

HILLINGDON SCHOOLS FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 22 September 2021 at 1pm via videoconferencing

Voting members

NAME	ORGANISATION	ATTENDANCE	TERM ENDS
Maintained Nursery (1)			
Ludmila Morris	McMillan Early Childhood Centre	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Maintained Primary - Schools (4)			
Rachel Anderson	Dr Triplett's School	PRESENT	Sep 2023
Duncan Greig	Breakspear Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2021
Kris O'Sullivan	Deanesfield Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Carly Rissen	Colham Manor	APOLOGIES	Sep 2024
Maintained Primary - Governors (4)			
John Buckingham	Glebe Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Jim Edgecombe (CHAIR)	Whiteheath Junior School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Tony Eginton	Minet Nursery & Infant School & Hillside Junior School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Phil Haigh	Cherry Lane Primary School & Meadow High School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Maintained Secondary (1)			
Liz Horrigan	Harlington School	PRESENT	Sep 2021
Maintained Special (1)			
John Goddard	Hedgewood School	PRESENT	Sep 2022
Academies (9)			
Aftab Ahmed	Guru Nanak Sikh Academy	PRESENT	Sep 2023
Peter Edgley	Bishopshalt	ABSENT	Sep 2024
Tracey Hemming	Middlesex Learning Partnership	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Nicola Kelly	Charville	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Helen Manwaring	Swakeleys School	PRESENT	Sep 2022
Catherine Mosdell	Frays Academy Trust	PRESENT	Sep 2023
David Patterson	Queensmead School	APOLOGIES	Sep 2023
Colin Tucker	Ryefield	APOLOGIES	Sep 2024
Sandra Voisey	Laurel Lane Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2023
Special Academies (1)			
Sudhi Pathak	Eden Academy Trust	PRESENT	Sep 2021
Alternative provision (1)			
Laurie Cornwell	The Skills Hub	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Private Voluntary & Independent Early Years Providers (2)			
Elaine Caffary	4 Street Nursery	APOLOGIES	Sep 2024
(vacant)			
14-19 Partnership (1)			
(vacant)			

Other attendees (non-voting)

Independent Non-Maintained Special School			
Debbie Gilder	Pield Heath School		NOT REQUIRED
Shadow Representative (Maintained Primary - Schools)			
Rachel Blake	Bishop Winnington-Ingram		NOT REQUIRED
Eleesa Dowding	Harmondsworth		NOT REQUIRED
Shadow Representative (Maintained Primary - Governor)			
Jo Palmer	Hillside Infant School and Hillside Junior School		NOT REQUIRED
Graham Wells	Colham Manor Primary School		PRESENT
Local Authority Officers			
Kate Boulter	Clerk		PRESENT
Vikram Hansrani	Assistant Director, SEND & Inclusion		PRESENT
Dan Kennedy	LA		PRESENT
Graham Young	Lead Finance Business Partner - School		PRESENT
Observers			
Liam McGillicuddy	Bishopshalt School		PRESENT

		ACTION
1.	<p>APOLOGIES</p> <p>Apologies were accepted and recorded in the attendance list (above). The Chair confirmed the meeting was quorate and could proceed to business.</p>	
2.	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 JUNE 2021</p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a correct record subject to the following corrections to the attendance list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jo Palmer had attended in place of John Buckingham • Rachel Blake was from Bishop Winnington-Ingram not Whiteheath Infant School 	
3.	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 JUNE 2021</p> <p>(a) TRAINING FOR SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERS</p> <p>The LA Finance Team and PH/JE would deliver training for any members who would like it. KB to coordinate interest and date.</p> <p>(b) SOCIAL CARE STRUCTURE</p> <p>This was deferred to the next meeting.</p> <p>(c) FUTURE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETINGS</p> <p>It had been agreed at the last meeting that the possibility of holding hybrid meetings would be explored. The Council did not have the technical facilities to accommodate hybrid meetings so it was AGREED that meetings would be held all in-person in a ventilated venue, or by Zoom if no suitable venue could be found.</p>	<p>KB</p> <p>DK</p> <p>GY/KB</p>
4.	<p>FEEDBACK FROM SUB-GROUPS</p> <p>There had been no meetings of the DSG/EY Group or High Needs Group since the last meeting. A meeting of the DSG Deficit Recovery Working Group had taken place which was discussed under Minute 6a.</p>	
5.	<p>ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION</p>	
5.1	<p>(a) GROWTH CONTINGENCY POLICY UPDATE (DISECONOMIES)</p> <p>The Forum considered the Growth Contingency Policy which had been updated to reflect the agreed arrangement for calculating diseconomies funding. The Forum commented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was unclear whether the calculation would work for all cases. • It was necessary to ensure the method did not enable a school to benefit from funding more than once. <p>The Forum AGREED that the policy would be considered in detail by the DSG/EY Group before the Forum made a decision on approval.</p> <p>(b) DSG 2022/23 FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INDICATIVE ALLOCATIONS</p> <p>The Forum considered a report which set out the key points from the government's announcements made in July 2021 which set out the schools, high needs, and central school services National Funding Formulae (NFF) for 2022/23. The provisional allocations for 2022/23 indicated the impact for Hillingdon would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A total Schools Block increase of 2.6% for Hillingdon compared with the 2021/22 baseline. This was broadly in line with the funding increase in 2021/22 and equated to approximately £6.4million additional funding. This did not include any assumed change for pupil growth/shrinkage. Provisional baseline funding rate per pupil would increase from £5,453 in 2021/22 to £5,616 in 2022/23. • A High Needs Block increase of 7.7% when compared with the 2021/22 baseline. This equated to approximately £3.9m additional funding. This did not include any assumed change for growth in special school numbers. • For the Central Services Block, an increase in the funding for ongoing responsibilities of 5.6%, which equated to additional funding of £99k. The funding for historic commitments would reduce by 20% which equated to £170k. • Early Years funding would return to the previous system of funding based on January 	<p>GY</p>

	<p>censuses. There was still no clarity on maintained Nursery School supplementary funding for 2022/23, and 2022/23 hourly rates were yet to be published. The DSG Deficit Recovery Plan had been updated with these figures.</p> <p>The Forum AGREED to consult stakeholders on the following questions and for the responses to be considered at the December meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should the core factors in the Hillingdon Funding Formula be increased by 3% in line with the increase in NFF rates? • Should we be moving the factor rates closer towards the NFF? 	GY
6.	INFORMATION ITEMS	
	<p>(a) DSG DEFICIT RECOVERY PLAN UPDATE</p> <p>Officers were due to meet with the DfE and ESFA on 29 September 2021 to continue discussions regarding the draft DSG Deficit Recovery Plan. The Forum discussed the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The aim was to agree an accurate and deliverable plan with the DfE/ESFA which would write off the deficit over the next five years assuming agreed targets were met. • The deficit was forecast to rise to £60million. Reaching an agreement with the DfE/ESFA and achieving the agreed targets would provide a stable future. If the Plan could not be agreed, or targets were not met, no additional funding would be provided and the deficit would remain. • High Needs was a significant growth area and two key elements of the Plan were developing additional special school places and improving the mainstream offer. • The first draft of the Recovery Plan submitted to the DfE/ESFA did not sufficiently demonstrate actions and tangible targets, and this was being worked on now. • Officers were working on modelling. The Chief Executive was chairing Project Board meetings and a number of workstreams were contributing to the plans. • Meetings of the Schools Forum DSG Deficit Recovery Plan Working Group were taking place and officers were attending meetings with other stakeholders such as SSPB, HASH, Primary Forum and SEND Strategy Group. • Officers anticipated that the DfE/ESFA would make a decision on the Plan within the next two to four months. • It was understood that LAs which had already agreed plans with the DfE/ESFA were providing quarterly updates to the DfE on their progress. • The actions set out within Hillingdon's Plan included policy decisions that would affect all schools. It was essential that there was communication and input with all stakeholders. • Members of the Forum commented that schools did not have a good understanding of the situation or the implications of the proposals. It was important to raise levels of understanding in schools, and for this to be done before the consultations on the 0.5% transfer and the 3% threshold closed. • Officers would deliver a communication and engagement plan in the autumn term. This should include school governors. • The Forum would require the latest data on number and percentage of pupils with EHCPs when it considered the consultation responses and made its decision. • A meeting of the DSG Deficit Working Group would be held on 4 October 2021 to discuss feedback from officers' meeting with the DfE/ESFA on 29 September 2021. The Forum members of the group were Jim Edgecombe, Phil Haigh, Liz Horrigan, Jenny Rigby, Duncan Greig and Tracey Hemming. <p>(b) DSG BUDGET MONITORING MONTH 4</p> <p>The Forum considered the Month 4 budget monitoring report 2021/22:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) monitoring position had an in-year overspend of £12,656K at Month 4, an increase of £5,328K on the budgeted deficit of £7,328K. • The overspend was due to ongoing pressures in the cost of High Needs placements, where due to a lack of capacity in borough, the number of independent placements had increased since the budget was set. In addition, the LA was increasingly seeing an uplift in the funding allocated to SEN placements due to a change in the level of need. 	<p>DK/GY</p> <p>GY</p>

	<p>The budget for High Needs was increased for 2021/22 to take account of projected growth, but it was projected that the budget would be significantly exceeded. When the £25,386K deficit brought forward from 2020/21 was taken into account, the cumulative deficit carry forward to 2022/23 was £38,042K.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The High Needs Block projected overspend at Month 4 was £5,175K. • There was £153K overspend on the Schools Block. The Forum had agreed to backdate growth contingency to 2018/19 for one secondary school which it retrospectively decided met the criteria for funding. This had resulted in overspend on the Schools block in 2021/22. • These figures had been built into the latest DSG Recovery Plan. • Three maintained schools ended 2020/21 in deficit. This was an improved position from the start of the year when the LA approved licensed deficits for five schools. • Two maintained schools would convert to academy status in September 2021. <p>(c) NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA 2022/23 CONSULTATION</p> <p>The Forum considered a report which summarised the proposals and possible implications of the DfE’s consultation on completing the reforms to the National Funding Formula (NFF), released on 8 July 2021. The consultation set out the move towards the ‘hard’ NFF and the proposed steps that would be taken to smooth the transition.</p> <p>The Forum AGREED that it would not submit its own response to the consultation. Officers would circulate the LA’s response.</p> <p>(d) SCHOOL PROVISION FOR AFGHAN REFUGEES</p> <p>DK reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some schools in the Heathrow area were being disproportionately impacted by admissions applications from asylum seeker children, many of whom were resident temporarily and never took up the place or left after a short time. • One school had processed 66 applications between September 2020 and September 2021, of which 29 children did not start. This affected schools’ funding calculated at census day. • LA Admissions had raised the matter with the DfE to see whether additional funding was available for schools whose funding was impacted by this. The DfE had responded that the Schools Forum should have provision within its budget for schools experiencing pressure. <p>The Forum commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refugee children attending school commonly needed additional support in other areas such as uniform, devices, translation and signposting to medical support. • This issue should be included in discussion with the DfE around the DSG Deficit Recovery Plan as an example of a pressure over which schools had no control. • The Skills Hub was running interim provision for young people without a school place and would assist if needed. <p>The Forum AGREED that officers would produce a proposal for compensating affected schools, for the Forum’s consideration.</p>	<p>GY</p> <p>DK/GY</p> <p>DK/GY</p>
7.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>None.</p>	

The meeting closed at 2.45pm.