

School Members

Governors: Jill Cochrane (Chair)*, Bob Stevenson*, Dave Lake, Veronica Kennard*, Pip Pinhorn*, Shahanur Khan*, Salma Mahbub and Bridget Cass*.

Headteachers: Gillian Kemp*, Lorraine Flanagan* (Vice-Chair), Sarah Helm*, Sheila Mouna*, Remi Atoyebi*, Ann O'Reilly*, Jemima Reilly*, Matthew Rayner*, Brenda Landers*, John Bradshaw* and Esther Holland*.

Non School Members:

Terry Bennett* (CE Diocese), Alison Arnaud (Tower Hamlets College)*, Joe Prendiville (City Gateway), Kim Arrowsmith (PVI EYs Providers), Alex Kenny* (Trade Union Rep) and Mahmudul Choudhury (Council of Mosques)

Observers: Cath Smith*

**indicates attendance*

Officers in attendance

Christine McInnes (Service Head for Education and Partnership), Bharat Jashapara (Schools Budget Manager), Sailesh Patel (Schools Finance Manager), Neville Murton (Service Head of Finance and Procurement), Runa Basit (Clerk)

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| 1. Apologies for absence | |
| Apologies were received from Dave Lake, Kim Arrowsmith and Debbie Jones. | |
| 2. Minutes of the meeting on 7 December 2016 and matters arising | |
| [correction] It was noted that Joan Harte had left the borough and was not in attendance at the last meeting. | |
| The minutes were agreed as a correct record. | |
| <u>Matters arising:</u> | |
| Sarah Helm enquired about the remit of the Early Years sub-group. Sailesh Patel said the remit for the group was to review the changes in the funding formula and offer clarifications for 2017/18 financial year. Sailesh Patel explained that the sub-group could make suggestions however any decision required will need to involve all schools. An additional meeting would be arranged for further discussion. It was noted that an application was made to the DfE to disapply the changes for Early Years. | |
| Forum members commented that the timescale to consider the changes was not sufficient and requested better communication from the LA in future. | |

3. Schools Budget 2017/18

Sailesh Patel presented the Schools Budget and said that a number of decisions need to be made at this meeting.

The report included the details of recommendations and timescales for decisions. The Schools Forum was invited to:

1) Decide whether the provision of £2.470m for pupil number growth contingency and the criteria for accessing it (Appendix A) was agreed.

2) Decide for Primary Schools (primary SF representatives only) whether each of the following services individually should be de-delegated from the maintained schools budget:

- Contingency (other than pupil number growth)
- Behaviour support service
- Support to underperforming ethnic minority groups (UPEG) and bilingual learners
- Free school meals eligibility
- Licences/subscriptions
- Staff costs supply cover (Appendix B)

3) Decide for Secondary Schools (secondary SF representatives only) whether each of the following services individually should be de-delegated from the maintained schools budget:

- Contingency (other than pupil number growth)
- Behaviour support services
- Support to UPEG and bilingual learners
- Free school meals eligibility
- Licences/subscriptions
- Staff costs supply cover (Appendix B)

4) Support the approach outlined for Early Years (Section 6).

5) Support the approach outlined for High Needs Pupils (Section 7).

6) Support the approach outlined for Central Provision (Section 8).

Sailesh referred to Table 1 (page 4) of the report which presented a high level view of the potential income and expenditure in the Schools Budget for 2017/18.

In reply to a question, Sailesh Patel clarified that the budget did not include the academies that were confirmed or were in the process of converting.

Sailesh advised that the total dedicated schools grant for 2017/18 was £350.337m. The components of the DSG 2017/18 were calculated in three blocks as outlined in Table 2 (page 5) in the report.

Brenda Landers asked, given the ESG funding cuts whether the LA was looking at how the work previously covered by the ESG will continue. Christine McInnes said that transformation and reconfiguration work was taking place. Brenda Landers said that

schools will need to decide whether services will be affordable as part of their budget planning.

Forum members further questioned the budget and asked why Table 1 and Table 2 elements of the DSG did not match. Sailesh explained that the blocks were not calculated in the same way.

Sailesh confirmed the minimum funding guarantee (MFG) remains at minus 1.5% per pupil.

Sailesh had circulated the funding matrix and the Schools Forums roles and responsibilities (hard copies were available at the meeting) for members reference.

Resolved – the Schools Forum requested information in a timely fashion from relevant departments, for clarity and transparency when planning the budget for 2018/19.

Sailesh Patel said the second phase of the National Funding Formula review consultation was taking place and urged colleagues to review and respond to the consultation.

The Schools Forum was asked to decide on the Delegation as set out on Appendix B De-delegation business cases for Schools Forum. Primary and Secondary school representatives were asked separately to decide on whether each of the services listed should be de-delegated from the maintained schools budget.

1 – Schools Specific Contingency

Resolved – Primary agreed to de-delegate for this service

Resolved – Secondary agreed to de-delegate for this service

2 – Free School Meals Eligibility

Resolved – Primary agreed to de-delegate for this service

Resolved – Secondary agreed to de-delegate for this service

3 – Licenses and Subscriptions

Resolved – Primary agreed to de-delegate for this service

Resolved – Secondary agreed to de-delegate for this service

4 – Supply staff cover

Resolved – Primary agreed NOT to de-delegate for this service

Resolved – Secondary agreed to de-delegate for this service

Alex Kenny said that inaccurate information was previously presented to Primary Heads and the consultation with Primary Heads was based on inaccurate information. Gill Kemp said that Alex Kenny was asked to provide further information which was circulated to all Heads and they were asked to vote on whether or not to de-delegate. Alex Kenny offered clarification and presented his views on why Primary schools should continue to de-delegate.

Headteacher representatives felt that given that they had consulted and obtained a decision from their phase colleagues, it was inappropriate to reconsider whether or not to de-delegate at this

Action:
Sailesh Patel

meeting. Primary representatives commented that whilst this was a difficult decision, Primary schools reached the decision on the information that was available to them.

Forum members asked whether it was possible to delay the decision to take into consideration further information. Sailesh Patel confirmed that a decision needs to be made at this meeting as a submission needs to be made to the DfE.

Alex Kenny further explained the importance of the service and the financial implication and requested that Primary Heads reconsider their decision.

Gill Kemp, said that as the Chair of the Primary Consultative she was representing Primary Headteacher colleagues and it was not appropriate to overturn the decision that was reached by a ballot.

Esther Holland said that as the Chair of the Secondary Consultative that Secondary Heads had decided to only de-delegate for this one year and requested further clarity and transparency ahead of the decision making process for next year.

Schools Forum members noted that Alex Kenny was a member of the Forum and therefore had the opportunity to present his case. However, other services being considered for de-delegation were not present at this meeting and were not able to present their case.

It was agreed that a model needs to be looked at how the work will be carried forward and charged separately for primary and secondary schools. Alternative options for the services covered by the Supply staff cover will be considered outside of this meeting.

The Chair requested more clarity and said that this should be provided in sufficient time for schools to consider and reach informed decision.

Christine McInnes said that traditionally Tower Hamlets was well funded and therefore schools were able to meet the de-delegation requirements and the LA was also able to cover costs for services which now would be provided through traded services. However, schools and the LA had to be more prudent in their budget planning due to the funding cuts.

5 – Ethnic Minority Attainment

Resolved – Primary agreed NOT to de-delegate for this service

Resolved – Secondary agreed NOT to de-delegate for this service

Headteacher reps requested that the NQT element be moved under a separate service. Christine McInnes will discuss this with relevant LA officers.

Action:
Christine
McInnes

6 – Behaviour Support

Resolved – Primary agreed NOT to de-delegate for this service

Resolved – Secondary agreed to de-delegate for this service

Primary reps requested for the Prevent and SIP elements under Behaviour Support to be provided through alternative method i.e. SLA.

Schools Forum members requested for future consideration these services should be split by services accessed by primary and secondary, for further clarity.

The Schools Forum considered the provision of £2.470m for pupil growth as outlined in Appendix A.

Terry Bennet proposed that the Forum agree the Pupil Growth Contingency. This was seconded by Ann O'Reilly.

Resolved – That the Schools Forum agreed the Pupil Growth Contingency.

4. Education Services Grant 2017/18

Bharat Jashapara presented the report on the Education Services Grant and explained that the Department for Education confirmed their intention to remove the Education Services Grant (ESG) and to move some of the funding for statutory services to the Dedicated Schools Budget and apply the de-delegation to the ESG General amount within the DSG.

The report outlines the level of budget needed to manage those statutory services.

The Schools Forum was asked to decide on whether:

- i) To retain centrally from the Dedicated Schools Grant an amount equivalent to £15 per pupil to fund the statutory services funded in the past from the retained element of the Education Services Grant.
- ii) The Schools Forum approves the de-delegation of the Central fund of the Education Services Grant.

Bharat presented the Appendix A, ESG retained duties. Bharat explained that the Education Services Grant money was made up of two elements: a general element which is referred to in the report as the ESG and Central Fund of £3.1m and a retained duties element of £0.6m. The retained funding rate for local authorities was a flat rate of £15 per pupil for all schools, which included academies.

The general element of the ESG will cease to exist from September 2017. The retained element was being consolidated into the DSG on an ongoing basis. These services will have both statutory and non-statutory functions.

Resolved – that the Schools Forum agreed to:

- i. To retain centrally from the Dedicated Schools Grant an amount equivalent to £15 per pupil to fund the statutory services funded in the past from the retained element of the Education Services Grant.
- ii. The de-delegation of the Central fund of the Education Services Grant.

5. Early Years 2017/18

Sailesh Patel presented the report. The purpose of the report was to update the Schools Forum on:

- national changes to Early Years funding to Local Authorities and providers
- Consult on the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) and inclusion fund for 3 and 4 year olds.
- Update the Schools Forum on the extension of the free childcare entitlement for eligible 3 and 4 year olds of working parents from 15 to 30 hours.
- Consult the Schools Forum on the Tower Hamlets funding rate changes for 2 year olds.
- Seek approval from the Schools Forum for 2017/18 centrally retained budgets

Sailesh highlighted that a new national funding formula for early years funding will be implemented from April 2017. A national consultation on the national funding formula undertaken by DfE concluded on 22nd September 2016. The response from the Government was published in December 2016. Operational guidance has been produced for Local Authorities.

Sailesh clarified that the proposals may change depending on the further clarity from the DfE.

Sarah Helm said there was a campaign taking place to raise awareness regarding the current funding arrangements and the possible impact which will mean that nurseries may become unsustainable. Sarah Helm expressed her concerns about losing outstanding provision and expertise within early years, should the proposed funding arrangements come into effect.

Schools Forum expressed their concern about the early years funding. Forum members also commented that the priority for working parents was not really relevant for Tower Hamlets residents.

Bridget Cass said that the current funding situation was making it difficult to plan the budget.

Gillian Kemp suggested that a modelling exercise, to give schools an indication on what funding levels they could expect would be really helpful. Sailesh Patel said that this would vary from school to school.

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| <p>Bharat said that he was in discussion with Newham and Hackney to see how they were planning to meet the changes in EYNFF.</p> <p>Christine McInnes said that an application had been made to the DfE. In the meantime, Headteachers and governors were asked to respond to the consultation and provide feedback on the likely impact on their schools.</p> <p>Christine will share the LAs response to the consultation.</p> <p>Sarah Helm requested for Tower Hamlets MPs and Councillors to get involved and support the nurseries.</p> <p>Resolved – the Schools Forum agreed to defer the following decisions to the next meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The allocation of 150k to the SEN inclusion fund under section 3.7. - The Central retained Budget within the Early Years Block under Section 5 <p>The Early Years Lead was invited to present at the Primary Heads consultative.</p> <p>Further discussion will take place at the Early Years sub-group meeting.</p> | <p>Action: Christine McInnes</p> |
| <p>6. Schools Budget Monitor 2016/17 This Item was deferred to the next meeting.</p> | |
| <p>7. AOB None</p> | |
| <p>8. Date of next meeting 8:30am, 22nd February / 1st March 2017 at the PDC, Bethnal Green</p> | |