

Minutes (*Draft*)

Schools Forum

Notes of meeting on 18 September 2024

Members:

Paul Lufkin (PL)	Primary School rep (Wimbledon Park) - Chair
Steve Donegan (SD)	Primary School rep (Malmesbury) – Vice Chair
Rachel Shepheard-Walwyn (RSW)	PVI rep (Montessori Children’s House)
Adrian Laing (AL)	Secondary School rep (Wimbledon College)
Martin Roughley (MR)	Primary School rep (Cranmer)
Emma Greer (EG)	Primary School rep (Pelham)
Carla Chander (CC)	PRU School rep (Melrose)
Alun Evans (AE)	Academies rep (Benedict Primary)

In Attendance:

Elizabeth Fitzpatrick (EF)	LBM CLLF – Director for Education and Early Help
Christina Pace (CP)	LBM CLLF -Director of Strategy, Commissioning and Partnerships
Tom Procter (TP)	LBM CLLF – Interim Director of Strategy, Commissioning and Partnerships and Head of Contracts and School Organisation
Andrew Good (AG)	LBM CLLF – Finance
Laura Byrnes (LB)	LBM CLLF – Strategic Lead
Collette Levingston (CL)	LBM CLLF – Finance
Jayne Ward (JW)	LBM CLLF – Finance
Patricia Kearney (PK)	LBM CLLF - Note taker

Apologies:

Fr Simon Peat (FSP)	Primary School Governor rep (St Mary’s)
Chris Roberts (CR)	Secondary School Governor rep (Ricards Lodge)
Allison Jones	LBM CLLF – Head of Service
Jacqueline Hyland (JH)	16-19 rep (Rutlish)
Clare Dudman (CD)	LBM CLLF – Head of School Improvement
Kirsten Taylor (KT)	Secondary School rep (Raynes Park High School)

1	Welcome and introductions – Paul Lufkin
	PL welcomed everyone and noted apologies. Christina Pace was welcomed in her new role.
2	Minutes from previous meeting – Paul Lufkin
	Actions from last minutes were reviewed and the minutes of the previous meeting were agreed for accuracy.

3	Confirmation of membership / constitution
	<p>EF noted the need to confirm or replace members whose terms have ended or are ending soon, specifically mentioning the special school governor and secondary governor roles. This action is necessary to ensure the forum's membership remains current and representative.</p> <p>JH is unable to continue with membership in her role.</p> <p>Action: Contact DE and LM to confirm their continuation or replacement for their roles in the Schools Forum. (EF)</p>
4	Outline of year's work
	<p>PL shared the outline of the 5 meetings scheduled for the year, which will be a blend of online and in person.</p>
5	Training: key roles and responsibilities
	<p>AG shared a presentation as way of an induction for new members and a refresh for current members. The presentation covered:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Introduction (and refresh) of School Forum meetings Schools' Forum Role, Powers and Operation School Funding System</p> <p>Schools' Forum was established by the Education Act 2002 and is a public meeting. The Government wanted effective partnership through the country and to ensure that schools in the area have a voice in range of matters directly relevant to schools funding.</p> <p>The national funding formula refers to broadly the way the money for each school is calculated centrally, but there are certain elements which are still under Schools' Forum consideration.</p> <p>De-delegation is the collective agreement by schools to pool together to buy a service e.g. tree pruning and tree maintenance. Effectively what schools choose to do is pass money back up for schools to buy those services on behalf of schools.</p> <p>Working groups: The DSG Sub Group is the High Needs sub working group, the membership of this group is PL, AL, CC and KT.</p>
6	Local Authority Monitoring and Brokering Grant proposal
	<p>EF introduced a proposal to consult on proposals to support school improvement services due to the removal of the LAMB grant by the DfE.</p> <p>Impact of LAMB Removal: The removal of the LAMB grant by the DfE has led to significant funding challenges for school improvement services, prompting the need for a consultation to explore viable solutions to sustain these essential services.</p>

	<p>The proposal aims to address funding shortfalls in school improvement services, with options including retaining current funding levels, increasing de delegated amounts, or reallocating funds from the school's partnership.</p> <p>Feedback from MR, SD, and EG indicated a preference for reallocating funds from the school's partnership to support school improvement.</p> <p>The discussion highlighted the need for a strategic approach to funding school improvement services, considering the changing educational landscape and the impact of government policy shifts on local authority resources.</p> <p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with a broader group of schools through the annual DSG consultation exercise regarding the potential increase of the Local Authority Monitoring and Brokering Grant. (EF) • Schedule a session at the next strategic primary heads meeting to discuss school improvement funding and DSG delegation. (EF)
7	DSG Safety Valve update / feedback from subgroup
	<p>TP provided an update on the DSG Safety Valve following the recent meeting of the sub group. The DfE continued to acknowledge the efforts made by the local authority in managing the high needs block, but the financial targets set under the safety valve agreement are not being met due to ongoing funding pressures (only a two percent uplift to the High Needs Block, in the context of ongoing pressures including 5% increase to teachers' salary, which is unfunded for non maintained schools) . This situation reflects a broader national issue of underfunding in special needs education.</p>
8	General updates
	<p>Brief verbal updates were provided on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25/26 national funding formula • Disapplication (Safety Valve) • Scheme of Finance • Schools' deficit budgets
9	Election of Chair
	<p>PL will continue as the chair for the current academic year, with SD and AL as potential stand-ins for meetings PL cannot attend.</p>
10	AOB – All
	<p>The next Schools Forum meeting is 13 November 2024</p>