

# LEWISHAM SCHOOLS FORUM



## Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 25th September 2014

Membership (Quorum = 40% i.e. 9)

✓ = present

✗ = absent

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

<b>Also Present</b>	
Frankie Sulke	Executive Director
Alan Docksey	Head of Resources & Performance
Dave Richards	CYP Group Finance Manager
Diane Parkhouse	Schools-HR
Nicholas Sawyerr	Clerk
Martin Powell-Davis	Teachers Union
Martin O'Brien	Sustainable Resources Group Manager
Suzanne Wallis	Energy Efficiency Officer
Jane Miller	Deputy Director Public Health

## **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Declan Jones, Stephen Bryan, Keith D'Wan & Liz Jones.

### **1. Minutes of Meeting held on 19th June 2014**

The minutes were agreed and signed by the Chair.

### **2. Matters Arising**

#### Schools Expansion Programme

AD informed the Forum that the DfE have published the draft School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2014. The regulations are now in conflict to the plan proposed expansion at Greenvale. Alternative models of expansion at the schools are being considered.

#### Single Status Appeals

DP informed the forum that appeals were progressing through the various stages and the target date for completion is December 2014.

### **3. Energy Efficiency in Schools.**

Members were updated with a report on carbon emissions data for 2013/14. The purpose of this data was to give an indication to schools of where energy waste was occurring so that this could be addressed. The data highlighted that new builds did not always improve energy efficiency. FS suggested that data on 2 PFI schools that were not captured for this report should be provided in future reports.

It was felt that it would be helpful if future reports could provide some examples of good practice.

A proposed spend of £2,750 to create a portal for schools to use to access energy management data was not approved.

### **4. Financial Update and Budget Monitoring Report**

#### High Needs SEN

DR presented this item and informed members that High Needs SEN is forecast to overspend by £1,577k. The High Needs sub-group is considering the impact on next year's budget.

An under spend of £2m on two-year-olds was reported to members and it was agreed to utilise these funds to offset the shortfall.

#### Catering

DR informed members that procuring a contractor for school meals service for May 2015 is ongoing. To date 5 contractors have been shortlisted. Officers

would welcome head teachers and school business managers to participate in the evaluation exercise and asked for volunteers.

#### School Budget Plans.

Members were informed that all school budget plans have now been received.

#### Mutual Funds

Members were informed that PLFC and Gordonbrock schools have had rateable values revised and the bills have been back dated. The new bills are in excess of the original bills by £600k and £200k respectively. It is expected that other schools will have their rateable values revised.

It was agreed that the mutual funds under spend for last year (2013-14) should be used to cover the cost.

#### Contingency

The current regulations allow a contingency to be set aside to support good or outstanding secondary schools with falling rolls. It was agreed to set up such a fund next year and future bids by schools against the fund should be brought to the Forum.

#### Non-Sickness Supply Fund

It is forecast that 2014/15 budget will be fully utilised by year end.

#### Internal Audit Reports Outstanding Recommendations

The Forum noted the position on the outstanding audit recommendations and officers were asked to write to all Chairs of Governors about the issue. For all schools that have outstanding recommendations they should also be contacted directly.

### **5. Funding Reviews**

#### Trade Union

Martin Powell-Davis felt that the time given to union reps to take part in trade union duties in Lewisham is reasonable and its current arrangements are working well across maintained schools in Lewisham. It was observed that over the past few years the cost per pupil of union support was reducing in real terms.

It was agreed that officers write to academies to see if they would wish to subscribe to a service level agreement for union time.

Lewisham schools support 3 union representatives on the National Executive. Frankie Sulkie was of the view that paying for Union National Executive's time by schools should be discouraged as this is a financial burden on schools for which they derive no direct benefit. Officers were asked to continue their discussion on the issue with the unions.

### **6. Financial Management in Schools**

#### Judging the Standard of Financial Management in Schools

DR presented statistics on schools performance. The cumulative carry forward forecast for schools varied significantly from when the budget was set

(£7m) to final carry forward (£16m). There were concerns raised about school's skills in managing and monitoring budgets. The chair was particularly concerned about the late returns and members suggested the following to try and remedy the issue.

- Measures to be put in place to continuously monitor returns
- The need to involve Governors to help with returns by bringing it to their attention.

It was agreed to set up a Peer Review system on a trial basis

## **7. Council Budget Setting 2015 onwards**

AD presented a report on the financial position of the council over the next three years. The overall savings for the next three years across the whole council was £95m.

### Children and Young Peoples Directorate

The mayor is considering proposals to make savings in CYP of £9.6m. The current net budget (excluding the DSG) is £53m.

### School Uniform Hardship Grant

The school uniform hardship grant is to be withdrawn. A draft letter to schools will be circulated to members for comments before being sent out. Members were concerned with cases where families were in extreme difficulties. It was proposed that school should deal with such issues if possible from their pupil premium funding.

### Traded Services for Schools

The Mayor is considering a proposal to raise an extra £0.9m through further income generation.

The school forum noted the increases in traded service and the new services and supported the proposal that the council should not subsidise the school activity.

## **8. School Places**

Members were updated with a table showing school places and the likely needs and capital requirements.

## **9 . Any Other Business**

Meeting closed 6.42pm

Date of next meeting 11 December 2014