

Schools Forum

Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 6th November

Members Present:	Jolyon Roberts Gareth Denton Tyrone Myton Clare Cranham Julie Evans Fiona Robinson Chris Andrew	Dan Bowden Theresa Staunton Markieu Hayden Sue Lenihan Kate Lanning Keran Currie
Observers Present:	Shelley Davies Charles Quaye Jenny Aarons Cllr Amy Foster	Maryssa Dako Daniel Bissex Cllr Joseph Lee
Apologies:	Cllr Margaret Bird, Kathy Roberts, Debbie Jones, Darran Money, Cllr Maria Gatland, Soumick Dey, Dave Harvey	
Chair:	Jolyon Roberts	
Vice Chair:	Theresa Staunton	
Clerk:	Mori Bates	

Item	Detail	Lead/Action
1.	Minutes and actions from last meeting 2nd October 2023.	JR
	<p>Declarations of interest – none.</p> <p>Minutes, actions, and matters arising from last meeting 2nd October 2023</p> <p>Summary of comments made in reference to the previous minutes, including a review of the actions:</p> <p>1.1 July: Southwark Diocesan representative – Vicky Mitchell had been tentatively named to fill vacancy and PS was to confirm agreement with the Diocese. SD had a brief discussion with the Diocese and will need to follow up. CA suggested Dermot Mooney as a potential representative. ACTION – SD to email Dermot Mooney in regards to standing as the Diocese representative.</p> <p>1.2 Oct: KR confirmed that we can lift this data from the record, of which it was agreed that this data would be beneficial. KR to compile data on the EHCP numbers in MNS and across the board, comparing details on the dashboard. ACTION – Carried forwards as possible agenda item for December SF of ‘SEN Dashboard Information.’</p> <p>1.3 As an update of the Key Decision Report (agenda item 4), JR and FR have</p>	<p>SD</p> <p>KR</p>

	<p>been invited to meetings on the therapies of which they will engage with whilst the early stages of the contract drafting, especially the KPIs, are underway.</p> <p>1.4 Question 2 under the Key Decision Report related to the 38 therapist posts or FTE - ACTION: SP to inform Forum whether the figure given is 38 FTE speech therapists. MB emailed SP for a response and will follow up again.</p> <p>1.5 KL clarified that the unique situation in Croydon is that 'Chatterbox' is being used to in order for a referral to take place for SALT provision whereas in all other boroughs it is just used as a SALT intervention.</p> <p>a) Clerk also amended other errors with formatting and SPAG.</p>	SP/MB																				
2.	DSG Formula Factors	CQ																				
	<p>2.1 CQ presented a paper based on the DSG Formula factors which Forum would be voting on today. The paper was previously presented at the Schools' Block Working Group on the 16th October and then at an extraordinary meeting on 31st October after some additional information was requested by Schools' Block members.</p> <p>2.2 The overall recommendations from the Schools' Block Working Group were to maintain the NFF rate for each factor with the exception of the Split Site Factor. With this factor, both the rate and distance should be taken into account.</p> <p>2.3 The majority of the factors presented in the paper were accompanied by a table depicting the figures depending on which of the options were selected, including which option was agreed upon last year.</p> <p>2.4 The Chair noted that this version of the paper was not the most up to date version as his comments of the draft version had not been provided to Forum. He noted his disappointment with this as a lot of work had been done on further iterations of the paper. Fortunately, SD was able to provide an electronic version of the updated paper for him to use in chairing the meeting.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="248 1601 1372 2107"> <thead> <tr> <th>No.</th> <th>Formula Factor</th> <th>Approval type 23/24</th> <th>Options</th> <th>Voting Result</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3.1</td> <td>Minimum per pupil funding</td> <td>To note</td> <td>Compulsory factor</td> <td>N/A – Forum noted</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3.2</td> <td>Age weighted pupil unit (Basic Entitlement)</td> <td>To note</td> <td>Compulsory factor</td> <td>N/A – Forum noted</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3.3</td> <td>Deprivation – IDACI</td> <td>BAND B-F – NFF was applied last year (NFF) BAND A – Above NFF rate was applied</td> <td>A) Keeping to last year's NFF (band B to F) and A on maximum B) Moving all bandings to 2.5% below the average NFF rate</td> <td>11 votes in favour of Option A. A is carried. (KC was absent at time of vote)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	No.	Formula Factor	Approval type 23/24	Options	Voting Result	3.1	Minimum per pupil funding	To note	Compulsory factor	N/A – Forum noted	3.2	Age weighted pupil unit (Basic Entitlement)	To note	Compulsory factor	N/A – Forum noted	3.3	Deprivation – IDACI	BAND B-F – NFF was applied last year (NFF) BAND A – Above NFF rate was applied	A) Keeping to last year's NFF (band B to F) and A on maximum B) Moving all bandings to 2.5% below the average NFF rate	11 votes in favour of Option A. A is carried. (KC was absent at time of vote)	
No.	Formula Factor	Approval type 23/24	Options	Voting Result																		
3.1	Minimum per pupil funding	To note	Compulsory factor	N/A – Forum noted																		
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3.3	Deprivation – IDACI	BAND B-F – NFF was applied last year (NFF) BAND A – Above NFF rate was applied	A) Keeping to last year's NFF (band B to F) and A on maximum B) Moving all bandings to 2.5% below the average NFF rate	11 votes in favour of Option A. A is carried. (KC was absent at time of vote)																		

			C) Moving to the 2.5% above the NFF or maximum rate	
3.4	Deprivation – FSM & FSM6	NFF was applied last year	A) Keeping to the NFF rate use last year B) Moving to the minimum NFF rate per pupil C) Moving to the maximum rate above NFF	12 votes in favour of option A. A is carried.
3.5	Low Prior Attainment	NFF was applied last year	A) Keep to the NFF rate as selected last year B) Move to the minimum NFF rate per pupil C) Move above the NFF rate	12 votes in favour of option A. A is carried.
3.6	English as an Additional Language	NFF was applied last year	A) Keep to the NFF rate B) Move to the minimum NFF rate per pupil C) Move above the NFF rate	12 votes in favour of option A. A is carried.
3.7	Lump Sum	To agree (local factor of £142,000 used last year (which is close to NFF))	A) Move to the minimum NFF rate per school B) Moving to the NFF rate C) Move above the NFF rate	6 votes in favour of option B, and 6 votes in favour of option C. In the event of a tie, JR as chair voted for C. C is carried.
3.8	Mobility	NFF was applied last year	A) Moving to the minimum NFF rate per pupil B) Moving to the NFF rate C) Move above the average NFF rate	12 votes in favour of option B. B is carried.
3.9	Private Finance Initiative – base rate increase	To agree but optional factor. The agreed amount paid for the last three years was £547K	A) Inflationary increase to be applied to last year's rate B) Stay the same as last year's rate C) Reduce last year's rate by £100K	10 votes in favour of option B and 2 votes in favour of option C. B is carried.
3.10	Minimum Funding Guarantee	To agree (compulsory) and part of the DfE model	Schools' Forum are requested to note the set MFG	Schools' Forum accept with the 0.5% uplift.
3.11	Growth (Primary Growth Factor Value*) New DfE minimum funding	Criteria for growth and no change expected on agreed rate for 2024/25.	Schools' Forum are requested to note the above and agree that the sum allocated to schools	Schools' Forum agree and will discuss the distribution at a later date.

	level/value payable per pupil to schools	Primary growth factor value* (£1,550 x number of pupils x ACA)	who meet the growth criteria.		
3.12	Split Site	Compulsory factor and local factor last year The new factor is made of a basic rate of £58,185 and an additional rate of £29,147 per 100m based on distance up to 500m	A) Moving to the minimum NFF rate per school B) Moving to the NFF rate C) Move above the average NFF rate	8 votes in favour of option A and 4 votes in favour of option B. A is carried.	
3.13	Sparsity & London Fringe	To agree but not applicable to Croydon (Sparsity is compulsory but none of the Croydon schools fall within the eligibility criteria on <u>distance</u> and <u>pupil numbers</u> . Croydon is not London Fringe)	These factors are not applicable to Croydon	N/A	
3.14	Looked After Children	DfE has removed this factor. Schools' Forum agreed to fund these services last year – the LA distributed £167K through this factor in previous years.	Please note: Schools' Forum last year agree to fund the £167K LAC through de-delegation process from the growth budget which forms part of the Schools' Block. No change is expected in 2024/2025	Schools' Forum agreed to continue to fund virtual schools via a dedelegation amount equal to last year.	
<p>2.5 Following the vote, the majority of the factors requiring a vote will maintain the same NFF rate as last year, with the exception of lump sum (increasing to the maximum rate) and split site (moving to the minimum rate). All noted or compulsory factors were accepted too.</p>					
3.	Safety Valve – High Needs Forecast				CQ
	<p>3.1 CQ presented a paper on the High Needs Forecast. The paper was purely for informational purposes as no decision is being made.</p> <p>3.2 The paper is an update on how Croydon is coping with the high needs deficit. CQ pointed Forum to Table 4.1 of the paper which showed the target of the deficit management plan and its projection over the course of the next four years.</p> <p>Q1: JR: Does the projected outturn of £0.655M for 23/24 include the top slice?</p>				

	<p>A1: CQ: The top slice is for the following year.</p> <p>3.3 CQ said that we need to consider ways in which we can manage the numbers going into MNS and how Early Years Intervention could help High Needs.</p> <p>Q2: TM: Under Table 2, the number of 322 students one year drops to 297 the next – is there a reason for this difference.</p> <p>A2: FR: The drop could be as we are trying to reduce the figure whilst simultaneously dealing with those that have additional needs. There should not be too much movement with the figures, meaning we should ensure a level of coordination within the borough. SD: It is important to consider the fact that some providers are charging to hold a place.</p> <p>Q3: JR: What are the EHCP numbers in connection with this data?</p> <p>A3: SD: Some children may not have the provisions to meet their needs, and we have to remember there is a parental decision also at play. Our strategy is to educate children within the borough whilst acknowledging factors that may affect the data. FR: There is more interest from individuals outside of the borough who want to send their children to our special schools. *Data on EHCP numbers may be presented in the dashboard information.</p> <p>3.4 CQ reminded the Forum that there will be a pressure on the deficit strategy over time – the projections in the paper may not hold. If they do not hold, that is when the Safety Valve comes into place.</p>	
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4.	Early Years Update – Funding paper 23/24 & Outturn 22/23	CQ
	<p>4.1 CQ presented a paper on the High Needs Forecast. The paper was purely for informational purposes as no decision is being made.</p> <p>4.2 The DfE has given some provisional funding across the Early Years funding and Table 4 in the paper shows how they are distributing the money and where.</p> <p>4.3 The main focus is the importance of the correct census data being received as it will then ensure that the DfE give us the right amount of money. If there is a belief that the amounts paid out are not accurate, then it is possible that the wrong numbers and census data are being inputted into the system.</p> <p>4.4 SENIF is designed to assist in Early Years intervention to assist children that may potentially require an EHCP. This funding is based on where a child goes to nursery, regardless of where they live.</p> <p>4.5 TS commented that we still do not have the figures going forwards and there is no guarantee what will happen with the new 15 hours allocation.</p>	

	<p>4.6 CQ can create a paper to clarify the DfE's decision and the distribution of Early Years Funding and Provisions.</p> <p>4.7 Whilst there is a possibility of issues, the Early Years funding is based on the numbers of children and census data being inputted into the system. The costs have also remained constant as Croydon has been good at managing the budget.</p>	
5.	<p>Update from Schools' Forum Working Groups</p> <p>a) Early Years b) Schools Block c) High Needs</p>	TS TM FR
	<p>Minutes were absent from the pack.</p> <p>a) Early Years block – Meeting took place on the 19th October with a paper on the Funding paper 23/24 and a Sufficiency update.</p> <p>b) Schools block – Initial meeting took place on the 16th October, rescheduled for an extraordinary meeting on the 31st October due to additional information being requested in connection with the funding formula factors.</p> <p>c) High Needs block – Meeting took place on the 19th October with the High Needs Forecast paper as presented at Forum, an update on CLSS Funding and a SEND Performance and Education Dashboard.</p>	
6.	Any Other Business	All
	No AOB Raised	

Meeting Adjourned: 11:20am
Date of next meeting: Monday 4th December at 9:30am
F10, Town Hall