



North Tyneside Council

# Minutes

**Meeting** Schools Forum                      Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2017  
**Location** Langdale Centre                      12.30 – 2.00pm

<b>Present</b>	David Baldwin (Chair)	Headteacher, Churchill Community College	<b>Representing</b>	Secondary/Middle
	Mark Longstaff	Head of Commissioning & Investment		NTC
	Elaine Appleby	School Finances Advisor		NTC
	John Newport	Headteacher, Marden Bridge Middle		Secondary/Middle
	David Grigg	Governor, John Spence High School		Secondary/Middle
	Jill Forster	Headteacher, Benton Dene Primary		Primary/First
	Christina Ponting	HR Business Partner		NTC
	Kehri Ellis	North Tyneside Learning Trust		Trust
	Eileen Bell	Bursar, Church of England Diocese		C of E Diocese
	Jim Stephenson	Headteacher, John Spence Community High		Secondary/Middle
	Angi Gibson	Headteacher, Hadrian Park Primary School		Primary/First
	Sharron Colpitts-Elliott	Headteacher, Rockcliffe First School		Primary/First
	David W Bavaird	Governor, Norham High School		Secondary/Middle
	Paul Quinn	Headteacher, Longbenton High School		Secondary/Middle
	Stephen Baines	Headteacher, Holystone Primary School		Primary/First
	David Watson	Headteacher, St Thomas More Academy		Academy
	Collette Bland	Headteacher, St Mary's RC Primary (FH)		Primary/First
	Colleen Ward	Headteacher, Coquet Park First School		Primary/First
	Keith Page	NASUWT		Trade Union Rep
	Alan Brown	Governor, Hadrian Park Primary School		Primary/First
	Angi Gibson	Headteacher, Hadrian Park Primary School		Primary/First
	Peter Gannon	Headteacher, Silverdale School		Special Schools
	Gavin Storey	Headteacher, Cullercoats Primary School		Primary/First
	Laura Baggett	Headteacher, Monkhouse Primary School		Primary/First
	Peter Thorpe	Governor, Redesdale Primary School		Primary/First
	Philip Sanderson	Headteacher, Kings Priory		Academies
	Audrey Kingham	Deputy Principal, Tyne Met College		Post 16

<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b> John Croft, Ann-Marie Crozier (Audrey Kingham), Paul Durgan, Karen Croskery, Michael Tate, Claire McLeod (Keith Page), Sharon Thompson, Andrew James.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Minutes of Last Meeting (11<sup>th</sup> January 2017)</b> Were agreed as an accurate account of the last meeting with the addition of John Croft to the attendance list.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Matters arising</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chair thanked GS for stepping in to chair the last forum</li> <li>• CP informed colleagues of the changes to membership: Audrey Kingham - Post 16 representative from 1<sup>st</sup> August 17</li> </ul>	

	<p>Gavin Storey – term of office confirmed until July 2020  Laura Baggett – First &amp; Primary representative for South East</p> <p>Letter of thanks to go to Jim Crinson, letter to Ann-Marie Crozier already sent.  Induction to Forum to be arranged.</p> <p>Item 6: thanks to any members who sent comments regarding the review of Forum Constitution. Additional information to be added to the document re membership levels/minimum attendance at meetings as well as regular none-attendees.  Item 8: the forward plan was updated and link to website was emailed to Forum members 9<sup>th</sup> June 17.  Item 9: ML responded to a question regarding the late availability of some of the services included in this years SLA offer on SLA online. It is difficult to get a reasonable balance between schools wanting to see the offer early but not wanting to commit until funding levels are known.  Colleagues discussed the Admissions Appeals SLA regarding Trust Schools, further conversations to take place.</p>	<b>CP</b>
4.	<p><b>2016/17 Outturn – Schools and the DSG</b>  EA talked through the briefing paper which is summarised below.</p> <p><b>Schools requesting deficit approval</b>  All schools were requested to submit their three year budget plan, approved by the governing body to the LA by 31<sup>st</sup> May. Deficit meetings took place in June and have now been completed.  The confirmed membership of the Headroom sub group is:  Gavin Storey  John Newport  Jim Stephenson  Andrew James  Peter Thorp  Peter Gannon  Ann-Marie Crozier was a member of this group and has now stepped down, a new member would be welcome (Audrey Kingham agreed to replace Ann-Marie on this group)  A meeting took place 29<sup>th</sup> June 17, with officers to discuss the deficit clinics held with each of the schools seeking permission to set a deficit budget for 2017/18.  10 schools are projecting a deficit for 2017/18. Further work and challenge are ongoing with these schools and further meetings are planned with the Chief Finance Officer and Head of Health Education Care and Safeguarding.  At the time of this report, the overall forecast for school balances for 2017/18 is net deficit of £2.896m. This is after offsetting the £6,880m deficit approval requests above. Without intervention, the position is forecast to worsen significantly over the three year planning horizon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GS asked if there is a long term strategic plan to address this situation  ML informed colleagues that a report was taken to Cabinet on Monday evening giving an overall Education review of the current position highlighting the challenge we have in primary and particularly in secondary</li> <li>• EA added that concerns have been shared with the Section151 Officer</li> <li>• Colleagues requested that Section 151 Officer (Janice Gillespie) is invited to the next Forum meeting in September, to discuss the position and options</li> <li>• DG asked if any conversation have taken place with the DfE about the deficits of some schools. ML replied that conversations have taken place around sustainability with the DfE</li> </ul>	

### **Falling Rolls Criteria**

The following criteria were discussed at the sub group:

- *Percentage level of reduction in pupil numbers which is currently 5%. The group wanted further detail of projected numbers for September before making further recommendation on changes to the percentage criteria*
- *Change in pupil numbers over two year period. (this excludes nursery and Post 16 pupils) This criteria was not proposed to change as this would allow schools time to adjust for these pupil changes*
- *Balances held by the school at 31 March. This criteria was recommended to remain with further consideration given to the threshold levels of 2.5% (secondary) and 4% (primary) of budget*

Further recommendations were considered:

- Looking at the length of time a school could access Falling Rolls funding. Suggestions included that length of time should be limited to two years as this gives the school time to allow for staffing adjustments
- The level of the Falling Rolls budget for future years. This year the Falling Rolls budget is £0.350m which includes £0.100m carried forward balance from 2016/17
- Having a standardised application Proforma for schools applying for Falling Rolls funding which would assist the group when considering the distribution of this funding. The detail of this template is still to be determined

The sub-group will bring final recommendations to Schools Forum once the analysis of schools projected pupil numbers are available and a further meeting has been held.

Forum agreed for final figures to be brought to the November meeting of the Forum.

### **2016/17 DSG Outturn**

As the DSG is a ring-fenced grant, any under or overspends are carried forward into the next financial year in order to be addressed within the following year's ring-fenced grant.

### **Schools Block**

This category includes the Falling Rolls fund, the carried forward balance of £0.100m was previously reported to Schools Forum in March. This balance is to be committed and brought forward to 2017/18 and added to the 2017/18 Falling Rolls budget.

Also included is the de-delegated Schools in financial difficulty balance of £0.011m, this was following the allocation of £0.197m to deficit schools as reported in the May Schools Forum meeting. The residual balance will be carried forward and added to the 2017/18 budget for headroom, available to support deficit schools in 2017/18. This budget for mainstream maintained schools in financial difficulty is reported to Schools Forum throughout the year.

Following further rates revaluations carried out throughout 2016/17 the residual balance is £0.079m. This balance will be brought forward to address some of the 2017/18 business rates commitments in relation to the new build schools and additional revaluations in 2017/18. The estimated commitments for additional in year business rates is £0.111m at this point in the year.

Within this Block centrally retained items totalling £2.402m were applied for their agreed purpose.

### **High Needs Block**

The brought forward High Needs Block balance at the beginning of 2016/17 was - £0.785m. At the January Schools Forum meeting the projected balance reported for the High Needs Block for the end of 2016/17 was -£0.552m. The actual outturn position has

improved slightly from the forecast position and is now -£0.544m. This balance will be carried forward into 2017/18 and has already been accounted for in the 2017/18 budget setting process.

Although the main area of financial pressures in the High Needs Block continues to be around Top Up funding, the provision made in 2016/17 to reduce this deficit is the main reason for reducing the High Needs overspend.

Our discussions with regional colleagues has highlighted that a number of Local Authorities are also experiencing financial pressures in the High Needs Block.

### **Early Years**

The final position for the Early Years Block is -£0.190m which is mainly due to a retrospective in year DSG adjustment and overspends. This outturn now reflects all three terms census data. At the time of the January Schools Forum meeting, when an update was given of the projected Early Years position, we were still awaiting the spring term census information. This over spend will be carried forward into 2017/18.

EA confirmed that this overspend was not due to the Early Years 30 hour offer as this provision is not due to commence until 2017/18.

### **Recommendations**

Schools Forum are asked to note the details of the 2016/17 outturn in respect of the Dedicated Schools Grant and the need to manage the pressures in 2017/18 and beyond and agree that Schools Forum:

Note the Falling Roll subgroup will bring back to the group recommendations on the Falling Rolls criteria once schools pupil data is available in the autumn term.

Note the underspend for Falling Rolls fund £0.100m to be carried forward and added to the 2017/18 Falling Rolls budget.

Note the brought forward de-delegation balance from the schools in financial difficulty budget £0.011m to be added to the 2017/18 budget allocation.

Note the residual rates balance of £0.079m will be carried forward to the 2017/18 budget allocation to be used for the 2017/18 business rates commitments.

Note the residual High Needs overspend balance which will be addressed with the arrangements already established in the High Needs Block in 2017/18.

Note the Early Years overspend balance which will be addressed when allocating the 2018/19 budgets and will be closely monitored going forward.

### **Forum agreed and noted all of the recommendations**

The Chair thanked EA for the work on this item.

## **5. Centrally Retained and De-delegated items**

CP talked through a briefing note summarised below:

Schools Forum receives regular reports and updated within Schools Forum to support their decision making in relation to 'centrally retained sums from the DSG' and 'De-delegation' sums. At the December 2016 Schools Forum it was noted that it would be beneficial going forward for Schools Forum to have consistency in the information they receive for the items provided for under these arrangements, specifically:

- a description of what the service area provides because of this funding allocation
- what schools would not receive if this additional funding was not available?

	<p>Discussion followed around additional columns to be added to the DSG table, cost per pupil, the addition of the budget for future years and what the overall service areas budget was. Any suggestions for additions/alterations to the template to be sent to CP.</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Schools Forum to note this report.</li> <li>2. Schools Forum to determine if they wish to progress with this matter and if so: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. advise if they wish to receive any additional information not noted in the template (Appendix A).</li> <li>b. confirm if they wish this item to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. continue as noted above and take place on a periodic basis/in-line with current arrangements, or</li> <li>ii. be established as an annual process with a set timeframe for service areas to provide information and for this to be built into the Schools Forum Forward Plan.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p><b>Forum noted the report and it was agreed that the template/table will be updated and service managers will be asked to present reports for the November 2017 Forum and this will be added to the Forward Plan. At the November Forum a decision will be made on whether service managers will be invited to attend a future Forum meeting to add clarity of understanding for future decisions.</b></p> <p>The Chair thanked CP for the work on the item.</p>	<b>All</b>
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>Link to 2017/18 Section 251 Budget Statement</b></p> <p>EA reminded colleagues that the link to the above is available (from the agenda for this meeting) in draft format until verification from DfE is received.</p>	
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>Scheme for Financing Schools – responsibilities for redundancy and early retirement costs</b></p> <p>CP talked through a confidential report already circulated to Forum members. Discussion followed.</p> <p><b>Forum agreed and noted all recommendations which will be effective from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017. All schools will be notified of the updated conditions.</b></p> <p>An annual update will be presented to Schools Forum in July 2018 and this will be noted on the forward plan.</p> <p>The Chair thanked CP for work on this item.</p>	<b>CP</b>
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>Strategic Plan for school budgets to be added to the agenda for the next Forum meeting.</p>	<b>EA</b>
<b>10</b>	<p><b>Date of next meeting</b></p> <p>13<sup>th</sup> September 2017 – 12.30 - 2 pm (lunch from 12 noon)</p> <p>The Chair thanked colleagues for their attendance, work and support throughout the year and wished all colleagues a good Summer break.</p>	