**Report to Hartlepool Schools’ Forum 7 May 2019**

**From Penny Thompson – Head of Service, The Children’s Hub and Partnerships**

# Agenda Item 12 – Funding for Designated Education Officer

1. **Purpose of Report**

1.1 The purpose of the report is to choose a suitable option for the future funding of the Designated Education Officer (DEO) for 2019/20.

**2. Background**

2.1 A detailed report was presented to Schools’ Forum on the 15 March 2019. Forum representatives were asked to consult with the schools they represent in order that a decision could be made at today’s meeting.

2.2 It was noted that, although the cost of this post to Hartlepool schools has been split evenly over all schools at a cost of £505 per school, that this had an adverse impact on small schools. It was requested that the costs could be recalculated using pupil numbers from the October census. This information was circulated with the minutes of the meeting and included in the table below as Option 4.ub to make

**3.0 Options**

3.1 Options for the DEO role:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Option | Pros | Cons |
| 1. | Allow the post to come to an end/ no longer fund the role. | Schools will not be expected to fund the role.  Ongoing inspections have highlighted the role as excellent practice.  National research consistently shows that a dedicated education specialist is vital to the effectiveness of a safeguarding hub.  The current DEO is a qualified teacher and has a clear understanding of the education system. | To cease funding an education presence would not be in line with positive verbal feedback received from head teachers and Designated Safeguarding Leads.  The CHub will no longer have a dedicated education specialist in the team. Schools will no longer have a ‘go to’ contact for general safeguarding advice.  Schools will need to participate fully in strategies and supply the CHub with all information relevant to a safeguarding enquiry.  DEO would no longer be able to contribute to training for Designated Safeguarding Leads. |
| 2. | Stockton schools to fund 66% of the role and Hartlepool schools to fund 34% of the role. The cost would be shared out equally across all schools regardless of pupil numbers. | If all schools agreed this would equate to each Hartlepool school contributing £505. | Not all schools would necessarily use the role fully if they had no safeguarding concerns in that year.  Some schools may have low levels (or no) contact with the DEO if the majority of their cohort was already a CiN as the DEO only deals with children with no current active worker. |
| 3. | Schools choose to ‘buy back’ into the DEO role. | Schools can buy the service if they feel it adds value to their safeguarding duties. | Difficult for the CHub to administer. The DEO is either an ‘all or nothing’ role. Cannot offer additional safeguarding support to some children but not others. |
| 4. | Schools pay for the role based on the numbers of children on roll.  Appendix A shows the cost implications for schools should this option be chosen. | Winners and losers in terms of costs to individual schools.  Small schools would pay less than large schools.  Arguably a fairer distribution of costs. | Some schools would need to pay more than they have previously. |

**4. Recommendations**

4.1 Schools Forum is asked to consider the options above and choose a preferred option at the meeting of the 7 May 2019.