

**Schools Forum
18 September 2013**

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Agenda – 55th Schools Forum

Wednesday – 18th September 2013 at 6.00 – 8.00 p.m.

**Venue: The Village School
Grove Park
Kingsbury NW9 0JY**

(Refreshments from 5.30 p.m.)

AGENDA


Items:

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Minutes of the Meeting of 19th June 2013
3. Low Carbon Schools Programme Closing Report Emily Ashton
- 4 School Funding Reforms – 2014/15 Update Sara Williams
- 5 Budget Review of Admissions and Pupil support Margaret Read
- 6 AOB

Next Meetings

Wednesday 23rd October 2013
Wednesday 4th December 2013
Wednesday 15th January 2014
Wednesday 26th February 2014

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 Brent	<p>SCHOOLS FORUM 18 September 2013</p> <p>Policy and Performance (Environment and Neighbourhoods) & Property and Asset Management (Regeneration & Major Projects)</p>
For Information	WARDS affected: ALL
<p align="center">Low Carbon Schools Programme Closing Report</p>	

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out for the Schools' Forum, the success of the Low Carbon Schools programme against the three specific energy reduction targets for the project group's tiers agreed by the schools' forum in February 2012.
- 1.2 The report also includes an outline of project delivery, barriers to action, lessons learnt and future school support.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The project's primary goal was to encourage schools to manage their energy usage effectively in order to reduce energy bills and the liability arising from the CRC energy efficiency scheme. In 2011/12 Schools account for 76% of the council's CRC reporting. On this premise both the Council and School Forum agreed in February 2012 that a project should be put in place to reduce ever increasing energy costs and mitigate against future rises in CRC costs. Based on research carried out through a Brent Council and Carbon Trust pilot project, the Forum agreed to top slice top from the Schools' Budget for one year. The money allowed for the creation of two full time posts, one as a Schools' Energy Advisor - Technical Specialist and a second as an Energy Advisor – Behaviour Change and Curriculum.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 The Brent Low Carbon Schools Project commenced in April 2012. All schools were eligible to receive support and advice from the project team however at varying different levels due to resource constraints. The support packages are delineated into three distinct tiers, 'New Intake', 'Existing partners' and 'Entry level'.

3.2 The support packages had the following targets;

Low Carbon Schools groups	2012/13 Target - kWh % reduction per annum
New Intake (full programme -technical and behaviour change)	14%
Existing partners (Light touch approach)	3%
Entry level (Pre service support)	2%

3.3 **'New intake'** schools are thirteen schools identified to receive the full level of support available. These thirteen schools were selected on highest CO₂ emitters per metre squared as requested by the Schools' Forum.

3.3.1 These schools were able to draw extensively upon the expertise and experience of the two officers responsible for project delivery, the Schools' Behaviour Change Officer who started on the project in April 2012 and the Schools' Technical Officer who started in September 2012.

3.3.2 To increase awareness and participation in energy saving opportunities amongst the thirteen schools and across the school community, stakeholders were engaged through a wide variety of channels. This involved working with student and staff energy teams to develop cross-school strategies and plans that deliver carbon reductions through addressing occupants' relationship with energy and encouraging them to make small changes to their behaviour.

3.3.3 Teaching staff were encouraged to explore opportunities to integrate related topics including climate change into lesson plans and schemes of work through curriculum support offered by members of the project team. A workshop was held for staff to explore this in detail and learn from examples of best practice. In addition themed, interactive assemblies and auditing workshops directed at pupils are available to each participating school, delivered by the Schools' Behavioural Change Officer. All schools were offered Energy Spy case which contains energy auditing equipment for staff and pupils to use to monitor energy usage and/or as an educational aid.

3.3.4 A new Low Carbon Schools website was launched in September 2012 which hosts downloadable resources and a comments blog for teachers and school administrators. An additional function enables manual meter readings to be uploaded by schools to aid the monitoring of their consumption rates. This website was available to all of the borough's schools through the schools extranet, however the thirteen schools who receive bespoke advice had password protected areas.

3.3.5 The Technical Officer conducted regular visits to 'New intake' participating schools to identify potential system or structural upgrades that will generate energy savings. The officer also sought to advise upon the provision of building services that matches need and occupancy patterns in each building. When eligible, Salix interest-free loans (available to schools through the council to target energy efficiency projects and paid back through savings from energy bills) have been offered to enable improvements to be financed. Some schools however, have opted to use their own finances and the Technical Officer has visited individual school boards to outline the invest-to-save case. In early October the Technical Officer ran a training workshop for caretakers, addressing the programming and management of HVAC (heating, ventilation & air conditioning) plant and the reviewing of maintenance contracts. Eight of the thirteen schools attended along with other schools the Technical Officer had also been in contact with.

3.3.6 For further information on individual schools progress, refer to **appendix A** for a summary.

3.4 '**Existing partner**' schools were the ten schools, which had previously taken part in the CLCSS and were provided with a comprehensive support service to help consolidate their previous efforts. These schools also had access to a bespoke, password protected '**Existing partner**' schools areas on the Low Carbon Schools webpage and could contact the Schools' Behaviour Change Officer and Schools' Technical Officer with queries. The 'Existing partner' schools also had access to Salix finance and a visit from the Technical Officer if they request, however the thirteen 'New Intake' schools are being prioritised for Salix finance as 'Existing partner' schools had priority access to the fund during the pilot.

3.4.1 Staff from these existing partner schools were used to support the New Intake schools through providing information at workshops and contributing to the initial Low Carbon Schools film which can be found on the schools' website.

3.5 All other borough schools were classed as '**Entry level**' and were able to access open areas of the Low Carbon Schools website. However use of the project team's more extensive range of services such as detailed notes which accompany one to one support was restricted. One school that was not in the 'New intake' or 'Exiting schools' categories approached the Schools' Behaviour Change Officer having seen details on the Low Carbon Schools website. If an 'entry level' school approaches the Technical Officer for Salix finance, the school was not refused. Towards the end of the project left over Salix finance was offered to all schools that had yet to take advantage of the finance.

4.0 Results

4.1 At the end of the 2012/13 '**New intake**' schools results from meter reading information provided by individual schools were analyses. These results demonstrated that the programme was on target to meet its 14% energy reduction and CO₂ and cost equivalents. However before this data could be published additional checks were needed to ensure the results correlated with annual data collected as part of the CRC data collection process.

4.1.2 There was a significant discrepancy between meter reading data provided by the school and overall annual data collected for CRC reporting through supplier statements. Further analysis between the two sets of data highlighted a problem with data collected by the schools through meter readings. It was concluded that the accuracy of the meter read data was unreliable and therefore the data provided through CRC reporting should be taken in determining the project's success against its energy targets. The CRC data set demonstrated a 5% reduction in energy for the 'LCS new intake' schools, a 0.3% reduction in CO₂ and a 1% reduction in energy bills (is due to 3% increase in all three fuel prices over the course of the project i.e. 2011/12 to 2012/13).

4.2 At the end of 2012/13 '**Existing partner**' schools results from CRC supplier statement data were analysed and showed that the programme met it's of a 3% energy reduction and CO₂ and cost equivalent targets. In fact, '**Existing partner**' schools bet the target and reduced their energy (kWhs) by a massive 17%, which equates to an 11% reduction in CO₂ and a theoretical energy bill cost reduction of almost £62k (11.5%) on the previous year. This significant reduction during 2012/13 indicates that '**Existing partner**' schools only felt the impact of the pilot behaviour change and technical programme in year following full implementation. This observation would be logical as schools who installed energy saving technologies would have only done so mid way through or at the end of the pilot so energy reductions and financial saving from them would not have been felt until the following year. The same could be said about embedding a 'whole schools approach' to energy saving behaviour.

4.3 With new evidence from the '**Existing partner**' schools to when optimum savings are achieved, it is felt that the data presented for 2012/13 '**New intake**' is an unfair representation of the progress within the schools. For this reason additional analysis has been done on savings achieved from both '**New intake**' and '**Existing partner**' during 2012/13 based on previous years data and is presented below.

4.3.1 'New intake' and 'Existing partner' during 2012/13

	2012/13 kWh (DD adjusted)	2012/13 CO ₂ (DD adjusted)	2012/13 Theoretical Cost in % (DD adjusted)	2012/13 Theoretical Cost in £ (DD adjusted)
New Intake and Existing Partner Schools (23 schools in total*)	-10%	-5%	-6%	-£67,988

*2011/12 baseline

4.4 At the end of 2012/13 '**Entry level**' Low Carbon Schools programme results from CRC supplier statement data were analysed and showed that the programme was on target and met its 2% energy reduction and its CO₂ and cost equivalent

targets. In fact the entry level schools reduced their energy consumption by 10% on the previous year which equates to a 6% reduction in CO₂ and a £112k (5.5%) reduction in energy bills.

4.5 Results against targets

	2012/13 Target - kWh % reduction per annum	2012/13 Actual kWh % reduction per annum	2012/13 Actual kWh % reduction per annum (New suggested combined results for New Intake and Existing partner schools)
Low Carbon Schools groups			
New Intake (full programme -technical and behaviour change)	-14%	-0.3%	-10%
Existing partners (Light touch approach)	- 3%	-17%	
Entry level (Pre service support)	-2%	-10%	

4.6 Overall during 2012/13 all borough schools have collectively reduced their energy by 10%, their CO₂ emissions by 5.5% and saved approximately £180k (5.5% reduction) on their energy bills compared with the previous year.

4.7 Due to changes in the reporting of the CRC a direct comparison between 2011/12 and 2012/13 tax cannot be made.

5.0 The future of the Low Carbon Schools programme

5.1 Due to a change of rule by Central Government, Local Authorities will no longer be able to top slice and hold funds from the schools' budget making it difficult to collectively fund the Low Carbon School project in future years.

5.2 If funding could be found to continue the project, the Council currently does not have the capacity to manage and monitor such a project on this scale at this present time. There may be capacity to provide bespoke ad hoc behaviour change and technical support; however this would require the school paying for a traded service. Schools would also have to demonstrate full commitment to implementing any projects.

5.3 Due to the time it takes to implement the project in a school, in particular the technical aspect, any future programme success should be measured over a two year period as a minimum.

6.0 Barriers to Action

6.1 In some cases there was a lack of commitment on the part of the schools to fully implement a 'Whole School Approach' to energy reduction among all members of the schools community. While initial support may have been offered by some members of a school's community, often the school's senior management, it usually falls upon others to ensure it is implemented. Problems arose when individual members of staff who were implementing the projects did not have the necessary support from senior management to drive change. Despite Council

officers efforts to address this issue, senior management often had more pressing priorities which lead to school staff implementing the project becoming despondent.

6.2 Schools were asked to submit regular, monthly readings; however a proportion of schools did not adequately meet this obligation, resulting in infrequent or unreliable data being submitted. Reasons for this include;

- Accessibility of meters – meters often located in hard to reach or restricted areas
- Motivation or support affecting accuracy and/or frequency – the schools project coordinator often delegated this task to caretakers and facilities managers who were not fully bought into the programme.
- Lack of Accountability - When meter readings have not been taken as requested there appears to be little holding to account of the person whose responsibility this oversight has been.
- Poor internal communication – in some schools it was unclear who has 'ownership' of the task to accumulate manual meter reads.
- Complicated meters and lack of training – there are a verity of new types meters and most caretakers and facilities managers are largely unaware of which types of meters were installed. It is understandable for them to be reluctant to approach these complicated meters and a fear of "mucking them up by pressing the wrong button" was frequently expressed to project officers despite support from council officers.

6.3 Due to internal matters there was a delay in employing the Schools' Technical Officer, which means the post was vacant for the first five months of the project. The schools forum agreed in December 2012 to allow for this underspend to continue beyond the project Closes until August 2013.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Close the project in its current form and ask schools to approach the Council if they would like any further tailor made support, either behavioural change technical or both, on a traded service basis.

7.2 If a programme similar to the Low Carbon Schools Programme is to be rolled out to Brent schools again, the above areas will need to be addressed and full school support given to the project.

7.3 In a one years' time revisit all schools energy and CO₂ reduction progress, in particular the progress of the 'New Intake' schools.

7.4 If the Schools Forum raises concerns with schools energy and CO₂ reduction progress after one year, the forum will consider corrective action such as ways of funding schools support.

- 7.5 Continue to host the Brent Council Low Carbon Schools webpage for all schools to have access to the entry level service.
- 7.6 Offer a Caretaker training service/workshop on an individual school payment basis.

8.0 SUMMARY

- 8.1 The project overall achievement can be demonstrated despite varying levels of success in meeting specific group targets. The fact that during 2012/13 the 'New intake' and 'Existing partner' achieved a 10% reduction in energy, a 5% reduction in CO₂ a theoretical 6% reduction in cost should be seen as the significant achievement.
- 8.2 The Low Carbon Schools project, at all levels has received positive feedback from the majority of schools that participated. Schools have an interest in saving energy and reducing CO₂ emissions in order to save money. The project has also allowed schools to set an example to their staff and pupils by drawing upon saving energy and climate change mitigation best practice identified.
- 8.3 The extensive support offered by the Council has been invaluable to these schools who, constrained by resource and time pressures, would ordinarily be unable to prioritise this issue fully. However in the future for the benefits of the project to be fully achieved, a total 'whole schools' approach in all participating schools is needed.

9.0 CONTACT OFFICERS

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Environmental Projects and Policy Officer (Policy and Performance –
Environment and Neighbourhood services)

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Energy Manager (Property and Asset Management - Regeneration & Major
Projects)

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Appendix A

Summary of progress within individual schools

This section provides a brief overview of every school that formally participated in the Low Carbon Schools programme. The most important actions taken by each school to reduce their energy consumption and engage their school community are outlined.

1. School: **Sudbury Primary School**

Number of students: **820 pupils**

A very large primary Academy school taking students aged 3-11 years old. The original school is a two story solid-brick building that has undergone a number of extensions since the school was founded. It is installed with a gas-fired central heating system. The school has added a major two story extension in 2011 containing sustainable features including grass roofing, photovoltaic panels, a sun catcher which converts solar thermal energy into electricity and a wind catcher to provide natural ventilation.

Engagement Activities

The school has

- Nominated an eco-coordinator and sent them to the LCS' Energy Matters workshop
- Established a monitoring program called the 'e team' in which two students from each class, around 50 students in total, check recycling, energy usage and temperatures of classrooms at lunch time and report back. Teachers from underperforming classrooms were initially named and shamed at staff meetings. As a result noticeable improvements have been observed such as a significant reduction in the number of lights left on during lunch and break times.
- Received and used an Energy Spy toolkit
- The 'e team' in the future will make wider use of digital thermometers to reduce the levels of overheating occurring in classrooms.
- Delivered a school topic called 'Being Green'. Subjects such as climate change and energy conservation have been explored in a number of ways across the school.
- A further sustainability measure inspired by the school's participation in the LCS programme has been the establishment of a kitchen garden and nature area to encourage biodiversity.

Technical Assistance & Improvements

The school has

- Sent a site manager to a training day provided by the LCS programme.

- Received a site visit, conducted by the council's technical officer who made adjustments to HVAC programming.
- Received a report highlighting recommended capital investment opportunities for the original, less efficient buildings.

2. School: **Brentfield**

Number of Students: **535 pupils**

This is a larger than average inner city primary school, serving a culturally diverse community, taking students aged 3-11 years old.

The original single story building is 50-60 years old, undertaking periodic expansions up until the present day and is heated by a gas-fired system. Recently a 2 storey extension has been built onto the existing school incorporating new classrooms, toilets, storage rooms, school hall, kitchen and associated plant, and some roof-mounted photovoltaic panels.

Engagement Activities

The school has:

- Nominated an eco-coordinator, who has taken a very active role in the LCS initiative.
- Appointed eight students as eco-warriors to ensure energy efficiency measures are implemented. Students had to undergo a formal interview process to apply for the role. Eco Warriors monitor the school at break times and after school to make sure energy waste is avoided. Eco Warriors featured in a video for the Low Carbon School programme which has been used extensively to promote understanding of the service.
- Achieved recognition of their efforts through receipt of a Silver Eco Schools Award in January 2013. This was partially through the encouragement and advice from LCS Officers.
- Received and used an Energy Spy toolkit
- Held a special assembly delivered by the Council's Behavioural Change Energy Officer.

Technical Assistance & Improvements

The school has

- Received a site visit, conducted by the council's technical officer who made adjustments to HVAC programming.
- Agreed to pilot an innovative TSB passive cooling system which will be installed in the summer of 2013. This will be fitted into three classrooms and is funded with Central Government money that will also pay for additional measures such as natural ventilation grills, lighting upgrades and valve wraps.
- The school is in the process of replacing its current air-conditioning system in its IT suite and is being assisted in identifying an appropriate energy efficient upgrade.

- Explored the possibility of installing solar film to existing windows and light sensor controls.
- Has reviewed its current maintenance contracts to ensure that it is getting the best value for money combined with a guaranteed quality of service. It is hoped that this will ensure the longevity and efficiency of existing HVAC systems.
- Sent its site manager to attend a training day provided by the LCS programme.

3&4. School: **Mount Stewart Infant and Junior Schools**

Number of Students: **643 pupils**

The site at Carlisle Gardens, Kenton contains two separately managed schools - an Infants and a Juniors. The schools share many of their building services; in particular gas and electricity supplies for which both schools share a meter for each.

The two schools were treated as different entities by project officers who worked with different points of contact within each school when supporting behavioural change initiatives and offering technical support. However the shared meters prevented separate monitoring of each schools' energy consumption. Observed changes to consumption patterns were therefore attributed to both schools collectively.

Engagement Activities

Both schools have:

- Nominated staff eco-coordinators, who have taken a active role in the LCS initiative.
- Received and used an Energy Spy toolkit

Mount Stewart Infants has:

- Set up a team of Eco Warriors who check twice a week that lights and heating in every room are switched off after school finishes. They also check for leaking taps and that that the doors to the outside are closed in order to retain heat. 'Thumbs down' cards are left in underperforming classes and are 'named-and-shamed' in assembly.
- Received a visit from the Schools Behavioural Change Officer who went into classrooms to talk to students about the importance of energy conservation.
- Rewards the best performing class with a certificate each month.
- Looked beyond energy conservation to other sustainability issues; initiating paper recycling and composting of fruit waste for which each class is responsible for.
- Efforts have also been made to integrate energy efficiency and conservation into the Year 2 Electricity topic.

Mount Stewart Juniors has:

- Set up a team of student champions to check shutdowns are completed and wasteful behaviour is reduced.
- Sent its eco-coordinator to the LCS' Energy Matters workshop

- Conducted a review of the school curriculum; identifying opportunities for integration of related themes into classroom content.
- Run design competitions for awareness posters and for the LCS Service's new logo.
- held a special assembly run by the Schools Behavioural Change Officer

Technical Assistance & Improvements

The schools have:

- Sent site managers to attend a training day provided by the LCS programme
- Not engaged closely with the School Technical Energy Officer and a comprehensive site review has not been conducted, preventing the compilation of a report with specific recommendations.

5. School: Byron Court

Number of Students: **592 pupils**

This is a larger than average primary school, serving a culturally diverse community, taking students aged 3-11 years old. The main school building was built in 1932 in the Arts and Crafts style. The building has since improved the thermal properties of the building by adding features such as a draft lobby in reception and double glazing throughout, however the building has not undergone significant modification since construction.

Engagement Activities

The school has:

- Nominated a staff eco-coordinator, who has taken an active role in the LCS initiative.
- Received and used an Energy Spy toolkit
- Sent its eco-coordinator to the LCS' Energy Matters workshop
- Set up of an Eco council which holds regular meetings for thirty eco warriors picked from across the two key stages. Eco warriors are responsible for saving energy across the school and reducing waste by recycling. Eco warriors are required to remind staff to switch off lights and interactive whiteboards across the school.
- Run a design competition for an eco code poster to raise greater awareness among pupils and staff.
- Taken part in Switch off Fortnight in November 2012.
- Sought to integrate energy and climate change issues more fully into the school curriculum through PSHE topics.
- Held a week, celebrating Byron Court Eco School. This involved assemblies and other activities with a sustainability theme.

- Held an assembly delivered to the school by the School Behavioural Change Officer.
- Plans to repeat many of the actions it has taken this year in order to maintain interest and active participation in energy savings in the future. Assemblies on energy issues will be held for all year groups and the poster competition will be repeated. The school is also keen to hold its own Eco Week event again and to participate in Switch off Fortnight 2013.

Technical Assistance & Improvements

The school has:

- Applied for £25,000 of Salix funding to fund report recommendations including upgrades to LED lighting, installation of valve insulation, and other energy saving measures. These measures were identified by the council's technical officer.
- Agreed to have new boilers installed through funding from the Council's Property & Asset Management capital projects budget.
- Sent a site manager to attend a training day provided by the LCS programme

6. School: Furness Primary School

Number of Students: **557 pupils**

This is a larger than average inner city primary school, serving a culturally diverse community, taking students aged 3-11 years old.

Engagement Activities

This school has:

- Nominated a staff eco-coordinator, who has taken an active role in the LCS initiative.
- Received and used an Energy Spy toolkit
- Sent its eco-coordinator to the LCS' Energy Matters workshop
- Set up of an Eco council.
- Held an assembly delivered to the school by the School Behavioural Change Officer.
- Appointed two eco-warriors in every class to ensure energy efficiency measures are implemented. The top year group also has five Eco Spies who adjudicate in a monthly competition awarded to the class displaying the most eco-friendly behaviour. Each winning class is awarded a certificate to display and a box of chocolates. Staff have been encouraged to support students' efforts and to actively participate in the monthly competition themselves –encouraging a friendly rivalry between teachers.

- Involved students in an energy saving themed colouring-in competition and in designing awareness-raising posters.
- Planned to participate in a school-wide celebration of Earth Day with every year group participating in cross curricular activities focusing on energy saving and climate change.
- Plans to hold a sustainability-themed trip for the eco warriors and spies to reward them for their involvement and to encourage their interests further.

Technical Assistance & Improvements

The school has:

- Received a site visit, conducted by the council's technical officer who made adjustments to HVAC programming.
- Received a report highlighting capital investment opportunities to improve building performance. Lighting upgrades, more efficient boiler controls & valve insulation, building insulation were identified as measures that would be eligible for Salix funding. To date the school has not yet committed to implementing any of these projects.
- The school site manager attended a training day provided by the LCS programme.

7. School: Wykeham Primary School

Number of Students: **524 pupils**

A larger than average inner city primary school, serving a culturally diverse community, taking students aged 3-11 years old. The school largely remains contained within the original solid brick, two story building it has occupied since 1930. A heated, indoor pool is located onsite and is used regularly by students and community groups.

Engagement Activities

The school has:

- Had been initially slow to engage in the programme due lack of enthusiastic staff
- Held two workshops for Year 3 students run by the programme's behavioural change officer. These workshops focussed upon energy efficiency and the use of the Energy Spy toolkits to identify opportunities within the classroom.
- Has tried to raise awareness of energy conservation through the use of poster, stickers and discussions in staff briefings and assemblies.

Technical Assistance & Improvements

The school has:

- Received a site visit, conducted by the council's technical officer who made adjustments to HVAC programming.
- Received a report highlighting capital investment opportunities to improve building performance. Lighting upgrades, more efficient boiler controls & valve insulation, building insulation were identified as measures that would be eligible for Salix funding. To date the school has not yet committed to implementing any of these projects.
- Received help in review maintenance contracts. A new contractor providing a higher guaranteed quality of service is being sought - extending the longevity and efficiency of existing HVAC systems.

8. School: **North West London Jewish Day School**

Number of students: **279 pupils**

A voluntary-aided state primary school taking Jewish students aged 3-11 years old. The school occupies a late-1950s solid brick building; with heating throughout provided via a gas-fired boiler system. Large volumes of electric air-conditioning have recently been installed across the site – substantially adding to fuel consumption. A heated, indoor pool is located onsite and is used regularly by students and community groups.

Engagement Activities

The school has:

- Been slow to engage in the programme as a whole. Some office-based champions have raised awareness amongst staff in teacher briefings as to the importance of saving energy and suggested actions for implementation.
- Put up posters and stickers across the school
- Done little to engage students; there has been no uptake of the services offered by the behavioural change officer.

Technical Assistance & Improvements

The school has:

- Received a site visit, conducted by the council's technical officer who made adjustments to HVAC programming.
- Received a report highlighting capital investment opportunities to improve building performance. Measures were identified that would be eligible for Salix funding due to the short payback periods. These include installation of a swimming pool cover, insulation, lighting upgrades and installation of more efficient burner controls to existing heating systems.

- Expressed some interest in replacing older, inefficient air-conditioning systems and installing photovoltaic panels.
- Yet to commit to implementing any of these projects.

9. School name: **Islamia**

Number of students: **389 pupils**

A voluntary-aided state primary school taking Muslim students aged 3-11 years old. The school occupies a late-Victorian solid brick building; with heating throughout provided via a gas-fired boiler system. The school site is shared with the privately-run Islamia Girls Secondary School. The two schools share most of their build services and are jointly metered for gas and electricity. Both schools currently wish to expand their admissions, but are constrained by the size of the site and planning restrictions. The primary school is in the process of identifying new premises offsite.

Engagement Activities

The school has:

- Held a special assembly attended by every student and member of staff in which the behavioural change officer officially launched the school's involvement in the programme.
- Office-based champions who raise awareness amongst staff in teacher briefings as to the importance of saving energy and suggested actions for implementation.
- Put up posters and stickers across the school to reinforce the energy saving message.
- Appointed student energy monitors to ensure that lighting and ICT is switched off in rooms that are left unoccupied during lunches and breaks.

Technical Assistance & Improvements

The school has:

- Received a site visit, conducted by the council's technical officer who made adjustments to HVAC programming.
- Received a report highlighting capital investment opportunities to improve building performance. Due to uncertainty concerning the future use of the school site, implementation of any of these measures by the primary school is unlikely at present.
- Sent its school site manager to a training day provided by the LCS programme.

10. School name: **Kingsbury Green Primary**

Number of students: **634 pupils**

A larger than average primary school serving a culturally diverse community, taking students aged 3-11 years old. The school consists of a range of buildings dating back since the early twentieth century until the present day; with heating throughout provided via a gas-fired boiler system.

Engagement Activities

The school has:

- Been slow to engage with the behavioural change officer; there has been no uptake of the services offered to them. It is unclear whether staff have implemented any measures to promote awareness of energy efficiency and conservation.

Technical Assistance & Improvements

The school has:

- Received a site visit, conducted by the council's technical officer who made adjustments to HVAC programming.
- Applied for £35,000 of Salix funding to fund report recommendations including upgrades to LED lighting, installation of valve insulation, and other energy saving measures.
- Begun exploring the possibility of installing solar PV panels on its roof which it would finance itself.
- Sent a site manager to attend a training day provided by the LCS programme

11. School name: Newman Catholic College

Number of students: **517 pupils**

A smaller than average boys-only secondary school built in the late 1950s which has undergone several additional phases of development up until present day. The school is one of the last remaining schools to use oil as its primary heating fuel.

Engagement Activities

The school has:

- Been quick to engage in the programme; building upon a pre-existing system of student eco champions and staff environment committee.
- Invited the behavioural change officer to attend a number of the committee's twice monthly meetings and meet with student representatives.
- Introduced a system of eco champions who check to ensure that lighting and ICT is switched off in rooms that are left unoccupied during lunches and breaks.

Technical Assistance & Improvements

The school has:

- Initially engaged well with the schools technical officer. A site visit was constructed by the council's technical officer who made adjustments to HVAC programming and compiled a report highlighting recommended capital investment opportunities.
- Received a report outlining options that included converting the existing oil-burning heating system to gas, retrofitting more efficient boiler controls, valve insulation, and installation of more efficient lighting.
- Yet to commit to implementing any of these projects.

12. School name: **Queens Park Community School**

Number of students: **1202 pupils**

An average-sized mixed secondary school built in the 1980s which has also undergone several additional phases of development since then. In recent years the school has made heating and lighting upgrades funded through the Salix fund. The school started the LCS programme as a Community School under the auspices of the local education authority, however converted to Academy Status in September 2012.

Engagement Activities

The school has:

- Been unable to engage fully in the programme; most likely due to the additional complications and pressures experienced as the school makes the transition towards Academy Status.
- Initiated a 9pm automated power down of computers.
- Replaced existing inefficient projectors with LED projectors
- A manual switch off check in each room is conducted daily by facilities manager.

Technical Assistance & Improvements

The school has:

- Had a site visit from the council's technical officer and a report of recommendations were submitted however the school has been unable to engage fully in the programme; most likely due to the additional complications and pressures experienced as the school makes the transition towards Academy Status.

13. School name: **Copland**

Number of students: **1704 pupils**

A Specialist Science College is a large urban secondary and tertiary school. The original building (approx. 1950s) is in a poor state of repair and is likely to be very inefficient at retaining heat due to deficiencies in glazing and the building fabric. The school has used Salix funding in the past to implement some improvements including upgrading its gas-fired heating plant and lighting. The school has a large volume of ageing external portakabin classrooms using inefficient electric heating.

Engagement Activities


The school has:

- Failed to engage in the programme; despite the efforts of an enthusiastic member of staff and the School Behavioural Change Officer

Technical Assistance & Improvements

The school has:

- Had a brief meeting with the council's technical officer but has failed to engage beyond that.

 Brent	<p align="center">Schools Forum 18th September 2013</p> <p align="center">Report from the Director of Children & Families</p>
For Information and consultation	
School Funding Reforms – 2014/15 Update	

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 This report starts the process to submit the Individual Schools Budget (ISB) for 2014/15 to the DfE in accordance with the new timetable introduced as part of the funding reforms last year. The timetable for the 2014/15 schools budget is set out below. It is similar to last year except that the final funding is to be provided by councils to maintained schools at the end of February 2014.

Date	Activity/Meeting
3 October 2013	School Census Day
23 October	Additional Schools Forum
31 October 2013	Local authorities submit provisional school budget proforma to the EFA
28 November 2013	School Census database closed
4 December 2013	Schools Forum
9 December 2013	Brent Executive approve ISB and overall DSG
18 December 2013	EFA confirms DSG Schools Block allocations for 2014-15 (prior to Academy Recoupment)
8 January 2014	Schools Forum
21 January 2014	Local authorities submit final school budget proforma to EFA
28 February 2014	Local authorities confirm budgets for their maintained schools.
31 March 2014	EFA to confirm Academies budget.

- 1.2 The following sub groups have been involved in developing the budget for next year:

- SEN sub group – 9th September
- Schools funding sub group – 10th September
- Early years funding sub group – 11th September

1.3 Informed by the above sub group meetings the report is part of a two stage process to consult all schools on the proposals for 2014/15 and is structured as follows:

- Section 2: Summarises the changes to the funding formula for 2014/15
- Section 3: Provides an exemplification to address the current primary:secondary ISB funding ratio in order to move it towards the national average
- Section 4: Sets out the proposed dedelegations
- Section 5: Sets out proposals for pupil growth funding
- Section 6: Summarises the outcomes from the equalisation of top-ups for special schools
- Section 7: Sets out a proposal to restore the 3% increase in the EYSFF base rate.
- Section 8: Contains recommendations and consultation points

2. Funding Formula Changes for 2014/15

2.1 In June 2013, the DfE issued guidance for the 2014-15 Revenue Funding Arrangements. The funding arrangements are similar to 2013/14 but with a number of changes referred in Paragraphs 1.2.1 to 1.2.9 below. As with last year, a provisional schools budget is required to be submitted at the end of October using October 2012 pupil data. The final data will be released in December 2013 which will have the relevant up to date October 2013 data for the 2014/15 final budget. This needs to be submitted to the DfE no later than 21st January 2014. All the financial modelling is carried out using the DfE's 'Tool' which automatically calculates the pupil factors and Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) for the chosen unit values.

2.2 The main changes in the new guidance are:

1. **Basic Entitlement** - will be as 2013/14 but with minimum values of £2,000 for Primary and £3,000 for secondary (KS3 and 4). For 2013/14 Brent was above these thresholds at £2,733 and £3,770 respectively.
2. **Prior Attainment** – the primary indicator will include those who failed to achieve a good level of development for the cohort of pupil in the 2013 assessments. This will only apply to this cohort, for older year groups in the school, there will still be the same choice between using the thresholds of 73 and 78 points because they were assessed under the old profile. This is a change from 2013/14 where primary indicator was based on the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. LA's could choose pupils achieving below either 73 or 78. Brent chose pupils achieving below 78 points. Secondary indicator will be based on the number of pupils not achieving level 4 in English or Maths at Key Stage 2. This is a change from the number of pupils not achieving level 4 in English and Maths at KS2.
3. **Looked After Children (LAC)** – This will be restricted to one indicator for those children on the March 2013 return. The definition of LAC will cover those children who have been looked after for one day or more in the year to 31st March 2013.

4. **Pupil Mobility** – funding will now be targeted only at those schools experiencing pupil mobility above a 10% threshold. Funding is to be allocated based on the proportion above this threshold e.g. if a school has 12% mobility, then 2% of its pupils would attract funding. This option was not selected by Brent in 2013/14.
5. **Proportion allocated through pupil-led factors** – At least 80% of the delegated schools block funding has to be through pupil-led factors. There were no restrictions in 2013/14 but Brent was already above this threshold at 90%.
6. **Sparsity** – this factor is new but not applicable to Brent. It focuses on the distance pupils have to travel to school including the numbers of pupils on role enabling smaller schools in rural areas to receive additional funding.
7. **Lump Sum** – The lump sums can be different for primary and secondary schools. The maximum lump sum will be £175,000 compared to the single value to all school of £200,000 in 2013/14
8. **SEN** – For 2013/14 a discretionary £6,000 was the DfE's recommendation. For 2014/15 the £6,000 threshold will be mandatory.

Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG)

2.3 This will continue to be set at -1.5% with the following provisos:

1. It will not apply to pupils under 5 or over 16 so early years will not factor in the MFG calculations.
2. Factors excluded from MFG are:
 - a. Post 16 funding from EFA
 - b. Allocations from High Needs Block including those for named pupils with SEN and special units
 - c. Lump sum, calculated by deducting the 2013-14 figure from the 2012-13 baseline
 - d. Business rates
 - e. Early years single funding formula

Capping and scaling

2.4 For 2013/14 a cap on gains was not implemented. For 2014/15 it is proposed to introduce a 1.5% cap and 100% scaling factor. The scaling factor indicates by how much any gains above the capping factor will be scaled back. The proposal would mean that all gains above 1.5% are scaled back and not retained by the school.

3 Primary and Secondary ISB Ratios

3.1 Following last year's schools budget setting the ratio was 1:1.09 whereas the average for England was 1: 1.27. The DfE contacted the Council in May as the council had the lowest ratio in England and they asked what our proposals were to increase the ratio. At the DfE's June conference with all London councils it was made clear that the Department is not expecting the ratio to fall or rise any further if authorities were significantly below or above the average. At the

current ratio the council has the highest value MFG in England at £28m which is unsustainable as it masks the true position of how the formula factors impact upon schools.

- 3.2 This was discussed with the schools funding sub-group on 10th September where the following issues were raised:
1. Whether to move in one step or a number of steps, for example, over the next two years
 2. The level of change in the pupil led factors to achieve the desired ratio
 3. The relationship between the capping on gains and the scaling factor
 - a. The Models set out below use a 1.5% cap and 100% scaling factor
 4. The impact on MFG
 5. The opportunity to have different values for primary and secondary lump sums.
- 3.3 The sub group agreed to apply a ratio of 1:1.27, the national average, and consult schools on the impact. Appendix A compares the proposed ratio with the actual for 2013/14 along 2013/14 and a summary of the key outputs is shown below:

	2013/14				2014/15			
	Primary	Secondary	Total	Ratio	Primary	Secondary	Total	Ratio
Pupil Number	23,968	13,064	37,032		23,968	13,040	37,008	
	£	£	£		£	£	£	
Total Funding (Pre-MFG)	99,449,527	59,862,612	159,312,139		110,462,834	76,152,329	186,615,162	
Per Pupil Funding	4,149	4,582	8,732	1:1.10	4,608	5,839	10,449	1:1.27
MFG	9,017,884	19,347,552	28,365,436		-561,374	2,136,573	1,575,199	
Total Funding (Pre-MFG)	108,467,411	79,210,164	187,677,575		109,901,460	78,288,902	188,190,362	
Per Pupil Funding	4,526	6,063	10,589	1:1.34	4,585	6,004	10,589	1:1.31

Explanatory note

- 3.4 The above summary illustrates:
1. The significant reduction in the gap between pre and post MFG funding arising from the higher ratio.
 2. The narrowing of the gap between and pre and post MFG ratios in 2014/15.
 3. A more realistic budget in anticipation of the eventual removal of MFG with minimum turbulence for all schools.
- 3.5 A concern of the Schools Sub Group was the possible of removal of MFG beyond 2015/16. Following a lengthy discussion they felt that it would more acceptable to schools if the ratio was brought up to national average in one year. This offered less dependence on MFG to restrict year on year on changes should MFG end in the future. The illustration above shows a change in value of MFG from £28,365,436 to £1,575,199.

- 3.6 In order to move to a ratio of 1:1.27, the following uplift factors for the Basic Entitlement and Additional Educational Needs were applied to the 2013/14 base:

- Primary 13%
- Secondary 25%

4 Delegations and De-Delegations

- 4.1 It is proposed to repeat the same de-delegations as were approved by Schools Forum for 2013/14 as follows:

1. Schools in financial difficulty: £138,121
 - a. This budget is used primarily as a way of allocating cash sums to individual primary schools which are in difficulty, for purposes agreed between the school and the School Improvement Service. Numbers of schools supported over the last three years are set out below.

Year	Primary	Secondary	Special	Total
2012/13	6			6
2011/12	9	1	2	12
2010/11	3	2		5

2. The Learning Zone at Wembley: £81,000
 - a. The Learning Zone at Wembley Stadium is the result of a unique partnership between the local authority and Wembley Stadium and the FA which provides support geared to the needs of individual schools and their pupils. It offers opportunities for young people to develop positive attitudes to learning, raise self-esteem and achieve their educational potential using sport and entertainment as a stimulus. It provides them with a safe and inspirational environment on their doorstep which helps to enrich and inspire their learning
3. Free school meals eligibility: £29,879
 - a. The funding is used for the administration of determining eligibility for FSM centrally rather than schools doing the checks themselves. This covers staffing costs, application forms, web pages, on line applications, liaising with DFE and DWP, updating information, advising schools of eligible pupils/families. FSM is based on those attending school in Brent – not borough of residence
4. Licenses and subscriptions: £105,340
 - a. The DfE provides a blanket cover for CLA (The Copyright Licensing Agency) and Schools Printed Music Licence (SPML). A number of blanket licenses are purchased by the council including:
 - i. British Pathe
 - ii. Public Video Screening
 - iii. Educational recording Agency
5. Trade union facilities: £155,000
 - a. Since the Employment Protection Act 1975 came into force, trade union representatives have had a statutory right to reasonable paid time off from employment to carry out trade-union duties and to

undertake trade-union training. The funding required to provide supply cover for this time off is currently met by the Local Authority.

- b. Delegation would mean schools would need to make plans to cover this directly from their budgets. The core argument in favour of maintaining this arrangement is the same as for supply cover for maternity leave. Schools are able to pool risk so that costs do not fall unpredictably or unevenly across schools. The DfE consultation document notes that arguments for central retention can be made on the grounds of economies of scale and pooled risk.

6. Staff costs supply cover: £379,974

- a. This covers maternity cover. The grant covers teachers and non teachers excluding SMSA's

7. Gordon Brown Outdoor Education Centre: £30,000

- a. The Centre provides outdoor activities for schools in Brent.

4.2 The September 2012 Schools Forum was presented with reports relating to individual service funded and provided centrally from DSG. The reports provided details of the background of services and historical expenditure details. Links to the reports are provided below:

- Schools in Difficulty
<http://local.brent.gov.uk/stratp.nsf/Pages/LBB-184>
- The Learning Zone at Wembley Stadium
<http://local.brent.gov.uk/stratp.nsf/Pages/LBB-184>
- Free School Meals
<http://local.brent.gov.uk/stratp.nsf/Pages/LBB-185>
- Maternity Grant, TU Facilities, Licences
<http://local.brent.gov.uk/stratp.nsf/Pages/LBB-184>

Schools Forum was consulted for decisions as they have a decision making power on these services regarding which they wanted delegated and de-delegated. The Schools Forum continue to have the decision making powers for 2014/15 and are asked to make decision on whether or not they wish to continue de-delegating these services.

5 Growth Funding

- 5.1 Schools Forum will be aware of the shortfall of schools places arising from Brent's population growth. In 2013/14 as part of central provision an additional £0.5m was added to the provision for growth funding. The pressure continues in 2014/15 and it is recommended that £1m is retained for growth. At this stage in this provisional ISB there is a small amount unallocated based on using 2013/14 ISB total. It is expected that this additional requirement can be accommodated within the final budget confirmed by DfE in December.

6 Equalisation of Top-Ups for Special Schools

- 6.1 The 9th September SEN sub group reviewed the financial impact of the equalisation of top-ups for special schools. All schools special schools will receive a top-up as follows:

Band 1	£3,946
Band 2	£6,432
Band 3	£10,081
Band 4	£13,740
Band 5	£17,400
Band 6	£24,720

7 Early Years Single Funding Formula

- 7.1 Following benchmarking in 2011 of the NEG 3 hourly rates with 11 other London councils, Schools Forum agreed a strategy to increase the base funding hourly rate by 5% in 2012/13 and 2013/14 to get closer to the benchmark average. Due to affordability pressures it was only possible to apply a 2% increase for 2013/14.
- 7.2 Owing to savings arising in 2014/15 from a clawback of the 2013/14 summer term over budgeting for schools offering full time nursery places, there is an opportunity to restore the 3% base rate increase lifting it from £3.48 to £3.58 an hour. The clawback of £500k would cover the estimated £400k full year cost of the 3% increase. The Early Years Funding Sub-Group will be consulted and the outcome will be reported to the Schools Forum on 23rd October 2013.

8 Recommendations & Consultation Points

With regard to the 2014/15 ISB Forum is asked to:-

1. Note the introduction of capping and scaling factor as set out in Section 2.
2. Comment on the proposed mechanism set out in Section 3 to move the current Primary: Secondary ratio of 1:1.09 towards the national average of 1:1.27. As per last year, it is intended to consult all schools on the impact on their individual school budget.
3. Agree to repeat 2013/14 de-delegations described in Section 4.
4. Comment of the proposed £1m provision for in-year pupil growth in Section 5.
5. Note the proposed equalisation of top-up funding for special schools in Section 6.

Background Papers

2014-15 Revenue Funding Arrangements: Operational Information for Local Authorities

All found on DfE website link below.


<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/financialmanagement/schoolsrevenuefunding/a00221523/school-funding-and-high-needs-funding-arrangements-2014-15>

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 Brent	<p style="text-align: center;">Schools Forum 18th September 2013</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Director of Children & Families</p>
For Information	
Budget Review of Admissions & Pupil support	

Consultation and Decision Making Points

The council has a duty to consult and seek views from the Schools Forum regarding the DSG funded element of the combined budgets covered in this report and this report represents part of the on-going process of consulting on DSG contributions with the Forum. The outcome of this review would be taken into account in setting the 2014/15 Schools Budget.

1 Summary and Report Structure

- 1.1 This report is one of a series of reports that allow the forum to review and challenge the spending on services provided by the council and funded through DSG. It reviews the work which has been carried out by Brent Customer Services and Pupil and Parent services, in relation to schools admissions, free school meals and home to school transport.

This report is structured as follows:

- Section 2: Provides an introduction and background to the arrangements for managing schools admissions, free school meals and home to school travel.
- Section 3: Provides details of the context of the services provided
- Section 4: Provides details of improvements and progress made in 2012/13 and 2013/14 year to date
- Section 5 : Provides details of comparative benchmarking information
- Section 6 : Provides detail of the costs of providing the services

- 1.2 Officers are aware of concerns a number of schools had regarding the admissions process last September and the Customer Services team is addressing the process issues raised by schools.

A number of changes have been made to working procedures for September 2013 to ensure vacancies are obtained, offered and cleared down more speedily.

These include:

- Working more closely with schools to ensure vacancies are captured immediately rather than waiting for the Friday update on SAM

- Offers made every day of the week replacing the previous practice of making offers on 2 days of the week
- Parents given 3 days to contact the school and arrange a start date rather than 7 days which was the previous timescale.
- Implementation of a document management system which improves management information on applications received and processed, allowing better monitoring to ensure they are loaded on tribal within 5 days of receipt unless all the information needed is not available

An online application for In Year school places is now available which allows parents to apply via the Brent website; this further improves the speed of applications as they are downloaded every day.

An online application for free school meals has been implemented so parents can apply for and receive immediate notification of their entitlement to a free school meal. Schools received next day notification of the entitlement via SAM.

2 Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to provide sufficient school places for all children in their area and to ensure that all children are offered a school place. Whilst the administration of school applications can vary from school to school, the fundamental responsibility to ensure that every child is provided with access to formal education remains with the Local Authority.
- 2.2 In Brent responsibility for administering schools admissions currently rests within the Council. Provision is made to process applications for schools, free school meals, home to school travel and develop policies and procedures to govern the overall admission process. This process covers the point from which an application is made to the point at which the child accepts a place or is referred to Educational Welfare because they remain out of school.
- 2.3 All of these functions were previously carried out within Children and Families Department. However following a Council wider review of Customer Contact arrangements in 2011, some aspects of the service were transferred into a new Brent Customer Services Unit. These functions included the management of schools admissions in year and coordinated for primary and secondary), administration of free school meals and home to school transport.

The Children & Families Pupil and Parent services unit continues to manage the appeals process (community schools), assessment centres for children of secondary school age, fairer access panels and educational welfare. In addition Pupil and Parent services take lead responsibility for the development of admissions policies and for place planning to ensure that future provision is sufficient to meet demand for places.

- 2.4 Brent Customer Services costs in relation to schools admission and related functions are recharged to the Dedicated Schools Grant through Children & Families on an annual basis. These costs are agreed on the basis of agreed resource levels and are checked and scrutinised by Children and Families to ensure that they have been fairly stated, before funding is agreed.
- 2.5 The main roles of Pupil and parent services are as follows:
- Processing applications for coordinated primary school admissions
 - Processing applications for coordinated secondary schools admissions

- Processing in year applications for primary school
- Processing in year applications for secondary school
- Submitting details of primary schools coordinated admissions to Pan London and updates at each iteration of the offer process
- Submitting details of secondary schools coordinated admissions to Pan London and updates at each iteration of the offer process
- Identifying, offering and chasing acceptance for in year applications
- Maintaining details of vacancies at all Brent schools
- Administering free school meal applications
- Administering home to school travel applications
- Responding to all enquiries about schools admissions, free school meals and home to school travel via Phone, Email, On Line Applications and correspondence (including complaints, MP and Member enquiries)

3.0 Context of Service Provision

3.1 The following summarises the key aims of the schools admission service in Brent:

- To provide a good school place for every child
- To offer places parents want for their children where this is possible
- To ensure all children are in school
- To increase provision through permanent and temporary expansions
- To provide good quality, fit for purpose school buildings which enable children to thrive and achieve their potential
- To provide an efficient and responsive admissions service for Parents, Schools and Members

3.2 Brent has a growing and transient population and this presents some difficult challenges in meeting demand for school places, particularly in the case of applications which are received during the academic year. Between 2001 and 2011 Brent's population increased by 18% rising from 263,464 to 311,215 respectively. The population of 0-4 year olds increased by 37.7% and for 5-19 year olds by 12.1%. The overall school population has increased by 5% since 2010, with a total of 45,154 children at school compared to 42,972 in 2010.

3.3 In 2012/13 there were 4356 applications for reception places in September 2012. There were 2996 applications for secondary school transfer in September 2012. During the academic year a further 3976 in year applications were received (primary and secondary) a number of which concerned children who were not attending school and required a place urgently. Whilst plans have been made to create additional school places to meet this demand, places are often not available in areas or in schools that parents are prepared to accept. This generates high volumes of contacts from parents, MPs and Councillors in relation to offers made, waiting list positions or general dissatisfaction.

4.0 Progress Achieved in 2012/13 and To Date

4.1 Since the new arrangements were implemented in January 2012, Brent Customer Services and Pupil and Parent services have been working closely together to improve the overall service to schools and families. Given the high volumes of applications received every year and the high volumes of contacts made in respect of enquiries about these, one of the earliest priorities was to ensure that applications were processed quickly so that timely offers could be made, in particular in relation to children who did not have a current school place.

4.2 At the time of transfer to Brent Customer Services, all applications were paper based making it difficult to resolve telephone enquiries or face to face enquiries without trawling paper files. Improvements have been achieved through the implementation of an electronic document management system (EDM) which was introduced in the spring of 2012. The EDM system

converts all paperwork related to a child's application to an electronic case file which then enables information to be retrieved quickly and easily without the need to refer to hard copies of the papers. This means enquiries can be resolved by any officer, including customer services officers based in the Council's Customer Service Centres.

- 4.3 The introduction of the EDM system has been complimented by efforts to significantly increase the number of coordinated schools admissions that are received on line. On line submission of secondary school applications has increased from 51% in 2011 to 93% in 2012 and primary school on line applications from 51% to 84 %. The on line process enables parents to amend preferences through the portal, receive on line acknowledgement that it has been received, email offer of a place and the ability to accept or reject a place offered on line. The self service facilities available through the on line portal are enabling staff on the schools admissions team to focus more time on placing children who have not yet had an offer and where necessary referring children who are out of school to Educational Welfare.
- 4.4 Since January 2012 all telephone calls to the schools admissions team have been handled through an Automated Call Distribution system (ACD). This technology enables callers to be routed to the first available officer, to be advised of likely waiting time and provided with the option to leave a message. Reports from the ACD system have enabled us to develop a much better understanding of the volumes of calls received and the extent to which we have been able to answer them.
- 4.5 A dedicated School telephone line was introduced in September 2012. The implementation of this has resulted in school enquiries being dealt with in a more prompt and timely manner. In addition to this, a dedicated School mail box was also set up in July this year for schools emails. The team have been able to manage emails more effectively by having separate mail boxes for Schools and Parents.
- 4.6 There are still a number of parents who prefer to make enquiries about school applications at the Council's customer access points. Up until January 2012 these enquiries were made at Chesterfield House however since the transfer of the Schools admissions team to Brent Customer Services, these enquiries have been dealt with at Brent House (Civic Centre from June 2013) and Harlesden Customer Services centres. Brent Customer Services has a team of Customer Services officers who are trained to handle a range of enquiries including schools admissions and this has provided greater capacity to handle peaks in contacts typically experienced during the schools admissions process.
- 4.7 A detailed Service Level agreement (SLA) has been agreed between Brent Customer Services and Pupil and Parent services specifying the standards of service that we aim to achieve. The key performance indicators are as follows:
 1. In Year applications are input on Tribal within 5 working days of receipt and acknowledged.
 2. Coordinated applications are input prior to the first round of data matching in line with the timelines stated in the Business User Guide.
 3. Applications for FSM and travel grant are processed within 5 working days of receipt
 4. No child will be out of school without an offer more than 10 days unless there are no vacancies to offer.
 5. Offers made are cleared down within 14 days of the offer or 7 days at key annual events such as census
 6. Quality checks on data accuracy for applications achieve 95%
 7. 95% of all enquiries are fully resolved or sign posted effectively by Customer Services at first contact
 8. Abandon Rate – No more than 10% of calls after initial recorded greeting. This is subject to peaks and local variation.

9. Complaints made against Customer Services with regards to school admissions processing, customer care , that are upheld is less than 0.05% of all contacts
10. 80% of schools, when surveyed, are satisfied, or very satisfied with the service provided by Customer Services
11. Length of time taken to refer a child out of school to Education Welfare Service

Current performance against SLA standards are set out below:

1. 90% of calls answered –
 - a. Resources within the team have to be balanced between answering calls, responding to emails and processing work. Call answer rates have steadily improved from 60% in March '13 to 67% in July 2013. There are further improvements that need to be made however prompt processing of applications and offers are critical to managing customer contacts.
2. All applications input within 5 working days -
 - a. It has taken time to develop accurate systems for measuring speed of processing for applications as this information is not easily reported via the Tribal system used to administer admissions. Reports have been developed through the EDM system and these will enable reporting from July 2013. There is some further work that needs to be undertaken for the team to improve processing times to achieve the SLA 5 day target. This will now be reported and closely monitored on a daily, weekly and monthly basis.
3. 100% of the Coordinated “on time” applications were input prior to the first round of data matching in line with published timelines
4. The total number of children out of school in May 2013 was 195, this compares to 388 in May 2012. The team make weekly in Year offers and all out of school children are made an offer where vacancies are available.
5. The team has been focussing on clearing down vacancies offered on a more regular basis. As soon as vacancies are offered, letters are sent out to parents asking them to take their child to the school to enrol within 3 working days. If the child does not start school within the 3 working days, the clearing down commences and subject to when we can make contact with the parent, the vacancy will be offered to another child within 7-14 days of the offer having been made
6. Recent quality checks conducted in July show 64% data input accuracy. The learning from this has been incorporated into a team Learning and Development Plan and clear targets for improvement have been set. There will be another detailed quality check exercise conducted for each team member in September to track progress. Any learning from these checks will be discussed with the team.
7. The team very rarely receive complaints which are upheld in respect of admissions processing and customer care. The indicator of no more than 0.05% of all contacts resulting in an upheld complaint has been met
8. The team aims to refer all pupils out of school at 6 weeks to the Education Welfare Service. The team has been reviewing unplaced children out of school to ensure that our records are up to date and that referrals to Educational Welfare are made. The team has referred 20 children to the service in the past few weeks. Further referrals will be made in the coming weeks.

- 4.8 A number of improvements have been made in preparation for the pupil census in October 2013. These include a requirement for all parents to accept or decline a place offered , proactive chasing of offers made but not accepted and reoffer of places not taken to children not yet placed or following an in year application. A dedicated Accept/Decline mail box has been set up for parents to respond to offers made. These changes should help to maximise the number of children on school rolls in October and at the time the census is run.

5.0 Benchmarking information

- 5.1 A benchmarking exercise was carried out in December to help evaluate the arrangements for schools admissions in Brent with other London Authorities. It has been difficult to make like for like comparison between respondents because arrangements and issues differ so greatly from Borough to Borough . For example, levels of in year applications in Brent are much higher than many of the survey recipients and this makes it more difficult to compare the resources allocated. Some Authorities also split responsibility for administering schools admission between back office teams and generic call handling teams. The total level of resource involved in schools admissions for these Councils is not wholly quantified and thus cannot be compared to Authorities such as Brent who have a single team administering the function on an end to end basis. However a broad comparison of the resources allocated and volume of applications received shows :

Number of In Year applications received

With approximately 4,000 applications per annum Brent was 3rd highest when comparing the number of In Year applications received. Brent received more than twice the number of applications received by 9 of the authorities and over 30% more than the remaining 3 authorities. This is indicative of the general population trends for Brent and the transient nature of a large number of residents.

Resources

Results show that the resource allocated to deal with school admissions in Brent is low when compared to the majority of authorities who replied. The survey indicated that the ration of staff in Brent to overall caseload is in the lowest quartile of respondents.

Pupil Census

8 of those who responded said moving the national pupil census date to October impacted on their ability to fill school places on time for the census. Reasons given by those boroughs included the vacancies resulting from student churn at the beginning of the school year and the reduction in time to offer places particularly those that occurred as a result of the vacancies.

Brent council is of the view that this change makes it more difficult to fill places in time for the October census.

Schools admissions structures

Brent administers pupil admissions within the Customer Services team as an end to end process. Of the councils who responded, their admissions processes were managed as follows.

End to end process in the Children's department	End to end process in another department	Phone contact in customer services and processing in Childrens' department	Other
8	2	5	3

The survey shows that Brent has a flatter structure than most other respondents.

6.0 Service Costs

- 6.1 The Children's team in Brent Customer Services consists of a dedicated team leader and 9 Customer Services Officers. Support is also provided to the team from senior managers

within Brent Customer Services, a Corporate web team, a central service improvement team and a centralised post team. There are running costs associated with IT, accommodation and telephony as well as more general costs such as stationery, printing and other staff costs.

- 6.2 A breakdown of actual expenditure in 2012/13 and the 2013/14 budget for the Parent and Pupil Services and Customer Services elements of the schools admissions service is shown below.

Parent and Pupil Services	2012/13 (£000)			2013/14 (£000)
	Budget	Outturn	Outturn Variance	Budget
Employee Expenses	33	34	1	33
Running Expenses	23	52	29	23
Total	56	86	30	56

Customer Services	2012/13 (£000)			2013/14 (£000)
	Budget	Outturn	Outturn Variance	Budget as at 31.07.13
Employee Expenses	417	321	(96)	417
Management Charge	0	95	95	0
Total	417	416	(1)	417

Contact Officer

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Interim Director of Children and Families

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