

Schools' Forum Meeting
23 March 2022

Attendees:

Members

Carole Bradley (CB) (Primary - Large <50%)
 Emma Espley (EE) (Academy - Secondary)
 Martyn Gordon (MG) (PRU)
 Lisa Grieg (LG) (Academy – Special)
 John Hardy (JH) (Primary – VA Small)
 Jo Heaton (JHe) (Diocese – C of E)
 Sue Sharpe (SS) (Primary - Large Deprived)
 Mark Tilling (MT) (Secondary)
 David Turner (DT) (Primary – Small)
 Lee Walker (Primary Academy > 50% FSM)
 Zoe Westley (ZW) (Special)
 Joanne Wilson (JW) (Primary)

Local Authority Officers

Jacqui Braithwaite (JB)
 (Integrated Services for Learning Manager)

Jane Kashouris (JK) (Teaching and Learning Consultant Numeracy)

Sandra Shears (SSh) (Head of Finance – Corporate and Schools)

Jo Stubbs (JS) (Administrator)

Danielle Swainston (DS)
 (Assistant Director Joint Commissioning)

Jane Watt (JWa) (Children's Finance)

Amanda Whitehead (AW)
 (Assistant Director Education)

Agenda Item		Action
1	<p>Apologies -</p> <p>Apologies were submitted by the following:</p> <p>Tracey Gibson (Secondary) – Emma Espley substituting Linda Richardson (Early Years) Chris Simmons (Academy – Governors) Lee Walker (Academy – Primary) Rachel Williams (Diocese RC)</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting – 2 February 2022</p> <p>Minutes approved.</p>	

	<p>SS confirmed that the Children’s Services Committee had approved the funding for Early Years provision as recommended at the previous Schools Forum meeting.</p> <p>Outstanding Actions Log</p> <p>JWa highlighted that an item on Capital Sub Group vacancies had been removed from the actions log erroneously and asked that it be retained as a reminder until the vacancies were filled.</p> <p>Minutes of Schools Capital Sub-Group Meeting</p> <p>CB made reference to condition surveys noting that she had never received them. The Chair requested that these be disseminated to all schools. AW asked that she receive copies also.</p> <p>ZW advised that she had been informed that previously completed fire safety work at Springwell would need to be redone. DS confirmed this did appear to be an issue. She would raise this as a funding priority with the capital sub group.</p>	<p>AW</p> <p>DS</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>The Horizon School and Alternative Provision 2021/22 Estimated Outturn</p> <p>SS updated members on the estimated 2021/22 outturn for the Horizon School and Alternative Provision services. The Horizon School was projecting an underspend of £65K. This included a 1.75% pay award for non-teaching staff but no pay award for teaching. This underspend was due to higher than anticipated income from grants. Any underspend is returned to the High Needs Block therefore the school had requested authorisation to use £14K this financial year for minor improvements at the school premises.</p> <p>Alternative Provision was projecting a slight overspend of £6K as a result of increased spending on school fees.</p> <p>ZW queried why this information was being reported for the Horizon school when similar reports were not brought to Forum for other schools. SS advised that it was an attempt at transparency as the request to spend £14K was outside of the Horizon funding agreement. AW suggested that in future these reports and requests might only be brought to the Forum should there be an overspend. DS advised that this would be looked at as part of the High Needs Block review.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>1. That the contents of the report be noted</p>	

	2. That the school's request to spend an additional £14K on minor improvements at the Horizon School be approved.	
4	High Needs Block Projected Outturn	
	<p>DS updated members on the projected outturn for high needs services for 2021/22. Based on spending to the end of December 2021 and estimated expenditure this ranged from £344K to £587K overspend. Reasons for this were primarily based on anticipated overspends on independent school fees and post-16 top-up funding. ZW queried whether it would be possible in future to have a breakdown on independent school fees by year group and main reasons for independent provision need. DS confirmed this could be done.</p> <p>ZW queried whether free transport for post-16 SEN was due to be removed in September and if so what the impact of this would be. DS confirmed that this was the case however something similar had happened at Stockton Borough Council with very little impact. Officers would work through the implications in due course but they had only become aware that this was happening after it had been approved. LG also advised that this cut only applied to new applicants and those already in receipt of free transport would continue to retain it.</p> <p>JHa queried how this projected outturn compared to other parts of the country. DS advised that the best case scenario for Hartlepool was better than projections in some areas. The Government were currently implementing a programme to support areas with significant deficits however this would be based on how existing funding was being spent rather than increasing it.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the report be noted</p>	DS
5	High Needs Supplementary Grant Distribution 2022/23	
	<p>Schools Forum had previously established a working party to consider options for distributing the high needs supplementary grant in 2022/23. As part of the Autumn spending review the Government had announced a schools supplementary grant of £2.2 million and a high needs supplementary grant of £600K. The Department for Education had prescribed an allocation method for distribution of the schools supplementary grant but not the high needs supplementary grant. 2 meetings of the Working Party had taken place and 4 spending models had been considered before a preferred option was identified. The cost of this was estimated at £252K with the remaining funding required to fund potential price increases for independent provision along with additional tuition time expected at post-16. Details of the preferred proposal were given within the report. DS gave assurances that these matters had been</p>	

	<p>looked at in great detail by the working group while CB noted that she had attended the first meeting but had not been asked to attend the second.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the preferred proposal from the Working Party for distribution of the high needs supplementary grant to special schools, Horizon School and ARPs be approved.</p>	
6	Growth Funding Update	
	<p>In May 2019 the Forum agreed local criteria and methodology for accessing and disbursing the growth fund. Hartlepool received growth funding through the DSG for the first time in 2019/20. The allocation for 2022/23 was confirmed in December 2021. The report showed a balance of £293K at 31 March 2022 prior to receipt of the 2022/23 allocation. This remaining balance could be taken to DSG reserves at year-end to meet future growth commitments. A growth fund forecast of £377K for 2022/23 was anticipated. An enquiry had been made to the ESFA as to whether this reserve could be used to increase school budget shares when these were calculated in January. Their response would be shared with members when it was received. The process around the allocation of growth fund monies was due to be reviewed by a working party.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the report be noted</p>	JWa
7.	Any Other Business	
	<p>JWa advised members that revisions would be made to schools budget packs due to increases in estimated energy expenditure. DT noted that Trade Waste SLA prices on the SAS website had also increased since budget packs had been distributed. Post meeting note: SSh checked with Trade Waste service area and changes confirmed with DT.</p> <p>JS advised members that School Exclusion Appeal training was due to take place the following week and asked that anyone interested in taking part contact her.</p> <p>The Chair confirmed that the next meeting of the Forum would be a face to face meeting. Venue details would be provided in due course.</p>	
8.	Date and Time of next Forum meeting	
	Friday 10 th June at 10am. Venue details to follow.	
	The meeting concluded at 14:55pm.	

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS LOG

Meeting	Description	Owner
N/A	<p>It was requested at the Schools Capital Sub group that membership of the Sub Group be kept on the agenda at the School Forum until replacements for those that have stood down have been found.</p> <p>The current situation is outlined below:</p> <p>2 x Primary Headteachers to represent all primary schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Turner - Headteacher, Rift House Primary School. • VACANT <p>1 x Secondary Headteacher to represent all secondary schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark Tilling - Headteacher, High Tunstall College of Science. <p>1 x Special school Headteacher to represent the special education needs sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louise Robson – Head of Corporate Services, Catcote Academy. <p>2 x Academy Headteachers to represent all academies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VACANT • VACANT <p>1 x Church of England Diocese representative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jo Heaton – Executive Headteacher Federation of St. Peter's Elwick CofE (VA) and Hart Primary Schools. <p>1 x Roman Catholic Diocese representative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary Frain - Headteacher, St Teresa's RC Primary School. 	All

Financial Year 2021/22: Children's Services Committee – Log of Schools' Forum Recommendations and Committee Decisions

Last Updated: 05/07/2021

Committee Date	Report	Recommendation and Decision Details
23 Jun 2021	PROPOSAL TO INCREASE CAPACITY FOR SEND EDUCATION PROVISION	<p>Unanimously supported and referred this report to Finance and Policy Committee (meeting Wed 7 July 2021) to support a sustainable solution for the provision of additional capacity for children with SEND and to seek approval from Council to Prudentially Borrow £1.550m saving the HNB annually between £0.343m and £0.783m. Decision to be ratified by Council.</p> <p>Noted the loan repayment cost will be met from the HNB and will not impact on the General Fund Budget of the Council.</p> <p>Subsequently approved at Finance and Policy Committee on 7th July 2021 and Council at 8th July 2021.</p>
16 November 2021	EDUCATION SERVICES GRANT 2022/23	<p>Agreed to submit the disapplication request to the Secretary of State to set the Education Services General Duties rate at £60 per pupil/place for 2022/23.</p> <p>Council submitted disapplication request by the deadline of 19 November 2021.</p>
18 January 2022	School Budget Shares and CSSB 2022/23	<p>Agreed with Schools' Forum recommendation of 2% MFG and appropriate cap for school budgets.</p> <p>Agreed with Schools' Forum recommendation to transfer £174k from CSSB to Schools Block after funding 2022/23 budget requirements.</p>
18 January 2022	High Needs Block 2022/23	<p>Agreed the High Needs Block Budget for 2022/23.</p> <p>Agreed with Schools' Forum recommendation to increase SEND top-up ranges by a further 2.75% in 2022/23. Future years to be reviewed as part of the MTFS.</p>

		Agreed with Schools' Forum recommendation to increase special school's MFG by a further 3% in 2022/23. Future years to be reviewed as part of the MTFS.
15 March 2022	Early Years National Funding Formula 2022/23	Agreed with Schools' Forum recommendation to increase hourly rates to early year's providers from April 2022.