

Schools' Forum Meeting

21 October 2015

Attendees:

Members

Amanda Baines (ABa) (VA Primary Schools Large & Mid FSM<50%)
 Andy Brown (ABr) (Academies)
 Chris Hargreaves (CH) (Trade Unions)
 Julie Deville (JD) (Academies)
 Julie Thomas (JT) (Mid Sized Schools 190-280 FSM>50%)
 Kieran Sharp (KS) (Student Support Unit)
 Louise Robson (standing in for Alan Chapman)
 Marion Fairley (MF) (Large Primary Schools FSM>50%)
 Mark Tilling (MT) (Secondary Schools) (Chair)
 Stephen Hammond (SH) (Academies)
 Sue Sharpe (SS) (Small Primary Schools <211)

Local Authority Officers

Christine Lowson (CL) (Administrator)
 Joanne Smith (JS) (Children's Finance)
 Mark Patton (MP) (Assistant Director Education)
 Sandra Shears (SSh) (Children's Finance)

Apologies:

Alan Chapman (AC) (Academies)
 Andrew Jordon (AJ) (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)
 Lynn Scott (standing in for Jo Heaton)
 Mark Atkinson (standing in for Helen O'Brien)
 Penny Thompson (PT) (Early Years)
 Suzi Yeniceri (SY) (Early Years PVI)
 Zoe Westley (ZW) (Special Schools)

Agenda Item	Action
<p>1 Minutes of the Last Meeting</p> <p>As Sue Sharpe had been delayed Mark Tilling took the chair for this meeting. It was noted that turnout was poor considering there were decisions to be made at this meeting and the meeting had been in diaries for a number of months.</p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true and accurate with the following matters arising.</p>	

<p>2</p>	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>STPCD Pay Award – consultations had started on 25 September 2015 and have now finished.</p> <p>School Place Planning – MP reported that Clavering and Hart extension recommendations had come from meetings held with Headteachers of the three town areas.</p> <p>Governor Votes – MP reported that permission to share Chair of Governor contact details with Fr Buttery is currently being sought.</p> <p>High Needs Block – SSh reported that Kelly Armstrong had e-mailed schools as requested 17 had responded and 16 had not responded. It was noted that not all schools are aware of the Headteacher section of Any Comms. It was further noted that alerts could be set up for incoming information. CL to speak to Kay Forgie to ask her to clarify areas of Any Comms and alert details.</p> <p>Schools Formula – MP reported that the split vote had been taken to Children’s Services Committee and they had made a decision to set the deprivation factor at 13.5%.</p>	<p>CL</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Space to Learn Support for Year 2</p> <p>Forum members had requested extra time to consider supporting Space to Learn for a second year as the cost would be £98k and not £148k as originally thought.</p> <p>A vote was taken and three representatives voted in favour of supporting for a further year with three representatives voting against. One vote in favour had been sent in by e-mail.</p> <p>Decision – Space to Learn would be supported for the 2017/18 year at a reduced cost of £98k.</p> <p>It was noted that a long term business plan is required for Space to Learn to assist with financial planning. MP agreed to work with the Management Committee from Space to Learn on this.</p> <p>It was explained that the academy vote against supporting Space to Learn was because they felt they should be able to make their own decisions around what to do with their funding.</p>	<p>MP</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Mid-term Transfers Autumn 2014 Model</p> <p>SSh tabled an updated Page 3 to the report already circulated with the meeting papers.</p>	

	<p>It was noted that there is already a protocol in place for managed moves however historically the transferring of funding does not occur.</p> <p>It was explained that Ward Jackson had been looked at specifically as requested however only looking at one school does not give a clear picture therefore Forum members had been asked if they wanted this issue looked at in further detail.</p> <p>A comment was made around there being a flaw in the system figures whereby children who have been identified over the summer as starting at a school in September are included in the transfer figures, however, the pupils do not start at the school in September therefore funding for these pupils is never received.</p> <p>It was suggested that this issue be looked at further as pupils moving out or around town are a loss of funding to schools however pupils moving in from out of town do not receive any funding.</p> <p>It was suggested that when looking at this issue the Admissions Team be involved and also it is necessary to trace the chain back more than one step to follow the funding route.</p> <p>It was felt that this was a much wider piece of work than originally thought and it is not just the finance that needs looking into, all policies and protocols also need to be looked at.</p> <p>A query was raised around is this outside of the scope of Schools' Forum as numbers can be provided to enable a decision to be taken on intra moves and funding to follow.</p> <p>Decision – it was proposed that further work be done around transfers within Hartlepool and the funding following providing that funding is already received for the child. Two years are to be looked at with the funding chain being traced back more than just one step.</p> <p>It was appreciated that this would a long term piece of work therefore an update is to be brought to the next Forum meeting in January.</p>	<p>SSh</p> <p>Agenda</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Excessive School Balances</p> <p>MP referred to the funding figures in the report sent to Forum members in June 2015. He explained that there is £1.642m in unused balances and this figure is after commitments have been taken into account. This level of surplus was not atypical, and has been a feature of Hartlepool for many years. He went on to say that leaving this amount of funding unused is immoral when it could be used to benefit the children of Hartlepool.</p> <p>It was noted that the EFA have a different view to the DfE and recommend that academies hold back 17% against the DfE figure of 8% or 5% for schools.</p>	

A comment was made that this figure may change and outstanding balances may not continue as schools gain a clearer picture of where they would like to be moving forward. MP reiterated the point that high surplus balances had been a feature of Hartlepool for years.

MP explained that this is not about the Authority clawing back money it is about collectively having excessive balances uncommitted and doing nothing when it could be used to benefit pupils.

The Authority is asking Forum representatives to talk to their own groups and discuss whether or not collectively we should be using this money and how best to use it to support the children of Hartlepool.

A query was raised around can a protocol be set up for Headteachers to challenge other Headteachers with regard balances. It was felt that this would raise further questions such as; who would look after the funding? Where would it go? What would it be used for?

A comment was made around schools maybe sitting on funding for a specific reason, however, it was noted that this should be listed in the school's commitments.

It was suggested that the Authority do something about the outstanding balances and use its powers to take back outstanding balances from schools holding funding.

It was stated that academies would not be part of this therefore funding could only be clawed back from maintained schools and if this was the case it should only be spent on maintained schools which in turn would create a split town.

It was suggested that the Authority produce a draft claw back policy. A comment was made that this may make schools spend money on things they would not have previously purchased just to make sure their funding is not clawed back.

It was noted that a second schools balances survey is to take place over the next month the results of which will be brought to the January meeting.

SSh

It was felt there is a definite need to look at schools who consistently sit on balances. MP explained that Council are aware of the balances and have requested a further report in January.

Decision – the Authority is to draft a balances protocol to include the Authority clawing back funding and Forum making the decision on what the clawed back funding will be spent on. This protocol will be brought to the January meeting.

MP

6	<p>Schools Formula 2016/17</p> <p>Following the decision of Children’s Services Committee to set the level of deprivation at 13.5%, Finance will supply new figures based on this percentage.</p> <p>JD stated that she was very disappointed that Forum had been made to compromise a second time when a compromise had already been made. This view was seconded by ABa.</p> <p>ABr stated that he totally disagreed with the above statement. This was seconded by both MF and JT.</p>	
7	<p>Date and Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next meeting is to be arranged for Wednesday 20 January 2016.</p>	CL
8	<p>Agenda Items for the Next Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Balances Update • Mid Term Transfers Update • Schools Formula 2016/17 • Scheme of Financing for Schools 	
9	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>There was no other business to note.</p>	