



# **Schools Forum Minutes 10 December 2014**

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## Brent Schools Forum

### Minutes of the Schools Forum held on Wednesday 22 October 2014 at The Village School

#### Attended by Members of the Forum:

##### **Governors:**

Mike Heiser (MH)  
Herman Martyn (HM)  
Helga Gladbaum (HG)  
Sue Knowler (SK)  
Umesh Raichada (UR)  
Titilola McDowell (TMcD)  
Cllr Lesley Jones (Cllr LJ)

##### **Head Teachers:**

Rose Ashton (RA)  
Rabbi Yitzchak Freeman (YF)  
Terry Molloy (TM)  
Sabina Netty (SN)  
Sylvie Libson (SL)  
Lesley Benson (LB)  
Matthew Lantos (ML)

##### **PRU:**

Terry Hoad (TH)

##### **PVI Sector:**

##### **Trade Unions:**

Lesley Gouldbourne (LG)

##### **14-19 Partnership:**

##### **Observer - DfE:**

Marcia Richards (MR)

##### **Lead Member (C&F):**

##### **Officers:**

Sara Williams (SW)  
Minesh Patel (MP)  
Norwena Thomas (NT)  
Devbai Patel (DP)  
Nish Vitharana (NV)  
Angela Chiswell (AC) - up to Item 4

##### **Circulation to all present plus:**

Cllr Ketan Sheth, Marc Jordan, Gill Bal, Gail Tolley, Martin Beard, Richard Martyn, Andy Prindiville, Kay Charles and Paul Russell



ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	Some members were delayed due to worse than usual traffic. MH opened the Schools Forum at 6.15pm when the Forum was quorate. He apologised for missing the last Forum. He welcomed MR from DfE. SW apologised for being late as she was caught up in the MOBO awards event traffic.	
1.0	<u>Apologies</u>	
1.1	Martin Beard Gill Bal Cllr Ketan Sheth - Retrospectively Marc Jordan Gail Tolley Richard Martyn Andy Prindiville	
2.0.	<b>Minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2014 and Matters Arising</b>	
2.1	<u>Accuracy</u>	
2.1.1	Action item 5 on Gold Book has been confused with the Settlement Agreement policy since June Forum. It has no link with Gold Book	
2.2	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
2.2.1	<u>Action Item 1, 3% increase on base rate to be paid to all 2013-14 3 &amp; 4 Year Old providers</u> – LB confirmed that her school has received it.	
2.2.2	<u>Action Item 2, Free School Meals and Pupil Premium leaflets to be emailed as attachments</u> – These were e-mailed to all as separate attachments. NT reported that the DfE has invited authorities to bid for additional UIFSM capital money for any shortfall in implementing the FSM policy. Officers in the Schools Capital Programme Team are trying to put together a bidding process. SL asked how Brent will know what is needed and NT replied that from the last audit the team will bid for anything that didn't get completed.	
2.2.3	<u>Action Item 3, Benchmarking of End to End process and cost per pupil in processing admission application</u> – SW said that the School Admissions Team is returning to Pupil and Parent Services in Children and Young People Department. The service will be reviewed under the new manager and update will be provided from that team.	SW



- 2.2.4 Action Item 4, write to EFA to request why the VA schools are not exempted from paying VAT on the governors' liability of capital funding and Academies are exempted – SW said that the Council's VAT Officer is looking into this issue and liaising with Brent's external VAT advisers for their view. An update will be provided when received. SW
- 2.2.5 Action Item 5, Free School Meals Budget, officers to raise with EFA that £2.30 per meal should be increased for meals that have to be pureed and for kosher meals – SW reported that officers have pursued this with EFA but they will not change their approach. YF asked if it was worth asking colleagues in other LA's if they have similar issue and if they are able to address them. SW
- 2.2.6 Action Item 5, Follow up with Legal on the Settlement Policy – Norwena said she has heard from Legal and they have advised her that advice note will be put together by them. LB asked if this would be soon as the Financial Regulations are out and the policy needs to be in place in conjunction with it. NT said that she would feed that back to Legal. NT
- 2.2.7 Action Items 6 and 7, Access to Model Redundancy Policy for Schools – SW spoke to HR and said that there is an anomaly. However this is inherent in current business model and changing it at this point could jeopardise the existence of the schools HR team. It will be considered for review next year.
- 2.2.8 LG asked if item 5.8 has been followed up – It was asked who is monitoring the quality of Audit. MP reported that this has been followed up with the Head of Audit and it was confirmed that all reports are quality checked. SW said she fed back all the comments made at the last meeting to the head of Audit.

### 3.0 Schools Funding Formula 2015-16

- 3.1 NT presented this report. She said that at September's Forum it was reported that Brent is to receive £11m in 2015-16. The Schools Funding Sub Group met at which several models were presented. It was agreed to take two models to Schools Forum. The first increased all pupil led factors and the second model increased all pupil led factors except AWPU. Both models maintains primary secondary ratio to the National Average of 1:1.29. In 2014-15 the national average ratio was 1:1.27. Where unit values did not meet the DfE's recommend minimums, these have been increased to bring them up to the minimum level. These are tabled in paragraph 2.2.1 along with the unit values for the two models presented.



- 3.2 Two Non Recoupment Academies were now included in the formula and Michaela Free School will appear in the final funding formula as Free Schools receive their funding from the LA from the second year of opening. They are funding directly by the DfE in the first year of opening.
- 3.3 An option was put forward to the Schools Sub Group to consider changing EAL factor from EAL1 to EAL3 but the Sub Group felt EAL1 one removed the best factor for Brent as it is a particular in Brent that new children arrive all through every year.
- 3.4 Gain and Cap on Gain was not recommended as there was minimal MFG due to the increase in funding in the Schools Block.
- 3.5 ML said that the spreadsheets have changed from those presented at the Schools Sub-Group and asked why they had changed. NT explained that this was because of MFG,
- 3.6 TM suggested that the only sensible approach would be to run with the current model i.e. evenly distribute the additional funding. HM Again raised his concerns about Sinai. It had been an outlier since 2012-13 and has continued to be the same.
- 3.7 SW said that they would check that there was a need to consult schools if there is no change and would consult only if it is absolutely necessary.
- 3.8 SN said that her school is a growing school in that they will be taking on additional pupils. SW said there is a separate pot of money held centrally to pay schools that have in-year increased pupil number and those schools are paid under this expansion/ rising rolls policy.
- 3.9 MH invited all to vote if they agreed with the proposal to evenly distribute the additional funding. This would be to increase all unit values proportionately. The votes were:  
Agreed – 13  
Abstained – 0  
Disagreed - 0
- 4.0 The Gordon Brown Outdoor Education Centre (GBOES) - Request for continuing Dedicated Schools Grant funding in the 2015-16**
- 4.1 AC presented the report. She said that she has been responsible for the center since 2006 when she joined Brent. The staff are highly dedicated. The centre is very customer focused. It offers a life changing experience to children who mostly have never been away before and for some that have had no contact with animals.



The visits are mainly residential and weekend to both Brent and non Brent school children. The DSG allocation contributes to supporting the Centre for example through offering a reduced rate for visiting Brent Schools. . The center generates income by opening 50 weeks a year, although winter weeks are less popular, but round the year opening has helped to maximize revenue and off-set running costs, hence maintaining the pricing structure for schools. It works with local businesses and volunteers to bring in additional resources.

- 4.2 Cllr LJ asked if the Centre runs sports programmes so schools can use sports funding. AC replied that it offers some sports activities such as archery, trim trail, canoeing as detailed in paragraph 5.1 of the report.
- 4.3 HG said she represents the primary sector and she is a great fan of GBOEC. She congratulated the authors of the report. She said all schools that use the centre talk about it highly.
- 4.4 Members wanted to know how the replacement for the Shrubbery building mentioned in paragraph 7.3 of the report would be funded as they felt it would be good to expand. AC said that the Council's Property and Assets Service and Capital Projects Board are looking at options to funding it. The pre fabricated building is coming to an end of its natural life. One of the options being considered is that the Centre borrows funding and pays it back over a long period. TM said that the capital funding is outside of this request. He said the centre is accessed mainly by children so it was important to know the number of children who used it, the number of schools using it and what consequences there would be without the £60k. AC referred to the pricing structure and visitor numbers in the Appendices to the report. ML estimated that the £60k fund equates to the cost of 400 residential visits to children at £150 each. SN said that if capital investment is needed, Brent should be considering it. SN also commented that the centre should be offered to secondary school children. AC commented that there are visitors from Secondary schools and youth groups but primarily current usage is by Primary schools. It was asked why secondary schools are not using the centre, and if it does not meet secondary schools provisions, is it worth considering widening the provisions. TM proposed approving £60k to the centre for the next financial year only. . MH invited members to vote on the decision and all voted in favour. Therefore £60k of DSG was approved to allocate to Gordon Brown Outdoor Environmental Education Centre in 2015-16.

## **5.0 De-Delegation 2015-16 : Maternity Grant, Trade Union Facilities and Licenses**



5.1 NT presented this report. The report requests approval to de-delegate Trade Union Facilities and Licenses as well as requests approval to continue offering the benefit to schools for being able to purchase the Maternity Grant. Both maintained primary and secondary schools were asked to vote on whether or not they wanted the services to be provided centrally. There were no secondary schools representatives present to vote. AP had asked TM to represent on his behalf but he did not have specific instructions to vote.

5.1.1 Trade Union – This service was substantially reviewed last year. The current year's allocation is not likely to be fully spent in 2014-15. Majority of academies buy into this service so the de-delegated amount is topped up. The funding is based on 1.91 FTE which is £86,400 in total for maintained schools. Maintained Primary schools voted as follows:

**Primary**

Favour - 8

Abstained – 1

Against – 0

**Secondary**

No representation

5.1.2 Licenses – The DfE covers a number of countrywide blanket copyright licenses for all schools for which funding is centrally retained. There are still a number of licenses that are required to be purchased by schools and the LA purchases these on behalf of maintained schools from the de-delegated budget. The estimated amount to be held centrally for the blanket cover is £120,060 and the amount to be de-delegated is £1.04p per pupil which equates to £25,970 based on 2014-15 pupil numbers. Members of the Primary maintained schools voted as follows:

**Primary**

Favour - 10

Abstained – 0

Against – 0

**Secondary**

No representation

5.1.3 Maternity – This benefit is offered to schools in order that they can pool funding to claim maternity costs. This helps them when the costs do not fall unevenly. The costs cover schools with a grant of £4,206 and for teachers and £3,179 for non-teachers. The amount charged to schools is £8.50 per pupil. Members of the Primary maintained schools voted as follows:



**Primary**

Favour - 9

Abstained – 0

Against – 0

**Secondary**

No representation

**6.0 Any Other Business**

6.1 None

6.4 The Forum ended at 7.45pm



## Action Log

No.	Action	Completion Date	Owner
1	Obtain approval from the Secondary Maintained School representatives to de-delegate Maternity Grant, Trade Union Facilities and Licenses in 2015-16	Dec 14	SW (AP&RM)
2	Benchmarking of End to End process and cost per pupil in processing admissions application	Sept 14	SW
3	Update on VAT as to why the VA schools are not exempted from paying VAT on the governors' liability of capital funding and Academies are exempted.	Sept 14	SW
4	School Meals budget – officers to find out from other authorities if their schools have funding issue for meals that have to pureed and for kosher meals.	Sept 14	SW
5	Follow up with Legal on when the settlement agreement policy will be available to schools.	Sept 14	NT
6	Review of NEG 3&4 hourly rates	Dec 14/ Jan 15	Sue Gates
7	Update on funding the free entitlement for two year olds	Dec 14/ Jan 15	Sue Gates
8	Wembley Learning Zone – DSG Funding request for 2015-16	Dec 14/ Jan 15	John Galligan
9	De-Delegation - Free School Meals Eligibility Assessments	Dec 14/ Jan 15	Carmen Coffey
10	Schools Causing Concerns - DSG Funding request for 2015-16	Dec 14/ Jan 15	John Galligan
11	2015-16 Growth Funding and Pupils Out of School Places	Dec 14/ Jan 15	Carmen Coffey
12	Review of SEN Band 6	Dec 14/ Jan 15	Carmen Coffey
13	Review of CIN and CWD Funding	Jan 15	Sue Gates