

SCHOOLS' FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held at 4.30 pm on 24 January 2013

Present:

Andrew Downes (Chairman)	Secondary Academy Governor
Geoff Boyd	Primary Maintained Governor
Angela Chapman	Primary Maintained Governor
Nick Cross	Secondary Academy Head Teacher
Patrick Foley	Primary Maintained School Head Teacher
Karen Raven	Secondary Academy Head Teacher
Alison Regester	Non-School Representative (Early Years)
David Wilcox	Secondary Academy Governor
Aydin Önaç	Secondary Maintained Head Teacher

Also Present:

Lynn Barrett	14-19 partnership
David Bradshaw	Head of Education and Care Services Finance
Dr Tessa Moore	Education and Care Services
Amanda Russell	Head of Schools Finance Support
Helen Long	Democratic Services Officer

27 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from; Councillor Pauline Tunnicliffe, David Bridger, Keith Seed, Anna Boshier, Neil Proudfoot and Sam Parrett, Lynn Barrett attended as her alternate.

28 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

29 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13th December 2012

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13th December 2012 were agreed subject to the following amendments:

Minute 22: under matters arising, 1st bullet point, remove the second sentence. 2nd bullet point, change "officers did not understand the request so had responded asking for clarity" to "Officers had requested clarity".

Matters Arising -

The Forum asked what the current position was on PFI's. Don King reported that if a PFI was needed it would be top sliced but it needed to be considered carefully; the practicalities of commissioning a PFI. Each PFI would need to be signed off by ministers. The Chairman added that the Forum would want to know before any decision was made so that they would be able to make representations.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the 13th December 2012 be agreed subject to the minutes subject to the amendments outlined above.

30 2013/14 Dedicated Schools Grant

Officers presented a report giving details of the indicative allocation for the 2013/14 Dedicated Schools Grant and an outline of how this funding would be allocated and expended across the High Needs, Early Years and Schools Blocks.

The Dedicated Schools Grant allocation for 2013/14 had now been notified to the LA as a total sum of £228,331,776.; allocated in three blocks which had been agreed by the LA as follows:

Schools Block	£167,903,853
Early Year Block	£14,560,243
High Needs Block	£45,867,680

Funding for 2012/13 was £220,809,000 but had increased for 2013/14 due, not only to increased pupil numbers, but also to additional funding which was now being included in the DSG. However, this additional funding also brings with it additional expenditure that is now included in the DSG.

At the request of the Chairman, Officers circulated examples of how the calculations would work.

Members asked for clarification on a number of points:

- Officers circulated a sheet to members showing how the calculation of the MFG works for individual schools (copy attached). Following questions, officers explained how the budget class funding allocated in 2012/13 was excluded from the calculation as it to be allocated outside of the funding formula in 2013/14.
- DfE had highlighted the issue that the Bromley Primary AWPU funding level is low in comparison to other LAs. Officers clarified that this was due to the fact that funding had been moved out of AWPU in the Primary sector to support the lump sum and the higher levels of funding for the supplements for EAL, deprivation and attainment. It was also confirmed that the Secondary AWPU was in line with other LAs. Officers also reported that the response to DfE also highlighted the issue that Bromley's DSG was low in comparison to other LAs therefore it was due to this in part that our funding is low.

- Officers had asked DfE to provide evidence of other LAs funding but DfE were unable to provide this. Officers will endeavour to find supporting evidence on the DfE website in terms of overall DSG allocations. Forum members commented that it may have been helpful to have had more information about the rationale for this included in the report as without this the information could be seen as misleading. Officers confirmed that this information had been discussed in detail with the Chair and Vice Chair and had been included in the report at the specific request of DfE.
- One Forum Member asked if it was possible to move funding from another funding block to address the low primary AWPU level. Officers explained that this was possible as the blocks are not ringfenced however it would not actually provide any additional funding to individual schools due to the impact of the MFG
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- Officers reported that the authority had been invited to meet with the DfE on 13th February, the purpose of which was to share information on the issues faced by the Local Authority in moving forward with the funding formula. Officers would attend but wanted some representatives from the schools to attend. The Chairman would attend and it was suggested that Patrick Foley and Keith Seed also attend.
- Forum members were told that in previous years schools had been provided with an indicative budget based on the MFG at February half term with full and final budgets being issued at the end of March. As the date for issuing final budgets has now been brought forward to the middle of March it was agreed that no indicative figures would be issued as they could be misleading to schools, and that schools would wait for the full information to be released in March.
- Concerns were raised at the decrease in pupil numbers in the secondary sector which had an impact on individual schools MFG. Karen Raven commented that this was particularly affecting schools in the east of the borough. Don King advised that the EFA was aiming to get the detailed allocations to academies by mid to late February for next September's allocation. That would give schools ample time to query or raise questions about the allocation.
- The Forum suggested that a circular outlining the above should be sent to all Head teachers.
- It was also agreed that an officer would produce a glossary of terms for all Schools Forum Members.

RESOLVED that the allocations are noted, specifically relating to the funding rates for the schools funding formula.

31 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Officers circulated an information sheet from Charles Obazuaye on the local terms and conditions affecting maintained schools. It did not affect academies who could set their own terms and conditions. If staff wanted more information they were encouraged to contact their unions.

32 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

As the date of the January meeting had been delayed by 2 weeks it was agreed that the February meeting should be cancelled and a new date of 7th March was set. The meeting scheduled for 14th March was therefore cancelled.

It was noted that the EDC was closing at the end of March so an alternative venue would need to be used for meetings in April onwards.

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 7th March 2013 4.30pm at the EDC.

The Meeting ended at 6.15 pm

Chairman