

<p>Schools' Forum Meeting</p> <p>9 July 2021</p>
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Attendees:**Members**

Carole Bradley (CB) (Primary - Large <50%)
 Lynne Chambers (Primary Academy >25%<50% FSM)
 Tracey Gibson (TG) (Secondary)
 Martyn Gordon (MG) (Horizon School)
 Mandy Hall (MH) (Primary Academy >25% FSM)
 Stephen Hammond (SH) (Academy – Secondary)
 John Hardy (JH)
 Katy Hill (KH) (Diocese – C of E)
 Mark Hughes (MH) (16-19 Sector)
 Andrew Jordan (AJ) (Secondary Academies >50% FSM)
 Sue Sharpe (SS) (Primary - Large Deprived)
 Chris Simmons (CS) (Academy Governors)
 Mark Tilling (MT) (Secondary)
 David Turner (DT) (Primary – Small)
 Zoe Westley (ZW) (Special)
 Rachel Williams (RW) (Diocese – RC)

Local Authority Officers

Amanda Whitehead (AW)
 (Assistant Director Education)
 Danielle Swainston (DS)
 (Assistant Director Joint
 Commissioning)
 Sandra Shears (SSh)
 (Children's Finance)
 Jane Watt (JWa) (Children's
 Finance)
 Jo Stubbs (JS) (Administrator)

Agenda Item	Action
<p>1 Apologies -</p> <p>Apologies were submitted by the following:</p> <p>Lisa Grieg (Academy – Special) Jo Heaton (Diocese – C of E) – Katy Hill substituting Linda Richardson (PVI) Lee Walker (Primary Academy >50% FSM) Jo Wilson (VA Large)</p>	
<p>2 Minutes of the Last Meeting – 10 June 2021</p> <p>Minutes approved subject to the following addition from Jo Heaton</p> <p>“that while members agreed wholeheartedly and in principle to the proposal to increase capacity for SEND Education Provision there was not an infinite pot of money and they needed to look beyond the emotive to the practical and look to alternative funding to repay this loan, including the High Needs Capital Allocation that comes in along with CIF bids, with an aim that this</p>	

	<p>loan is repaid from other sources otherwise our other vulnerable pupils funded from the high needs block will be left without adequate funding”</p> <p>These comments had also been reiterated at the Children’s Services Committee at which time the Vice-Chair of Children’s Services Committee had made reference to the exploration of other financial options. Final approval had been given at Council the previous evening having been fully supported by Finance and Policy Committee</p> <p>DS advised that officers would be meeting with Department for Education representatives regularly and raising concerns around capital and SEND. Reports would be brought back to this meeting and Children’s Services Committee at the appropriate time. She also urged members to let officers know of any alternative funding avenues as they were not always aware of them. MT suggested this be a standing item on the Sub Capital Group agenda. The Chair agreed this would be useful.</p> <p>Outstanding Actions Log</p> <p>High Needs Task and Finish Group – Meetings of the Children’s Strategic Partnership were due to commence in September 2021</p> <p>Salary disclosure – no change on the position</p> <p>A copy of the most recent Sub-Capital Group minutes had been forwarded to members as previously requested as had a log of recommendations which had been forwarded to Children’s Services Committee from the Forum.</p>	
3	<p>Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair</p> <p>SSh advised that she had received 1 expression of interest for the position of Chair of the Forum from MT. In the absence of any dissent this was subsequently approved.</p> <p>There had been no expressions of interest made for the post of Vice-Chair. CB subsequently put her name forward. In the absence of any dissent this was subsequently approved.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That Mark Tilling be appointed as Chair and Carole Bradley as Vice-Chair of the Schools Forum</p>	
4	<p>Dedicated Schools and De-Delegated Budgets Update</p>	
	<p>JWa updated members on the outturn position for the DSG and de-delegated budgets from 2020/21. There had been overspends in Early Years and Central School Services with underspends in High Needs and</p>	

	<p>Growth Funding resulting in an overall underspend of £1.031m for the DSG block. Reasons for this were given within the report. In terms of Early Years, Forum had previously agreed to establish a sustainability fund to allow Early Years Providers to apply for financial assistance using previous early years underspend and reserves. Successful applications to this fund amounted to £24k..</p> <p>De-delegated services showed an underspend of £8k primarily due to a staff vacancy. This underspend had been carried forward into 2021/22</p> <p>MT queried whether the underspend in Growth Funding was ring-fenced. JWa confirmed that it was seen as part of the Schools Block and that to use it for anything outside of the Schools Block would require a block transfer.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the report be noted</p>	
	<p>5 Updates to Scheme for Financing Schools</p>	
	<p>JWa gave details of a change to the Scheme for Financing Schools statutory guidance which had been published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) in April 2021. This related to the Schools Financial Value Standard form and stated that maintained schools needed to submit it to their local authority by 28th May 2021, around a month later than usual. This delay was to allow for pressures faced by schools and local authorities as a result of the coronavirus outbreak.</p> <p>CS noted reference to EU procurement procedures within the document and queried this following Brexit. JWa to query this and report back to the forum. Post meeting note: Confirmed that reference to EU procurement will be amended to Contract Regulations before the scheme is published.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the ESFA changes be noted, confirmed and published in the Scheme documentation</p>	
	<p>6 Trade Union Facility Time (Termly Update)</p>	
	<p>SSh updated members on the current status of the de-delegated fund for trade union facility time. In 2019/20 this funding had been reduced from £2.45 per pupil to £1.25 per pupil for all pupils and the Forum had agreed to fund the sharing of non-teaching trade union facility time and contribute to the Local Authority costs on an annual basis, an annual cost of £3,075 in 2020/21. The reserve balance relating to Trade Union Facility Time stood at £37,638 in April 2020. Following the funding of non-teaching trade union facility time and the share of the Designated Education Officer for 2020/21 it</p>	

	<p>now stood at £17,344. Forum had agreed to earmark this to fund the Hartlepool share of the Designated Education Officer for 2021/22. In terms of future outlook a surplus of £3,650 is expected to be transferred to reserves in 2021/22.</p> <p>MT queried whether there was a monitoring process for Trade Union time. SSh to query this and report back to the Forum. Post meeting note: Information relating to time recording circulated after the meeting.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>	
7	Designated Education Officer Update	
	<p>DS updated Forum on the activity of the DEO for 2021/22. Details were given of DEO activity in the first quarter of 2021. DS asked schools if any further information would be helpful in future updates. DT suggested that in future the number of schools which had received assistance be included within the report, while retaining their anonymity.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the report be noted and the number of schools receiving assistance be included in future updates.</p>	
8	Review of Final 2020/21 School Balances	
	<p>SSh gave details of the review of final 2020/21 school balances. This was a key control to ensure schools were not carrying an excess level of balances and spending their balances effectively. Any school triggering the excess balance percentage of 8% for primaries and 5% for secondaries would be monitored by a triad panel of Forum members. A survey of all of Hartlepool's maintained schools was carried out showing that school balances remaining at the end of March 2021 was £2,061.197. 4 of the 13 schools had balances exceeding their excess balance percentage which would therefore be taken forward to the Excess Balances Panel.</p> <p>MT noted that the Panel would require a Vice-Chair. DT volunteered to take that role if there were no other volunteers. SSh suggested that officers may wish to extend an invitation to non-Forum members and asked that the heads of all Hartlepool maintained schools be contacted regards this.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the report be noted and the Excess Balances Panel be convened for the 4 primary schools beyond the agreed threshold.</p>	

9	High Needs Medium Term Financial Strategy – Verbal Update	
	DS confirmed that as previously discussed a survey on the issues raised as part of the review had been circulated. She urged members to complete it giving as much detail as possible. The results would be brought back to members after the Summer break.	
	Decision	
	That the verbal update be noted	
10	Any Other Business	
	The Chair noted that a number of maintained schools had recently converted to Academies and queried what impact this had on the Forum membership. SSh advised that it had been suggested that Tracey Gibson and Jo Wilson might remain on the Forum as Academy representatives from September 2021 otherwise replacements would be needed. TG confirmed she would be happy to do this.	
	The Chair thanked all members for their attendance and support over the past year, particularly following the change to virtual meetings. Members thanked the Chair for her hard work and expressed their support for MT in the future.	
11	Date and Time of Next Forum Meeting	
	Tuesday 21 st September 2021 at 10.00am	
	The meeting concluded at 10:50am.	

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS LOG

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
24/09/20	Provide standard form of words for new salary disclosure (Financial Transparency for Schools)	Jane Watt
9/07/20	Set up a meeting of the Excess Balances Panel	Mark Tilling

Financial Year 2021/22: Childrens 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>