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| **Schools’ Forum Meeting**  **9 December 2020** |

**Attendees:**

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| **Members**  Carole Bradley (CB) (Large <50%)  Julie Deville (JD) (Primary-Academy >25% >50% FSM)  Tracey Gibson (TG) (Secondary)  Martyn Gordon (MG) (Horizon School )  Lisa Grieg (LG) (Academy – Special)  Mandy Hall (MH) (Primary Academy <25% FSM)  John Hardy (JH) (VA Small)  Jo Heaton (JHe) (Diocese of Durham)  Andrew Jordan (AJ) (Secondary Academies - >50% FSM)  Neil Nottingham (NT) (Primary Academy >50% FSM)  Laura Ovens (LO) (Secondary Schools)  Linda Richardson (LR) (PVI)  Sue Sharpe (SS) (Large Deprived)  Chris Simmons (CS) (Academy Governors)  Sarah Tait (ST) (Academy – Secondary)  David Turner (DT) (Small)  Lee Walker (LW) (Primary Academy - >50% FSM)  Zoe Westley (ZW) (Special Schools)  Rachel Williams (RW) Diocese – Roman Catholic  Jo Wilson (JW) (VA Large) | **Local Authority Officers**  Amanda Whitehead (AW) (Assistant Director Education)  Danielle Swainston (DS)  (Assistant Director Joint Commissioning)  Jacqui Braithwaite (JB) (Integrated Services for Learning Manager)  Sandra Shears (SSh) (Children’s Finance)  Jane Watt (JWa) (Children’s Finance)  Jo Stubbs (JS) (Administrator) |

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| **Agenda Item** | | **Action** |
| **1** | **Apologies -**  Apologies were submitted by the following:  Lynn Chambers (Primary-Academy >25% >50% FSM) : Julie Deville substituting  Stephen Hammond (Academy – Secondary): Sarah Tait substituting  Mark Hughes (16-19 Sector)  Penny Thompson (Early Years); Danielle Swainston substituting  Mark Tilling (Secondary Schools): Laura Ovens substituting |  |
| **2** | **Minutes of the Last Meeting – 19 November 2020**  Minutes approved  **Matters Arising**  Regarding previous requests for further information around birth rate and pupil projection numbers it was confirmed that this information would be provided in the New Year.  Regarding concerns around water supplies and burst pipes SSh confirmed that following discussions with the Council’s Assistant Director (Place Management) school SLA’s would be amended and schools advised to contact the Council should they be approached by Hartlepool Water to arrange for any necessary work to be carried out. Under current rules it was the responsibility of schools to check water meters for any unexplained increase in usage. DT requested that training be provided on this while TG advised that Northumbrian Water offered an additional service whereby changes to water patterns were highlighted. The Chair asked that all the information discussed be forwarded to head teachers. SSh confirmed that the amended SLA would be brought back to the Forum to be circulated to all schools.  The Minimum Funding Guarantee table referred to at the previous meeting had been included within the papers for this meeting – copies of which were sent to all head teachers.  Information on the impact of the High Block Budget Proposals on the special schools, due to be considered at this meeting, had been forwarded to all members in advance of this meeting.  **Outstanding Actions Log**  JH affirmed that there would be no further action from the High Needs Task and Finish Group item until the re-establishment of the Children’s Strategic Partnership. |  |
| **3** | **Appointment of Vice-Chair**  The Chair noted that the usual practice was to alternate between primary and secondary heads for the posts of Chair and Vice-Chair, however it had been suggested that the roles alternate between maintained schools and academies. TG suggested that if the role was to alternate between primary and secondary it could be done on a weighted-rota basis due to smaller numbers of secondary heads. The Chair asked that members consider how they wished to appoint these roles in future and asked that expressions of interest be brought to the next meeting. She would raise this issue at the next Heads meeting.  **Decision**  That this item be deferred until the next meeting. |  |

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| **4** | **Schools Capital Sub Group Membership and Terms of Reference Review**  The membership and Terms of Reference for the Schools’ Capital Sub Group was due for its bi-annual review. Four of the current 8 members had indicated they wished to step down from their roles. SSh confirmed that membership was not limited to existing Schools Forum members but should include those who were felt to have the appropriate experience and expertise. Details of the vacancies had been sent out to all head teachers. The Chair advised that she would add this to the agenda for the January meeting of head teachers and asked that this and the approval of the Terms of Reference be deferred and brought back to the next meeting.  JHe queried whether the Diocese representative on the Schools’ Capital Sub Group had to be the same individual as the Forum representative. SSh confirmed this was not the case.  JD suggested that the Terms of Reference should include the review of outcomes from the Good Estates Management Plan. SSh agreed to request the amendment and submit the revised Terms of Reference to the next meeting.  **Decision**   1. That the re-appointment of those members who have agreed to carry on for a future term be approved. 2. That volunteers to replace those members who had stood down be brought back to a future meeting 3. That approval of the Terms of Reference be brought back to a future meeting | **SSh** |
| **5** | **High Needs Block Budget Proposals 2021/22**  At the previous meeting members had been asked to consult with schools and sectors in preparation for a vote on two items concerning the High Needs Block budget for 2021/22. Firstly, a vote on whether the apply 3 years of inflation at 2.75% to SEND top-up ranges. Secondly, proposed amendments to the Special Schools MFG as follows   1. Apply 3 years of inflation at 3% 2. Apply 3 years of inflation at 2% 3. Apply 3 years of inflation that mirrors the MFG to all other schools (i.e. funded within the schools block)   JWa referred to the clarification email relating to the MFG options circulated ahead of the meeting. A number of members who were substituting indicated they felt unprepared to make a decision on this item as they had not had sight of the email. A member queried whether it would be possible to defer this decision however JWa highlighted the importance of a swift decision owing to the impact this would have on school budgets which would be set in February. It was also noted that all heads had received the relevant information previously. Members were reminded that any changes to email addresses must be notified immediately to JS to ensure all paperwork for future meetings reached them.  **Decision**  That 3 years backdated inflation to SEND top-up ranges based on 2.75% for 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 be applied in 2021/22 only, pending the Medium Term Financial Strategy Review.  That 3 years inflation at 3% to Special Schools MFG be applied in 2021/22 only, pending the Medium Term Financial Strategy Review. |  |
| **6** | **Early Years National Funding Formula 2021/22**  Members were advised that the Government had indicated there would potentially be monies available to enable authorities to increase the hourly rate paid to providers. However, prior to this announcement, officers had begun annual consultation with providers with a view to retaining the same hourly rate as the current year, 2020/21.  Forum were reminded that a decision had been taken to hold back an 8p increase on the 2 year-old hourly rate for 2020/21, pending the outcome of the Task and Finish Group investigation and implementation of changes. Were the 2 year-old hourly rate increased for 2021/22, a similar decision would need to be considered.  A more detailed report on this would be brought to the next meeting once details of new hourly rates were published and in order that recommendations from the Forum could be brought to Children’s Services Committee.  **Decision**  That a report and recommendations be brought to the next meeting. |  |
| **7** | **Any Other Business**  No items |  |
| **8** | **Date and Time of Next Forum Meeting – to be confirmed (confirmed as 2 February 2021)**  The Chair asked that dates for meetings for the remainder of the year be diaried in order to provide clarity to members. |  |

Outstanding Schools’ Forum Actions Log

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| **Meeting** | **Description** | **Owner** |
| **21/06/19** | High Needs Task and Finish Group – document and implement a whole system approach to an inclusive ethos across the full school estate – to lead initially via the Head Teacher Group and then through the Children’s Strategy Partnership | John Hardy |
| **05/02/20** | MT – highlighted that a substantial amount of money was still left in the SEMH capital pot. He felt that Forum need to consider how to use the money. Report to be brought to future Forum meeting. | Danielle Swainston |
| **24/09/20** | Provide standard form of words for new salary disclosure (Financial Transparency for Schools) | Jane Watt |
| **19/11/20** | Provide more detailed information on pupil projections using birth rate data | Amanda Whitehead |