

Schools' Forum Meeting

7 May 2019

Attendees:

Members

Alan Chapman (AC) (Academy - Special)
 Amanda Baines (ABa) (Primary Academy <25% FSM)
 Angela Henderson (AH) PRU
 Christopher Simmons (CS) (Governor)
 David Turner (DT) (Small)
 Jo Heaton (JHe) (Diocese of Durham)
 John Hardy (JH) (VA Small)
 Lynne Chambers (LC) (Primary-Academy >25% >50% FSM)
 Mark Hughes (MH) 16-19 Sector
 Mark Tilling (MT) (Secondary Schools)
 Mary Frain (MF) (VA Large)
 Penny Thompson (PT) (Early Years)
 Rachel Williams (RW) Diocese – Roman Catholic
 Stephen Hammond (SH) (Academy – Secondary)
 Sue Sharpe (SS) (Large Deprived) **CHAIR**
 Tracey Gibson (TG) (Secondary Schools)

Local Authority Officers

Jane Watt (JW) (Children's Finance)
 Sally Robinson (SR) (Director Children's Joint Commissioning Services)
 Sandra Shears (SSh) (Children's Finance)
 Eileen Larkin (EAL) (Administrator)

Agenda Item		Action
1	Apologies	
1.1	Julie Thomas	
2	Minutes from last Forum (15 March 2019) & Matters Arising	
2.1	Minutes were read and accepted as a true record.	
3	High Needs Task and Finish Group Outcomes (R/I)	
3.1	This item was deferred to the next meeting on Friday 21 June 2019.	Actioned
4	School Balances Review (I)	
4.1	Chair advised that the meeting to discuss the school balance above tolerance had not yet taken place, despite best efforts. An update would be provided at the next meeting in June.	
5	National Funding Formula (I) (standard item)	
5.1	There were no specific updates for the meeting.	

<p>6</p> <p>6.1</p>	<p>SEND free school update (standard item)</p> <p>SR advised that there would be a launch event on 20 May 2019 at 1pm at CETL. Invitations were requested to tender for the project. Closing date for applications is 30 September 2019.</p>	
<p>7</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p> <p>7.3</p> <p>7.4</p> <p>7.5</p> <p>7.6</p> <p>7.7</p> <p>7.8</p>	<p>Growth Fund Disbursement Proposal (R/D)</p> <p>The group of three head teachers established by Schools' Forum had met and MT reported their proposal for a methodology for accessing and disbursing the growth fund.</p> <p>MT stressed that the three head teachers all felt that eligibility based on the published Local Authority Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme was particularly important.</p> <p>MT explained the proposal in more detail and hoped that Forum agreed that everything had been covered, with a solution found that would cover all schools.</p> <p>AB advised that she had some concerns as she had some Appeals going through and primary schools should not receive growth funding when there were spare places across the town. MT clarified that growth funding would not be allocated in such circumstances and that this was why a clear rationale for eligibility was so important.</p> <p>AB mentioned that there had been a mix up with coordinated admissions due to system changes. Her school had been advised that it was up to the school to chase up the admissions which was not feasible</p> <p>MT advised that this issue should be reported via the Admissions Forum.</p> <p>SR advised that it was her understanding that the system issues relating to primary schools had been resolved in time but that she was aware of a problem for secondary schools. .</p> <p>A vote was taken of those eligible to vote.</p> <p>In favour – 15 Against – 1 Abstained – None</p>	
<p>8</p> <p>8.1</p>	<p>Dedicated Schools Grant and De-Delegated Budgets 2018/19 Final Outturn (R/I)</p> <p>The purpose of the report was to update Schools' Forum on the outturn position for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and de-delegated budgets for the financial year 2018/19.</p>	

8.2	SSh referred to the report and gave an overview of the total DSG underspend of £0.216m.	
8.3	SSh confirmed that the under spend of £11k regarding Space to Learn had been taken to reserves to contribute to final closure costs. A report will be brought back to Forum once the final closure costs are established.	
8.4	SSh explained that although there was an overall underspend of £0.056m on the Early Years Block, there was an underlying financial pressure against spending on 2 year old provision. This had happened for a number of years and further investigation is required.	
8.5	TG reported that she was concerned about a shortfall in the Early Years Block.	
8.6	SSh reassured Forum that effort would be spent to understand the position now that in-depth work had been completed for High Needs spending.	
8.7	Although the reasons for the underspending against de-delegated trade union spend was understood, MT expressed concerns for staff as there was no union representation.	
8.8	SSh confirmed that termly updates from the Council's Head of HR would begin during 2019.	
8.9	CS raised the possibility of use of reserve balances for proposals to be discussed later in the meeting.	
8.10	MT enquired what the total DSG reserve balance was and SSh advised that reserve details could be presented to the next Forum.	SSh
8.11	This item to be added to next agenda.	Actioned
9	High Needs Block 18/19 outturn update (R/I)	
9.1	The purpose of the report was to confirm the final 2018/19 outturn for high needs services.	
9.2	SSh referred to the report.	
9.3	The report clarified that the additional funding received from government in 2018/19 was on the basis of population as opposed to the level of financial pressure. This related to a question raised by DT at an earlier Forum meeting.	
9.4		

9.5	<p>DT reiterated the point that other authorities were in debt and HBC was not. Any additional funding should be based on level of need and not per head.</p> <p>SR referred to the session in 2018 with the National Audit Office and advised that much of the discussion related to the link between funding and need.</p>	
10	SEMH (Standard item)	
10.1	SS advised following feedback given from Caroline Reed and the Working Group - all was working well. ARP had taken 4 x places.	
10.2	The Rossmere ARP had requested some Capital Funding before admissions in September 2019. Discussions were ongoing about this.	
10.3	MT advised that they were awaiting reports before any authorisation could be made in relation to additional funding.	
10.4	SS stated that she will take this issue back to the SEMH group to be discussed. Heads needed to be reminded what the money could be used for. Funding is to be issued for the Working Group around SEMH provision. Monies should only be accessed through panel.	SS
11	Teachers' Pension Grant Methodology (R/I)	
11.1	The purpose of the report is to inform Schools' Forum of the methodology for disbursement of the Teachers' Pension Grant.	
11.2	SSh referred to the report which she believed was self-explanatory.	
11.3	JHe stated that she had reviewed an initial assessment using the methodology and felt that there was a significant shortfall which would have a huge impact.	
11.4	AC asked if there was any funding relating to post-19 teaching staff.	SSh
11.5	RW asked if there would be support to any schools wanting to submit a claim to the supplementary fund if they could prove a funding shortfall. SSh confirmed that support would be available and that once further details were issued, these would be shared.	
12	Designated Education Officer in The Hub – funding for post following stakeholder consultation (R/D)	
12.1	The purpose of the report is to choose a suitable option for the future funding of the Designated Education Officer (DEO) for 2019/20.	
12.2	PT referred to the report and asked for a decision at the meeting	
12.3		

<p>12.4</p> <p>12.5</p> <p>12.6</p> <p>12.7</p> <p>12.8</p> <p>12.9</p> <p>12.10</p> <p>12.11</p> <p>12.12</p>	<p>A decision would be made on 26 May 2019 by Stockton BC on their way forward. SR commented that Stockton had shown strong support for the role historically.</p> <p>Forum would like to show Stockton BC that they were equally committed to the role.</p> <p>CS proposed an amendment to option 2 relating to the vote. The amended option 2 would fund the DEO amount from DSG reserves as opposed to the £505 per school.</p> <p>A discussion took place to ensure that Forum Members were satisfied that the option 2 amendment could be made without the need to consult the schools they represented further. Following the discussion, Forum agreed that the option 2 amendment should proceed.</p> <p>MT asked Forum to consider whether funding for the DEO role should be agreed for a 2 year period instead of 1 year. Although this was supported, because of the option 2 amendment, Forum believed this further change would require consultation before a vote. Due to timescales, Forum agreed to vote against the original 1 year proposal.</p> <p>Forum voted first against option 1 in the report – Allow the post to come to an end and no longer fund the role.</p> <p>A vote was taken of those eligible to vote.</p> <p>In favour - 2 Against - 13 Abstained – 1</p> <p>Forum then voted against option 3 in the report – Should schools chose to buy back into the DEO role</p> <p>A vote was taken on those eligible to vote.</p> <p>In favour – 0 Against – 14 Abstained – 2</p> <p>Forum then voted against the amended option 2 – Hartlepool schools to fund 34% of the role and fund this from DSG reserves</p> <p>In favour – 15 Against – 0 Abstained - 1</p>	
<p>13</p> <p>13.1</p>	<p>Scheme for Financing Schools Update (R/D)</p>	

13.2	Local authorities are required to have a scheme for financing schools, setting out the relationship they have with their maintained schools.	SSh
13.3	Each year, ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency) publish changes required to the Scheme for Financing Schools. Local authorities are required to incorporate the changes into their Scheme and associated documentation, in consultation with schools.	
13.4	SSh outlined the required changes to the existing Scheme and provided a revised Scheme to reflect the updates.	
13.5	SSh advised this affected maintained schools only and not academies.	
13.6	Forum members were asked to note the contents of the report and approve the changes to be made to the scheme. Forum agreed that the changes be made and published. SSh to organise the updates and publish the updated scheme.	
13.7	JHe – enquired about item 3.4 and asked if it would affect many schools and was informed that 3 or 4 would be affected.	
13.7	CS commented that the changes to reporting for community facilities were sensible and clearer. SSh commented that schools with large community facilities are likely to continue to report community facilities separately so the position could be monitored by governors.	
14	Any Other Business	ALL Actioned
14.1	SR brought Forum’s attention to an issue with a school that had recently received a very large water bill which had arose as a result of a water leak. The leak had gone undetected due to the water meter not being read on a regular basis. All were reminded of the importance of checking their school water meters regularly to prevent any similar problems.	
14.2	JHe requested training and induction of Forum members be added to agenda for the next meeting.	
15	Date and Time of Next Forum Meeting – Friday 21 June 2019 @ 9.30am	