

Schools' Forum Meeting
18 November 2022

Attendees:

Members

Carole Bradley (CB) (Academy – Primary)
 Lisa Grieg (LG) (Academy – Special)
 John Hardy (JHa) (Academy – Primary)
 Sarah Hargin (SG) (Horizon School)
 Jo Heaton (JH) (Diocese C of E)
 Linda Richardson (LR) (Early Years)
 Chris Seymour (CS) (Secondary)
 Sue Sharpe (SS) (Maintained Primary)
 Chris Simmons (CS) (Academy – Governors)
 Mark Tilling (MT Chair) (Maintained Secondary)
 David Turner (DT) (Maintained Primary)
 Zoe Westley (ZW) (Academy – Special)
 Leanne Yates (LY) (Maintained Primary)

Local Authority Officers

Sandra Shears (SSh) (Head of Finance – Corporate and Schools)
 Jo Stubbs (JS) (Administrator)
 Danielle Swainston (DS) (Assistant Director (Commissioning))
 Amanda Whitehead (AW) (Assistant Director (Education))

Agenda Item	Action
<p>1 Apologies -</p> <p>Apologies were submitted by the following and accepted by Forum:</p> <p>Jayne Brown (HBC Passenger Transport Team Leader) Chris Connor (Maintained Primary) Tracey Gibson (Secondary) – Chris Seymour substituting Martyn Gordon (Horizon School) – Sarah Hargin substituting Mandy Hall (Academy – Primary) Phil Pritchard (Academy – Primary) Jane Reid (16-19 Sector) Lee Walker (Academy – Primary) Jane Watt (HBC Group Accountant) Joanne Wilson (Academy – Primary)</p>	

2	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting – 19 October 2022 - Minutes approved.</p> <p>Matters Arising</p> <p>The Chair requested that annual declarations of interest forms be distributed to members for completion.</p> <p>A breakdown of the profile of children placed into independent provision by year group had been provided to members in advance of the meeting. ZW highlighted a number of factual errors on the document. DS to correct and recirculate to members with the inclusion of totals. ZW requested that year group details also be included.</p>	
3	<p>Non-Schools Forum Representative</p> <p>The Chair highlighted the existing vacancy for an Early Years representative on the Forum. LR suggested Toni Ray. Members happy to approve.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That Toni Ray be appointed as Early Years representative on the Schools Forum.</p>	
4	<p>Designated Education Officer Proposal 2023/24</p>	
	<p>DS updated members on the funding of the Designated Education Officer role for 2023/24. In 2022/23 members had agreed that each school would contribute to funding the role on the basis of pupil numbers at an estimated rate per pupil of £1.41. Flat rate contributions would also be sought from further education and early years settings. Details were given of the purpose of the role and an activity summary. Hartlepool’s contribution to the DEO role (34%) in 2023/24 would be £19,720 with Stockton Borough Council contributing 64% (£37,120). After seeking a contribution from Early Years and Post-16 providers Hartlepool schools would be asked to contribute £17,315. This contribution could be split between schools using either an equal share of £481 per school (option 1) or an estimated charge per pupil of £1.30 (to be updated based on confirmed October 2022 pupil numbers) (option 2). A third option was to use the former de-delegated service reserves for Trade Union Facility Time (£14.5k) with the remaining costs being funded using option 1 or option 2.</p> <p>The Chair noted that previously this funding had been approved for 2 years. SS queried whether this funding could be made permanent without the need to bring it back to the Forum for debate. Members were in favour of this suggestion.</p> <p>JH noted that 2 schools appeared not to be contributing to the role. SSh confirmed that this was an error within the report.</p>	

	<p>Decision</p> <p>That a total contribution of £19,720 be approved to fund the Designated Education Officer role for 2023/24 (£17,315 from Hartlepool Schools and £2,405 from other education establishments)</p> <p>That the Hartlepool Schools contribution be split using the former de-delegated service reserves for Trade Union Facility Time with the remainder funded using a charge per pupil estimated at £1.30 (to be updated for October 2022 pupil numbers) – approved unanimously.</p> <p>That future funding for this role be approved automatically.</p>	
5	<p>Commissioning of Horizon School Places</p>	
	<p>DS updated members on the growth in permanent exclusions and the resulting pressure on places at the Horizon School. In October 2020 members had agreed to fund the Horizon school for 12 permanently excluded places, 12 home and hospital places and 10 further funded places (2 per secondary) at £20K each, a total of £680K for 2 years. However following a total of 10 permanent exclusions at the time of writing since September 2022 this was not enough to meet current need and other options needed to be considered. There are currently 24 PEX on roll, 5 of these accessing alternate provision between 2 and 5 days. Additionally 10 children were accessing in-reach places at risk of permanent exclusion. Figures showed that the in-reach programme was successful in helping to avoid permanent exclusion in the majority of cases. Details were given of the current financial situation. Places were funded through the High Needs Block at £20K per place however it was felt that this situation could not wait until the completion of the ongoing High Needs Block Review.</p> <p>Options to fund an increase in Horizon provision were suggested as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fund temporarily as exceptional funding until the High Needs Block Review is finalised 2. Convert the 10 in-reach places to PEX places 3. Commission an additional 6 PEX places and continue with the 10 in-reach places 4. Commission an additional 6 PEX places, continue with the 10 in-reach places and charge schools £5K per place <p>DS noted that all of these options were temporary until completion of the High Needs Block review.</p> <p>Members had a wide ranging discussion on the options. The general consensus was that they were uncomfortable to simply increase the</p>	

numbers of places as they felt they would simply be filled and further places would then be needed. They also queried the financial impact on the authority should children need to travel out of borough. DS confirmed that funding for any child permanently excluded would follow the child including clawback of monies allocated through the schools funding formula such as low attainment allocations, FSM and Pupil Premium. DT commented that this could result in schools with lower PEX keeping more of their budget.

JH queried whether the Horizon School actually had the physical space to accommodate these increases. She referred to Spark of Genius which would eventually help to provide additional places and asked whether they were in a position to provide out-reach assistance at the moment. DS confirmed officers were also working with them to identify children who would attend the future SEMH school and further conversations could take place. DS further suggested that it might be prudent to form a Task and Finish Group to look at these issues in depth.

ZW referred to the disparity in monies and staffing available to the Horizon school when compared to the special academies. She had no objection to further funding being made available to Horizon but wanted the lack of equity to be made clear particularly as excluded SEMH children were given more funding than others with special needs. The Chair queried whether the bar for permanent exclusions was the same at all schools.

Members indicated they were happy to approve the formation of a task and finish group to look at these issues but there needed to be timescales and feedback.

Decision

- i. That the report be noted
- ii. That it be noted that the local authority will closely monitor the numbers of permanent exclusions and work with the Head of Horizon to ensure all children's needs are met (including a review of all Move On arrangements and a review of attendance to understand if they would better engage with AP provision)
- iii. That it be noted that the financial modelling for places at PEX is included within the High Needs Block review

- iv. That the votes on the 4 options listed be as follows:

Option 1 – 11 votes
Option 2 – no votes
Option 3 – 2 votes
Option 4 – no votes

	<p>Option 1 (Fund temporarily as exceptional funding until the High Needs Block Review is finalised) approved</p> <p>v. That a Task and Finish group be set up to look at these issues in depth.</p>	
6	High Needs Task and Finish Group Update	
	DS confirmed that the date for the next scheduled meeting would be altered due to a number of schools having PD days. She would email members with details of an alternate date.	
7.	Transport	
	Item deferred	
8.	Trade Union Facility Time (Termly Update)	
	<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 2022/23 financial year. The current reserve balance relating to Trade Union Facility Time currently stood at £14,809. As agreed previously during the meeting these reserves would be used to partially fund the Designated Education Officer role.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>SSh confirmed that an error had been made within the report and that all schools had bought back into the scheme.</p> <p>JH queried whether the reserves would be drawn upon in the event of strikes. It was confirmed that strike costs would be funded at a national level.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the report be noted.</p> <p>Chris Seymour (Secondary) left the meeting.</p>	
9.	Indicative Central School Services Block Budgets 2023/24	
	Members were asked to approve the budget requirements for the 2023/24 Central School Services Block. This Budget is funded within the Dedicated Schools Grant allocation comprising a fixed amount for historic costs with a	

	<p>rate per pupil for ongoing costs. The rate per pupil for 2023/24 is £37.37 with the fixed rate set at £190k– total funding of £712k For the fourth 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. With this cut the funding requirements for 2022/23 would be met however this position was likely to change by April 2025.. 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. Not voting to approve any of the elements would require a request for disapplication to the Secretary of State.</p> <p>JH noted that not all schools used all the licences being paid for. SSh advised that all licences were purchased as part of the overall EYES system and this was a historic contribution. There was already a £10K saving which had been passed on the Forum.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the report be noted.</p> <p>That funding of £67k for licences for 2023/24 be approved</p> <p>That funding of £31k for termination of employment costs for 2023/24 be approved</p> <p>That indicative funding of £215k (subject to pupil number changes to be updated in December 2022) for Retained Education Services be approved</p> <p>That funding of £146k for Admissions be approved</p> <p>That indicative funding of £74k (subject to pupil number changes to be updated in December 2022) be approved for Copyright Licences</p> <p>That funding of £39k be approved for Servicing Schools’ Forum.</p>	
10	Indicative Schools Block Budget Update 2023/24	
	<p>SSh advised members that the draft Authority Proforma Tool (APT) had been released in August. This was used to model and set individual school budgets. A local Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) could be set to a maximum of 0.5% for 2023/24 and based on the October 2021 census this was affordable without the implementation of a cap. However this might change when October 2022 pupil numbers and characteristics were reflected in the formula at which point it was thought likely that a 3.1% cap might be required</p> <p>Decision</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. That the report be noted ii. That the application of a maximum 0.5% MFG be approved with the application of an appropriate cap to make this affordable for 2023/24 ISBs. 	
11.	Any Other Business	
	<p>SS advised members that the Forum’s disapplication request in respect of the dedicated schools grant (former education services grant rate per pupil) had been agreed by the Children’s Services Committee at their meeting earlier that week.</p> <p>The next meeting of the Forum would take place on Tuesday 6th December at 2pm at CETL</p>	

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OUTSTANDING ACTIONS LOG

Meeting	Description	Owner
18/11/22	Breakdown of profile of children placed into independent provision by year group to be provided to members to be corrected and recirculated	Danielle Swainston
18/11/22	That a Task and Finish Group be set up to look at issues around funding of Horizon places	Danielle Swainston

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Financial Year 2022/23: Children’s Services Committee – Log of Schools’ Forum
Recommendations and Committee Decisions

Last Updated: 7 October 2022

Committee Date	Report	Recommendation and Decision Details
15/11/22	Dedicated Schools Grant (Former Education Services Grant rate per pupil) – Disapplication Request	<p>The Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Agreed the 2023/24 funding rate at £60 per pupil/place. b) 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 2023/24. c) Noted this will be the seventh consecutive year the local authority has applied for disapplication and that the previous six applications have been successful. d) Agreed that a request for additional funding be sought from the Secretary of State, on behalf of the Children’s Services Committee, to assist in discharging statutory responsibilities to schools.