

## Schools' Forum Meeting 2 February 2022

### Attendees:

#### Members

Carole Bradley (CB) (Primary - Large <50%)  
 Sara Crawshaw (SC) (Academy – Secondary)  
 Emma Espley (EE) (Academy - Secondary)  
 Martyn Gordon (MG) (PRU)  
 Mandy Hall (Primary Academy >25% FSM)  
 John Hardy (JH) (Primary – VA Small)  
 Jo Heaton (JHe) (Diocese – C of E)  
 Andrew Jordan (AJ) (Academy – Secondary)  
 Linda Richardson (LR) (PVI)  
 Louise Robson (LR) (Academy – Special)  
 Sue Sharpe (SS) (Primary - Large Deprived)  
 Chris Simmons (CS) (Academy Governors)  
 Mark Tilling (MT) (Secondary)  
 David Turner (DT) (Primary – Small)  
 Lee Walker (Primary Academy > 50% FSM)  
 Zoe Westley (ZW) (Special)  
 Rachel Williams (Diocese – RC)  
 Joanne Wilson (JW) (Primary)

#### Local Authority Officers

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

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
<p><b>1 Apologies -</b></p> <p>Apologies were submitted by the following:</p> <p>Tracey Gibson (Secondary) – Emma Espley substituting            Lisa Grieg (Academy - Special) – Louise Robson substituting</p>	
<p><b>2 Minutes of the Last Meeting – 9 December 2021</b></p> <p>Minutes approved.</p> <p>The Chair referred to the discussions around vacancies at the previous meeting. SS advised that she was still awaiting an update from Neil Nottingham around Academy representatives. JS confirmed that she would action the request to invite Jane Reid to future meetings.</p>	

	<p>CB advised members that Alison Darby had passed on her thanks to the Local Authority for their prompt follow up linked to concerns relating to capital works to the fire doors at the school</p> <p>Capital Sub-Group – DT indicated he had not received an invitation to the recent meeting. The Chair confirmed he would ensure he was put onto the list. CB requested that information on which schools were included in tranche 3 be forwarded to Forum members. The Chair confirmed at the meeting that the schools in tranche 3 were Clavering, the Horizon School, Rift House, St John Vianney and St Teresa.</p> <p><b>Outstanding Actions Log</b></p> <p>Completed</p>	
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Dedicated Schools Grant – Early Years Block 2022/23</b></p> <p>Members had previously approved the central spend element of the Early Years funding for 2022/23. Consultation had subsequently taken place on the Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) for 2022/23 and funding of Providers. This EYNFF set the hourly funding rates that each local authority was paid to deliver the universal and additional entitlements for 3 and 4 year olds, along with entitlements for 2 year olds. In November the Government had announced a £160 million increase nationally for early years while there were hourly rate funding increases for Hartlepool of 17p for 3 to 4 year old provision and 21p for 2 year old provision. In 2020/21 and 2021/22, Childrens Services Committee agreed that an 8p increase to 2 year old provision (a total of 16p) would not be passed on to providers and these monies would be used to help offset financial pressures against 2 year old provision, which had resulted in a deficit reduction of approximately £0.040m per annum.</p> <p>Consultation with providers had taken place between 17<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> January and had shown the following:</p> <p>81% of respondents wished to distribute the 17p increase to the hourly rate for 3 and 4 year old provision at 16p increase to the base rate and 1p to centrally retained budgets</p> <p>52% of respondents wished to retain the historical 16p increase in 2022-2022</p> <p>95% of respondents wished to pass the 21p funding increase for 2 year old funding for 2022/23 to providers</p> <p>LR requested assurance that should the 2 year old funding increase be approved this decision would not be reversed by Children’s Services Committee as had happened previously. The Chair indicated he hoped this would not happen while DS advised that officer would be</p>	

	<p>recommending that the increase be passed on to providers and would ensure that members of the Committee were fully briefed in advance of any decision being taken.</p> <p>DT highlighted the need for the minutes of this meeting to be circulated to Children's Services Committee members prior to the meeting of the Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> February. DS confirmed this would happen.</p> <p><b>Decision</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the contents of the report and the consultation responses included be noted</li> <li>2. That the proposed 3 and 4 year old hourly rate shown at the table be unanimously recommended to Children's Services Committee for implementation from April 2022</li> <li>3. That an increase to £5.41 for the hourly rate for 2 year old provision be unanimously recommended to Children's Services Committee for implementation from April 2022</li> </ol>	
<b>4</b>	<b>Trade Union Facility Time (Termly Update)</b>	
	<p>Members were updated on the current status of the de-delegated fund for trade union facility time. There was currently no call on facility across Hartlepool Schools therefore there had been no claims made on the fund so far for the 2021/22 financial year. The current reserve balance relating to Trade Union Facility Time currently stood at £1,159. While it had been agreed previously that Trade Union Facility Time should move to an SLA agreement the current price per pupil would remain at £1.25 for the 2022/23 financial year. These arrangements would be reviewed once the buy-back take up was known.</p> <p>MT enquired what the position would be, should any schools not agree to an SLA. SSh explained that, in such a case, the level of support would need to be reduced accordingly.</p> <p>SSh further confirmed that historically, all schools had bought back</p> <p><b>Decision</b></p> <p>That the report be noted</p> <p><b>Linda Richardson (PVI) left the meeting</b></p>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Schools Block Budget Update 2022/23</b>	
	<p>Members were given updated information on the 2022/23 Schools Block funding issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) in December 2021. At their last meeting Forum members had voted to apply</p>	

	<p>the maximum possible MFG with an appropriate cap which estimates had suggested would be in the region of 2.75%. Schools Forum had also agreed to the transfer of £0.174m from the Central School Services Block to the Schools Block.</p> <p>The updated Hartlepool schools block allocation showed a 2.64% increase in funding for 2022/23 based on October 2021 census numbers. This formula calculation requires a cap of 3.33%, an improvement on the estimate of 2.75%. Redacted details of individual school block funding were appended to the report.</p> <p>Central School Services Block funding of £0.731m had been confirmed. ESFA had also announced supplementary funding as part of the Government's Autumn spending review. This would be a separate grant for 2022/23 although it was expected that this would be mainstreamed into the DSG in future years. Details of the finalised allocations would be circulated to schools. Forum members had previously requested that a letter be sent jointly from the Chair and the Council Leader outlining concerns over energy cost increases and its potential impact on schools. A response had been received (appended to the report) which made reference to the supplementary grant.</p> <p>CB queried whether details of the supplementary funding amounts would be available before the February half term. JW advised that indicative amounts would be included in the budget packs as a new section.</p> <p><b>Decision</b></p> <p>That the updated schools block funding for 2022/23 detailed in the report be noted</p> <p>That the response relating to energy cost increases and the reference to supplementary funding be noted.</p>	
6	<b>High Needs Block Budget Update 2022/23</b>	
	<p>Details of the updated High Needs Block allocation for 2022/23 were given. Hartlepool's funding had increased by 11% with an additional allocation of £0.616m to help cover costs relating to the health and social care levy and extra study for students with special needs. The base funding is subject to change in July owing to the annual import/export adjustment.</p> <p>Details of the planned high needs block budget were detailed in the report. These included 2 budget changes recommended by Forum and subsequently approved by Children's Services Committee relating to the continuation of the increased SEND top up ranges and continuation of the backdated annual increases of 3% to special schools' MFG. Owing to sustainability concerns these budget increases had only been implemented for 2022/23 and would be reviewed for future years as part of the MTFs. Budget amounts included the additional supplementary grant allocation</p>	

	<p>although this might need to be amended when allocation rules were made available.</p> <p>ZW had concerns that allocations for any supplementary grant to special schools would not be available until after school budgets needed to be set. The Chair acknowledged the need for clarity and asked whether additional information could be brought to Forum before the next scheduled meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> March. JWa advised that budget packs were due to go out to schools week commencing 14<sup>th</sup> February. The Chair asked that an additional meeting of the Forum be scheduled for the week before half term (w/c 14<sup>th</sup> February). Prior to that, a Working Party should be set up involving JWa DS AW ZW LR MG AD and himself in order to propose any allocation of the supplementary grant to special schools, Horizon School and ARPs before bringing them back to Forum. JH noted that any recommendations made by this Working Group relating to high needs funding could also impact on mainstream schools that required additional staff for SEN pupils. DS confirmed there needed to be parity in the system. ZW asked that further information be provided on how the additional allocation from government had been calculated if possible.</p> <p><b>Decision</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the report be noted</li> <li>2. That a Working Group meet to discuss High Needs Block Funding involving AD, MG, LR, DS, AW, JWa, ZW and the Chair w/c 7 February</li> <li>3. That an additional Forum meeting be scheduled w/c 14 February to discuss High Needs Block Funding</li> </ol>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
	None	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Date and Time of next Forum meeting</b>	
	The date and time of the next scheduled meeting is 23 <sup>rd</sup> March. An additional meeting will be scheduled and the details sent out to members.	
	The meeting concluded at 10:50am	

## OUTSTANDING ACTIONS LOG

Meeting	Description	Owner

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 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021 and Council at 8<sup>th</sup> 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	Verbal update to be provided at Forum once Committee meeting has taken place