LONDON BOROUGH OF SUTTON
SUTTON SCHOOLS FORUM:
THE FUNDING CONSULTATIVE GROUP
Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 18 June 2019
at Cheam High School at 6.30pm

Members:
* denotes absence
(Voting)
✔ Brenda Morley (Chair) (BM) Academy Secondary Governor
✔ Bec Allott (BA) Academy Secondary Headteacher
✔ Gordon Ironside (GI) Academy Secondary Headteacher
✔ Viv Jones (VJ) Academy Secondary Headteacher
* Nathan Cole (NC) Academy Secondary Headteacher
✔ Emma Hart-Dyke (EHD) Academy Primary Headteacher
✔ Phillip Hedger (PH) Academy Primary Headteacher
* Rob Watkins (RW) Academy Special School Headteacher
✔ Carole Cook (CC) Academy Primary Governor
✔ Dr Mary Howard (MH) Maintained Secondary Governor
✔ Jenny Sims (JS) Maintained Primary Governor
* Havard Spring (HS) Maintained Primary Headteacher
✔ Jane Allen (substitute)
✔ Emma Walford (EW) Maintained Nursery Headteacher
✔ Emma Bradshaw (EB) { Academy Pupil Referral Unit (shared)
* Bev Williamson (BW) { Sutton Tuition and Reintegration Service (shared)
* Rosemarie Evison (RE) Early Years Provider

(Non-Voting)
✔ Jason Pemberton-Billing (JPB) 14-19 Provider
✔ Andrew Theobald (AT) Archdiocese of Southwark
* Brian Stevens (Vice Chair) (BS) Diocese of Southwark
✔ Sue Smith (SS) Sutton Teachers Committee

Observers
✔ Cllr Jenny Batt (JB) Vice-Chair of the People Committee
✔ Cllr Jane Pascoe (JP) Opposition Spokesperson for the People Committee

Also Present:
✔ Fiona Phelps (FP) Assistant Director, Education and SEND (LBS)
✔ Kieran Holliday (KH) Head of Pupil Based Commissioning (LBS)
✔ Sue Holmes (SH) Senior Finance Business Partner (LBS)
✔ Tracey Burley (TB) Managing Director (Cognus Limited)
✔ Bob Harrison (BH) Services Director (Cognus Limited)
✔ Jonathan Williamson (JW) Assistant Director, Children's Social Care & Safeguarding (LBS)
✔ Corinne Redonnet (CR) Independent Minutewriter

3 members of the public
1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
   a) Everyone was welcomed to the meeting.
   b) Apologies for absence were received from Mr Cole, Mr Watkins, Mr Stevens and
   Mr Spring who was substituted by Mrs Allen.
   Mrs McIntosh resigned with immediate effect on 19th May 2019 and her
   replacement Mrs Evison was unable to attend.
   **RESOLUTION: a) and b) were noted**

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS
   The Chair reminded those present to declare any business interests, pecuniary
   or otherwise, as and when they occurred.
   a) Mrs Sims declared that she is a non-executive Director at Cognus.
   **RESOLUTION: a) was noted**

3. MINUTES OF MEETING OF 12 FEBRUARY 2019
   AT queried the accuracy of item 4. h). it was confirmed that the minutes were
   accurate.
   **RESOLUTION: noted**

4. MATTERS ARISING
   a) Refer Item 8. g) – KH informed members that Cognus no longer charges for
   network meetings / conferences and that a core offer is in place, free of charge
   to schools and EY providers.
   b) Other matters arising are covered elsewhere in the agenda.
   **RESOLUTION: a) was noted**

5. DSG CONTRIBUTION TO CHILDREN’S SERVICES
   The Chair introduced Jonathan Williams (JW) and a round of introduction took
   place.
   The *DSG Contribution to Children’s Services* report which had been circulated
   with the agenda in advance of the meeting was taken as read.
   JW highlighted the main points of the report and it was noted that the main
   approach is to develop a more holistic approach to safeguarding than before.
   a) A member asked if they have an indication of contribution to DSG from local
   authorities comparable to LBS. SH replied that this type of benchmarking
   information is not collated but she will email other boroughs to gather the
   information if it is available.
   b) Members appreciated the joint pooling of resources but queried how they will
   demonstrate that it is having an impact for schools. FP replied that they will work
   at outcomes and the impact the funding is having.
   c) A member expressed the need for early help being put in place in primary
   schools. JW replied that the decision was made today to extend the Change Up
   project to the primary sector.
d) A member commented that this project should join up with the High Needs Review which should be the priority.

e) The *Additional High Needs Funding for Schools with high proportions of EHC Plans* report which had been circulated with the agenda in advance of the meeting was taken as read.

KH gave a highlight of the main points and noted that it is LBS’s decision, however sought members’ views on the four proposed options.

f) A member asked about the average number of children with EHC in schools. KH will share the numbers tomorrow. SH commented that the average changes yearly.

g) The relevance of EHC funding to the NFF was queried as schools have to pay the first £6,000 for children on EHC Plans. It was also highlighted that the smaller the school, the bigger the impact on their budget and some schools have a disproportionate number of children on EHC Plans.

h) Members were concerned about the introduction of such a change before the High Needs Review has been finalised and has provided possible alternatives.

i) Members’ recommendation was for option D. FP/KH accepted that this would be considered as part of the high needs block review.

j) KH noted that Forum wished to review the DSG contribution to Children’s Services on an annual basis. It was agreed that a review at the December meeting would get this onto an annual cycle for budget planning purposes.

**RESOLUTION:** a) f) and j) were agreed

i) was recommended

JW left the meeting at 7:05pm

6. **COGNUM LRD UP-DATE**

The Cognus’s Report to School Forum, Appendices 1, 2 and 3 which had been circulated with the agenda in advance of the meeting were taken as read.

a) BH noted that the report answers some of the questions raised at the last meeting including the number of parents and children who had been involved in the Star review, 33 parents were involved.

b) BH is currently working with FP, and Caroline Boardman and Sutton Educational Partnership (SEP) with a goal to making changes in September and putting some earlier support in place such as language therapy and educational psychology.

c) The Chair questioned the involvement of the new Sutton Education Partnership and expressed concerns over potential cross overs with Schools Forum. FP replied that the SEP is a collaboration between Cognus, LBS and various sectors in order to make decisions in relation to the High Needs Block Review. This will have school representation but it will not take decisions that are required to be taken by Schools Forum.

d) A member raised concerns on items 4.6 and 4.7 of the report. BH explained:

4.6 - relates to KPIs agreed at the School Forum, some of the services are about outputs not necessarily about measurable outcomes.

4.7 – this was alluded to in BH’s introduction and they are trying to move to earlier intervention, a number of children are highlighted early but demand is high so Cognus have moved support from other areas. They are looking to work
more effectively with young people in particular in Educational Psychology and Language Therapy. They are looking at reducing costs but improving outcomes.

e) A member questioned KPI 6 (Appendix 1). BH explained that Cognus is the admissions authority for maintained schools. He added that appeals are arranged by a third party, last year it was Kent County Council.

f) Appendix 3 - Members noted that Jane Morgan is Head of SEND Support and School Improvement.

g) Referring to item 4.6 iii) of the report, a member asked how schools can get involved in the discussions. BH replied he will discuss this with Caroline Boardman and will then liaise with schools.

h) A member was concerned that despite the ongoing High Needs Review, various small groups are having discussions outside this remit and potentially making decisions that could have greater impact than immediately desired. FP explained that all the work will come together, the small groups are putting interim plans in place for the next year, but they will ensure that all groups and initiatives coalesce.

i) A member asked if the Forum will have some input regarding item 4.8 of the report. KH acknowledged that a discussion could take place with the FRG once there is greater clarity on revised KPIs / ongoing commissioning discussions.

j) A member was concerned that some partnerships are focussing solely on SEND children, an overarching review of all education services should also be considered. KH acknowledged the concerns but noted that the High Needs Review is presently the priority.

k) A member commented that it is not clear to schools where School Improvements are reported on. KH replied that a process will be put in place and suggested that Jane Morgan could attend the next Primary Headteachers Group to discuss.

l) Members were not clear about Jane Morgan and Kate Leyshon’s roles. BH replied that Kate Leyshon was involved in setting up the School Improvement offer, Jane Morgan has been brought on to do that work for 2 days a week as agreed.

m) A Member expressed concerns that Jane Morgan was not delivering what had been agreed. The Member explained that School Improvement was going to be delivered school to school, but contracts have been awarded to outside organisations and Sutton’s experience is not being used as agreed. BH replied that he was unaware of this agreement and will follow up with Kate Leyshon and Jane Morgan.

n) Appendix 1, 37 - a member raised concerns over the length of time between assessment requests and assessments. BH explained this figure is due to the way the software aggregates data, the actual waiting time is 4 weeks (13 x 4 = 52). He added that Cognus met the 4 weeks agreed time each time.

**RESOLUTION: m) was agreed**

TB and BH left the meeting at 7:42pm

7. **REVENUE REPORT**

The *Revenue Report, Appendices A to F* which had been circulated with the agenda in advance of the meeting were taken as read.

a) Appendix A - SH noted a carry forward of £1,068k for 2018/19.
A member asked what the funds would be used for. SH explained that the funds are in the blocks as shown and will be carried forward accordingly. LA and Schools Forum will consider how best to use the balance in 2020/21 and discuss in future Forum meetings.

b) Appendix B – the complete schools budget broken down into Section 251 format. The 3rd page shows the breakdown between the DSG blocks.

c) Appendix C – latest DSG budget 2019/20 by block. The total in-year DSG is £97,904k.

d) Appendix D – the in-year net NNDR payments of £6,308.

e) Appendix E – the additional funding allocation based on numbers on roll as agreed. This will be in the July allocation to schools.

f) Appendix F – the de-delegated budget that primary maintained schools have requested be delegated back into schools' budgets.

At 4 December 2018 meeting, the de-delegated budget was agreed, subsequently primary schools Headteachers queried the decisions and requested that it be reviewed.

Maintained primary schools' representatives voted for the de-delegated budget to be distributed to maintained primary schools.

g) The recommendations were:

i) outturn position on the DSG for 2018/19 - noted

ii) surplus balance of £1.068m to be carried forward to 2019/20 - noted

iii) S251 Budget Statement for 2019/20 - noted

iv) latest budget for 2019/20 – noted and approved

v) payment of the NNDR in-year adjustments for 2019/20 - approved

vi) payment of additional funding allocation to all schools based on pupil numbers – approved

vii) repayment of the de-delegated budget for Schools in Financial Difficulties for 2019/20 (primary maintained only) - approved

h) A member asked if maintained schools will receive the pensions grant in full via the LA. SH confirmed that they will.

RESOLUTION: g) i), ii) and iii) were agreed

iv), v), vi) vii) were approved

8. ADDITIONAL HIGH NEEDS FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

See item 5.

RESOLUTION: See item 5.

9. CAPITAL REPORT

The Capital Funding Arrangements for Schools report which had been circulated with the agenda in advance of the meeting was taken as read.

KH highlighted the main points.

a) The change to the estimated cost of primary expansions due to the contractors going into administration prior to completion.

b) The secondary funds remain the same.
c) The confirmed funding to April 2021 has increased slightly, leaving, after the planned expenditure, a small balance of £3.2m of which £1.98m has been set aside to support SEN.

d) The grant allocation for maintained schools has been confirmed at £838,283.

e) Harris Academy school due for completion on 10 July 2019.

f) The DfE is responsible for the delivery of the new 8FE secondary free school on the Rosehill site. Planning application was submitted on 5 June 2019. LBS is working with the DfE to enable an option for temporary accommodation to be provided from September. There is a risk from a place planning point of view as it is dependent on planning permission being granted in time.

g) KH thanked secondary schools for providing additional places for September 2019. Demand next year is expected to be greater due to 130 additional year 6 pupils coming through Sutton schools from September 2020.

RESOLUTION: noted

10. CONFIDENTIALITY
There were no confidential items.

RESOLUTION: agreed

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
The Chair informed members of the following changes in membership:

Muriel McIntosh – As mentioned at the start of the meeting, unfortunately Muriel resigned from the Forum on 19 May. This is because she is not continuing as Chair of the Sutton Opportunity Pre-School. She joined the Forum in February 2014 and brought her wide knowledge of early years to our deliberations.

Viv Jones – As well as being a successful Head of Carshalton High School for Girls, Viv also for a period has been an able Chair of the VPP. Since joining the Forum in October 2010, she had brought that wider experience to our work.

Gordon Ironside – Along with Brian, Bec and myself, Gordon was a member of the Forum when it first met in January 2003. He has been a key member of the Formula Review Group, both before the setting up of the Forum and since. Particularly in the FRG, he has always brought his considerable financial expertise to our considerations to enable us to make decisions which were fair across all sectors.

All our colleagues will be greatly missed.

RESOLUTION: noted

12. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

a) Schools Forum, all meetings held at 6.30 pm at Cheam High School:
   Tuesday 15 October 2019
   Tuesday 3 December 2019

b) Formula Review Group
   Dates to be agreed.

c) To note the next meeting of the People Committee on:
   Thursday 4 July 2019
   Thursday 10 October 2019
The meeting ended at 8.13 pm