
EDUCATION CONSULTATIVE FORUM**29 JANUARY 2008**

Chairman:	* Councillor Miss Christine Bednell	
Councillors:	* Mrs Camilla Bath * B E Gate * Mrs Vina Mithani (2)	* Janet Mote * Raj Ray * Bill Stephenson
Teachers' Constituency:	* Mrs D Cawthorne * Ms C Gembala Mr A Jones	† Ms J Lang * Ms L Money * Ms L Snowdon
Governors' Constituency:	† Mr N Rands * Mrs C Millard	Ms H Solanki
Elected Parent Governor Representatives:	* Mr R Chauhan	* Mrs D Speel
Denominational Representatives:	Mrs J Rammelt	Reverend P Reece

* Denotes Member present

(2) Denotes category of Reserve Member

† Denotes apologies received

The Forum observed a minute's silence in respect of the passing of Councillor Dhirajlal Lavingia.

PART II - Minutes

77.

Budget Update:

The Forum received a tabled report of The Director of Schools and Children's Development, which set out the Schools Budget for 2008 – 2009. The officer apologised for the late report and informed the Forum that Harrow was on the first year of a three-year multi cycle of the schools budget.

The officer confirmed that:

- Due to an increase of 4.5% in the Dedicated Schools Grant from the previous year, £5.7million will be allocated for Harrow Schools;
- There would be a further 3.6% and 3.5% rise in years 2 and 3 respectively;
- With a raise of 2.1% of the minimum-funding guarantee (£3 million) taken into account, £2.7 million headroom was left to be allocated;
- £331,000 would be allocated for Ministerial Priority;
- £490,000 would be allocated for Special Educational Needs Higher Costed Statements;
- £395,000 would be allocated for extra places at Special School;
- £885,000 would be allocated for Central Items Growth;
- In year 2 of the cycle more funding would be dedicated for autism within mainstream schools;
- The 2009 - 2010 and 2010 -2011 budgets were estimates were based on inflation increases.

A Member expressed concern that the information contained within the report was not detailed enough. The Member requested information concerning the cuts in budget of Education Psychologist Service (EPS), Education and Welfare Service (EWS), Extended Schools Funding, and the Achievement and Inclusion Service. In response to the Member's queries, the Director of Schools and Children's Development confirmed that:

- Not all information available with regards to the budget was known at the stage that the budget was compiled;
- The School Forum had decided not to secure funding for the EPS and the Extended Schools Funding;
- The EWS was still operational but with reduced funding;
- Harrow had a good track record in dealing with children with a wide range of learning difficulties;
- Figures for the provision of special units within schools that dealt with autism did not reflect the whole year's costs but merely the start-up costs.

The Chairman commented that savings had been achieved through improved efficiency and organisational changes. The Chairman further commented that she would be attending a rescheduled meeting with one of Harrow's Members of Parliament and the Chief Executive to discuss school funding and that the Forum's meeting had fallen at a problematic time as decisions concerning the budget were still under consideration.

In response to questions the Chairman reported that there were three special units being developed within schools that had experience and qualifications in dealing with autism.

A member asked whether it was possible to have the future meeting dates published within the agenda. The Director of Schools and Children's Development replied that dates for the future three meetings could be forwarded to members.

RESOLVED: That (1) the report be noted;

(2) the Chairman liaise with the other Members in order to arrange future meetings of the Forum that would allow for more effective consultation on the Budget.