

<p>Schools' Forum Meeting</p> <p>21 September 2021</p>
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Attendees:**Members**

Carole Bradley (CB) (Primary - Large <50%)
 Lynne Chambers (Primary Academy >25%<50% FSM)
 Sara Crawshaw (SC) (Academy – Secondary)
 Tracey Gibson (TG) (Secondary)
 Martyn Gordon (MG) (Horizon School)
 Lisa Grieg (LG) (Academy – Special)
 Mandy Hall (MH) (Primary Academy >25% FSM)
 John Hardy (JH) (Primary – VA Small)
 Jo Heaton (JHe) (Diocese – C of E)
 Andrew Jordan (AJ) (Secondary Academies >50% FSM)
 Linda Richardson (LR) (PVI)
 Sue Sharpe (SS) (Primary - Large Deprived)
 Chris Simmons (CS) (Academy Governors)
 Mark Tilling (MT) (Secondary)
 David Turner (DT) (Primary – Small)
 Lee Walker (LW) (Primary Academy >50% FSM)
 Zoe Westley (ZW) (Special)
 Rachel Williams (RW) (Diocese – RC)
 Jo Wilson (JW) (VA Large)

Local Authority Officers

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

Jane Kashouris (JK) (Teaching and Learning Advisor - Primary)

Sandra Shears (SSh)
 (Children's Finance)

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 Penny Thompson (HBC Head of Housing, Hardship and Welfare Services) with Danielle Swainston substituting</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting – 9th July 2021</p> <p>Minutes approved.</p>	

	<p>Outstanding Actions Log</p> <p>High Needs Task and Finish Group – a meeting of the Children’s Strategic Partnership was scheduled for the following week. Feedback would be provided at the next Forum meeting.</p> <p>Salary disclosure – no change on the position, JW would chase this with the DfE.</p> <p>Excess Balances Panel – MT to progress this.</p>	
3	<p>High Needs Block Projected Outturn 2021/22</p> <p>Members were given details of the High Needs Block projected outturn for 2021/22. In 2020/21 the final position had been a year end underspend of £848m . The allocation for 2021/22 was confirmed at £14,769m with in-year adjustments revising this to £14.577m a net allocation of £12.497m. Based on quarter 1 spending the outturn was projected at being on Best Case Scenario an underspend of £366k and Worse Case Scenario an overspend of £360k Current reserve balances for the High Needs Block were £72k</p> <p>DT referred to the previous year underspend and requested information on how many schools had applied for financial support during that period as this information could be supportive to the ongoing High Needs Block review. The Chair asked that comparisons be provided with previous years in terms of funding applications made and whether they had been successful or not</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the report be noted</p> <p>That information be provided regarding the number of funding applications made in 2020/21, whether they were successful or unsuccessful and how this compared to previous years.</p>	
4	<p>The Horizon School and Alternative Provision 2021/22 Estimated Outturn</p>	
	<p>Members were given details of the estimated 2021/22 outturn for the Horizon School and Alternative Provision Services. In 2020/21 the final position had been an underspend of £90k This was returned to the High Needs Block. In 2021/22 the budget for the Horizon school was set at £680k funded through the High Needs Block. Based on quarter 1 spending an underspend of between £26k and £34k was projected for the Horizon school depending upon whether a pay increase was awarded for teachers. Income was also expected to be £22k above budget by year end. In terms of alternative provision an overspend of £8k was anticipated. This was</p>	

	<p>owing to an expected reduction in clawback income as this could only be claimed when a child was on a school roll during the latest funding period. Further updates on this would be provided at the next meeting</p> <p>JWa informed members that the number of pupils provided within the report had recently been updated and was now as follows:</p> <p>PEX girls – 7 PEX boys – 10 Dual Registered girls – 3 Dual Registered boys – 7 Home Hospital girls – 5 Home Hospital boys – 2 Outreach girls – 1 Outreach boys – 0</p> <p>This was an increase on the previous year when only 4 pupils had been permanently excluded. MG advised that the majority of students included in these figures had been included for some time and by the end of this academic year there should be less demand on alternative provision.</p> <p>TG acknowledged the increase in permanently excluded pupils but noted that schools had been closed for a large part of 2020/21. She referred to the anticipated additional income of £22k and asked the origin of this. JWa advised this was an unexpected grant increase. TG also queried if there was still the capacity to provide outreach given the large numbers of permanently excluded pupils. The Chair commented that without outreach PEX numbers would rise so outreach work needed to be done.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the report be noted</p>	
5	Indicative Schools Block Budgets 2022/23	
	<p>ESFA had published indicative National Funding Formula allocations for 2022/23. Based on pupil numbers and information from the October 2020 census they showed an allocation of £72.537m for 2022/23. However this would be amended based on information provided by the October 2021 census and would be reissued during December 2021 when it was forecast to reduce to £72.323m. In previous years a transfer-in to the Schools Block from the Central School Services Block had become usual practice. This year it was anticipated that £174k would need to be transferred in for 2022/23. However there was expected to be no requirement for a transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. Regulations also allowed for a minimum funding guarantee and cap to be set so that excessive year-on-year charges could be protected against. In 2020/21 the MFG had been set at 2% and there had been no cap set. Details of the funding factor increases were appended to the report.</p>	

	<p>CB expressed concerns around low primary pupil numbers and asked that this be taken into account when making future decisions. TG also noted large numbers of children were coming through the system with low prior attainment for secondary school who would require additional funding. SS highlighted the impact of lower funding rates on smaller schools particularly those with children with complex needs.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the formula changes for 2022/23 outlined in the report be noted</p>	
6	Indicative Central School Services Block Budgets 2022/23	
	<p>Members were asked to approve the budget requirements for the 2022/23 Central School Services Block. This Budget is funded within the Dedicated Schools Grant allocation comprising a fixed amount for historic costs with a rate per pupil for ongoing costs. The rate per pupil for 2022/23 is £37.19 with the fixed rate set at £238k– total funding of £733k For the third year a funding cut of 20% would be applied to historic commitments with the Central School Services Block. These historic commitments were licences and termination of employment costs relating to the former Brierton School. However even with this cut the funding requirements for 2022/23 would be met. Details were given of the Budget’s ongoing responsibilities of Retained Education Services, Admissions, Copyright Licences and Servicing Schools’ Forum. Members were asked to vote on the budget requirements for historic commitments and ongoing responsibilities. CB queried the consequences of not voting to approve. JWa advised that this would require a request for disapplication to the Secretary of State.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the report be noted.</p> <p>That funding of £67k for licences for 2022/23 be approved</p> <p>That funding of £31k for termination of employment costs for 2022/23 be approved</p> <p>That indicative funding of £217k (subject to pupil number changes to be updated in December 2021) for Retained Education Services be approved</p> <p>That funding of £136k for Admissions be approved</p> <p>That indicative funding of £71k (subject to pupil number changes to be updated in December 2021) be approved for Copyright Licences</p> <p>That funding of £36k be approved for Servicing Schools’ Forum.</p>	

7	Statutory Services provided by the Local Authority	
	<p>SSh set out the funding streams for statutory services provided for maintained schools and academies, details of which were appended to the report. Members had voted to approve the continuation of retained services funding earlier in the meeting and would be asked to vote on general rate duties at the next meeting. Schools were being asked to fund central services at a consistent £60 per pupil, a rate which had not changed since 2017/18. If pay inflation had been imposed the rate would have been set at £65.91 per pupil for 2021/22. In 2021/22 the £60 rate had not been agreed by the Forum resulting in a disapplication request to the Secretary of State. If members were unable to approve the proposed £60 per pupil cost similar steps would need to be taken again. Members were therefore asked to consult with those maintained schools they represent in order to allow for a vote on 19th October.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the report be noted</p> <p>That members consult with those maintained schools they represent on the Forum in order to vote on a general rate of £60 per pupil at the next Forum meeting on 19th October.</p>	
8	Proposed De-Delegated Services Budgets 2022/23	
	<p>De-delegated services budgets applied to maintained schools only with funding incorporated within the National Funding Formula by ESFA and passed back to the Local Authority with Forum approval. Funding of services to special schools and PRUs is included in any top-up payments. Details were given of the formula used to calculate funding based on total pupil numbers across all maintained schools and academies and members were given further information on the services provided.</p> <p>CB queried the difference between Deprivation and AWPU. JWa explained that AWPU was the basic entitlement rate for all pupils while deprivation was based on the FSM6 funding formula. In terms of educational psychology funding JB advised that this could be given in terms of funding or alternative provision.</p> <p>SS referred to the service for ethnic minority pupils, querying whether the capacity was there to meet the breadth of languages and translation services required. SSh to provide an answer to members following consultation with the Council's Virtual School Head teacher.</p> <p>Members felt it would be appropriate to meet with all maintained primary heads before voting on these issues. The Chair suggested that this item be deferred to the next meeting on 19th October. SSh confirmed that the vote could be deferred but it would need to take place at the next meeting. The</p>	

	<p>Chair noted that a meeting of primary heads was already scheduled for the following week. SSh indicated officers would provide any information required.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That consideration of this item be deferred to the 19th October Forum meeting.</p>	
9	Dedicated Schools Grant – Early Years Block Centrally Retained Budget 2022/23	
	<p>Members were asked to approve the central spend element of the Early Years funding for 2022/23 as part of the Dedicated Schools Grant. The initial funding allocation was expected to be announced in December 2021. ESFA guidance states that a proportion of the grant may be centrally retained. It was proposed that this proportion be set at 5% of the EYNFF. This amount would be applied once the provisional allocations were published and would be centrally retained. It would be used to administer and deliver early years provision including staffing and administration. Members were asked to vote to approve this funding element however the Chair asked that this vote be deferred to allow members to consult with their representatives. SSh advised that if the vote was not taken then a disapplication request would be required.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the report be noted</p> <p>That approval of the centrally retained funding be deferred to the 19th October Forum meeting.</p>	
10	High Needs Block Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/23	
	<p>DS referred the initial findings of the ongoing High Needs Block review. Indicative funding allocations for the High Needs Block for Hartlepool in 2022/23 was £16.065m, a 10% increase on the previous year. Current reserves stand at £721k. As it was noted that any changes to one element of the block would necessarily impact on other elements it was proposed that the review be paused until the findings of an independent review into increased inclusion had been considered.. This delay would require the continuation of a cumulative increases of 3% to the Minimum Funding Guarantee for special schools for a further year along with a further 3% inflationary increase for 2022/23 and 2.75% to the SEND top up ranges for a further year along with a further 2.75% inflationary increase for 2022/23. This would result in an overall cost of £423k Members were therefore asked to consult with their representatives in order to make a decision on these increases at the next Forum meeting.</p>	

	Decision	
	That this item be deferred until the 19 th October Forum meeting	
11	Any Other Business	
	<p>SSh advised that following recent increases in energy prices worldwide Tees Valley Finance Officers were due to meet to clarify the potential impact on local authorities. A report would be circulated to members when available.</p> <p>JWa gave a brief update on the Early Years Task and Finish Group which had met the previous week. Funding had benefitted from changes made throughout the pandemic and it was not felt necessary to take action to deal with historic financial pressures at this stage. Further information would be provided at the next meeting.</p> <p>The Chair thanked all those who attended the training session on 15th September and noted that further sessions could be arranged if needed. Members to contact JS.</p>	
12	Date and Time of Next Forum Meeting	
	Tuesday 19 th October 2021 at 10.00am	
	The meeting concluded at 11.30am	

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: 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>