provision and residual costs of the professionals’ portal.

DA would take back that several schools were still writing their own EHCPs. JW felt it was frustrating that early years/SEND staff were undertaking the work of the Council re SEND. The early years service received no financial help for SEND children and an hourly rate had to be funded that was less than the maintained sector.

SI suggested that Carline Penfold could meet with the forum. Early years was a national issue and the points re funding needed to be forcefully made to Government. JW felt it was important to transition a SEND child to the primary sector with the right funding so that the child did not struggle in school. KC added that she would no longer allow her SEND staff to do the paperwork for EHC Plans as there were Council officers for this.

SL explained that he had not yet had any support for a business case for ASD facilities at Hall Mead. A similar situation existed at Redden Court. Hall Mead was expecting an additional four statemented children from September but had not received the required funding as yet and hence did not have the infrastructure for this. SI would contact SL and Redden Court direct regarding these issues. There was a need for a process and system to be established between schools and asset management. A carry forward of £521k had been requested from the previous year's projects. Two other schools had come forward to take part in the behavioural pilot although no schools had come forward as yet for the higher level of the step-up model. .

The requested carry forward was **AGREED** by the Forum but more assurance and details of expenditure were requested. Also **AGREED** by the Forum were the use of carry forwards for payments due in 2016-17 as shown in table 6.2 of the report and the roll forward of de-delegated budgets as shown in table 6.3.

DA would bring a report to the next meeting on schools unable to set a balanced budget and it was noted that increased pension and National Insurance contributions had led to a deficit for some schools. One option for schools to make savings could be to federate with another school in order to share costs.

It was hoped that a revised allocation of the DSG from 2017/18 would result in a better allocation for Havering. DA would also report to the next meeting on schools with large carry overs

## 171 **SECTION 251 BUDGET STATEMENT 2016-17**

DA explained that the Council was required to publish the annual statement of planned expenditure on Children's Services (including schools) on its website. The majority (£176 million) of the overall budget went to individual schools, including academies and early years providers. De-delegated amounts from maintained schools were also listed. The largest of these related to insurance. High needs funding included top-up funding for both

maintained schools and Academies. All these budgets areas were funded by the Direct Schools Grant (DSG).

Non-DSG expenditure was funded by the Council and the Education Services Grant. This grant was expected to end in 2018/19. These areas included £1.1m for statutory services, and also for school improvement, education welfare and asset management. Central expenditure also included £662k for the educational psychology service and £2.2m for SEN transport.

The statement also showed planned expenditure on Children's Social Care as follows: Looked After Children and associated costs,£14 million; social work and child protection areas,£11 million. The overall budget for education services was £205 million and with the inclusion of children's social services, this increased to £241 million.

The capital expenditure figure of £43 million covered planned maintenance, early needs and devolved capital.

DA would clarify the position on how much of the early years pupil premium allocation was utilised.

The Forum **RECEIVED** the Section 251 budget statements.

## 172 **DFE FUNDING REFORMS - CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

DA explained that this was the first stage of a two-stage consultation and draft responses had been circulated previously. The Forum **NOTED** the responses to the consultation that had been submitted on its behalf. The Chairman recorded thanks to DA for his work on the responses.

## 173 **DFE CHILDCARE CONSULTATION**

The Forum noted that the Government was looking to review hourly funding rates for childcare and wished to improve the overall quality of childcare.

It was proposed that there would be an extension of childcare up to 30 hours per week for 'working families' and that this term was now clearly defined. It would be the responsibility of parents to self-declare that they would meet thresholds. If a parent lost their job, childcare would be funded to allow it to continue for a grace period of half a term.

It was proposed that childcare would be offered from 6 am to 8 pm but there remained a maximum of 10 funded hours per day. It was also proposed to enhance SEN provision on a case by case basis.

These changes would mean new responsibilities for the Local Authority but the process would be streamlined. Parents would need to be made aware of the revised offer through both on-line and off-line channels.

JW pointed out that Havering only received £3.56 of an £4.12 average hourly rate and that it was important to invest in early years. There were current concerns about both the quality and staffing of early years provision with fewer students entering the sector.

NE added that he felt that schools were educators rather than nursery care providers and that the nursery at his school could not continue to be subsidised. JW felt that that any response to the consultation should reflect concerns that it was unclear what the 30 hour model of childcare would look like.

It was felt that rates may have to be raised by £1.50 - £2 per hour in order to meet the new national average. DA confirmed that the Council funded an hourly rate but received one of the lowest allocations in London to do this.

It was **AGREED** that JW would meet with TC and the Early Years Reference Group on 10 May in order to agree a response. Providers were also encouraged to report separately and TC would share responses submitted by the Local Authority.

#### 174 **SCHOOL KITCHEN EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE**

Following the raising of the matter at the previous meeting of the Forum, DA explained the rationale for school kitchen equipment being the responsibility of schools. Reference was made back to the Section 251 statement and it could be seen that that there was no budget line to record kitchen maintenance. Also, the Education Funding Agency had confirmed that this funding was delegated to schools. NE and others stated that they had not had any notification of this policy.

DB responded that Havering Catering Services had previously been expected to meet the costs of repairs that were not its responsibility such as the repair of fences and pavements in schools and this also extended to the repair of kitchen equipment. Catering Services was running a deficit and, while this was reducing, expenditure on kitchen equipment could not be justified.

DB had met with heads and school business managers and offered 0.7% of income or £500 to schools to go towards maintenance costs. While some money was available to modernise school kitchens initially, it was agreed that kitchen equipment was heavily used and expensive. DB wished to reach an amicable agreement on these issues.

Academies had found it difficult to find an alternative provider of kitchen equipment and DB was pleased that extensions, with a clear Service Level

Agreement, had been agreed with schools such as Frances Bardsley and Hall Mead. DB felt that Catering Services' offer was competitive compared to other organisations.

An asset register had been sent to all schools and DB would arrange for this to be resent. In cases where two schools shared a kitchen, the school with the kitchen would receive 0.7% of income or £750, whichever is the greater and schools with just a server would receive up to £250. Any costs above this would need to be agreed between the two schools. Health and safety issues would normally be the responsibility of the catering company.

Members of the Forum felt that the service offered by Catering Services was very good but that it was important to achieve best value. NE felt that there had been an issue of communication in making schools aware that catering equipment was now their responsibility and felt that this change would not be cost neutral to schools.

175 **RAVENSBOURNE SCHOOL**

It was noted that Ravensbourne School became an academy on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 as part of the Hornbeam Academy Trust.

176 **NEXT MEETING**

It was **AGREED** that the next meeting would be held on Thursday 7 July at 8.30 am at CEME.

177 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business raised.

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**Chairman**