



North Tyneside Council

Minutes

Meeting Schools Forum **Date** Wednesday 23 March 2022

Location Via Microsoft Teams

Present

✓ Present
D Deputy
A Apologies
O Absent

Name	Organisation	Representing	12.01.22	23.03.22
Anthony Gollings	St Thomas More	RC Diocese	N/A	✓
Andrew James	St Aidan's Primary	Academy	✓	✓
Angi Gibson	Hadrian Park Primary	Primary	✓	✓
Candida Mellor	Trade Unions	Trade Unions	✓	N/A
Collen Ward	Coquet Park First School	Primary	✓	✓
David Bavaird	Norham High School	Governor - Secondary	✓	A
David Watson	St Thomas More	Academy	✓	✓
Finn Wilcock	Southridge First School	Primary	✓	✓
Gavin Storey	Cullercoats Primary	Primary	✓	✓
Jill Wraith	Benton Dene Primary	Primary	✓	✓
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	✓	✓
Louise Bradford	Diocese	C of E Diocese	✓	✓
Marie Flatman	Tyne Met	16-19 Provider	✓	O
Mark Teale	Trade Unions	Trade Unions	N/A	✓
Matt Snape	Marden High School	Secondary	✓	✓
Michael Young	Spring Gardens Primary	Primary	✓	✓
Paul Johnson	Churchill Community College	Secondary	✓	✓
Peter Gannon	Silverdale School	Special	✓	✓
Peter Thorp	Redesdale Primary	Governor - Primary	✓	✓
Philip Sanderson	Kings Priory	Academy	✓	✓
Rob Harker	Carville Primary	Primary	N/A	✓
Stephen Baines	Holystone Primary	Primary	✓	✓
Steve Wilson	Whitley Bay High School	High	✓	A
<u>In Attendance:</u>				
Mark Longstaff	Director of Commissioning & Asset Management	NTC	✓	✓
Claire Emmerson	Senior Manager - Finance Strategy & Planning	NTC	✓	✓
Noel Kay	Senior Business Partner, Finance	NTC	N/A	N/A
Diane Thompson	Finance	ENGIE	✓	✓

Christina Ponting	Senior Manager - Schools HR	ENGIE/NTC	✓	✓
Mary Nergaard	PA to Director of Commissioning & Asset Management	NTC	✓	✓
Kevin Burns	Senior School Improvement Officer (Vulnerable Learners)	NTC	✓	N/A
Julie Firth	Assistant Director Safeguarding and Children's Services	NTC	✓	N/A

Item		Action
1.	Apologies for Absence	
	See table above	
2.	Attendance Register / Membership / Roles and Responsibilities	
	<p>CP provided an overview of the changes to the current membership as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Young reconfirmed as the rep for Primary/First Schools • Still a vacancy for Secondary Governor. Work has been carried out with Secondary schools and 2 nominees have now come forward. Reminder issued to forum to get their votes in • David Watson confirmed as the new Academy rep • Kerry Lilico confirmed as the ongoing Academy rep • Andrew James has now been appointed to one of the new Academy positions • Rob Harker has replaced Andrew James as the South West Primary rep • John Croft, Karen Croskery, and Peter Gannon are all reconfirmed in their positions • Anthony Gollings has been appointed as the new rep for the RC Diocese • Mark Teal replaces Candida Mellor as the Trade Union rep • John Newport's term coming to an end in May. JN to work with his locality on the post from June onwards • PG welcomed the new reps to Schools Forum 	
3.	Public Meeting / Observers	
	The Chair welcomed the public to the meeting.	
4.	Declaration of Interest	
	Peter Thorpe – High Borans	
5.	Minutes of the last meeting	
	Minutes agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.	
6.	Matters Arising	
	<p>Page 3, Item 6.1 – Council Financial Position: Outstanding debt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ML noted that a letter was sent to all schools from Tracy Hunter on 4 February followed by an email from Mark Longstaff on 7 February outlining the work being carried out. As advised, it is hoped that with Janice we will be able to report back the outcomes of the review and some suggested ways forward following the Easter break. 	

	<p>Page 3, Item 6.1 – Council Financial Position: Catering Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MN confirmed that this has been added to the agenda for the July meeting. <p>Page 5, Item 6.2 – Finance Update: National Funding Formula</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report was recirculated after the meeting to include the updated figures. <p>Page 6, Item 6.2 – Finance Update: Services in receipt of funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MN confirmed that this has been added to the agenda for the July meeting. <p>Page 7, Item 6.2 – Finance Update: High Borans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey was circulated. Schools opted not to approve the contribution therefore, High Borans will now operate on a fully commercialised model. <p>All other actions are covered on the agenda</p>	
6.1	<p>Finance Update Claire Emmerson</p> <p>CE talked through the presentation on screen. Main points to note as follows:</p> <p>Second Termly Monitoring Position for 2021/22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outturn for 2020/21 showed a positive balance of £3.722m against a forecast deficit of £6.755m. Budget plan for 2021/22 forecast a deficit of £5.993m. This improved to £3.902m at the monitoring 1 and there has been some further improvement at monitoring 2 with the deficit now forecast at £3.585m. A movement of £2.408m This includes one additional school which is now forecasting an unauthorised deficit over £5,000 in 2021/22 with a deficit of £0.013m at monitoring 2. Work is ongoing with the school to see what can be done to improve the position to reach an in-year balance <p>Existing Deficit in Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 6 schools already in deficit as shown in Table 3 of the report (shown on screen) one of which is identified as in structural deficit. All bar one of these schools are showing improvements which reflects the plans put in place to mitigate the deficit Overall improvement of £1.032m against the budget bring the forecast deficit down from £13.799m to £12.768m Work continues with all schools in deficit in effort to improve this position further before year end <p>High Needs Block</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forms part of the DSG which is ring fenced and does not form part of the General Fund Accumulative deficit of £13.4m which made of the historic deficit of £8.880 and the in-year deficit of £4.533. The pressures are in line with the national and regional picture The LA has submitted a draft recovery plan to the ESFA and we have received a letter to say we have been invited to be part of the safety valve programme. This is the second tranche of this programme. Further detail to be submitted to the ESFA Meeting scheduled on 8 April with Head Teachers to go into further detail around the High Needs Block and to set up those workstreams that we need to take this work forward 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Also taking a presentation to North Tyneside Council's Finance Sub-Committee on 29 March <p>Budget Tool Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CE noted that an update on the new budget tool is provided in the report. Finance team are rapidly working to implement the tool Training being rolled out as part of the finance SLA from week commencing 21 March, with schools needing to prepare and submit budgets by the May 2022 deadline. <p>Recommendations</p> <p>Schools Forum is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the forecast position for schools after the second termly monitoring process; Noted Note the latest position for the High Needs Block as reported in February; Noted Note the update on the new Budget tool for use in the 2022/23 to 2024/25 budget planning cycle. Noted 	
6.2	<p>Special Leave SLA</p> <p>Christina Ponting</p> <p>CP provided a verbal update. Main points to note as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At December we were forecasting as expected for the year for Part 1 (Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Shared Parental Leave, Jury Service) January and February claims have come in slightly more than anticipated so we're now looking at a forecast of £0.010m over the total pot at this point in time compared to 20/21 Part 2 (Trade Union Facility Time) is always paid at 100% and we originally forecast Part 1 to come in at 90%. We now anticipate that this could come in at almost 100% and there may even be a small surplus to carry over depending on the outcome of the March claims Previously reported that there is usually a pattern of one peak year followed by two lower years. If this pattern continues this is the second lower year so we would anticipate that next year could be a peak year Still waiting for final claims for TU facility time but these are forecasting as expected Pay award – there has not been a pay award for Teachers in September 21, although pay progression has taken place for those staff that are eligible. The fact that a pay award has not been granted has resulted in the claims being therefore lower than in previous years. Further update to be provided in July on the final figures Forum need to be mindful of the potential to go into a peak year and the impact of the recent academy conversions, combined with an expected higher pay award being forecast for September 22 for teaching staff Current charge is £27 for the combined SLA (£21.97 Part 1 and £5.03 Part 2) Already agreed these figures for the next financial year, but would need to monitor this for future years Always pay Part 2 first as agreed by Schools Forum 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CP needs to look at the shift between Part 2 and Part 1 and projected costs for future years, in light of potential peak year and impact of pay award for teaching staff (Part 1) and teaching and support staff (Part 2) • It was noted that due to there being no pay award for teaching staff for Part 1 for September 2021, there has been a difference to the overall value of the claims, as if there had been we wouldn't be carrying the potential slight surplus. However, the DfE have published their proposal earlier this month which is proposing a 3.9% average across the board in 2022/23 and 2.6% in 2023/24 • This will increase the pay bill across the two-years by 6.7% • SF have already agreed that this is a self-funding SLA and the contribution will therefore need to increase in line with inflation which is dependent on the pay award • Support staff pay award has been agreed for April 21 at £1.75%, but is yet to be determined for 2022/23 and negotiations have not yet commenced. Minimum wage has also increased from April 2022. • CP noted that the government is providing a grant to help with employers rising costs for NIC from April 22; but overall Schools Forum were asked to note that whilst the SLA could carry a surplus balance at year end, it would be minded to carry those monies forward to offset potentially higher claims/ 3rd years claims in 22/23 and the potential for a pay award over 22/23 and 23/24 that was no less than 6.7% for teaching staff, which impacts on Part 1 of the SLA which is the higher value / spending area. 	
7.	Any Other Business	
	<p>Future predictions for Schools in Deficit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LB asked with the increased staffing costs, pay increases coupled with NI/Pensions and significantly rising energy prices, has any work been done to identify how many schools are likely to be in deficit in future years? • CE noted that the current 3-year budget planning tool has a support and challenge framework. The schools finance team works closely with schools that have potential for becoming schools in financial difficulty. • New budget planning tool is now being launched. • We usually come back to Forum in July to outline the predications for future years • CE noted that it has always been challenging as this process is reliant on individual schools' view of where they are • CE noted that we will be reviewing the position once schools have set their budgets and report back to Forum in July <p>JW raised the following items via email ahead of the meeting:</p> <p>Containment Pot</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JW noted that there is a containment pot of £0.090m that the Finance Team would be managing and allocating it to those most 'in need'. JW asked if Forum can we have some clarification about this please? • CE provided a recap on the history into this funding which was allocated by the Recovery Coordination Group and was specific to costs linked to covid. Applications were invited by schools and most of the funding was paid out, however, there is some residual funding left 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CE noted that there will be a fair and equitable process for all schools to apply for some funding but that the detail is still being worked through and methodology for distribution will be based on the requirements of the grant funding for the cost of containment of COVID within schools. <p>High Needs Block Transfer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JW raised a comment regarding the High Needs Block to ask that we ensure that all HTs are consulted about any transfer and how it may be broken down and not be a choice of 0.5% or nothing. I think this is already on the table. CE noted that we are in a different position to where we were last year. We will be gathering evidence and will be consulting with schools before coming back to Schools Forum in November. Consultation is expected to be different to previous years in view of the work being undertaken with the ESFA on the safety valve programme David Watson queried if the safety valve programme comes with funding. CE confirmed that funding is available. The ESFA will be looking at the recovery plan. Once we have evidence that we have a plan to come back into an in-year balance there may be some funding available to help with the deficit. CE noted that this is likely to be a far more rigid and intense programme CE noted that there is also potential to apply for capital funding that could be put towards the work required to support High Needs children and reduce the pressures <p>Catering Debt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JW asked if we have an update on catering debt? How debt is currently being managed and what are the plans to wipe out or manage the debt? ML referred to earlier statement (See Item 6, Matters Arising) <p>Energy Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JW noted that there was a restructure in energy management for schools and asked, as we are all facing rising utility costs, JW wanted to know what the SLA is offering to support schools and indeed other LA buildings and services to mitigate against this? ML noted that he is liaising with Iain Betham (IB) who is now managing this team/SLA. IB will get a note out to schools in due course 	ML
8.	Date of next meeting	
	Wednesday, 13 July 2022 at 12:30pm, via Teams.	