

Westminster Schools Forum

Date and time of meeting: Monday 11th January 2016, 4.45 – 6:00pm

Location: St Augustine's CE Secondary School

Representing	Name	Organisation	Attendance
Primary Schools	6 Members		
Primary Head	Sandra Tyrrell (ST)	Christchurch Bentinck Primary	Present
Primary Head	Joffy Conolly (JC)	Soho Parish	Present
Primary Head	Mary Wilson (MW)	St Mary of the Angels Primary	Apologies
Primary Governor	Aslam Merchant (AM)	Hallfield Primary	Present
Primary Governor	Andrew Garwood-Watkins (AGW)	St Stephens	Present
Primary Governor	Ti Chen (TC)	Christchurch Bentinck Primary	Present
Secondary schools	1 Member		
Secondary Head	Eugene Moriarty (EM)	St Augustine's High	Present
Academies	5 members		
Secondary Non Recoupment Academy Principal	Vacancy		
Secondary Recoupment Academy Head	Kat Pugh (KP)	St Marylebone	Present
Secondary Recoupment Academy	Vacancy		s
Alternative Provision Academy	Nathan Crawley-Lyons (NCL)	TBAP	Apologies
Primary Recoupment Academy Head	Louisa Lochner (LL)	Gateway Academy	Present
	Lucian Boyd-Harte	Quintin Kynaston Academy	Observer
Maintained Nursery Schools	1 member		
Nursery Head	Sylvie Gambell (SG)	Mary Paterson Nursery School	Present
Special Schools	1 member		
Special Schools Head	Olivia Meyrick (OM)	Westminster Special Schools	Present
Early Years (PVI)	1 member		
	John Trow-Smith	LEYF	Present
14-19 Representative	1 member		
	Vacant		
Officers in Attendance			
Tri Borough Director of Finance & Resources	Dave McNamara (DMc)	Tri Borough Children Services	Present
Tri Borough Director of Resources	Andrew Tagg (AT)	Tri Borough Children Services	Present
Tri Borough Director of Schools	Ian Heggs (IH)	Tri Borough Children Services	Apologies
Tri Borough Assistant Director Special Educational Needs & Vulnerable Children	Alison Farmer (AF)	Tri Borough Children Services	Apologies
Tri Borough Interim Schools Finance Manager	Mala Dadlani (MD)	Tri Borough Children Services	Present
Tri Borough Clerking Service Manager and Clerk to WSF	Owen Rees (OR)	Tri Borough Children Services	Present

Item		Action
1.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND</p> <p>Apologies for absence are set out above.</p>	
2.	<p>CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP</p>	
	<p>The Forum welcomed Joffy Conolly to the Forum and thanked Ann Townsend for her work as a member</p> <p>The Clerk reported that the two vacancies were previously reserved for non recoupment and recoupment (one each) academy representatives. Following changes to the DfE good practice guidance and to the way in which the formula operates made by the EFA, the distinction between non recoupment and recoupment academies would no longer appear necessary. Officers had asked for confirmation from the DfE on this, but have received no response. The local authority would therefore be writing to all academies confirming that it is happy for both vacancies to be open to all academies, and that while the guidance is clear that academies should determine their own process for election, to offer any facilitation that they might wish if an election is required. The same advice would be followed should either of the current Academy members resign or reach the end of their term.</p>	
3.	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 8th OCTOBER 2015</p>	
	<p>RESOLVED</p>	
	<p>The Schools Forum agreed the minutes of its meeting on the 8th October 2015 as true and accurate.</p>	
4.	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</p>	
	<p>It was noted that the School Organisation Strategy, Nursery Strategy and the report on Savings within Children Services would be presented at the March meeting.</p>	DM/AT
	<p>RESOLVED</p>	
	<p>That the matters arising be noted.</p>	
5.	<p>FEEDBACK FROM SCHOOLS FUNDING CONSULTATION</p>	
	<p>AT introduced the report. He noted that the outcome of the consultation had not been sufficiently in favour of within the formula, and that there would need to be further work from May and June on arrangements going forward. It was clarified that the decision to make an application to lift the MFG rested with the local authority. DM noted that WCC would also take into account the impact of any change on specific institutions and the DfE's likely position, and that, in the light of the consultation outcome, an immediate review of MFG within the formula would not occur.</p> <p>The Forum discussed the potential impact of the National Funding Formula on the formula. Officers noted that consultation on the introduction of the formula would not begin until February, and that there was no information on the phasing or cushioning of any change. It was noted that while the factors would remain, there was the possibility of reduced block funding.</p> <p>The Forum discussed the role of the Schools Funding Working Party in light of the consultation response. It was agreed that a working party which could look in detail at proposals and make a recommendation to the Schools Forum was welcome. It was agreed that clear terms of reference were needed, and that any decision on changes to the Formula, on allocation of resources or on consultation was subject to agreement from the Schools Forum. It was noted that the approach to consultation was key, and that officers accepted that improved timetabling was required in terms of the submission of papers to the Forum to allow for consultation with constituent groups.</p>	

	It was noted that WCC was required to submit the APT Tool in the immediate future, but that allocations of funds outside the formula could be referred to the working party.	
	RESOLVED	
	<p>The Schools Forum noted the contents of the report and ratified the decision not to proceed with an application to remove the Minimum Funding Guarantee, and</p> <p>3.2 To request that officers, with the input of the working party draw up a terms of reference for the ongoing role of the schools funding working group and its decision making powers for submission to the Schools Forum.</p> <p>3.3 To agree the governance, reporting and timetable for the formula funding review</p> <p>3.4 To continue the development of the new schools funding model to be implemented for the financial year 2017/18.</p>	
6.	COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW ANNOUNCEMENTS	
	<p>AT introduced the report. He reported that while modelling appeared to show a shift in funding from inner London, there were special factors which WCC with other affected local authorities were raising with the DfE. Transition arrangements were unknown at the date of the meeting.</p> <p>AT noted that the impact of the reduction in Education Services Grant would reduce the services that the local authority could undertake. The DfE had undertaken to remove statutory duties in line with the reduction in funding, but these had not been specified at the date of the meeting.</p>	
	RESOLVED	
	That the report be noted	
7.	DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2015/16 MONITORING AND GRANT UPDATE	
	<p>AT introduced the report, noting that the projected year-end balance was approximately £4.6 million, but that the in-year underspend was £326,000. In response to a question from a Forum member, it was noted that the £4.6 million had chiefly derived from unspent 2 year old funding, and that it was appropriate to use this to fund capital projects to expand that offer. In response to a question regarding the level of reserves required,</p> <p>AT also reported on the introduction of the revised system for High Needs returns. He noted that the 40% of schools had not returned in the previous term, and asked members to raise this with their constituent groups. The Forum welcomed the increased frequency with which returns were sought.</p> <p>In response to a question regarding the funding of full-time nursery places offered prior to the withdrawal of funding and funded as a result, AT undertook to check that these had been removed for the following financial year.</p>	
	RESOLVED	
	That the report be noted.	
8.	DSG 2016/17 AND LOCAL SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA	
	<p>MD introduced the report. She noted that the amalgamation of Non-Recoupment Academies into the Formula would increase overall cash received, but would lead to pressure from in-year growth. She also noted that funding to the High Needs Block would be adjusted geographically, and based on institutions within an area rather than populace. She noted that there had been significant falls in the</p> <p>She noted that the APT tool would use the values previously agreed. She reported that there had been a net increase in pupil numbers, driven by secondaries, and that meeting the costs arising from this would absorb a significant proportion of the £2million which had not been allocated to the</p>	

	<p>Formula in the previous year, with £738,000 remaining to be allocated. WCC proposed to allocate this to ensure that all Primary Pupils received at least £5,000 in funding; it also proposed that £450,000 be allocated to the Falling Rolls Fund. In response to a question from a Forum member, MD clarified that without using the £2million to meet the growth required, capping and scaling would be required, which the Forum has previously rejected as an approach.</p> <p>The Forum agreed the submission of the APT Tool, and asked that the Working Party examine the allocation of the funds remaining and the allocation to the Falling Rolls Fund.</p>	
	RESOLVED	
	<p>The Forum noted the contents of the report, and agreed the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The submission of the APT tool as outlined in this report. • Requested that the Schools Forum Working Party bring forward a recommendation on the allocation of the funds not allocated to the Formula to the March meeting. • Consider if any of the anticipated carried forward funds should be allocated to schools, as a one off measure. 	
9.	FALLING ROLLS 2016/17	
	<p>AT introduced the report, noting that the purpose was to preserve capacity within schools with a view to future need. In response to a question from a Forum member, MD confirmed that the decision to establish a Falling Rolls Fund was a local one, taken with the aim of preserving capacity in the system.</p>	
	RESOLVED	
	That the Schools Forum Working Party be asked to consider the establishment of a Falling Rolls Fund.	
10.	EARLY YEARS PUPIL PREMIUM FUNDING 2015-16	
	<p>AT introduced the report, noting that the papers proposed the easiest possible way of issuing the funds to individual schools, with funding issued based on IDACCI for 1 year, and with the introduction of individual claims necessary from the conclusion of that period. AT confirmed that retrospective payments would be allocated to providers based on previous years' data. Payments would be made on the basis of £100 per term.</p> <p>JTS suggested that a link to the 2 year old offer might be a useful proxy. AT agreed to contact JTS to discuss payment schedules for PVI's.</p> <p>In response to a question from JTS, AT confirmed that there had been turbulence in the IDACCI measures which would be reflected in funding received in future.</p>	AT
	RESOLVED	
	<p>That the following be approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) For maintained schools and academies, making payments for this financial year on the basis of eligible FSM recorded by schools for Nursery pupils. (b) For other Early Year providers collection of information from all Early Years providers from the Jan 2016 census with National Insurance Numbers for any claims to be made through the national eligibility checking service. (c) For the October 2015 census and PVI providers payments to be based upon an IDACI proxy measure. (d) Payment being made by the Schools Finance team on receipt of the results each term. (e) Backdated arrangements for October 2015 and May 2015. 	

11.	CLOSURE OF ACCOUNTS	
	AT introduced the report, which set out the deadlines for the closure of accounts for 2015-16. He noted the benefits of the early closure, and reported that officers would work with schools.	
	RESOLVED	
	That the deadlines set out in the report be noted.	
12.	DIRECTORS REPORT, INCLUDING MANAGED SERVICES AND SCHOOL MEALS	
	DM noted that the 3 authorities had been notified by Ofsted of the Children's Service Inspection, which would commence later in the week. DM noted that BT would be attending a meeting of the Council's Audit Committee to discuss the Managed Services programme later in the week. DM reported that the School Meals contract was going through Governance within the Council and was scheduled for sign off by Councillor Chalkley a week after the meeting. He reported that significant savings had been archived for almost all schools.	
	RESOLVED	
	That the report be noted.	
13.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
	7 March 2016 at St Marylebone School 6 June 2016	