

LEWISHAM SCHOOLS FORUM



Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 20th March 2014

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

✓ = present

✗ = absent

		Attendance
Primary School Headteachers		
Irene Cleaver	Athelney	✓
Steve Davies	Coopers Lane	✓
Liz Booth	Dalmain	✓
Paul Moriarty	Good Shepherd	✗
Lisa Pearson	Torridon Infants	✗
Michael Roach	John Ball	Apologies
Nursery School Headteacher		
Nikki Oldhams	Chelwood	Apologies
Secondary School Headteachers		
Anne Potter	Addey & Stanhope	✓
Bob Ellis	Conisborough College	Apologies
David Sheppard	Leathersellers Federation	✓
Carolyn Unsted (Chair)	Sydenham	✓
Special School Headteacher		
Lynne Haines	Greenvale	✓
Pupil Referral Unit Headteacher		
Liz Jones	Abbey Manor	Apologies
Primary & Special School Governors		
Keith D'Wan	Athelney	✓
Erica Pienaar	John Ball	Apologies
Mark Simons	Coopers Lane	✗
Secondary & Secondary Special School Governors		
Simon Nundy	Trinity	✗
James Pollard	Addey & Stanhope	✓
VACANT	Special School	
Academies		
Declan Jones	Haberdashers' Aske's	Apologies
16-19 Consortium Rep		
Theresa Williams	LeSoCo	Apologies
Early Years Rep		
Cathryn Kinsey	Clyde Nursery	✗
Diocesan Authorities		
Rev Richard Peers	Southwark Diocesan Board of Education	✗
Stephen Bryan	Education Commission	Apologies

Also Present	
Hayden Judd	Principal Accountant – Schools Team
Alan Docksey	Head of Resources
Sue Tipler	Head of Standards and Achievement
Martin O'Brien	Sustainable Resources Group Manager
Dave Richards	CYP Group Finance Manager
Janita Aubun	Clerk
Kim Knappett	Teacher Unions (ALT)
Matthew Eady	Service Unit Manager – Estate Management

Apologies for Absence

An apology was received from Michael Roach, Nikki Oldhams, Bob Ellis, Theresa Williams, Liz Jones, Erica Pienaar, Declan Jones, Stephen Bryan & Frankie Sulke.

1. Minutes of Meeting held on 12th December 2013

The minutes were agreed and signed by the Chair.

2. Matters Arising

No matters arising.

3. Energy Policy

Martin O'Brien presented the Council's Energy Policy report 2014 -18 to Forum for invitation to comment and for approval.

Forum discussion regarding a mild winter and its implications. Suggestion also for widely publicised data to be made available on energy consumption. Martin O'Brien to supply this data for September 2014 Forum.

Recommendations were agreed by Forum which included:

- Target of 20% reduction in annual carbon emissions from buildings across the Council by March 2018.
- Target of 20% reduction in carbon emissions per pupil for schools by March 2018.

4. Catering

Catering Contract and Universal Free Meals Reports – both presented by Matthew Eady to Forum for discussion.

- The Catering Contract report is a copy of the Mayor and Cabinet Report 19 March 2014 which is excluded from the press and public. In summary, all contracts relating to the provision of school meals expire April 2015. The Council has started the process for procuring a contractor to deliver school meals from May 2015 with a timetable set out in line with OJEU legislation requirements.
- Universal Free Meals report – Forum were invited to give their views on the planned price increase of paid meals to KS2 pupils and above. Dave Richards explained the impact of funding government grant being set at £2.30 and the reduction in recharge to schools for contract costs.

Recommendation that Forum note the report, and this was agreed.

5. Budget Monitoring

Report presented by Dave Richards for Forum discussion on the budget monitoring position of the central budgets within the DSG at end January and the schools budget monitoring returns at end December 2013.

School Balances - Indications are that the carry forward will be around £14m. Dave Richards will bring an up to date position to next Forum.

Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) – Lewisham did not meet the Standard last year. Forum were requested that they remind schools to return any outstanding which were due by 31 March 2014.

Mutual Funds - no change since last Forum.

Recommendations agreed by Forum:

- Forum note the report.
- Forum agree to transfer £362k new funding for delivery of the 2 year old entitlement to the early years block.

6. Budget Setting 2014/15

Report presented by Alan Docksey and Dave Richards to update the Forum on the final budget settlement and to agree the approach to completing the individual school budget return required by the DFE.

Issues discussed:

- Forum informed that the settlement for the schools block was broadly in line with expectations; schools budgets issued with funding rates fixed at the same level as the 2013/14 funding rates. The High Needs Block settlement was still outstanding.
- Big Lottery – bid being led by the Children’s Society supported by the local authority and CYP partner, which if successful, could mean extra funding between £30 - £50M over the next 10 years. The decision to provide support to the project of £200K was confirmed.
- Year 10 & 11 Students – 40 students in college and therefore not included on a school roll, consequently not funded in schools block. Proposal to take the funding from the high needs block was agreed but the issue of the missing students will be discussed with the Secondary Heads Consultative.

Capital Funding:

Alan Docksey informed Forum that The Department for Education have confirmed the devolved formula funding rates. They are as follows:-

	Per Pupil	Lump Sum
Nursery / Primary	£11.25	£4,000
Secondary	£16.88	£4,000
Special	£33.75	£4,000

The allocation for each local authority and VA school is based on the relative proportion of DFC paid to the schools in the respective local authority. Lewisham will pursue with the DfE how they make their allocations for Basic Need as there appears to be disparity between Boroughs in terms of when demand for places is identified and funded. .

Chair requested an update on the situation for September's Forum.

7. Cash Advances

Report presented by Hayden Judd to agree the re-profiling of cash advances to schools from 2014/15, so that the majority of a school's cash advance is advanced in April.

- To reduce the total number of cash advances (both scheduled and ad hoc), by providing more cash at the start of the year.
- The April 2014 cash advance would be equivalent to the level of spend from the school's bank account in the whole of the 2013/14.
- School bank balances would be reviewed in January 2015 and any additional advances required would be made.

Forum agreed all recommendations.

8. Scheme of Delegation and Schools Finance Manual

Scheme of Delegation

- Adopt the changes to the Scheme as published by the DfE in that only Forum members representing maintained schools have a role in the approval of scheme changes.
- Schools can spend their budgets on pupils who are on the roll of other maintained schools including academies.
- The LA can charge costs to a school's budget where support has not been made, by the school, for a low need or high need SEN pupil.

Schools Finance Manual

To raise the purchasing thresholds:

Required For Best Value	Proposed
No Quotes Required	£0 – £10,000

3 Quotes Required	£10,001 - £25,000
4 Quotes Required	£25,001 – £50,000
Tender	£50,001 – £100,000
Tender With LA Approval	over £100,000

Forum agreed the above recommendations.

9. Traded Services

Report presented by Alan Docksey – a paper which looked at the report which is being considered by the Children and Young People Select Committee. The report provided information on the services traded with schools and the work being undertaken to look at the future shape, level, and charges for services to be provided.

The report highlighted that Traded services will continue to do their SLA work until further notice.

The contents of the report were noted by Forum.

10. Items For Information

Annual Internal Audit Report:

- This informative paper provided Forum with an overview of the findings and recommendations from the schools internal audit work undertaken in 2012/13.

The contents of the paper were discussed and officers were asked to continue to ensure governors were made aware of the recommendations that were being made by the auditors.

Health & Safety Audit:

- This report provided a summary of the H&S audit work, their key findings and recommendations. Appendix A & B gave a detailed breakdown by school to aid managing health and safety.

Forum discussed and noted the report.

Absence Report

- An absence update report was discussed at Forum. This discussed the fact that at Schools Forum in September, it was noted that there was a significant level of absence reported under the category 'details not provided'. To address, this the Corporate Council has set up a list of 15 wider but clearer reasons for absence with a letter being sent to schools before Easter to explain the reasons.

This report was noted.

11. Any Other Business

Discussion about Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Is a safeguarding issue and employment issue and that some school staff are not presenting their DBS clearances to the LA when requested as part of ensuring they are Safe to Recruit. Heads agreed to follow up with relevant staff when notified.

Kim Knappett recommended an on-line system which could be utilised once trained. Alan Docksey confirmed the Authority are in the process of introducing an on-line system.

Alan also suggested staff on Lewisham payroll's pay be stopped if they do not produce their clearance when asked for and Heads were supportive of this.

Meeting closed 6.30pm

Date of next meeting 19 June 2014

SCHOOLS FORUM ACTION SUMMARY – from schools forum 20th March 2014

ITEM	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	OFFICER(S) RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION	OUTCOME/CURRENT POSITION
3. Energy Policy	Data on energy consumption to be produced.	Martin O'Brien	To be reviewed at September 2014 Forum