

EDUCATION CONSULTATIVE FORUM

21 SEPTEMBER 2006

Chairman:	* Councillor Miss Christine Bednell	
Councillors:	* Mrs Camilla Bath * B E Gate * Manji Kara	* Julia Merison (1) * Raj Ray † Bill Stephenson
Teachers' Constituency:	Mr R Borman † Ms C Gembala * Ms J Lang	* Ms L Money * Ms L Snowdon
Governors' Constituency:	* Ms H Henshaw * Mrs C Millard	Mr N Rands Ms H Solanki
Elected Parent Governor Representatives:	* Mr H Epie	Mr R Sutcliffe
Denominational Representatives:	* Mrs J Rammelt	Reverend P Reece

* Denotes Member present
(1) Denotes category of Reserve Member
† Denotes apologies received

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS**RECOMMENDATION 1 - School Term Dates 2007/08**

The Forum received an update concerning the finalisation of school term dates for 2007/08, following the deferral of this decision from the Forum's previous meeting on 3 July 2006, and in order to obtain information regarding neighbouring boroughs' proposals.

An officer reported that this information was still unavailable, as both Brent and Ealing had not yet completed their consultations. However, a document was tabled suggesting proposed revisions to the dates agreed by the Forum at its meeting on 31 January 2006, taking into account guidance by the Local Government Association (LGA).

A teacher's representative commented that the Primary sector was in favour of the model proposed by the LGA. By contrast, a representative from the secondary sector commented that his experience indicated that the sector was broadly in favour of retaining Harrow's own model, as this would reduce the administration involved in the opening and closing of schools over Easter. However, in light of other views expressed at the Forum and the importance of synchronicity between boroughs on this issue, the representative said he would support the proposed revisions tabled at the meeting.

Members commented that they would support the views expressed by the education sector representatives.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to the Portfolio Holder, People First):

That the following 2007/08 school term dates be approved:

Autumn 2007	Monday 3 September – Friday 19 October Half Term 22 – 26 October (5 days) Monday 29 October – Wednesday 19 December
Spring 2008	Thursday 3 January – Friday 15 February Half Term – 18 – 22 February (5 Days) Monday 25 February – Friday 4 April
Summer 2008	Monday 21 April – Friday 23 May Half Term 26 – 30 May (BH + 4 days) Monday 2 June – Wednesday 23 July

[Reason: To enable school term dates for 2007/08 to be published, and so aid future planning for schools, governors, parents and other partners.]

PART II - MINUTES**17. Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

<u>Ordinary Member</u>	<u>Reserve Member</u>
Councillor Janet Mote	Councillor Julia Merison

18. Declarations of Interest:

RESOLVED: To note that (1) the following personal interests were declared;

<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>
Councillor Mrs Camilla Bath	Governor of Whitchurch first school, and Harrow High School
Councillor Miss Christine Bednell	Governor of Vaughan First and Middle School, Stanmore College and Whitmore High School
Councillor B E Gate	Governor of Whitmore High School
Councilor Manji Kara	Governor of Glebe School and Stanburn School
Councillor Julia Merison	Governor of Newton Farm/Grange School
Councillor Raj Ray	Governor Kingsley High School

(2) prejudicial interests were declared in relation to item 6: Matters Arising – Voluntary Aided Hindu School.

<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>
Councillor Mrs Camilla Bath	Chairman of the Development Control Committee
Councillor Manji Kara	Member of the Development Control Committee
Councillor Julia Merison	Member of the Development Control Committee

19. Arrangement of Agenda:

RESOLVED: That all items be considered with the press and public present.

20. Minutes:

RESOLVED: That the signing of the minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2006 be deferred until printed in the Council Bound Volume.

21. Matters Arising:**Recommendation 1 - Terms of Reference**

An officer informed the Forum that there were currently two Governor positions vacant on the Forum's membership, and that these should be filled, under the terms of reference, by a Primary sector headteacher, and a Secondary sector headteacher.

The Chairman asked Governor representatives their views on potential nominations, and responded that they would return to the Forum with advice.

Minute 4 - Arrangement of Agenda

An officer expressed the view that it would be appropriate if more suggestions for agenda items would be volunteered from constituent groups, and asked that these be forwarded to her.

Minute 13 – Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate

Members of the Forum were informed that the Council remained in negotiations regarding the above, and had met with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). In addition, it was reported that officers were to meet with MPs and the Secretary of State to discuss the matter further.

The Chairman and Members of the Forum offered their congratulations to the work conducted so far on the project, and noted the expansion of numbers in the collegiate as a sign of success.

Minute 14 – Financial Position

A Member of the Forum expressed disappointment that consultation over recent Council reforms which had affected the education sector had been conducted over the summer, when staff were not readily available to comment.

Members also drew attention to a recent report which had publicised the benefits of music tuition in schools, an area affected by recent reforms, and also to the reductions in clothing subsidies.

A teacher representative commented that there was also concern over the reduction of legal assistance to schools.

A Member commented that the decisions had undergone due process, but agreed that the consultation and conditions under which the proposals were initially brought to the Executive were unsatisfactory, particularly in that the Forum did not have an opportunity to comment.

The Chairman stated that she would make the views of the Forum known to other Members, and said that she expected the Forum to be consulted on such matters in future.

Minute 15 – Voluntary Aided Hindu School

The Forum heard that a site for the school had been identified, and that the planning process for this had begun. An officer stated that consultation results would be published shortly.

Members expressed concern about the validity of the consultation period, particularly regarding the notification that schools received. Officers agreed to relay this feedback to I-Foundation representatives.

Responding to a query regarding the school's status, the Forum heard that the school would be a Trust school, with a two-form infrastructure, although initial plans were only to admit one form. In addition, the school had proposed a gradual expansion of intake in order to minimise impact on surrounding schools.

RESOLVED: That the above be noted.

22. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

23. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions were received at this meeting under the provisions of the Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 13 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

24. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

25. **School Term Dates for 2007-08:**
(See Recommendation 1)

26. **Rapid Intervention Team / Reduction in Exclusion:**

The Forum received a report of the Director of Lifelong Learning and Cultural Services, outlining developments concerning the Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) and reductions in exclusion.

It was reported that there had been 63 referrals to the RIT since February 2006, and that this was having a positive impact in reducing the number of exclusions. The Forum heard that schools had welcomed the support of the team accordingly.

An officer stated that in terms of the Team's future development, a system was required, to enable the progress of certain children to be tracked.

Members emphasised the importance of ensuring that the RIT was properly resourced, and suggested the alternative sources of funding, such as the local police, be explored. The importance of contact with parents was also stressed, and the need to publicise support services to help reduce exclusions further.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

27. **Date of the Next Meeting:**

RESOLVED: To note that the next meeting of the Forum would be held on 30 January 2007.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.35 pm, closed at 9.10 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR CHRISTINE BEDNELL
Chairman