

EDUCATION STRATEGY CONSULTATIVE FORUM MINUTES

3 DECEMBER 2012

Chairman:	* Reverend P Reece (Vice-Chair in the Chair)	
Councillors:	* Christine Bednell (1) * Ramji Chauhan * Zarina Khalid * Kairul Kareema Marikar	* Janet Mote Raj Ray * Krishna Suresh
School Employee Constituency:	1. *Anne Drew 2. *Anne Lyons 3. (Vacancy)	4. (Vacancy) 5. (Vacancy) 6. (Vacancy)
Governors' Constituency:	1. (Vacancy) 2. (Vacancy) 3. (Vacancy)	4. (Vacancy) 5. (Vacancy) 6. (Vacancy)
Elected Parent Governor Representatives:	1. (Vacancy)	2. (Vacancy)
Denominational Representatives:	Reverend P Reece 2. (Vacancy) 3. (Vacancy)	4. (Vacancy)
Also in attendance:	Neville Ransley, Julia Rammelt, Michael Carson, Michael Murphy, Fiona Prussia	

- * Denotes Member present
(1) Denotes category of Reserve Member

110. Attendance by Reserve Members

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

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Mrs Camilla Bath

Councillor Christine Bednell

111. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Simon Goulden, Roy Millard and Ann Nash.

112. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that the following interests were declared:

Agenda Items 10, 11, 12 and 14 – Information Report: Harrow Pupils' Attainment and Progress: Summer 2012 (Provisional), Development of the Early Years Strategy, School Organisation, Information Report: Proposed Admission Arrangements

Councillor Christine Bednell declared a non-pecuniary interest in that she was the Local Authority appointed governor at Vaughan School and Whitmore High School. She would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

Councillor Ramji Chauhan declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he was Local Authority appointed governor at Hatch End High School and Glebe Primary School. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

Councillor Zarina Khalid declared a non-pecuniary interest in that she was a Local Authority appointed governor at Canons High School. She would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

Councillor Kairul Kareema Marikar declared a non-pecuniary interest in that she was a Local Authority appointed governor at Bentley Wood High School and was Ward Councillor for West Harrow. She would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

Councillor Janet Mote declared a non-pecuniary interest in that her sister-in-law taught at Marlborough School. She would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

Reverend P Reece declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he was governor at Camrose and Krishna Avanti Schools. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

113. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2012 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

114. Public Questions, Petitions and Deputations

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were put or petitions or deputations received at this meeting.

RESOLVED ITEMS

115. Confirmation of Constituent Group Membership

In accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following report was admitted late to the agenda in order to allow the Forum to consider the most up to date list of nominations received.

An officer tabled a report which set out nominations received for co-opted membership of the Forum. An officer stated that the following nominations for the following constituent groups had been received:

School Employees Constituency:

1. Anne Lyons (NAHT)
2. Anne Drew (NUT Primary)
3. Lynne Snowdon (NUT Secondary)
4. Ruth Duncan (NASUWT)

Denominational Constituency

1. Rev Paul Reece (Church of England)
2. Simon Goulden (Jewish)

Early Years and Private and Voluntary Sector Provider

Ann Nash

Post-16 Provider at a Further Education College

Patrick Harty

The GMB had been approached and would shortly be confirming the names of support staff representatives.

Officers were awaiting confirmation of Governor Constituency and Elected Parent Constituency nominees.

RESOLVED: That the nominations received be noted.

116. Information Report: Harrow Pupils' Attainment and Progress: Summer 2012 (Provisional)

The Forum received a report of the Corporate Director of Children and Families, which set out provisional results for Harrow pupils in the relevant key stage assessments for their age in 2012. An officer advised that the results were subject to further checks and the finally validated results would be available in early 2013. The officer highlighted the following aspects of the provisional results:

- standards continued to rise in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the 2012 results were Harrow's best ever outcomes. Harrow's ranking had increased from 149th in 2011 to 98th in 2012. EYFS continued to be a priority area for improving standards;
- Key Stage 1 results were an improvement on 2011 results across all subjects. Harrow's results had remained above both the national and statistical neighbour averages over the past few years. For the first time, a phonics screening assessment had been introduced to enable early identification of those children who had barriers to fluency in reading. Harrow's children had also performed well in these assessments;
- Key Stage 2 results showed good progress, and there was significant improvement in English with Mathematics at level 4 or above;
- at Key Stage 4, under the new English Baccalaureate measure, Harrow was ranked 25th in the country compared to 11th in 2011;
- overall, Harrow was ranked 3rd in England in the progress that pupils made in English from Key Stages 2 to Key Stage 4;
- Harrow was a high achiever in Key Stage 5 and was joint top in the UK for the numbers of students staying on in further education.

Forum Members thanked officers, teaching staff and parents in Harrow for the excellent results. Following questions from Forum Members, an officer advised that the Corporate Director of Children and Families, fully supported the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) and secondary head teachers in their discussions with the government about discrepancies in and challenges to exam results during the summer of 2012.

It was noted that there were some errors in the figures in the report. Bullet point 4, on page 10 of the agenda should read:

- the key indicator of the percentage achieving at least 78 points and who have at least 6 in PSE (Personal, Social and Emotional) and CLL (Communication, Language and Literacy) has shown a significant improvement since 2009, with a 10% point increase from 2009 (50%) to 2012 (60%); this represented a 20% improvement on previous results;

and bullet point 7, on page 14 of the agenda should read:

- this year's English Baccalaureate result of 21.3% is below last year's national average of 23.7%. Harrow is ranked 25th on this measure (11th in 2011).

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

117. Development of the Early Years Strategy

The Forum received a report of the Head of Education and School Organisation which provided an update regarding the early years needs assessment and the proposed priorities of the early years strategy. An officer advised that the Early Years Strategy Board had been meeting on a regular basis since June 2012 and its membership was drawn from a broad range of service providers. Following the undertaking of a needs assessment, the Strategy Board had identified the following three priorities: broadening partnership, building capacity and raising quality.

The officer advised that the percentage of children in Harrow achieving a good level of development had increased from 56% in 2011 to 60% in 2012, however, Harrow's national ranking had declined from 103rd to 107th. The Strategy Board was evaluating the current situation and identifying areas for improvement. There would be engagement with parents and schools to explore solutions and identify areas of best practice at other local authorities.

As part of the above strategy, the officer proposed adjourning the meeting and dividing Forum Members into three groups to discuss and feedback on the current situation and next steps, innovative ideas.

The meeting was adjourned at 8.10 and resumed at 8.35.

An officer stated that the group discussions had yielded some useful feedback and innovative ideas. A summary of the feedback from each group would be circulated to Forum Members by email following the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

118. School Organisation

The Forum received a report of the Corporate Director, Children and Families which set out the progress in meeting the increased demand for primary school places, the approach to developing the second phase of the primary school expansion programme, the latest school roll projections and the proposed review of the approach to achieving Harrow's preferred model of primary school organisation.

An officer advised that:

- five bulge classes had been offered in 2009 at primary level; this figure was twelve in 2012;

- following a borough-wide consultation and statutory consultation, the permanent expansion of 9 schools from September 2013 onwards had been agreed and a second phase of primary school expansion of those schools not previously considered for expansion, had also been agreed;
- since 2005, a large number of infant and junior schools in Harrow had amalgamated;
- the policy set out a wider context to the Council's preferred model of school organisation;
- the government was increasingly encouraging schools to become more independent and this impacted on the local authority's role in Education provision;
- changes to the national funding formula had meant that there would be a financial disincentive to schools amalgamating.

An officer advised that pressure for school places in Harrow was currently mainly in the primary sector and that this was a London-wide challenge. Place planning was not an exact science and was based on evaluating recent statistics and making best-guess projections on the basis of these. To date, the projections had proved accurate, however, the landscape was becoming increasingly complex, particularly since schools were becoming more autonomous and the Council no longer had the power to establish or promote schools.

Following questions from members of the Forum, an officer advised that:

- Avanti House was currently the only Free school in Harrow. It planned to offer places from reception through to sixth form in the near future. He envisaged a mixture of voluntary aided, free, community, Federation and Academy schools operating in Harrow in the future, including the Jubilee Academy that would open in September 2013;
- Harrow faced the challenge of ensuring sufficient funding for all planned school expansion and the need to ensure that there were sufficient places available to the widest community;
- the two schools in Harrow which had formed a statutory federation, with a single governing body and one head teacher, were doing well. One of these had undergone an inspection recently, and reported positive outcomes.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

119. Special School and SEN Placements Planning Framework

The Forum received a report of the Corporate Director Children and Families which set out the work to develop Special School and Special Educational Needs (SEN) Placements Planning Framework and a series of options to increase capacity in SEN provision in Harrow. An officer stated that the report highlighted changes in government policy and the current pressure on places in Harrow.

Following questions from Forum members, the officer advised that:

- as with mainstream schools, pressures on SEN and special school places had increased due to a number of reasons, these included demographic growth, increased survival rates among premature babies, families with young children, attracted by the excellent reputation of its special schools and favourable OFSTED reports, moving into Harrow;
- it was envisaged that the Framework would increase the number of school places and plug any gaps in provision by offering families increased choice in terms of either mainstream or special school provision, while ensuring the efficient use of resources. It would also assess the value of out-of-borough SEN placements;
- those pupils with moderate learning difficulties, attended Shaftesbury and Alexandra Schools, whereas those identified as having severe or complex needs attended Woodlands or Kingsley Schools. All four schools were operating at maximum capacity;
- Kingsley School in particular was housed on a small site and any development of the site would present challenges. Officers were consulting on three options based on pupils needs and whether they would be best placed at either a mainstream or special school;
- it might be possible to adapt existing Children's Centres in the borough into special schools. These sites had the advantage of having a good geographical spread around the borough and may offer parents greater choice. However, there would be cost implications of modifying these buildings for SEN use;
- had established post-16 education provision for SEN pupils. This was in recognition of the additional responsibility under the 1996 Education Act on local authorities for young people under the age of 19 years and for young people with special educational needs up-to the age of 25;
- had created additionally resourced provision at mainstream schools for those pupils who had been identified as having moderate learning difficulties;

- there were plans to open both a primary and a secondary special school in the neighbouring borough of Hillingdon, and it might be possible to place Harrow SEN pupils at these;
- the autism spectrum disorders were extremely wide ranging and the individual needs of autistic children could vary enormously. Some autistic children attended mainstream schools. Aylward, Priestmead and Whitmore schools in Harrow had additional resources provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders;
- there was limited post-16 SEN provision in the Borough and some SEN pupils, traveled to provision out of borough, including Oaklands College and West Herts College and experienced long journeys which was not in their best interest. The cost element of this was also high;
- the officer undertook to circulate figures relating to the number of out-of-borough SEN pupils attending Harrow Schools to Forum members.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

120. Information Report on Proposed Community School Admission Arrangements

The Forum received a report of the Head of Education Strategy and School Organisation which set out proposals relating to admission arrangements for Community schools in Harrow. An officer advised that one proposal was to change the child's medical criterion to allow priority to be applied to a pupil with a social or medical need, provided appropriate supporting information was submitted at the time of application. It was also proposed to give sibling link priority at Whitmore High School to children applying for a place with siblings who were attending from years 7-11.

Following questions from Forum members, an officer advised that:

- medical criteria had always been allowed as a priority category. Supporting information from Special Educational Needs experts or a medical Consultant would need to specifically name the school the child in question should attend, and that this would normally be the nearest school to the child's home, unless the consultant specified another school and gave reasons for this;
- the sibling link priority would only apply for High Schools and not primary schools;
- there were strict deadlines for parents to adhere to when applying for school places and parents were informed of these.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

121. Date of Next Meeting

RESOLVED: To note that the next meeting of the Forum would take place on 30 January 2013.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.27 pm).

(Signed) REVEREND P REECE
Vice-Chairman in the Chair