

## Schools' Forum Meeting

### 22 September 2015

#### Attendees:

##### Members

Alan Chapman (AC) ( Academies)  
 Amanda Baines (ABa) (VA Primary Schools  
 Large & Mid FSM<50%)  
 Anne Malcolm (AM) (Standing in for Andrew  
 Jordon)  
 Andy Brown (ABr) (Academies)  
 Fr Graeme Buttery (GB) (Primary Governor)  
 Grant Carswell (GC) (Secondary Schools)  
 Helen O'Brien (HO) (Large Primary Schools  
 FSM<50%)  
 Jo Heaton (JHe) (Diocese of Durham)  
 John Hardy (JHa) (VA Small Primary Schools)  
 Julie Deville (JD) (Academies)  
 Julie Thomas (JT) (Mid Sized Schools 190-280  
 FSM>50%)  
 Lynne Pawley (LP) (Large Primary Schools)  
 Marion Fairley (MF) (Large Primary Schools  
 FSM>50%)  
 Mark Tilling (MT) (Secondary Schools)  
 Penny Thompson (PT) (Early Years)  
 Stephen Hammond (SH) (Academies)  
 Sue Sharpe (SS) (Small Primary Schools <211)  
 (Chair)  
 Zoe Westley (ZW) (Special Schools)

##### Local Authority Officers

Christine Lowson (CL) (Administrator)  
 Joanne Smith (JS) (Children's Finance)  
 Mark Patton (MP) (Assistant Director  
 Education)  
 Rachel Clark (RC) (HR Business Partner)  
 Sandra Shears (SSh) (Children's Finance)

#### Apologies:

Andrew Jordon (AJ) (Academies)  
 Suzi Yeniceri (SY) (Early Years PVI)

Agenda Item	Action
<p><b>1 Minutes of the Last Meeting</b></p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record with the exception that ZW had sent apologies for the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>2 Matters Arising</b></p> <p>It was noted that with regard to Early Years only one set of paperwork for free school meals and pupil premium is issued to schools instead of two.</p>	

<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>STPCD 2015 Pay Award</b></p> <p>RC explained that consultations with Headteachers had taken place the outcomes of which were</p> <p>1% up-lift option 1 – 31 out of 35 schools agreed with this.  1% up-lift option 2 – no interest  Option 2a – LGA consideration – 6a/6b split – 27 agreed  Option 2b – 2% straight increase – 8 agreed</p> <p>It was noted that eight schools agreed with option 2b.</p> <p>It was noted that there could be possible costs for changes to the payroll and finance systems for schools that did not go with the consensus. However, following some discussion, it was thought that despite the changes it was likely that schools would use the same pay structure. SSh is to clarify if there would be any additional costs to schools.</p> <p>It was noted that the recommendation from the LA is for the 6a/6b split as this would give more flexibility within performance related pay and did not reward those teachers on point 6 who had not met their performance objectives.</p> <p>RC reported that there had been mixed consensus across Teesside and the North East.</p> <p>Some members of Forum felt that if the 6a/6b option was accepted then issues with Trade Unions could arise. RC reported that she had contacted the Trade Unions but no stance had been reported.</p> <p>It was noted that all pay policies would need to be updated regardless of the decision.</p> <p>A decision is required by 31 October 2015 as it needs to be in place for the current year pay rise. It was noted that pay policies will need to go to the next Governing Body meetings at all schools before any changes can be implemented.</p> <p>It was noted that the options are linked to performance management for meeting objectives and therefore the 6a/6b option shows a clear differential. All staff would get a 1% cost of living rise.</p> <p>LP joined the meeting.</p> <p>HR will prepare two pay policies and consult with Trade Unions regarding both policies.</p>	<p><b>SSh</b></p>
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<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>School Place Planning and Basic Need Allocation</b></p> <p>A report had been issued with the meeting papers with regard to increasing space at both Clavering and Hart primary schools.</p> <p>It was noted that consultation is required when any school or academy is to increase their PAN to consider the best interest of all schools in the surrounding area.</p> <p>A query was raised around how the recommendation had been reached to increase the size of these two schools when both Barnard Grove and West Park were also under pressure. MP is to clarify how the recommendation was made.</p> <p>Schools' Forum noted the content of this report and noted that the final decision rested with Children's Services Committee</p>	<p><b>MP</b></p>
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Pupil Premium and Free School Meals Update</b></p> <p>PT reported that one data collection is to be used in future. Schools have been asked to notify the Early Years team if they have any concerns over pupils not taking up their entitlement.</p> <p>It was appreciated that there is a degree of work involved for schools to identify individual children, however this is the only way forward.</p>	
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Capital Sub-Group Membership</b></p> <p>It was noted that the changes to the membership will be;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stephen Hammond to represent academies</li> <li>• Alan Chapman to represent special schools</li> <li>• Jo Heaton to represent Diocesan schools</li> </ul>	
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>Space to Learn Update</b></p> <p>It was noted that the decision on finance for the next 2016/17 financial year (Year 1) and the 2017/18 financial year (Year 2) had been deferred from the last meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that only Year 1 would be at a cost of £148k as this would include £50k for broadband. Year 2 would be at a cost of £98k as the NGfL broadband contract would have finished.</p> <p>Members of Forum had consulted with their groups and a vote had been taken however it was noted that this vote had been for two years at £148k as it had not previously been realised that Year 2 would be at a reduced rate due to the broadband not being included. The vote was</p> <p>Year 1 – 12 votes to continue funding. Year 2 – 7 votes to continue funding.</p>	

	<p><b>Decision</b> – Space to Learn funding of £148k approved for 2016/17</p> <p>As the amount for support has now been reduced, it was felt that further consultation was required for the continuation of funding for Year 2. This was agreed and the decision for Year 2 will be taken at the next meeting to be held on 21 October.</p> <p>A comment was made that the difficulty with committing further funding for Year 2 is that the broad band contract is currently an unknown quantity and the likelihood is that not all schools will be in the same contract after March 2017. MP agreed which is why Forum will only be deciding on funding to support the actual running costs of Space to Learn for 2017/18 financial year.</p> <p>JD queried was the vote of the Primary Governor a true representation of the views of governors. GB explained that it was difficult to contact all governors however those he had contacted had not responded. MP agreed to seek approval from Chair’s of Governors to share contact details with GB to facilitate consultation.</p>	<b>MP</b>
<b>8</b>	<p><b>High Needs Block Pressures</b></p> <p>AC explained that a meeting had been held between Catcote, Springwell and the Heads of ARP. He went on to explain that clarity and transparency is required with regard to what is happening with the High Needs Block and how the funding is being spent.</p> <p>Full details of individual pupils are required to ensure that the pupil’s needs cannot be met within the town before panel agree to costly out of ten placements. Costs need to be clearly marked as to whether they are to support the pupil’s education or their social care needs.</p> <p>It was noted that clarity is needed to ensure that the High Needs Block funding is not being used to support any social care elements of support.</p> <p>Gaps in provision in Hartlepool need to be looked at as there are specialist skills within the town however pupils are being educated out of town.</p> <p>AC explained that the views of medical consultants are often that some pupils could be better supported outside of the town and sometimes decision makers felt under pressure to agree with this.</p> <p>Clarity is also required around exceptional funding in terms of what does this amount do and what funding has been allocated to which schools.</p> <p>It was felt that more joined up approach between Panel and the level of funding available is required as the level of needs for pupils is increasing while funding levels are decreasing.</p>	

It was noted that there are 160 young people receiving funding who do not have a formal review date to see if the current level of support and funding is still required or can it be changed. It was noted that all schools are aware of their pupils who receive support and can review if this level of support is still appropriate. SSh is to ask Kelly Armstrong to contact schools to review supported pupils. Panel will then review any other pupils that schools have not identified. Schools will be asked to review those pupils without a review date and inform the LEA of pupils who no longer need support. Schools will then be required to attend Panel to request continuation of support. It is anticipated that this will be completed by January.

**SSh**

ABr stated that he had spoken to his finance team who had advised that a reduction in the hourly rate rather than a reduction in hours would be marginally beneficial to schools.

It was felt that a review of current expenditure would be required before any decision on reducing funding could be made.

It was noted that decision is required immediately to ensure that the High Needs Block does not end the current financial year in deficit.

A comment was made that it was 'odd' that schools have only been informed of these pressures in September 2015 when all schools already have their plans in place based on current levels of funding.

It was noted that this would be temporary measure for the rest of this financial year whilst a further review is undertaken for future years.

It was noted that schools run on a three year financial model and any changes could affect the level of support received.

The options are

- 1) reduce the number of weeks that support is supplied for at the current rate ie 38 weeks at £10.74.
- 2) retain the number of weeks but reduce the level of support ie 44 weeks at £9.00

Both options would be backdated to 1 September 2015. A vote was then taken;

- Option 1 – 1 vote
- Option 2 – 12 votes

**Decision** – Option 2 adopted for the remainder of the 2015/16 financial year.

MF joined the meeting.

**9 Schools Formula 2016/17**

A request had been raised for the use of Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) to be used for financial year formula planning. SSh felt that the best way forward to consider this request would be to set up a Task and Finish group to look into the pros and cons of using this approach.

JH explained that IDACI is a better way of considering the community rather than the individual as children of more affluent parents still suffer if part of a deprived community.

Volunteers were requested for the Task and Finish group and the following members volunteered;

- Sue Sharp
- John Hardy
- Lynne Pawley
- Jo Heaton
- Andrew Jordon
- Mark Tilling
- Amanda Baines
- Marian Fairley

2016/17 Financial Year

A comment was made that if de-delegated funding was to be agreed for two years and then IDACI used for the second year this would affect the amount of the de-delegated funding already agreed.

A query was raised around why pupil premium is not taken into account as this along with deprivation means that schools are funded twice.

ABr stated that the level 4+ indicator shows 13 schools in Hartlepool are classed as deprived against the national average of 54%. 70% of primary schools now have increased results therefore the level of funding currently agreed is having a positive impact.

It was recognised that deprived communities require additional funding and this is why Schools' Forum have historically funded deprivation at a higher rate. However there are concerns around what will happen if a national formula has to be used.

A vote was taken on the deprivation factor to be used in the formula;

- 15% = 7 for, 7 against, 2 abstained
- 12% = 7 for, 7 against, 2 abstained
- 9% = 0 for, 14 against, 2 abstained
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It was noted that the results of the vote will be passed to Children's Services Committee for the final decision. Forum members were reminded that this is a public meeting and that anyone can attend.

**MP**

	It was noted that the vote shows that schools are willing to compromise.	
<b>10</b>	<p><b>De-delegated Services</b></p> <p>It was clarified that academies do not have a vote with regard to de-delegated services. However they are allowed to give their views to Forum.</p> <p>Comments from academies were;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indications were that they were against a two year sign up.</li> <li>• Trusts would not permit a two year sign up</li> <li>• Suggestion that moving forward to a SLA style would be better than de-delegated.</li> </ul> <p>A vote was taken regarding the number of years that schools will agree de-delegated funding;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One year primary vote = 7 for, 1 abstained</li> <li>• One year secondary vote = 2 for</li> <li>• Two year primary vote = 3 for, 4 against, 1 abstained</li> <li>• Two year secondary vote = 2 against</li> </ul> <p><b>Decision</b> – de-delegated services were agreed for 2016/17 only</p> <p>A query was raised around what would happen if the centrally retained services funding was not agreed. SSh explained that the funding would be left in the schools budget but the services would potentially no longer exist.</p> <p>A vote was then taken with regard to agreeing the centrally retained services funding for the 2016/17 year;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 for</li> <li>• 2 against</li> <li>• 4 abstained</li> </ul> <p><b>Decision</b> – centrally retained services agreed for 2016/17 only</p>	
<b>11</b>	<p><b>Mid-Term Transfers</b></p> <p>This item was deferred to the meeting to be held on 21 October to allow for further information to be modelled through as this information had only been received late on the 18 September.</p> <p>Finance is to look at Ward Jackson School as a special case.</p>	<b>SSh/JS</b>
<b>12</b>	<p><b>Schools Balances</b></p> <p>This item was deferred to the meeting to be held on 21 October due the discussions around Item 8 High Needs Block Pressures.</p> <p>It was noted that this is not an attempt by the LA to claw back funding but an open and honest debate around how best to support shared</p>	

	responsibilities using balances in excess of financial guidelines.	
<b>13</b>	<p><b>LAC Pupil Premium</b></p> <p>Forum members were reminded that a proportion of the pupil premium element of funding is held by the LA and that schools can bid for it. MP informed members that there is still some funding left and therefore urged schools to apply for it as unclaimed funding will be clawed back by the EFA. It was noted that additional pupil premium funding was only considered if the expenditure would support the pupil's personal education plan.</p> <p>MP stated that funding comes in to the Authority in instalments rather than upfront and there are now more stringent views around authorities going into debt, schools need to plan for quarterly payments from April 2016 rather than a lump sum at the beginning of the year.</p>	
<b>14</b>	<p><b>Next Forum Meeting</b></p> <p>The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 21 October 2015, in the Croft Room at the Borough Hall.</p>	
<b>15</b>	<p><b>Agenda Items for Next Meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Space to Learn Support (Year 2 - 2017/18)</li> <li>• Mid-Term Transfers</li> <li>• Excessive School Balances</li> </ul>	
<b>16</b>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>There was no other business to note.</p>	