



North Tyneside Council

Minutes

Meeting Schools Forum Wednesday 13th September 2017
Location Langdale Centre 12.30 – 2.00pm

Present		Representing
David Baldwin (Chair)	Headteacher, Churchill Community College	Secondary/Middle
Elaine Appleby	School Finances Advisor	NTC
John Newport	Headteacher, Marden Bridge Middle	Secondary/Middle
Jill Wraith	Headteacher, Benton Dene Primary	Primary/First
Christina Ponting	HR Business Partner	NTC
Kehri Ellis	North Tyneside Learning Trust	Trust
Jim Stephenson	Headteacher, John Spence Community High	Secondary/Middle
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
Alan Brown	Governor, 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
Claire McLeod	NASUWT	Trade Union
Sharon Thompson	Howdon Nursery	EY/PVI
Steve Wilson	Headteacher, Whitley Bay High School	Secondary/Middle
Andrew James	Headteacher, St Aidan's RC Primary School	Primary/First
Wayne Myers	Richardson Dees Primary School	Primary/First
Warwick Stephenson	Tyne Met College	16-19 Providers
Janice Gillespie	Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer	NTC

1. Apologies for Absence Mark Longstaff, John Croft, Audrey Kingham (Warwick Stephenson), Paul Durgan, Karen Croskery, Angi Gibson (Wayne Myers), Eileen Bell, David Grigg	
2. Minutes of Last Meeting (12th July 2017) Were agreed as an accurate account of the last meeting	
3. Matters arising <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Chair welcomed colleagues to the first Forum meeting of the new academic year and also welcomed Janice Gillespie Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer to give an update on Schools Finance as requested at the last Forum meeting (12th July 17)	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item 3 CP confirmed that inductions for new forum members had been arranged • Item 5 CP reported no requests for changes/additions to the DSG table • Item 7 CP confirmed annual update of Scheme for Financing Schools to be added to Schools Forum forward plan • Item 9 EA confirmed Strategic Plan for schools budgets is on the agenda for this meeting 	
4.	<p>Election of Chair and Vice Chair David Baldwin was nominated and elected as Chair for another term (12 months). Peter Gannon was nominated and elected as Vice Chair (12 months).</p>	
5.	<p>School Balances at 31st March 17 EA talked through the briefing paper provided (summarised below)</p> <p>National benchmarking on school balances is publicly available on the DfE website using data from 1999/2000 up to 31st March 2016. It covers all 152 local authorities in England. The position to 31 March 2017 will not be known until later in the financial year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall School Balances in North Tyneside have continued to decrease and balances have fallen from £6.982m at March 2016 to £4.986m at March 2017. This is the figure reported in the accounts and used in National Government benchmarking • Within this total the uncommitted balances have decreased from £3.339m at March 2016 to £1.158m at March 2017 • As at 31st March 2017 there were 9 schools with an overall deficit. This compares with 7 at March 2016. Of the schools in deficit, 8 had deficit approval • Excess school balances are those uncommitted balances over 5% for middle & secondary schools and over 8% for first, primary and special schools • No school had an uncommitted surplus balance over the thresholds at March 2017 <p>2017/18 deficit clinic process EA talked through the deficit process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In June 2017, 10 schools indicated that they required the Authority's agreement to set a deficit budget for 2017/18. Meetings were held in June and July. • Following the meetings the School Forum sub group met on 29th June to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide assurance to the Forum and wider school community that the deficit approvals agreed are reasonable and that deficit schools are taking reasonable action to manage within their budget 2. Allow the group to use their experience to suggest to the Authority any potential further actions that it would be reasonable to expect from any school in deficit • A further meeting was arranged on 18th July with Jacqui Old (Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding) and Janice Gillespie (Head of Finance) to review each budget plan and the schools proposals to address the deficit both this year and in future years. Officers shared the concerns of School Forum regarding the size of the overall deficits. Following this meeting an email was sent to all deficit schools advising them a further meeting was to be scheduled after the 	

summer break before deficit approval was granted. These meetings were scheduled during September

- Although the number of schools seeking deficit approval has increased slightly from 2017/18, the overall value of the deficits approved has increased significantly

Next steps in relation to deficit schools

- Each School will meet with the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding and the Chief Finance Officer to discuss their submitted budget plan before deficit approval is granted. Each school in deficit will be subject to additional financial scrutiny across the year. Some of the deficit schools are scheduled to meet with the Local Authority officers again in the Autumn term to discuss and review current positions
- The sub group of the Schools Forum proposed that they receive a further update on deficit schools following these meetings with Finance Officers to review the progress by each deficit school and the information provided during the year
- In keeping with previous years' experience we are anticipating the value of deficits at year end being less than the deficit approval as schools will continue to scrutinize their budgets and realise savings through the year
- funds for supporting schools in Financial difficulty in 2017/18 will be distributed at the end of the financial year

Schools forecast balances

- It was reported at the July meeting that the overall forecast school balance for 2017/18 is -£2.896m. This position is forecast to worsen significantly over the next three years, without intervention (based on the schools submitted 2017/18 3 Year budget plans)

Discussion followed around three year forecasting, future deficits and the impact of potential changes to public sector pay.

Recommendations

Schools Forum were asked to note:

1. At March 2017 in North Tyneside overall balances have decreased along with uncommitted balances.
2. The number of schools reported with a deficit balance in North Tyneside at March 2017.
3. There are no excess school surplus balances at March 2017 to be clawed back in 2017/18.
4. There has been an increase relating to the number of schools requesting deficit approvals for 2017/18 compared with the previous year and the size of this deficit has risen significantly.
5. Further discussions will be arranged with Head of Health, Education, Care & Safeguarding, the Chief Finance Officer and deficit schools.
6. Note the overall projected balance forecast for all schools.

All recommendations were noted.

6. Update from Chief Finance Officer

JG talked through a presentation giving an overview on factors that she was considering in her role as Head of Finance. This presentation noted to schools the

	<p>matters that JG was working through with colleagues in NTC on the wider financial considerations affecting the LA. JG also presented her understanding of the challenges/matters/factors that schools were also directly facing. Discussion followed around JG presentation including the schools current budget positions overall, including those in and potentially facing deficit via the current forecasting process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JG confirmed that as Section 151 Officer she could prevent schools being able to directly manage their budget if deemed necessary, however this would not resolve the current considerations/ challenges and would not support effective management of the issue/challenges/opportunities. • JG confirmed that the overall position regarding school budget, balances and spending profile, etc is being reviewed and discussed with Senior Leaders and members within NTC. There are a wide range of matters which need to be considered including overall financing, sharing data, pupil numbers, borough wide options and local plan implications. JG added that funding overall including challenges both for LA's and schools is also a national problem/ challenge. • JG to take a similar presentation to Head teacher Briefing and look to work with Heads and Governors as part of a wider working group. She was keen to ensure that she also worked closely with Schools Forum JG would also come back to the next/ future Schools Forum meetings to continue this conversation. 	JG																
7.	<p>National Funding Formula EA presented a report summarised below. The funding arrangements for the main schools block have been subject to consultation as part of the Government's intention to move towards a national funding formula. Phase one of the consultation was undertaken in the spring 2016. Phase two of the consultation was undertaken in the spring of this year which provided further details and proposed National Funding Formula (NFF) factor values. Schools Forum collectively responded to both consultations.</p> <p>We are awaiting the response to Phase two consultation which is expected to be available in September ahead of setting the 2018/19 funding formula. We are advised this will include publishing indicative allocations for schools under the final national funding formula.</p> <p>Last year a sub group met to consider the responses of the consultation and undertake any financial modelling dates, dates for future meetings will be arranged following the release of Phase 2 consultation.</p> <p>Key dates and the recommended approach to considering the funding formula for 2018/19 are set out below:</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="151 1780 1316 2139"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Date</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Activity</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>13 September</td> <td>Schools Forum consider this report</td> </tr> <tr> <td>September / October</td> <td>DfE Phase two consultation response released</td> </tr> <tr> <td>September / October</td> <td>ESFA issue allocation for schools, central school services and high needs block</td> </tr> <tr> <td>October / November</td> <td>Local consultation documents issued to stakeholders</td> </tr> <tr> <td>November</td> <td>Deadline for consultation responses</td> </tr> <tr> <td>November</td> <td>Sub-group convenes and discusses findings – financial modelling undertaken as required</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Autumn 2017</td> <td>High Needs funding guide for 2018/19 issued</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Date	Activity	13 September	Schools Forum consider this report	September / October	DfE Phase two consultation response released	September / October	ESFA issue allocation for schools, central school services and high needs block	October / November	Local consultation documents issued to stakeholders	November	Deadline for consultation responses	November	Sub-group convenes and discusses findings – financial modelling undertaken as required	Autumn 2017	High Needs funding guide for 2018/19 issued	
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	<p>15 November Schools Forum considers sub-group findings</p> <p>13 December Schools Forum considers further work (if required)</p> <p>Mid-December ESFA issues APT populated with pupil data and factors</p> <p>10 January DSG blocks (schools and high needs) issued</p> <p>Schools Forum formally considers funding arrangements, including agreeing block transfers, centrally retained items and de-delegated items</p> <p>19 January Deadline for submission of final APT to ESFA</p> <p>Recommendations for the Forum</p> <p>Forum were asked to:</p> <p>1. Note current update in relation to National funding formula</p> <p>Agreed</p> <p>2. Agree the proposed timetable</p> <p>Agreed</p> <p>3. Agree membership of the funding sub-group</p> <p>Membership to include: David Baldwin, David Grigg, David Watson, Steve Wilson, Gavin Storey, Andrew James, John Nugent, Phillip Sanderson, Steve Baines and Jim Stephenson (TBC).</p> <p>EA to circulate dates of meetings to all Forum members, extra Forum members welcome.</p>	EA
9.	<p>AOB</p> <p>-</p>	
10	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>The scheduled Forum meeting 18th October will now be a Funding Sub Group meeting.</p> <p>The next Schools Forum meeting will be 15th November 2017</p>	