



North Tyneside Council

Minutes

Meeting Schools Forum **Date** Thursday 26 November 2020

Location Via Microsoft Teams

Present

✓ Present
D Deputy
A Apologies
O Absent

Name	Organisation	Representing	01.10.20	26.11.20
Andrew James	St Aidan's Primary	Primary	✓	✓
Angi Gibson	Hadrian Park Primary	Primary	✓	✓
Candida Mellor / Claire MacLeod	Trade Unions	Trade Unions	Candida Mellor	Candida Mellor
David Baldwin	Churchill Community College	Secondary	✓	✓
David Bavaird	Norham High School	Governor - Secondary	✓	✓
David Watson	St Thomas More	RC Schools	✓	✓
Gavin Storey	Cullercoats Primary	Primary	A	✓
Jill Wraith	Benton Dene Primary	Primary	✓	✓
Jim Coltman	Diocese	C of E Diocese	A	A
Joanne Thompson	Holystone Out of School	Early Years PVI	✓	✓
John Croft	Sir James Knott	Nursery	✓	✓
John Newport	Marden Bridge Middle School	Middle	✓	✓
Karen Croskery	North Tyneside Student Support Service	PRU	✓	✓
Kelly Holbrook	Longbenton High School	Secondary	✓	✓
Kerry Lillico	Grasmere Academy	Academy	A	✓
Laura Baggett	Monkhouse Primary	Primary	✓	✓
Marie Flatman / Mo Dixon	Tyne Met	16-19 Provider	✓	O
Matt Snape	Marden High School	Secondary	✓	✓
Michael Young	Spring Gardens Primary	Primary	✓	✓
Paul Mitchell	Whitley Bay High School	Governor – Secondary	✓	✓
Peter Gannon	Silverdale School	Special	✓	✓
Peter Thorp	Redesdale Primary	Governor - Primary	✓	A
Philip Sanderson	Kings Priory	Academy	✓	✓
Sharron Colpitts- Elliott	Rockcliffe First School	Primary	✓	N/A
Stephen Baines	Holystone Primary	Primary	✓	✓
Stephen Easton	Marine Park First School	First	Colleen Ward	✓
Steve Wilson	Whitley Bay High School	High	✓	✓
Tim Jones	Langley First School	Primary	N/A	✓
In Attendance:				
Mark Longstaff	Head of Commissioning & Asset Management	NTC	✓	✓
Claire Emmerson	Senior Manager - Finance Strategy & Planning	NTC	✓	✓
Noel Kay	Senior Business Partner, Finance	NTC	A	✓

Diane Thompson	Finance	ENGIE	O	O
Christina Ponting	Senior Manager - Schools HR	ENGIE/NTC	✓	✓
Mary Nergaard	PA to Head of Commissioning & Asset Management	NTC	✓	✓
Diane Buckle	Assistant Director for Education	NTC	N/A	✓ (item 8 only)
Kevin Burns	Senior School Improvement Officer (Vulnerable Learners)	NTC	N/A	✓ (item 8 only)
Rob Smith	School Improvement Advisor, PE, Sport & Health	NTC	N/A	✓ (item 8 only)
Anne Taylor	Finance	ENGIE/NTC	N/A	✓

Item		Action
1.	Apologies for Absence	
	See Table above. The Chair welcomed everyone to the Schools Forum.	
2.	Attendance Register / Membership	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tim Jones has joined Schools Forum to replace Sharon Colpitts-Elliott and has received an induction along with other recent new members Jim Coltman has stood down as C of E Diocese representative. Vacancy to be filled. Conversations ongoing with the Diocese. David Baldwin's position as Chair ends on 31 December. Peter Gannon has agreed to step up and be chair from January. Forum agreed New Vice chair to be appointed in January. Nominations to be submitted and discussed at the January 2021 meeting. Paul Johnson to join Schools Forum in January as the South West Secondary Head teacher representative. The Chair welcomed TJ to Schools Forum and thanked JC for their contribution to Schools Forum. 	
3.	Public Meeting / Observers	
	The Chair welcomed the public to the meeting	
4.	Declaration of Interest	
	Item 6.1b – Matt Snape, Jill Wraith, John Newport	
5.	Minutes of the last meeting of 1 October 2020	
	Minutes agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.	
6.	Matters Arising	
	Page 2, Item 6 – Matters Arising: Overall Budget Position <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>ACTION (carried forward):</u> CE to bring an update back to Forum in the January meeting in advance of the APT being submitted 	CE
	Page 5, Item 6.1a – National Funding Formula – Local Funding Formula update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance and Resources session was carried out and made available to those that couldn't attend Consultation Presentation was made available for schools on request 	

	Page 6, Item 6.1b – Schools in Financial Difficulty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forum agreed to retrospectively look at applications and reassess the allocations. Updated to be provided under Item 6.1b 	
	Page 7, Item 7 – Any Other Business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools SLA sub-group met on 22 October and Friday 13 November. ML provided an update as follows: ML noted that the meetings were very useful in terms of going through the catering agreement. Agreed some work to be carried out on the SLA portfolio in advance of next year AJ to provide further feedback under Item 7 – Any Other Business 	
6.1	Finance Update	
	<p>a) North Tyneside National Funding Formula Consultation update Claire Emmerson</p> <p>CE talked through the briefing paper. Main points to note as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reminder provided on options subject to the consultation as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option 2. Move 100% to national funding formula (NFF) and capping maximum increase at 4.5% Option 4. Move 75% to national funding formula (NFF) with no capping 57 surveys completed from 38 schools. Reduction on last year 68% down to 54% Responses received from 31 Head Teachers, 19 Governors or Governing bodies and 7 from other leadership figures Total votes were 65% in favour of Option 2, with 35% in favour of Option 4 Votes per school was clearer at 72% in favour of Option 2, with 28% in favour of Option 4 Where multiple votes were submitted from one school, the Head Teacher vote was counted. However, none of these votes went against how the governing body voted. A factor impacting selection was the application, or not, of capping. There was an overwhelming majority agreeing to allow the Authority to set a fair MFG based on the available funding both overall and by school with a total of 54 voting yes with 3 having no preference. (36 by school with 2 having no preference). Seven options were provided as the best way to allocate surplus funding with the majority voting for Age-weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) There was no overall agreement to transfer 0.5% to the High Needs Block with 55% saying no and 45% saying yes. However, the yes vote was up from 23% last year. References were made to understanding the deficit position for High Needs but also the need for an understanding of those with lower level need and supporting those schools. If there was to be a transfer to the High needs Block consideration would need to be given on how that would be ringfenced An update on the 2021/22 funding arrangements was provided. Funding will be based on the DfE National Funding Formula using October 2019 census data 	

- Table 2 shows the DSG 2021/22 illustrative allocation compared with prior year actuals
- 19.5% increase on the 17/18 baseline with a change per year of 7%
- **High Needs Block position:** At the end of 2019/20 there was an overall deficit position of £4.542m with a forecasted in-year outturn variance of £3.515m. Cumulative overspend of £8.057m
- Indicative funding shows a 39.7% increase on the 17/18 baseline, change per year of 11.9%
- Whilst the funding increases since 2017/18 have been constant, the gap between funding and actual costs is starting to widen as shown in Chart 5
- The LA does not have to submit a recovery plan on high needs as this is not a requirement. However, the LA is working with the DfE on ways to alleviate the pressures
- **Central School Services Block** – Table 10 shows the impact of the indicative funding for 2021/22, which reflects the DfE's plan to reduce funding of CSSB. The historic commitments element has been reduced by 20% per annum, in line with strategic DfE published plans over the last two years.
- Indicative allocation for 2021/22 is estimated to be 1.854m.
- The LA absorbed the cost of the reduction in funding in 2020/21. However, this is not an option in terms of additional reductions in future years
- **Early Years Block** – outturn surplus of £0.432m. 2-year old provision is forecast to be on budget with payment to providers continuing as normal in December.
- Funding for 3 and 4 year olds in the Autumn term can go ahead as planned with providers being funded based on the higher of Autumn 2019 / Autumn 2020 places. From spring term funding will be provided based on the funded numbers at that time.
- **Budget Monitoring for Schools** – Currently forecasting a deficit but there has recently been a £1.089m improvement against budget plans
- The summary of balances by phase is shown in Table 6
- The position of schools in deficit has improved by £0.308m. One school has moved out of deficit; however, 2 schools are reporting new deficits. Impact of Covid discussed. Work continues with these schools.

Discussion followed around:

- Query raised against the 2 schools in structural deficit and one school in a high deficit
- CE noted that in April 2019 Forum agreed to reduce the time scale that a school could come back into balance from 5 to 3 years. It was also agreed that those who couldn't get in balance within 3 years would have to be able to show an in year financial balance. In terms of Longbenton High School they are forecasting an in-year balance and won't go into structural deficit. With regard to the 2 schools in structural deficit, this has largely been down to pupil numbers. Until the pupil numbers increase the LA continues to work with those schools to manage the deficit. Independent financial support has been brought in which has been funded by the LA.
- CE also noted that all schools are on track to be brought back into in-year balance.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chair thanked CE and the team for the work carried out and to Forum for the work carried out to encourage schools to take part in the consultation. <p>Recommendations</p> <p>Schools Forum is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the responses to consultation with all schools in relation to distribution of funding from the Schools Block; Noted Confirm the option which Forum wishes to recommend to Cabinet to inform Budget engagement; Forum agreed to Option 2, 100% NFF with relevant MFG, capping and scaling applied subject to affordability with any surplus channelled through the AWP figures. Forum not agreed on transfer of funds to High Needs Block Note the update on National Funding Formula and update on indicative allocations for each of the four funding blocks; Noted Note the improvement in the budget monitoring position for schools following monitoring one; and Noted. Continue to review the position of the High Needs block, considering the work to keep children in schools, the SEND Review and reviews of ARPS and commissioned services which will consider value for money and the outcomes for children and young people and will implement change, where needed, following due process. Agreed 	
	<p>b) Schools in Financial Difficulty Claire Emmerson</p> <p>CE talked through the briefing paper on behalf of the Schools Forum Finance Sub-Group. Main points to note as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An overview of funding already approved was provided including the £20k funding for the MASH post which left a balance of £519,539 Forum agreed to amend the criteria at the last meeting of Schools Forum held on 1 October 2020 Following the review of the criteria, applications from schools that were previously excluded were reviewed 4 were eligible for review, of which only 2 were accepted for additional funding as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benton Dene Primary School met all the eligibility criteria and shows a strong recovery position. Sub-group recommends the school is granted the full funding requested of £41,000 Marden High School also met the revised criteria and shows a strong recovery position. 3 funding options were considered and sub-group recommends funding of £161,026 is granted Balance remaining is circa £318k <p>Discussion followed around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Query raised on the proposed Growth Fund. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CE noted that the proposed Growth Fund Policy has not been presented to Sub-Group yet and is separate to this funding • It was noted that one of the schools that doesn't meet the criteria for this pot of funding may qualify for funding under the proposed Growth Fund policy once the policy has been ratified and implemented • The Growth Fund will support those schools that are seeing financial difficulty through growth as opposed to other causes • A meeting of the Sub-Group will be held in December to ratify the Growth Fund Policy proposals which will then be brought to Schools Forum in January for approval • Schools that are eligible will have funding allocated by the end of the financial year <p>Recommendations Schools Forum is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allocate the funding as per the recommendations made from the subgroup for both Benton Dene Primary and Marden High School. <p>Agreed</p>	
	<p>c) Revisions to the Scheme for Financing Schools Claire Emmerson</p> <p>CE talked through the briefing paper. Main points to note as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates received from statutory DfE guidance • Overview of revisions provided <p>Recommendations Schools Forum is recommended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. approve the report and adopt the proposed draft of the Scheme for Financing Schools. <p>Approved</p>	
6.2	<p>School Forum Constitution and Action Plan Review Christina Ponting</p> <p>CP talked through the briefing paper. Main points to note as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report circulated that outlines the changes to the constitution, all of which are minor. • In addition to the revisions to the constitution, a revised toolkit has also been circulated via email to include the suggested amendments. Only area that requires some additional work is further support for Governing Body members so that they are able to undertake their wider representation role. <p>Discussion followed around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PM noted the guidance on the appointment of a new chair and that Forum needs to approve the appointment. Chair agreed and voting was carried out. • The Chair noted that the timings for publishing papers need to be looked at along with the dates of future meetings to help manage this affectively. The toolkit states 7 calendar days before the meeting which is not being achieved. CE noted that this was not possible on this occasion due to the 	

	<p>tight timescales resulting from the date the consultation closed. Comments noted.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <p>Schools Forum having read this report and clearly understanding the information provided consider this report and note the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Members are asked to consider the changes to the document and to confirm if they are clear on the changes and if they are happy for the document to be updated as noted. Agreed 2. If Schools Forum members are in agreement, the updated document would replace the current document provided to members and noted on the Schools Forum website. Agreed 3. The North Tyneside Schools Forum Constitution will be reviewed again in September 2021 or asap thereafter once ESFA guidance is updated/ provided. Noted 	
6.3	<p>Special Leave SLA</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Christina Ponting</p> <p>CP provided a verbal update. Main points to note as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update circulated via email on Friday 20 November • Based on the predictions, TU facility is on par and Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Shared Parental and Jury Service leave is differing from last year. • Estimating a refund value for Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Shared Parental and Jury Service to be in the region of 84%. • Estimates involve a number of predictions so this will be kept under review and further updates provided to Schools Forum members. • Impact of Pay Award discussed; Schools Forum have already agreed that the SLA will increase each year from 1st April to match inflation/ average pay award which was applied in the previous September. • Percentage increase and additional increase added to the Special Leave costs as agreed by Schools Forum but it will take some time to see the impact of this increase. <p>Discussion followed around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair asked what the shortfall was to take the Schools refund to 100% for Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Shared Parental and Jury Service. CP noted that this was in the region of £86k based on current spending and estimates for future months. • Query raised around access to Schools In Financial Difficulty funding and if this was a potential to fund the shortfall for some schools. • CP noted that this could result in funding being allocated to Schools that aren't in financial difficulty and that using that money could be outside of the updated/revised criteria Schools Forum had recently reviewed for allocation of money under this heading. • SW asked if it is possible to look at the criteria again. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CE noted that we are potentially going to see an increase in Schools in Financial difficulty and there is benefit in maintaining a sufficient residual balance in this fund. • Schools that find themselves in financial difficulty as a result of Special Leave pressures may benefit from funding via the already agreed criteria • MY noted that the funding has been used in the past for other things outside of Schools in Financial Difficulties. • CE noted that the level of funding has been discussed and agreed. It is important to differentiate between schools that are in financial difficulty and those schools that can manage the pressure within their own budgets. • CE noted that it would require further analysis to establish if any schools impacted will also be in financial difficulty. • It is important to ensure that there is sufficient money left in the Schools in Financial Difficulty fund to support schools that may find themselves in financial difficulty, particularly those impacted by Covid. To reduce this fund further by using it top up funding that is a de-delegated item could potentially put pressure on schools in financial difficulty. • Forum noted that this needed to be left open as pending a further review of their criteria linked to Schools In Financial Difficulty and if they wished to review this again • Forum asked for the use of Schools in Financial Difficulty funds and the associated criteria to be further considered particularly in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Is this appropriate to use those funds for other means – as had been done in the past? ○ If this was considered to be an option how could this be enacted/is this possible? ○ If this was felt to be a feasible option by Schools Forum, how can this be applied in a way that is as fair as possible? • The Chair asked if it would be possible to compile a list of schools that would find themselves in financial difficulty as a result of Special Leave pressures and for this to be further considered by Schools Forum at their next meeting. <p><u>ACTION:</u> to bring this forward to the next meeting</p>	CE
7.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Thanks to the Chair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ML issued thanks on behalf of Schools Forum members and the Authority to DB for his work as Chair of Schools Forum over the last 10 years. DB noted that it has been an honour to serve the schools and the children of North Tyneside in his role as Chair and offered best wishes to the new Chair. <p>Schools SLA Sub-Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AJ thanked ML for arranging the Schools SLA Sub-Group and for the provision of an example model (School A). • AJ provided an overview of the breakdown of charges and queries as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Query was raised around the overhead charges which ML agreed to look in to ○ Charges for equipment raised a query around who owns that equipment 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provision for debt – Primaries don't have any way of recovering that debt, so this is a charge that Primaries take on with no powers to do anything about it • AJ noted that schools can have a better understanding of the costs if they had a breakdown. ML agreed that this can be provided to individual schools on request. • <u>ACTION:</u> Further follow up meeting of the Schools SLA Sub-Group to be arranged • SB thanked ML for the information • <u>ACTION:</u> SB asked ML to follow up with Iain Betham on the energy management SLA. ML agreed. 	<p>MN</p> <p>ML</p>
<p>Observers were excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that the report contains information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.</p>		
8.	De-delegated / Centrally Retained Services	Claire Emmerson
	<p>Presentation was shown on screen. Main points to note as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CE provided an overview of the funding allocation in the previous year along with the indicative funding level for 20/21 • Overall reduction of £0.197m estimated • Impact on individual areas discussed • A series of presentations on services in receipt of funding were delivered. • It was noted that the implications of any decisions need to be made clear to Schools Forum • Schools Forum agreed to a separate confidential meeting to be held in December with a single item agenda to further discuss this as there needed to be more time allocated to this topic • Presentations/supporting information to aid this further discussion/decision to be circulated in advance on a confidential basis. Date/time to be agreed as a matter of urgency and circulated to members. 	
9.	Date of next meeting	
	Wednesday, 13 th January 2021 at 12:30pm	