

Schools' Forum Meeting

22 October 2014

Attendees:

Members

Amanda Baines (ABa) (Diocese)
 Andrew Jordon (AJ) (Academies)
 Andy Brown (ABr) (Larger Primary Deprived Schools)
 Anne Malcolm (AM) (Secondary Schools)
 Chris Hargreaves (CH) (Trade Unions)
 Jan Brough (JB) (Small Deprived Primary with High Mobility)
 John Hardy (JH) (VA Primary Schools)
 Julie Deville (JD) (Academies)
 Lynne Pawley (LP) (Middle Primary 250 – 349)
 Mandy Hall (MH) (standing in for Peter Cornforth)
 Marian Fairley (MF) (Multi-ethnic Primary Mobility Deprived)
 Mark Atkinson (MA) (Governors Primary)
 Mark Tilling (MT) (Secondary Schools)
 Michael Lee (ML) (Academies)
 Penny Barker (PB) (Secondary Schools)
 Peter McMahon (PM) (Student Support Unit)
 Sue Sharpe (SS) (Small Primary Schools <249)
 (Chair)
 Suzi Yeniceri (SY) (Early Years PVI)

Local Authority Officers

Christine Lowson (CL) (Administrator)
 Dean Jackson (DJ) (Child & Adult Services)
 Joanne Smith (JS) (Children's Finance)
 Sandra Shears (SSh) (Children's Finance)
 Sue Beevers (SB) (Child and Adult Services)

Agenda Item	Action
<p>1 Apologies</p> <p>The following apologies for absence were noted; Alex Fau-Goodwin (AF) (16 – 19 Provision) Danielle Swainston (DS) (Early Years) Peter Cornforth (PC) (Larger Primaries > 350) Penny Thompson (PT) (standing in for Danielle Swainston)</p>	
<p>2 Early Years and School Infrastructure Plan</p> <p>SB explained the background behind the School Infrastructure Plan and who had contributed to the plan. She explained that the area split had been determined during the Primary Capital Programme and went on to explain the surplus and trigger point figures of 7% and 17% respectively.</p>	

	<p>SB explained that the plan had been put in place due to the number of planning applications for housing developments. It was noted that the Authority now has a plan in place to calculate the amount of funding that should be requested from developers for educational provision.</p> <p>A query was raised around where the Authority had got their projected figures from as some members of Forum believed them to be wrong. SB explained that the figures were standard figures from Tees Valley Unlimited. It was noted that all schools listed in the North set disagreed with the projected figures.</p> <p>It was noted that the area groups shown in the appendices were not the same as the groups used for PCP and therefore how had these areas been arrived at</p> <p>SB explained that there had been issues around factoring in parental choice.</p> <p>DJ explained that the document is still draft and needs to be finalised. The Authority is now looking into being more pro-active with regard to obtaining funding from developers.</p> <p>Members of Forum felt that there should be a town wide effort with regard to surplus places and that a corporate strategy needs to be put in place as well as further dialogue with parents.</p> <p>DJ explained that in order to finalise the document all comments are to be sent to SB no later than Wednesday 5 November.</p> <p>SB left the meeting.</p>	All
3	<p>Minutes from the Last Meeting and Matters Arising</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2014 were accepted as a true and accurate record with no matters arising.</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2014 were accepted as a true and accurate record with no matters arising.</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2014 were accepted as a true and accurate record with no matters arising.</p>	
4	<p>Space to Learn</p> <p>DJ explained that the current guaranteed funding ends on 31 March 2015. He went on to explain the three options available for the next financial year;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools can carry on funding Space to Learn at the current rate of £238k through Centrally Retained Services. 	

- Schools can support Space to Learn at a minimum cost of £100k plus £50k for broadband through Centrally Retained Services.
- Schools can decide not support Space to Learn further, which will mean that the building reverts back to St Hild's School and the TUPE transfer of staff will be resolved by the Authority and St Hild's School.

A query had been raised at the last meeting as to the amount of funding that schools would receive back into their 'pot' if they did not fund Space to Learn. It was noted that if schools did not fund Space to Learn approximately £18.37 per pupil would be put back into the central pot meaning approximately £82k going into the primary pot and £55k going into the secondary pot. However if schools were to support Space to Learn at a cost of £100k plus £50k for the broadband approximately £10.66 will be put back into the central pot.

A query was raised regarding if there was a tipping point around what figure the Authority can manage to run Space to Learn with if some schools decided not support it. It was explained that this does not apply to de-delegated funding as either all schools are in or all schools are out.

JH reiterated that the VA primary view is that if SLAs were implemented the cost would be too great as not all schools would buy in.

DJ explained that the launch of the ICT support from North Tyneside is for secondary, primary and special schools and is a highly creative and imaginative package to enhance ICT learning in schools.

The Authority has agreed to a 60 day package over the academic year at a cost of £500 per day however North Tyneside have agreed that Hartlepool will make no payment until Easter 2015 and will have the option to walk away if not entirely satisfied.

It was noted that there is increased focus on ICT within the curriculum from Ofsted.

Some discussion then took place around supporting Space to Learn and the following comments were noted;

- If Space to Learn is retained for a further twelve months schools can then make a more informed decision.
- Centrally Retained Services are taken before the funding formula is applied.
- How Space to Learn is to be linked to the North Tyneside package is unclear and schools cannot justify supporting Space to Learn, a facility they do not use while having to reduce their own staffing levels.

DJ explained that he requires a further twelve months support for Space to Learn to ensure that it is inextricably linked to the North Tyneside support.

	<p>Forum were asked to make a decision on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retaining the £50k for broadband within the Centrally Retained Services – this was agreed • Supporting Space to Learn for a further twelve months at a cost of £100k – this was agreed by a vote of 9 to 3 in favour of supporting Space to Learn. <p>It was agreed that an update on Space to Learn be given at each Schools Forum Meeting.</p>	Agenda
5	<p>Schools Funding Formula</p> <p>MA joined the meeting.</p> <p><u>De-Delegated Funding and Centrally Retained Funding</u> DJ tabled a report and explained it in further detail. It was noted that the figures in the report had already been issued in Agenda items 7 & 8 at the meeting held on 18 September.</p> <p><u>De-Delegated Funding</u> It was explained that de-delegated funding includes all schools and academies however if academies do not buy back services the rate per pupil remains the same for all other schools and the Authority would need to re-model the service.</p> <p>Forum members were asked to decide by sector whether or not they wish to continue to de-delegate funding in 2015/16 for the services listed in Table 1 Paragraph 3.2 of the report.</p> <p>Both the primary and secondary sectors agreed to de-delegate the funding.</p> <p>Academy representatives were asked to decide whether they will buy back the delegated services in 2015/16 as detailed in Table 1 Paragraph 3.2 of the report with the exception of SIMS licenses.</p> <p>AJ reported that a conversation around Behaviour Support needs to take place before a decision can be made regarding buying back this service.</p> <p>It was agreed that academies would respond as soon as possible regarding the buying back of services.</p> <p><u>Centrally Retained Funding</u> A query was raised around admissions and if the figure still includes the salary for the Head of Admissions who is soon to leave the Authority. DJ explained that it still includes a salary figure as the Authority is to recruit to the post.</p> <p>With regard to school meals, it had been clarified at the Task and Finish Group earlier this year that Dyke House do not contribute to this figure.</p>	Academies

A query was raised around what is included in the cost for vulnerable children. DJ explained It was noted that the previous Government provided a specific budget for vulnerable children that created a new post. Part of this funding stream covers this officer and on costs. A further £9k covers private tuition and the Letter Box scheme. £11k goes directly to schools to assist with looked after children. The above costs total approximately £83k plus overheads.

It was noted that the Authority now receives pupil premium for looked after children therefore further clarity is required for the following years. DJ is to liaise with Zoe Westley for further clarification.

Forum Members were asked to agree the value of Centrally Retained Services as shown in Table 2 Paragraph 4.1 of the report.

Forum agreed the value of Centrally Retained Services.

SY left the meeting.

Formula Agreement

JS clarified that column 2 on all scenarios showed cash comparisons between the current financial year and the coming financial year.

DJ explained each spreadsheet in further detail and it was noted that the final column showed the direction of travel and impact on the schools.

It was noted that once a scenario has been chosen the anonymity will be removed.

MT suggested using a deprivation figure of 14.04% for the funding formula. This was challenged by AM, MF and ABr who recommended that deprivation remains as it is at 15.25%.

PB suggested discussing scenario 4 in full details to allow for prudent, forward financial planning.

A comment was made around consideration being given to schools who have been hit in previous years by the deprivation figure.

AJ suggested that the decision Forum should be making is between either creating the least turbulence for schools or moving towards the end point more quickly.

It was noted that Forum are privy to the end point figures however other schools only look at the reduction in cash figures. It was felt that there is a need for all schools to see the end figures.

It was suggested that scenario 4 be removed as an option however ML stated that he would not be happy with this as he felt the scenario 4 is the compromise scenario.

DJ

It was noted that capping helps to protect schools whilst still moving towards the end point. It was further noted that this only applies while MFG is in place and this is not guaranteed for future years.

It was noted that changing both the lump sum and the deprivation level creates the most turbulence and that smaller deprived schools lose the most.

It was noted that without putting some resources into areas of high challenge, it will be very hard to close the FSM gap.

It was explained that for large schools with low deprivation scenario 1 would be the chosen option.

JS informed Forum Members of the lump sum used by neighbouring authorities.

It was suggested that moving forward with the direction of travel more quickly should be the chosen scenario as this end point has to be reached eventually.

AM stated that if figures from the Government are flawed can Forum be certain around the direction of travel. She went to explain that she would be uncomfortable using any Government suggestion and national averages.

It was noted that in terms of Government it is still the DfE who drives the figures and formula.

MF stated that deprivation should not be considered to be the same as last year as in general things are not the same and will only get worse going forward.

The key question is does finance follow strategy or not?

A comment was made that a compromise across the town must be reached. It was explained that a decision must be reached today and if this decision is not made then it will have to go back to the Authority to make the decision. A question was raised around the likely outcome if the Authority was to make the decision. DJ explained that this was unknown however last year the Director of Child and Adult Services had indicated that with regard to deprivation the direction of travel was downwards.

It was noted that in general Hartlepool is a deprived town with areas of further deprivation.

It was suggested that the lump sum remain at £175k however not all agreed to this as it was felt that if the deprivation figure could not be agreed on then the decision on the lump sum may not stand..

	<p>It was suggested that as the Director indicated a downward direction of travel for deprivation scenarios 3 and 4 be used.</p> <p>PB suggested that the compromise would be scenarios 2 and 3, as the lump sum is reduced on one and deprivation reduced on the other.</p> <p>It was agreed that Forum would vote on the lump sum and deprivation separately.</p> <p>Forum voted on the level of deprivation.</p> <p>Accept deprivation at 15.25% - 9 votes Accept deprivation at 14.04% - 6 votes</p> <p>It was clarified that all who voted were entitled to vote therefore the vote was accepted.</p> <p>Forum voted on the lump sum amount.</p> <p>Accept the lump sum at £175k – 11 votes Accept the lump sum at £145k – 4 votes</p> <p>It was clarified that Schools' Forum are recommending a lump sum of £175k with a deprivation level of 15.25%.</p>	
6	<p>Date and Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>CL to arrange and send meeting invites for early February.</p>	CL
7	<p>Agenda Items for Next Meeting</p> <p>Space to Learn update.</p> <p>Further agenda items to be sent to CL</p>	All
8	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>There was no other business to note.</p>	