

Schools' Forum Meeting

1 March 2023

Attendees:

Members

Carole Bradley (CB) (Academy – Primary)
 Chris Connor (CC) (Maintained Primary)
 Alison Darby (AD) (Maintained Primary)
 Lisa Grieg (LG) (Academy – Special)
 John Hardy (JH) (Academy – Primary)
 Phil Pritchard (PP) (Academy – Primary)
 Linda Richardson (LR) (Early Years)
 Chris Simmons (CS) (Academy Governors)
 Mark Tilling (MT Chair) (Maintained Secondary)
 David Turner (DT) (Maintained Primary)
 Lee Walker (LW) (Academy – Primary)
 Zoe Westley (ZW) (Academy – Special)

Local Authority Officers

Jacqui Braithwaite (JB) –
 Integrated Services for
 Learning Manager

Jo Stubbs (JS) – Administrator

Jane Watt (JW) - Children's
 Finance

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>Jo Heaton (Diocese C of E) Toni Ray (Early Years) Jane Reed (16-19 Sector) Sue Sharpe (Maintained Primary) Sandra Shears (HBC Finance) Danielle Swainston (HBC Assistant Director (Joint Commissioning) Joanne Wilson (Academy – Primary)</p> <p>The Chair expressed disappointment at the low attendance and indicated he would contact those members not in attendance</p>	
<p>2 Minutes of the Last Meeting – 15 February 2023 – and Matters Arising</p> <p>Minutes approved.</p> <p>Page 4 – ZW felt that the minutes did not adequately convey the members strength of feeling on the development of IPS funding to clusters. The action needed to be clearer in terms of who would move it forward and when. Similarly the review of place numbers at special schools needed to be clearer in terms of who would do this and when. CB advised that these</p>	

	<p>issues had been discussed at a meeting of headteachers that morning, including ways to assist Danielle Swainston and the rest of the team around what form the clusters should take. It was hoped that this would be fed into the next directors meeting. ZW suggested that there be an open invitation to deputy heads and SENCO representatives.</p> <p>DT reiterated his point from the previous Forum meeting that all head teachers should hear the same message. He suggested that local authority officers may need help from Forum Members on how to structure discussions relating to the high needs block review actions at future head teacher and Director meetings.</p> <p>AD suggested that there be discussions with parents who had removed their children, even though conversations may prove difficult. AW to talk to Sally Robinson regards this.</p> <p>Outstanding Actions Log</p> <p>Annual declaration of interest forms were pending.</p>	<p>AW</p> <p>SSh</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>High Needs Block 2023/24</p> <p>Members were asked to agree the proposed High Needs block budget requirement for 2023/24 for onward decision by Children’s Services Committee. These proposals encompassed the recommendations agreed at the previous Forum meeting in response to the High Needs Block Review report. Indicative funding allocation for the High Needs Block for Hartlepool in 2023/24 was £15.331m, a significant increase on the previous year. The total budget requirement stood at £20.807m, an excess of £2.146m on the High Needs Block funding allocation. The changes proposed in the High Needs Block review were intended to bring spending back in line with available funding with three years.</p> <p>During the review proposals were considered that moved to a top-up price per pathway or team as an alternative to the current MFG arrangement for special schools. Further work would be needed to identify suitable funding models for Catcote and Springwell Academies as currently their pupils were organised into 3 pathways depending on individual needs, It was proposed that this new methodology be implemented in September 2023. An interim solution to cover April to August would be presented at a future meeting along with a final cost model. LG highlighted the urgent need to develop an interim solution.</p> <p>CB referred to the proposals around Early Years in the High Needs Block review. MT advised that agreement in principle had been reached on this matter with the detail to be worked through. JW accepted that the wording on this matter in the recommendations of the draft report to Children’s Services Committee (point h) might be unclear. She would add a reference to this being an indicative proposal for clarity.</p>	<p>JW</p>

	<p>ZW suggested that it be highlighted under the risk implications section that failure to approve the special school funding proposals could result in spiralling costs for independent provision, with a greater number of Hartlepool children being educated outside of the borough. This would ultimately lead to higher costs and risk the children's well being.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the proposed High Needs Block budget requirement for 2023/24 contained in the draft report to go to Children's Services Committee be unanimously recommended for approval by Children's Services Committee on 14 March 2023.</p>	
4	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Chair indicated that Hartlepool Borough Council had identified a more efficient classroom lighting model at a cost of £1500. He would email members more information on this if required.</p> <p>CB confirmed that the Growth Fund Working Group representatives were Dave Akers, Alison Darby, Carla Grant and and Dave Turner. DT agreed to set up an initial meeting for this group but did not have capacity to lead the group.</p> <p>LR confirmed that Kiddikins nursery had been awarded an outstanding OFSTED rating.</p>	<p>MT</p> <p>DT</p>
5	<p>Date and Time of Next Forum Meeting – 15th June 10am at the Civic Centre</p>	

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS LOG

Meeting	Description	Owner
18/11/22	Annual declaration of interest forms to be sent to members	Sandra Shears
01/03/23	Convene meeting of growth fund working party	David Turner
01/03/23	Develop 3 year recovery plan for High Needs Block spending	Schools Forum

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

Last Updated: 6 June 2023

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.
17/01/23	Dedicated Schools Grant - SCHOOL BUDGET SHARES 2023/24 AND CENTRAL SCHOOL SERVICES BLOCK 2023/24	<p>The Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted the contents of the report; b) Noted the agreement by Schools’ Forum to centrally retain funding of £0.572m, with the residual £0.139m being transferred to the schools block; c) Agreed the MFG to be used for 2023/24 and noted the recommendation from Schools’ Forum of applying an MFG of 0.5%, alongside a 3% cap; d) Approved the individual school budget share for 2023/24
14/03/23	DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT – EARLY YEARS BLOCK 2023/24	<p>The Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) noted the contents of this report and the outcomes from the consultation with providers and Schools’ Forum; b) noted the recommendation by Schools’ Forum to centrally retain funding of 5%;

		<p>c) approved the hourly rate funding formula for three to four year old provision for 2023/24, passing an increase of 6p on to all providers through the base rate;</p> <p>d) approved option 3 for payment of the new TPG / TPECG supplement as recommended by Schools' Forum;</p> <p>e) approved the hourly rate funding formula for two year old provision for 2023/24, passing the increase of 22p on to providers through the hourly rate.</p>
14/03/23	Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block 2023/24	<p>The Committee:</p> <p>a) noted the contents of the report;</p> <p>b) approved the proposed new 25 place primary ARP from 1 April 2023 and the extension of 22 secondary ARP places with effect from 1 January 2024 at a cost of £0.205m;</p> <p>c) noted the agreement from School's Forum to establish a solution focused forum, bringing challenge to the current process in order to reduce the significant cost of independent school fees;</p> <p>d) approved an increase of 6 places at Horizon School and the introduction of a new top-up rate of £14k for Horizon School and £1.6k for Haven at a total cost of £0.120m;</p> <p>e) agreed the proposed uplift of 4% to top-up ranges for IPS and ARPs and cessation of the clawback process at a total cost of £0.270m;</p> <p>f) noted that once further work is complete and a cost model established for both special academies, a proposal will be presented to Members at a future Committee;</p> <p>g) approved the creation of 2 SEND Officer posts to increase capacity at a cost of £0.089m;</p> <p>h) approved the creation of an early year's offer with a focus on early intervention at a cost of £0.116m (make up of posts in the team yet to be agreed);</p> <p>i) approved the overall budget requirement of £20.807m, noting that the budget allocation is £18.661m;</p> <p>j) noted that Schools Forum have committed to draw up a plan which will look to address the deficit over a three-year period.</p>