**Report to Hartlepool Schools’ Forum 24 September 2020**

**From Penny Thompson (Head of Service: The Children’s Hub)**

**Item 14: Early Years Sustainability Grant Update**

1. **Introduction**

1.1 At their meeting on 14 July 2020, Schools’ Forum agreed to establish a fund of £45k to provide sustainability grants to Early Years Providers.

1.2 Grants applications of up to a maximum of £5k for nursery settings and £1k for childminders were invited from Providers.

1.3 Applications for the grant were subsequently received and decisions on grants to be awarded have been made via a grant panel process.

1. **Sustainability Grant Update**
   1. A total of 17 grant applications were received from Providers – 8 from nursery settings and 9 from childminders.
   2. A panel comprising Finance, Childcare team and Head of Service considered the applications on 27 August 2020. For unsuccessful applications, an appeal window of 10 days was provided and the panel reconvened on 11 September to consider 3 appeals.
   3. Grants were awarded to 3 nursery settings and 8 childminders.
   4. Grant amounts were awarded on a sliding scale based on the amount of financial loss demonstrated by the Provider.
   5. Total grant payments out of the £45,000 fund amounted to £20,200.

2.6 No further applications to the sustainability grant fund will be considered for the period of lockdown starting in March 2020. However, it is proposed that the remaining fund is set aside in case further mitigation is required during 2020/21.

**3. Recommendations**

3.1 Forum Members are asked to note the contents of the report