

LEWISHAM SCHOOLS FORUM



Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 17th May 2012

In Civic Suite

Membership (Quorum = 40% i.e. 8)

✓ = present ✗ = absent

		Attendance
Primary School Headteachers		
Irene Cleaver	Athelney	✓
Steve Davies	Coopers Lane	✗
Liz Booth	Dalmain	Apologies
Paul Moriarty	Good Shepherd	✓
Helen Johnston	Launcelot	Apologies
Nursery School Headteacher		
Nikki Oldhams	Chelwood	✓
Secondary School Headteachers		
Anne Potter	Addey & Stanhope	Apologies
Bob Ellis	Conisborough College	Apologies
Erica Pienaar (Chair)	Prendergast	Apologies
Carolyn Unsted	Sydenham	✗
Special School Headteacher		
Tim Stokes	Pendragon	Apologies
Primary & Primary Special School Governors		
Keith D'Wan	Athelney	Apologies
Brian Lymbery (Vice-Chair)	Lucas Vale	✓
Mark Simons	Coopers Lane	Apologies
Secondary & Secondary Special School Governors		
Simon Nundy	Trinity	Apologies
Nick Day	Sydenham	✗
Academies		
Declan Jones	Haberdashers' Aske's	✓
14-19 Consortium Rep		
Dympna Lennon	Addey & Stanhope	✓
Early Years Rep		
Diocesan Authorities		
Rev Richard Peers	Southwark of Diocesan Board of Education	✗
Michael Cullinane	Archdiocese of Southwark Schools Commission	✗

Observers	
Frankie Sulke	Executive Director For Children & Young People
Alan Docksey	Head of Resources
Kim Knappett	ALT (standing in for Martin Powell-Davies NUT)
Also Present	
Dave Richards	CYP Group Finance Manager
Hayden Judd	Principal Accountant School's Team
Chris Threlfall	Head of Education Development
Sue Tipler	Head of Standards and Achievement
Denise Castle	Clerk
Janita Aubun	Schools Accountant

Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Erica Pienaar, Liz Booth, Helen Johnston, Anne Potter, Bob Ellis, Tim Stokes, Keith D'Wan, Mark Simons, John Russell, Conrad Hall, Jan Shapiro and Adam Higgins.

1. Minutes of Meeting held on 1st March 2012.

The minutes were agreed and signed by the Vice-Chair.

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes that were not covered by the agenda.

3. Consultation on School funding reform : Next steps towards a fairer system

Alan Docksey presented the background to the consultation on school funding reform. The latest consultation is the third paper that has been issued and runs from 26th March until 21st May. The period for consultation does not last the usual 12 weeks limiting the time that Schools Forum has to consider the proposals. The shorter timeframe will enable the DFE to make an earlier announcement in the summer about the outcome to achieve deadlines for April 2013. The changes proposed are complex and technical and the DFE are proposing to introduce a national funding formula during the next Spending Review period (2015-16). 29 factors are currently used in the local funding formula and this will be reduced to 10 for 2013-2014.

The main concern was one of timing, not only will the new formula be radically different but Lewisham will need to make a return to the Education Funding Agency at the end of October detailing the new simplified formula and its operation in Lewisham. Forum agreed to set-up a working group to meet during June to look at the current formula factors that are no longer permissible under the new regulations and to consider how Lewisham converts these into new allowable factors. The group will also look at how some of the current central services that have to be delegated are allocated to schools. It will then be possible to model and to determine what level of turbulence there might be and to agree transitional arrangements.

Forum expressed that the following concerns should be included in the response:-

Proposal to switch the formula grant that is currently paid to councils for some education services into the schools funding system. The top slicing of this grant for Academies before it is devolved to authorities is unfair as authorities have varying numbers of Academies.

Small schools and infant schools may face financial difficulties with the proposed lump sum across all schools. Primary and secondary phases have different fixed costs.

Forum agreed that there are different levels of support between reception and Key Stage 1 and they supported the current differential of £800 in Lewisham. This level of funding would enable the £10,000 threshold for High Needs to be more easily managed by primary schools

High level funding for pupils and students: This is perhaps the most radical of the proposals within the consultation document and the document implies that there will be further consultation in this area. Forum wanted to see more detail from DFE before it could be clear as to the implications of the changes.

The meeting addressed the proposals around the future role of the schools forum and that the reduced potential for decision making and the possibility of electoral blocks within the forum for voting would mitigate against the collective decision making that takes place now.

Action : Dave Richards to set up a Sub Group

4. School Budgets

The report updated Forum on the latest budget position following the setting of schools budgets at the last meeting on 1st March and provided further information on the recommendations to allocate the temporary funding of £1m.

Forum agreed the recommendations to allocate the £1m funding to:-

1. Fund the capital cost of bulge classes with an allocation of £500k
2. Support school improvement activity through federation arrangements with an increased allocation of £220k.
3. Assist the increasing number of schools managing capital projects with an additional allocation of £50k.
4. Allocate £230k to all schools through the pupil led element of the formula on a one-off basis.

Decision : Agreed by Chairs action

Capital

Lewisham will be opening 25 bulge classes in September 2012, and Lewisham is the second highest in the country. This has significant capital implications for schools. Lewisham currently has a shortfall of £15.5m to September 2015. Secondary schools are looking at the future needs of meeting pupil numbers and some secondary are proposing expansion to meet these needs.

Postal Services

Forum noted the response to the survey conducted by Alan Docksey regarding the options to reduce the costs of the Customer Services SLA which provides a daily mail service for schools.

The Chair of the Schools Forum approved, under delegation, that a reduction of service to an alternate day service was the preferred option. It was also noted that the SLA would increase by inflation of 5% in line with other SLAs.

Decision : Agreed by Chairs action

5. Balance Control Mechanism

Dave Richards presented the report on the school's carry forward position for 2011-2012. Forum were asked to note that balances have increased to £13.4m, from £8.7 in 2010-2011. Members expressed concern about increased levels of

balances and asked for a more detailed report to be brought back to the next meeting to enable members to make decisions on whether claw-backs from the balances were justifiable. Balances should not include Federation allocations or collaborative funding. If schools are saving for a particular expenditure, this should also be included in the report. Forum asked for the Academies balances be included also in next report.

Decision : Dave Richards to present report on 12/07/12

6. Any other business

None.

Date of next meeting 12th July 2012

SCHOOL FORUM ACTION SUMMARY – from School Forum held on 17th May 2012

ITEM	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	OFFICER(S) RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION	OUTCOME / CURRENT POSITION
4	Sub Group to be set up for consultation on formula changes	Dave Richards	
5	Balance Control Mechanism report	Dave Richards	

SCHOOL FORUM ACTION SUMMARY – from School Forum held on 1st March 2012

ITEM	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	OFFICER(S) RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION	OUTCOME / CURRENT POSITION
4	Primary and Secondary Head volunteers required for School Therapies consultation	Warwick Tomsett	