

ADVISORY AND CONSULTATIVE

Extract from Education Consultative Forum 27 January 2009

EDUCATION CONSULTATIVE FORUM

27 JANUARY 2009

Chairman:	* Councillor Mrs Anjana Patel	
Councillors:	* Husain Akhtar (1) * Mrs Camilla Bath * B E Gate	* Mrs Vina Mithani (3) * Raj Ray * Bill Stephenson
Teachers' Constituency:	† Mrs D Cawthorne † Ms C Gembala † Ms J Howkins	* Ms J Lang * Ms L Money Ms L Snowdon
Governors' Constituency:	Ms H Solanki * Mrs C Millard	
Elected Parent Governor Representatives:	* Mr R Chauhan	* Mrs D Speel
Denominational Representatives:	* Mrs J Rammelt	Reverend P Reece

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

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL

PART II - MINUTES

125. INFORMATION REPORT - Draft Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2009-10 to 2011-12:

The Forum received a report which provided a summary of the Council's draft budget plans for 2009-2010 to 2011-12, as reported to Cabinet in December. The officer stated that comments were being sought from a variety of stakeholders and invited the Education Consultative Forum to ask questions and provide feedback.

Following a number of questions from Members of the Forum, officers clarified that:

- Per pupil funding for 2009/10 had been confirmed as £4,669 (a 3.6% increase on 2008/09) and for 2010/11 as £4,862 (a 4.1% increase on 2009/10). Schools were responsible for ensuring money followed individual students.
- The calculation of the total Dedicated Schools Grant for 2009/10 and 2010/11 would depend on the January 2009 and January 2010 pupil counts respectively.
- The minimum funding guarantee for 2009/10 was set at 2.1%
- Due to the current economic climate, all directorates, including Education, were required to identify savings.
- The Achievement and Inclusion Service was currently operating with one vacant position, although this was due to be filled shortly.
- Any unforeseen cost increases would need to be absorbed by the directorate.
- A Placements Procurement Team is being created to achieve efficiency gains by reducing the unit cost of placements.
- The service responsible for handling Child Death reviews had seen an increase in central government expectations, and was expecting further demands, as a direct result of the Baby P incident at Haringey Council. It was explained that such reviews were held whenever a child died in suspicious circumstances.

A Member of the Forum commented that the energy currently being used by schools in Harrow had been purchased in advance and, unfortunately, the contract had been agreed when fuel costs were high. However, though it was hoped a new contract could be negotiated shortly, it was suggested that the Council needed to accept that the time of cheap energy had passed and should instead focus on building energy efficient schools.

The Chairman stated that, whilst she supported the development of energy efficient schools, the Forum had to acknowledge that most school buildings in the borough were old and there was little the Council could do to improve their energy efficiency. She also noted that building highly efficient buildings was expensive and not always feasible given budgetary constraints. In response, a Member agreed that initial outlay could be expensive, but that the Council should investigate the grants available from central government. An officer added that the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme set out clear guidelines that Councils should adhere to when building new schools, with the central emphasis being energy efficiency.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.