



North Tyneside Council

Quadrant, The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park,
North Tyneside, NE27 0BY
Tel: 0345 2000 101

Item 3 Minutes

Meeting Schools Forum **Date** 30TH April 2025

Location Via Microsoft Teams

✓ Present
D Deputy
A Apologies
O Absent

Present

Name	Organisation	Representing	30.04.2025
Angi Gibson	Hadrian Park Primary School	Academy	A
Anthony Gollings	St Thomas More	RC Diocese	✓
Claire Withers	Fordley Primary School	Primary	✓
Colette Bland	St Mary's RC Primary School (NS)	Academy	✓
Colleen Ward	Coquet Park First School	First (*)	✓
Daniel Jamieson	Burnside Community College	Secondary	✓
David Watson	St Thomas More	Academy (*)	✓
Diane Turner	Tyne Coast	16-19 Provider	O
Finn Wilcock	Southridge First School	First	✓
Gavin Storey	Cullercoats Primary School	Primary (*)	✓
Gillian Tawes	Shiremoor Primary School	Governor - Primary	✓
Jane Lowe	Monkseaton Middle School	Governor - Secondary	D (Duncan Phin)
Joanne Thompson	Holystone Out of School	Early Years PVI	O
Jonathan Heath	John Spence High School	Academy	✓
John Croft	Sir James Knott	Nursery	✓
John Newport	Marden Bridge Middle School	Middle (*)	✓
John Ord	Greenfields Primary School	Governor - Primary (*)	✓
Justina Terretta	Beaconhill Special School	Special	✓
Karen Croskery	North Tyneside Student Support Service	Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)	✓
Kelly Holbrook	Longbenton High School	Secondary (*)	✓
Laura Baggett	Monkhouse Primary School	Primary (*)	✓
Lesley Griffin	Wellfield Middle School	Governor - Secondary	A
Louise Bradford	C of E Diocese	C of E Diocese	✓
Matt Snape	Marden High School	Secondary (*)	✓
Phil Kemp	Trade Unions	Trade Unions	D (Claire MacLeod)
Philip Sanderson	Kings Priory	Academy (*)	✓
Stephen Baines	Holystone Primary	Primary (*)	✓
Steve Wilson	Whitley Bay High School	High (*)	✓
Tim Jones	Spring Gardens	Primary	✓
Wayne Myers	Richardson Dees Primary	Primary	✓

In Attendance:			
Julie Firth	Director of Children's Services	NTC	✓
Jon Ritchie	Director of Resources	NTC	A
Andrew Brown	Principle Accountant, Finance	NTC	✓
Christina Ponting	Senior Manager – Schools HR	NTC	✓
David Mason	Head of Finance – Deputy S151 Officer	NTC	A
Diane Thompson	Senior Accountant – Schools Finance	NTC	✓
Jane Cross	Senior Business Partner, Finance	NTC	✓
Ian Wilkinson	Strategic Lead, Education and Inclusion Review	NTC	✓
Lisa Ramshaw	Assistant Director, Education and Inclusion	NTC	✓
Mark Mirfin	Assistant Director, Commissioning, Partnerships and Transformation	NTC	A
April Gibbs-Thorn	Statutory Services Officer – Schools Forum	NTC	✓

(* indicates current member of Finance Sub Group)

Minutes of Meeting

Ref	Item	
1.	Welcome and Apologies	
	<p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and issued a reminder that the meeting is live streamed to the public on the Authority's YouTube Channel.</p> <p>A reminder of roles and responsibilities for Forum Members was provided.</p> <p>See table above for apologies.</p>	
2.	Attendance Register / Membership	Christina Ponting
	<p>Attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See table above. <p>Membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christina confirmed there are no updates at this time. 	
3.	Minutes of the last meeting and Matters Arising	
	<p>Minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>Matters arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools Business Services (SBS) Migration Update. A request for possible compensation to be raised again with SBS. Andrew Brown confirmed that in a recent meeting with the Managing Director of SBS there had been an acceptance of some difficulties. A goodwill gesture was offered of 10%. 	

	<p>Andrew confirmed a full paper will be presented at the Schools Forum meeting on 09 July 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools Business Services (SBS) Migration Update. A request for an internal conversation regarding any potential future procurement with a new provider to be held with the Local Authority Head of Applications and IT. <p>Andrew noted that there has been some internal conversation regarding procurement. Andrew informed Forum that an alternative provider would cost Schools £840.00 per year and that the G-Cloud platform requires a 3-year contract Commitment.</p> <p>A full paper will be presented at the Schools Forum meeting on 09 July 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration for Special Leave for 25/26 Financial Year. Cost breakdown with actual costs per school requested. <p>Christina Ponting confirmed that cost breakdowns have been circulated to Schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any Other Business. Query regarding historic discount on combined Health & Safety and Human Resources SLA with Head of HR. <p>Christina informed Forum that a request has been made to HR for a separate meeting to be facilitated between HR and Schools. Confirmation of a separate meeting going ahead was requested by the Chair for the Schools Forum July meeting.</p>	<p>AB</p> <p>CP</p>
4.	Declarations of Interest	
	None.	
5.	Consideration for Special Leave for 25/26 Financial Year Christina Ponting	
	<p>CP talked through a presentation on screen. Main points to note as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the March Schools Forum meeting, further consultation had been agreed on Part 2 only (Trade Union). • Points raised in March included a reminder of individual requirements as employers, a history of reductions, that TU funds pay for all TU's – ASCL, GMB, NAHT, NASUWT, NEU, Unison and Unite, as well as factors being faced by schools/ changes in school landscape. • In addition, several points were highlighted to Forum on the potential impact on schools if less TU time was available. • Schools Forum had already agreed 6% increase. 	

- In summary, the difference between 6% (£6.91) and 10% (£7.17) was noted as 26p per pupil.

Consultation

Christina outlined several points for Forum to consider with the options and noted:

- Presentations and Head Teacher Briefing – total of three.
- The survey closed at 12 noon on 28 April 2025.
- The survey contained 2 questions: 10% or another amount.
- There was a default 10% increase; if understood/ in agreement further action required from schools.
- Schools Forum Sub-Group meeting held 28 April; Schools Forum 30 April 2025.
- The assumed default was being in agreement to 10% increase (£7.17 per pupil)
- Results of Consultation:
Of 56 Nursery, First and Primary Schools – 49 (87.5%) in agreement. Of 16 Middle, High and Secondary Schools – 16 (100%) in agreement and of 6 Special Schools – 6 (100%) in agreement. Therefore, from all Schools, 91% are in agreement with the recommended 10% increase.
- For transparency, Christina outlined a few reasons that some schools preferred a less than 10% increase. Affordability and/or cost to school, shared cuts/parity with challenges schools are facing and some concerns on disproportionate use. Christina assured Forum that usage is very closely monitored. Also, some schools highlighted being aware of other models; e.g. a pay as you go model.
- Christina raised some additional points including,
 - Existing Arrangements to be in place to 31 August; new arrangements in place from 1 September.
 - Assumption of 2.8% pay award and cash budget allocations.
 - The per pupil value next to be reviewed in January 2026.

Discussion

- Forum expressed thanks to Christina and members of the Finance team for the clear way the consultation was presented and the work carried out.

Recommendations

Schools Forum was asked to:

- Approve an increase the per pupil cost of the SLA from 1 April by 10%.

Approved

9.	Any Other Business	
	None.	
10.	Date and Time of Next Meeting	
	Wednesday 9 th July 2025 via Microsoft Teams	

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