



North Tyneside Council

Minutes

Meeting Schools Forum **Date** Thursday 10 November 2022

Location Via Microsoft Teams

Present

✓ Present
D Deputy
A Apologies
O Absent

Name	Organisation	Representing	21.09.22	10.11.22
Anthony Gollings	St Thomas More	RC Diocese	✓	✓
Andrew James	St Aidan's Primary	Academy	D (Claire Garbutt)	D (Claire Garbutt)
Angi Gibson	Hadrian Park Primary	Primary	✓	✓
Colleen Ward	Coquet Park First School	Primary	✓	✓
David Bavaird	Norham High School	Governor - Secondary	✓	✓
David Watson	St Thomas More	Academy	✓	✓
Diane Turner	Tyne Met	16-19 Provider	O	A
Finn Wilcock	Southridge First School	Primary	✓	✓
Gavin Storey	Cullercoats Primary	Primary	✓	✓
Jill Wraith	Benton Dene Primary	Primary	✓	D (Carmel Parker)
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	✓	D (Harriet Bland)
Lesley Griffin	Wellfield Middle School	Governor - Secondary	✓	✓
Louise Bradford	Diocese	C of E Diocese	✓	✓
Matt Snape	Marden High School	Secondary	A	✓
Michael Young	Spring Gardens Primary	Primary	✓	✓
Paul Johnson	Churchill Community College	Secondary	✓	✓
Peter Gannon	Silverdale School	Special	✓	✓
Peter Thorp	Redesdale Primary	Governor - Primary	O	✓
Philip Sanderson	Kings Priory	Academy	✓	✓
Rob Harker	Carville Primary	Primary	✓	✓
Phil Kemp	Trade Unions	Trade Unions	✓	D (Clare MacLeod)
Stephen Baines	Holystone Primary	Primary	✓	✓
Steve Wilson	Whitley Bay High School	High	✓	✓
<u>In Attendance:</u>				
Mark Longstaff	Director of Commissioning & Asset Management	NTC	✓	✓
Jon Ritchie	Director of Resources	NTC	✓	A

Claire Emmerson	Senior Manager - Finance Strategy & Planning	NTC	✓	✓
Andrew Brown	Principle Accountant, Finance	NTC	✓	✓
Jane Cross	Senior Business Partner, Finance	NTC	✓	✓
Diane Thompson	Senior Accountant – Schools Finance	EQUANS	✓	✓
Christina Ponting	Senior Manager - Schools HR	EQUANS/NTC	✓	✓
Mary Nergaard	PA to Director of Commissioning & Asset Management	NTC	✓	✓
Lisa Cook	Assistant Director, Education and Inclusion	NTC	✓	✓
Mark Mirfin	Assistant Director, SEND Transformation	NTC	N/A	✓
Ian Wilkinson	Strategic Lead, Education and Inclusion Review	NTC	✓	✓

Item		Action
1.	Apologies for Absence	
	See table above. CE noted that 2 Schools Forum members were not in the meeting and asked if anyone was carrying any apologies on their behalf. None were noted. CP to pick this up with the relevant members	
2.	Attendance Register / Membership / Roles and Responsibilities	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The chair reminded Forum of their roles and responsibilities Some members due for terms of office due to come up in January 2023 CP noted that 2 Governer members (Peter Thorp and David Bavaird) reach the end of their terms of office at the end of the year. Both members are willing to stand again. Historically we would ask for expressions of interest. If any are received there would be an election process. If no one else comes forward, the members will be appointed. <u>ACTION:</u> agreed to progress on this basis 	CP
3.	Virtual Public Meeting / Observers	
	The Chair welcomed the public to the meeting.	
4.	Declaration of Interest	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None received 	
5.	Minutes of the last meeting	
	Minutes agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.	
6.	Matters Arising	
	Page 4, Item 6.2a – Finance Update: Falling Rolls and Growth Fund Proposed Allocations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LB raised a query around eligibility and asked for some further information to understand the funding fully. CE was to pick up a conversation with LB outside of the meeting, however, this has not yet happened. <u>ACTION</u> (carried forward): CE to pick up a conversation with LB around eligibility for Falling Rolls and Growth Fund 	CE

	<p>Page 7, Item 6.2b – DSG Management Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The names of all those who agreed to be part of the sub-group were passed to Susan Young and the first meeting took place on 7 November where the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) were discussed, to be developed further. <p>Page 8, Item 7 – AOB (Ukrainian Students)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ML passed the request to Peter Mennell, Director for Housing who contacted SW directly to provide an update. SW has passed this on to other schools. CE noted that the Authority has received the Q1 funding and the team are going through the reconciliation process. Awaiting the next round of funding and the Authority will be making sure that this funding is passported through to schools. <p>All other actions are covered on the agenda</p>	
6.1	Finance Update	
	<p>a) Funding Distribution and Finance Update Claire Emmerson</p> <p>CE talked through the presentation on screen. Main points to note as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The key aspect for the formula for 2023/24 were outlined as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum per pupil funding levels: Primary £4,405, Key Stage 3 £5,503 and Key Stage 4 £6,033 Funding floor will be set at 0.5% per pupil (based on the individual school's LFF allocation in 2022/23) Rolling the 2022 to 2023 schools supplementary grant into the NFF Increasing NFF factor values (on top of amounts added for the Schools Supplementary Grant) as outlined in the report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.3% to free school meals at any time in the last 6 years (FSM6) and income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI) 2.4% to the basic entitlement, low prior attainment (LPA), FSM, English as an additional language (EAL), mobility, and sparsity factors, and the lump sum. 0.5% to the floor and the minimum per pupil levels (MPPL) 0% on the premises factors, except for Private Finance Initiative (PFI) which has increased by Retail Prices Index excluding mortgage interest payments (RPIX) which is 11.2% for the year to April 2022 In addition, two important restrictions will continue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LAs will continue to set a Minimum Funding Guarantee in the local formula. For 2023/24 this must be between +0.0% and +0.5%. LAs can only transfer up to 0.5% of their schools block to other blocks of the DSG, with their Schools' Forum approval. A summary of the DSG indicative values for 2023/24 was shown on screen as outlined in Table 1 of the report (based on October 2021 Census data). Average increase of 4.41% High Needs Block: The High Needs block outturn in 2021/22 was an overspend of £13.511m. Total cumulative overspend of £18.622m forecast at end of 2022/23 	

- Forecasted in-year outturn pressure of £5.111m at September. Reasons for the pressures were discussed
- DB noted that the costs associated with non-maintained and independent special school provision has increased significantly and asked for any explanation for this.
- CE noted that this was linked to demand and capacity in the system. The increase in this figure has been noted and this will be looked at as part of the work being carried out with the DSG
- The indicative value of the High Needs block in 2023/24 was shown on screen as outlined in Table 3 of the report
- Not expecting this to significantly change but this forms part of the assumptions used in the DSG Management Plan
- **Central Block Funding**
- The indicative value of the Central School Services Block (CSSB) was shown on screen as outlined in Table 5 of the report
- Funding is comprised of a historic commitments' allocation and a formula-based amount for ongoing functions.
- The historic commitments element has been reduced by 20% per annum, in line with strategic DfE published plans over the last two years
- The reduction in CSSB (£0.105m) will need to be taken from the remaining functions funded by CSSB on behalf of schools.
- The remaining CSSB functions were outlined on screen (Table 6 of the report)
- The relevant services will be reporting back to Forum in January 2023 to ratify these changes and to agree any services, including additional functions, to be funded by de-delegation.
- National copyright licences is expected to go up slightly. Schools admission service hasn't increased in a number of years. Schools Support Services and Education Improvement Partnership have both seen reductions in previous years
- Awaiting confirmation on final figures and working with finance sub-group on the proposals which will be brought back to Forum in January
- **2022/23 Budget Monitoring for Schools**
- All schools are required to submit in-year budget monitoring by October. Some schools have struggled to meet this deadline due to the transition to the new financial reporting system (SBS). Work is ongoing to complete this monitoring process and there will be some more monitoring carried out in January. However, as not all the data has been collated as yet, it is not possible to provide accurate data at this time.
- DW noted the challenges of not having that data from Budget Monitoring 1 along with the impact of rising cost of energy
- CE noted that it is only a small number of schools that have not managed to complete the Budget Monitoring 1 process. There are no additional notifications from schools to suggest that any additional schools are expecting to be in deficit. Schools are autonomous organisations, and they have the responsibility to manage any pressures such as those in the energy sector
- **Expected Deficit Schools 2022/23**
- There are 9 schools with a projected deficit in 2022/23, detail shown on screen as outlined in Table 4 of the report

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESFA have offered support to schools in the form of School Resource Management Advisors (SRMAs). For the Four schools new to deficit, the SRMAs will work to provide a report to these schools and the Authority during the autumn term. Initial deficit review meetings will take place following the outcome of the SRMA deployments <u>ACTION:</u> Sub-group of schools forum to meet to review the SRMA deployments and review the support being offered to schools in deficit. <p>Discussion followed around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teething problems with SBS were discussed. CE noted that any feedback is welcomed by the team and will be fed back to the provider <p>Recommendations Schools Forum is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the update on indicative allocations for each of the four DSG funding blocks; Noted Note the reported positions on High Needs, Early Years Block funding; Noted Continue to review the position of the High Needs block, considering the work to keep children in schools, the SEND Review and DSG Management Plan; Agreed Note the impact on funding the Authority's services via CSSB from the decisions in 2022/23 and the expected additional impact in 2023/24 Noted Note the delay in the budget monitoring position for schools; Noted 	CE
6.1	<p>b) National Funding Formula and Outcome of Consultation</p> <p>CE talked through the presentation on screen. Main points to note as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior to the consultation going out, some finance and resources sessions were carried out which was very beneficial. Whilst these are financial decision, the main priority is to ensure the best outcomes for the children of the borough. The finance and resources sessions highlighted the importance of working together to reach an agreed position 2 aspects were put forward for consultation; the local funding formula and the 0.5% transfer Only 11 out of 71 schools responded with a total of 13 surveys completed accounting for less than 16%. CE queried if the subject matter of the consultation may be causing some apathy preventing schools responding. KH noted that it wasn't apathy but more to do with timing of the consultation clashing with half term. A table showing the response rate by phase was shown on screen (Table 1 of the report) CE noted a slight update since the report in relation to the 0.5% transfer. If Schools Forum vote against the 0.5% transfer, the Authority will no longer 	Claire Emmerson

	<p>be required to submit a disapplication request to the DfE as this would form part of the DSG Management Plan process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PS noted that he and his governing body responded but this is not showing on the chart. PS also noted that Table 1 potentially identifies individual schools due to the low numbers in that phase and therefore the consultation process is not anonymous for those schools • CE noted that the response from PS and his governing body may be included in one of the other categories and that she would check that this is the case • The Chair asked that the way the data is presented in future be explored to ensure anonymity for all schools • It was noted that ensuring anonymity may elicit a wider response • SW also noted that the timing of the survey was during the half term break, and we shouldn't have a consultation as important as this taking part during the half term holidays • GS asked if this could be brought to a HT briefing in future • SB also noted the timing of the consultation not being ideal but noted that people are talking about the aspects being consulted on. • KH asked for clarity around what a disapplication request is and what this means • CE provided an overview of the conditions usually attached to a 0.5% transfer had we not been part of the Safety Valve process. However, as we are looking at entering into a DSG Management Plan agreement, the usual guidance will not apply • PJ noted that they did respond but had to do so without sufficient consultation with the governing body due to the timing • <u>ACTION:</u> CE acknowledged the comments relating to timing and anonymity and will take this on board in future • MY noted that Schools Forum have turned down the 0.5% transfer in previous years and asked why we have to be asked the question again, particularly if the DfE are going to mandate a transfer anyway. MY asked if there was any right to appeal or option for a High Court Injunction • CE provided a reminder of the operational guidance for Schools Forum and noted that as this is an annual decision that only affects that year's budget, therefore, there is a duty to consult Schools Forum every year and ask the question again regardless of the outcome in the previous year. • CE also noted that whilst the 0.5% transfer has not been approved in the previous 2 years, this has not always been the case as it has been supported in prior years. CE also noted that the vote was close in the consultation last year with a varying amount of support from schools. • CE noted that she is not aware of an appeal process or any information about the option for a High Court Injunction, all that can be confirmed at this stage is that it would form part of the DSG Management Plan • MY asked for clarification on what the 0.5% is for • CE noted that what the 0.5% transfer is used for can vary depending on what is agreed that year. A reminder was provided of the proposals put forward last year. However, this year, the transfer would not be for a specific aspect or any particular service but instead form part of the DSG Management Plan, and the initiatives within, as a whole • PJ asked how long the plan goes on for and would this mean a 0.5% transfer next year as well 	CE
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- CE noted that it is a 5-year plan, and the plan includes an assumption for a 0.5% transfer. However, this is what the Authority have been advised by the ESFA to put into the plan.
- It was reiterated that the vote today is solely for the 2023/24 financial year only and not for the other 4 years of the plan. There will still be a requirement to vote on the transfer next year and each year of the plan if it is felt that it is required. Depending on the detail in the plan, the transfer may not be needed for the other years.
- PG asked for clarification on whether or not the ESFA can overrule the decision of Schools Forum if they don't approve the transfer. CE confirmed that this could be the case.
- DW noted that the draft DSG Management Plan has already been submitted to the ESFA and asked if any school leaders been involved in that process or seen the draft plan.
- CE provided some clarification on the content of the plan which outlines the quantum of funding and the expenditure from the High Needs Block
- MM noted that the formal request received from the DfE came in July 2022 and in order to meet the initial deadline for submission of the draft DSG management plan in September 2022, significant work was undertaken during the summer break.
- MM noted that LC provided an overview of the plan at the last Schools Forum meeting and that officers have also attended a number of briefings, including Head Teachers Briefing and SENCO Network Meeting; there has also been a survey sent to Head Teachers and SENCOs, the deadline for which has ended. There is also a plan to invite Head Teachers and SENCOs to some workshops over the course of December 2022 and into January 2023 to further develop the DSG Management Plan together
- MM reiterated that the main priority and focus of the DSG Management Plan is to further improve outcomes for children and young people in North Tyneside, with strong value for money.
- The first Schools Forum High Needs sub-group met this week and formulated the terms of reference. It was very clear that this was not a one-off discussion ahead of submitting the plan in February 2023. It is important that we continue to have a strong dialogue. The purpose of the sub-group is to collaborate, helping to shape the plan and carry forward the themes throughout the duration of the plan
- DW raised concern that the disapplication request isn't needed and noted the conditions attached to such a request such as evidencing contributions from health or the impact on individual schools' budgets along with a condition for sharing that information with Schools Forum. DW asked if this would form part of the DSG Management Plan.
- CE noted that they don't usually bring detailed individual schools' budget information to Schools Forum as this is usually looked at by the Finance sub-group. However, as part of the consultation schools were informed that we would be happy to provide data on the individual impact on schools. That analysis has already been carried out and there were some schools that had no impact at all due to the minimum funding guarantee.
- CE noted the points being raised and reiterated that these points can't be answered without going back to the ESFA

- MY voiced his disappointment at the position Schools Forum is being put in by the Local Authority and also that a disapplication request has very strict and legal guidance that he doesn't believe is being met
- CE issued a reminder that the meeting is being live streamed and noted disappointment at the tone of some of the discussion.
- To be clear, it was reiterated that the Local Authority is not putting Schools Forum in this position. They are being directed by the ESFA and following ESFA guidance as part of the Safety Valve process.
- CP provided an overview of the questions received via the Teams chat feature as follows:
 - Would there also be no need to make a 'disapplication request' for the whole 5-year period of the safety valve plan?
 - Can we be assured that the DSG management plan capture and consider pressures in the other DSG blocks (Mainstream and Early years) and not just those in the High Needs block?
- The Chair reiterated that the most important goal is to achieve the best outcomes for the children of North Tyneside and stressed the importance of all school leaders working together with the Local Authority. It was noted that there are pressures on both sides that will only be resolved if we work together.
- The Chair thanked Forum for the extensive discussion that had been carried out during the meeting, asked that Forum note the discussion and move on with the rest of the agenda
- An overview of the questions asked during the consultation was provided along with a summary of the responses as follows:
 - 91% (10 schools) agreed to keep the NFF factors and rate increases as supplied by the DfE with only 9% (1 school) disagreeing
 - 82% (9 schools) agreed that the Authority should continue to set the MFG subject to affordability, based on the final funding allocation with 18% (2 schools) disagreeing
 - Schools were asked which factors should be used to distribute any surplus after delivering the chosen MFG protection level. The preference has changed to being based on Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU)
 - 82% (9 schools) said no to the transfer of 0.5% of the Schools block to High Needs block, with 18% (2 schools) saying yes (compared to 8% last year).

Recommendations:

A reminder of those eligible to vote was provided.

Schools Forum is asked to consider the results of the consultation with schools; and vote on the following options.

- Agree to continue to use factors in line with NFF, funding permitting.
Agreed
- Agree to allow the Authority to set a Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) and capping based on affordability.
Agreed
- Consider the response to the request to transfer 0.5% School block funding to High Needs and either:

	<p>a) Support a 0.5% transfer from Schools block to High Needs block to support the draft DSG Management plan; or</p> <p>b) Not support any transfer of funds from Schools block to High Needs block.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not Agreed with the following votes noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For = 3 ○ Against = 20 ○ Abstain = 2 <p>Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CE provided an overview of the next steps. The wishes of Schools Forum will be presented to the ESFA and will feedback on the outcome. SF members to feed this back to all schools when received. MM will continue with the work of the sub-group and the workshops as outlined earlier in the meeting • ACTION: PS requested that the list of de-delegated items be circulated. 	CE
6.2	<p>Schools Forum Constitution and Action Plan Christina Ponting</p> <p>CP talked through the review of the Constitution and the Self-Assessment. Main points to note as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The North Tyneside Schools Forum Constitution and Self-Assessment has been reviewed in line with updated ESFA advice and guidance and circulated to Schools Forum • There are no material changes needed to either document. • Changes that are needed are noted via tracked changes in the documents circulated for ease of reference for members. • CP noted Governor briefings and HT briefings will be scheduled to encourage support for Schools Forum Members <p>Discussion followed around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DW noted an error on the table at page 10. CP noted that this has already been identified and corrected <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>Schools Forum having read the revised documents and clearly understanding the information provided consider this report and note the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 a noted. • 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. • The North Tyneside Schools Forum Constitution will be reviewed again in 2023 as soon as the ESFA guidance is updated/provided. <p>Forum agreed</p>	
6.3	<p>Consideration of Special Leave for 22/23 Financial Year Christina Ponting</p> <p>CP provided a verbal update. Main points to note as follows:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current value is £27 per pupil with a split of £21.97 for Part 1 (Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Shared Parental Leave, Jury Service) and £5.03 for Part 2 (Trade Union Facility Time) • Part 2 has always been paid first as agreed with Schools Forum • It was noted that some schools have converted to academies, so the income levels have not been as high as previous years • In terms of an inflationary increase this year, this has been significantly higher than previous years and there has also been an increase in employers NI contributions • Forum will need to make some decisions in January on whether the costs of the SLA remain in line with inflation or if the contribution needs to increase further • Part 2 is on par with where we expect it to be based on predictions. However, Part 1 is more unpredictable. The Maternity aspect usually follows a pattern of 1 peak year in every 3 years and this year is predicted to be a peak year. • There was small surplus last year that was carried forward. • It was noted that the pay award has not yet been included nor has pay progression • If Part 1 comes in at the current predictions this will pay for itself, however Part 2 is currently underfunded as the per pupil rate does not cover the full costs • Government gave a commitment that NQTs would come in at starting salary of £30,000 within the duration of this Parliament. • National Living Wage has been confirmed as £10.42 for April 2023. • Average pay awards for teaching was 5% (ranging from 8.89 to 5%) and for support staff the average is 4.04% (flat rate award of £1,925). • Pay for April 2023 to September 2023 is therefore likely to be significantly higher. Add to that pay progression/increments and the potential for increased employer's costs, the SLA's ability to provide for refunds to schools (including Part 2) at a value that schools found of benefit/at the same levels as March 22, was unrealistic. • Schools Forum has previously agreed that it would review the SLA each year to take into account changes to employer costs and would determine if the rates needed to be raised and if so by what value/% • Impact of possible industrial action discussed. It was noted that it is unlikely that the SLA will cover the predicted costs. • It was noted that whilst the number of claims for Part 1 is lower than at this point in previous years, the average claim value is higher • <u>ACTION:</u> CP to send an email to confirm the detail provided at this meeting • <u>ACTION:</u> CP to work with the Finance team to model some figures before the January meeting 	<p>CP</p> <p>CP</p>
7.	Any Other Business	
	High Needs Sub-Group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AG noted that there are only 8 non-Local Authority members in the group and that more representatives from Schools, particularly those with High Needs pupils, was required 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PG noted his belated apologies for the sub-group meeting and reiterated that the discussion today highlights the importance for school leaders and the Local Authority to work together MY also noted his apologies for not attending the High Needs sub-group and issued an apology to Schools Forum for any inappropriate tone of discussion earlier in the meeting <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP noted that AG has offered to continue as a Head teacher Schools Forum Representative and her locality have confirmed their agreement. School Forum extended their thanks to AG for her support to date and ongoing offer of further support as a member of Schools Forum <p>PG issued thanks to SF and wished all those in attendance a Happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year.</p>	
8.	Date of next meeting	
	Wednesday, 11 January 2023 at 12:30pm, via Teams.	