



# **Schools Forum Minutes 24 February 2016**

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**BRENT SCHOOLS FORUM**

**Minutes of the Schools Forum held on  
Wednesday 24 February 2016 at The Village School**

**Attended by Members of the Forum:****Governors:**

Mike Heiser (MH)  
Titilola McDowell (TM)  
Herman Martyn (HM)  
Narinder Nathan (NN)  
Umesh Raichada (UR)  
Christine Starkl (CS)

**Head Teachers:**

Lesley Benson (LB)  
Martine Clark (MC)  
Kay Charles (KC)  
Rabbi Yitzchak Freeman (YF)  
Melissa Loosemore (ML)  
Andy Prindiville (AP)  
Troy Sharpe (TS)

**PRU:**

Terry Hoad (TH)

**PVI Sector:**

Paul Russell (PR)

**Trade Unions:**

Lesley Gouldbourne (LG)

**14-19 Partnership:****Lead Member (C&YP):****Officers:**

Cate Duffy (CD)  
Norwena Thomas (NT)  
Devbai Patel (DP)

**Others (BSP):**

Farzana Aldridge (FA) for item 4

**ITEM DISCUSSION****i. Introductions**

The Forum commenced at 6.10pm.

MH asked FA to introduce herself. FA attended for Item 4 to present the paper as a Strategic Director of Brent Schools Partnership.

**ii. Apologies**

Rose Ashton  
Martin Beard  
Sylvie Libson  
Cllr Ruth Moher  
Gail Tolley

**iii. Absences**

Helga Gladbaum  
Sue Knowler  
Desi Lodge Patch

**iv. Membership**

This item was covered under Item 7 of this meeting.

**1 Declarations of Interests**

1.1 MH asked members if they had any interests to declare. MH and KC declared their interest for Item 4 as MH is a member of the BSP Board and KC is the Chair of BSP Board.

**2 Minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2015 and Matters Arising**

2.1 NN was not present at the last Forum.

2.2 The above was noted. There were no other corrections to the minutes therefore they were approved as an accurate record.

**3.0 Action Log and Matters Arising**

3.1 De-Delegation Items – DP reported that the schools were invoiced for de-delegation items.

3.2 Minutes paragraph 5.4 – CD reported that a meeting took place with an officer from Revenue and Benefits and are waiting for a further update. There is no evidence at the moment that the effect is due to

the Benefits cap but discussions will continue. There is a housing issue which is an issue for the council but not on school places.

3.3 AP asked if the Financial Regulations are approved and available to schools. NT replied that they were posted on Schools Extranet mid December 2015, soon after the last Forum. It was requested that they were also put into Head Teachers Bulletin. It was confirmed that the Financial Regulations only apply to maintained schools.

3.4 LB asked when the Head of Audit was to meet with the schools. CD said that the Head of Audit will attend the next Governors and Head Teachers briefing.

**4.0 Review of Funding Allocated to Brent Schools Partnership (BSP)**  
[This report was for update and decision](#)

4.1 FA presented the first part of the report followed by ML. In 2014-15 Schools Forum allocated £100k to support KS1 & KS2 alternative education provision. Since then there has been no further allocation to BSP.

4.2 Annexe A provided details of the options put forward to BSP. Option 1 was for the BSP to receive £300k and take the full responsibility for the excluded primary pupils. Option 2 was to receive £100k and provide support to pupils at risk of exclusion. BSP opted for Option 2.

4.3 Paragraph 1.5 provided the details of the funding agreed to support the development costs and where placements were made, the agreed placement costs.

4.4 The way funding was utilised was set out in Paragraph 4.2. All schools were asked to complete a Behaviour and Safety survey in September 2014. This was to identify the common issues for children at risk and what schools would like to have in place to support them with children at risk of exclusion. Based on the outcome of the survey the feedback was for BSP to put a strategy in place. They identified 4 schools which would be able to help support children. There were a number of challenges in terms of progressing and was therefore not able progress as much as they would have liked i.e. a consultant was contracted but didn't want to continue.

4.5 ML went through the recommendations. The funding was for KS1 and KS2 but KS1 has not happened. They wish to progress with KS1 because there is a danger of children being excluded. Clearly schools are asking for this to happen soon.

4.6 FA said they are not suggesting a complex highly expensive consultant. MH said that Schools Forum is not in a position to commission as it doesn't have a budget. It has to be referred to LA.

- 4.7 LB commented on the first two recommendations which are asking Forum for plans. She didn't think they were in the format that could be agreed by the Forum. FA said this was not the intention. UR suggested bringing back the paper to June's Forum. KC said the report is for noting, comments and for consideration.
- 4.8 LB said the increasing need for alternative provision at Ks1 is worrying and something concrete needs to be in place.
- 4.9 LG said it would be more helpful to have more costings attached i.e. how many schools, cost of survey. She said it was a great shame that resources were not available. Standard report to scrutiny indicated that BSP would deliver CPD offer and she asked how this would be managed. FA said in terms of CPD offer, there would need to have skills and expertise to deal with challenges of pupils. There is an increasing demand at Roe Green Junior School provision for bespoke and school to school support. Four schools would receive children and would require skills and capacity to receive children. LG said that the paper says BSP will deliver CPD. KC said CPD is different, BSP members pay subscription. LG asked how much is spent on children. KC replied that none of the funding has gone into CPD. BSP is working closely with LA to have an inclusion service to work together to get the best outcome.
- 4.10 CD confirmed that £300k is allocated per annum from DSG. In 2014-15, £100k was paid to BSP and £200k was for the LA to buy primary alternative education provisions. The £200k allocated to the council has been used to support children excluded in KS1 and KS2. These have mainly been placed by the Council in a school in Islington. The children are having to travel to Islington which is difficult and challenging for parents and carers as they are asked to attend too. TS asked if any of the funding was used on transport and CD confirmed that it does. TS said it would be useful to know how much of it relates to transport. CD said this is always an issue when children are sent far. LB asked if the funding is used for already excluded children or at risk to which CD replied as for both. There was a need to carry out a feasibility study to establish how much it would cost and where would the funding come from to bring these children in borough.
- 4.11 CD stated that we need to keep children in Brent. We need to move beyond where we are using the BSP funding to build capacity towards actually delivering placements in Brent schools. The £100k released to date has just placed those schools in a position to receive pupils. In 2015-16 funding has not been released to BSP because we need to be clear on what it is to be used for.

4.12 MS asked if a decision was required. CD said it requires a conversation between officers and BSP. We only need to come back if the funding needs to be increased.

4.13 Recommendation 1-4 were noted by all. With regards to recommendation C, a working group should be set up and CD would be happy to chair.

## **5.0 Schools Funding 2016-17**

[This report was for update.](#)

5.1 NT presented this report. Section 3.0 of the report provided details of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocation to local authorities. Brent's provisional allocation is £302.01m before academy recoupment. Section 4.0 provides details of the ISB, Schools Block of funding, which is allocated based on the DfE's funding formula. There was a massive change to IDACI which Brent uses as a main indicator for deprivation factor funding. Various models were created but they all provided a very similar output. The final budgets have been approved by DfE with small changes and they will be released to schools by Monday 29<sup>th</sup> February the latest. With regards to High Needs budget there is no change in the method for calculations. Early Years will be impacted by IDACI in the same way the schools have been affected. There is no change to any of the grants, except that the Summer Schools Pupil Premium will discontinue from 2016-17.

5.2 MH asked if schools have seen the budgets to realise the impact on IDACI. NT said that the same paper that was emailed to members in January was posted on the Schools Extranet. AP asked if the Pupil Premium was included in the budgets and if the SEN payment to academies is made by the LA. NT confirmed that PPG is not included in the budgets and yes that SEN payments are made by the LA as top-up funding.

5.3 LB said that January Forum should not have been cancelled because what was circulated in email could have been discussed at a Forum. Mike did want to keep it in the diary. This was noted.

5.4 PR expressed his concerns over the Early Years allocations which are announced late and with IDACI being an issue, it could mean some of the private providers having to close down. They need to plan in advance where this is to be the case. NT said that officers have been exploring other options to provide data earlier. We emailed finance contacts in other London authorities and most use IDACI. None of the authorities that responded use IMD which is one of the indicator used in the past and suggested at Early Years Sub Group.

5.5 LB warned that we look at the indicator change to IMD or implement Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) and capping factor. Paul is

correct in that it is time to react to this. CD said that officers are worried and do not want provisions to close so will try their best to prevent providers having to close.

5.6 MH reminded members of the process of funding for 2016/17. In January members were informed that IDACI wasn't doing what it should be doing and nor was FSM. CD said the next paper was about the changes with the funding formula coming in effect from 2017-18 and said that the Schools Forum members will need to be heavily involved.

5.7 All five recommendations were noted by the Schools Forum.

### **6.0 Schools Funding 2017-18 and Beyond**

[This report was for update.](#)

6.1 NT presented this report. The report provided an update on the expected implementation of a new fair funding formula for schools from 2017 and the likely impact on Brent schools. There have been lots of speculation and lobbying for a national funding formula to be implemented. The DfE is intending to send out two consultations one on schools and high needs and the other one on early years. This is expected by the end of February and is expected to run for a few months due to purdah in May for the Mayoral elections. NT recommended that the Schools Forum provide a response to these consultations.

6.2 In 2013-14 there were a number of changes to the funding and these are listed in the report. In 2015-16, the Government also allocated £390m for the least fairly funded authorities, of which Brent received a share of £11m. There is expected to be a transition with the phasing in of losses and gains over time – there is speculation that London could be worst hit. NT said that we are advising that schools budget to lose 1.5% per pupil, year on year, on their pupil-led funding.

6.3 LG said that NUT will be campaigning to say no to National Fair Funding. AP said that he felt schools should not just accept it and that a lot of noise should be made if there are huge losses expected.

6.4 MH said that London Councils has carried out a lot of work so far for the figures used for minimum funding levels. What is consulted upon and how definitive it might be in principle and in figures will not be known until the consultations are out. CD said we will have to respond in a number of ways but once we see what the proposals are, it will give us some guidance in modelling what the impact is going to be. There will be a number of group discussions required. It was acknowledged that Paragraph 4.3.1 listed key points which were very helpful. KC said it was very useful report and was pleased to have received it in advance.

6.5 LB said that hopefully 0-25 SEN will finally be addressed to which KC commented that it means less funding. LB agreed that the paper was clear and helpful. She asked if the Budget template is built to allow the funding drop. NT confirmed that the template automatically reduces budget share by 1.5% but can be overtyped as some schools may have increased funding due to expansion, it assumes other income as cashflat, payroll assumes increments, inflation and employer contribution increases, and inflation for other expenditure is assumed as 4%.

6.6 Recommendation was noted and there was a full commitment from members to respond to the consultations. KC said that the more we respond the better outcome can be achieved.

6.7 Once the timescale is issued officers will facilitate meetings with all Head Teachers and Governors and call for a Schools Forum if required. It would be useful to respond as the response goes directly to DfE.

## **7.0 Schools Forum Membership** [This report was for consultation](#)

7.1 NT presented this report. As previously agreed, the membership would be reviewed once a year. Due to change in landscape in Brent, the Academy conversions at St Andrew and St Francis, St Gregory's High, Oakington Manor and Furness Schools and two additional free schools, there are a number of vacancies. Since writing this report, Gill Bal has resigned. Therefore there are 1 x primary governor, 1 x maintained primary Head Teacher, 2 x secondary Academy Head Teachers and 1 x maintained secondary Head Teacher vacancies. The vacancy continues to remain for Early Years PVI and 14-19 Partnership due to long standing absence.

7.2 A further paper on Administration of Schools Forum will be brought in June which will review the sub-groups. It was suggested that Schools Forum members provide their email address for schools to be able to contact them. This doesn't have to be private but the relevant school email address.

## **8. Dates of 2016-17 Schools Forum**

8.1 DP said that the meetings were listed on the back of the agenda but there is a change with the October Forum. The date proposed is in half term and a week before is not convenient due to Sukkot. YF said that because only HM and him are affected by this, they were happy for the Forum to go ahead. A date in November was suggested but if the returns are required in line with the current timeline, end of October, the Forum needed to be held before the end of October. DP

asked following a discussion earlier in paragraph 5.3 above, when it would be appropriate for January Forum date to be set. MH said as the February date is brought forward, it would not be necessary to hold a January Forum. The dates confirmed were:

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2016 - Queens Park Community School

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2016 – The Village School

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016 – Queens Park Community School

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2016 – The Village School

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2017 – Queens Park Community School

## **9.0 AOB**

- 9.1 The Forum showed appreciation to SL. Some members wanted to know if a suitable position could be created for her to remain a Schools Forum member. MH explained that the schools change and members have to change their hats with the change. At this moment of time SL was not eligible for any vacant positions. NT reported that the feedback officers have had was that SL was happy to step down due to additional school she is looking after, making a total of three primary schools to manage.

The Forum ended at 7.45pm



## *ACTION LOG*

<i>Item No</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Due</i>	<i>Owner</i>
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*NONE*

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