

THE KIRKLEES SCHOOLS FORUM

meeting held on **Friday 16th June 2017**

10:00am at the Tolson Museum, Huddersfield

Present:

	Nursery School Heads (1)
Diana Wilson	Primary School Heads (5)
	Middle School Heads (1)
Ian Ellam, Loz Wilson	High School Heads (2)
	Special School Heads (1)
	Special Academy Heads (1)
Michelle Lee [Chair]	Academy Heads (3)
Martin Ridge	Pupil Referral Units (1)
	Kirklees Governors (1)
Gillian Collins (ATL), Hazel Danson (NUT), Paula Wescott (NASUWT)	Non-school members (5)
David Gearing (Financial Delegation Manager); [Minute Clerk]	Officers in Support
Jo-Anne Sanders (Acting Service Director – Learning & Support)	
	Observers

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Sarah Ellis (Pre-school Learning Alliance), Julie Helm (Nursery Schools), Gary Johnson (Middle Schools), Catherine Jubbs (Academies), Marcus Newby (Primary Schools) and Sarah Wilson (Special Academies).

2. Minutes of the Schools Forum Public meeting held on 10th March

The minutes were agreed to be a true record of the meeting.

3. Matters arising from the Schools Forum Public meeting 10th March

3.1 National Funding Formula update

Following the outcome of the General Election the situation regarding the National Funding Formula process is even less clear. Because of the delay, there must now be doubts as to whether changes can be made in time to influence 2018-19 School Funding allocations.

3.2 Alternative Provision Free School Bid update

Martin Ridge gave a brief verbal update about the Alternative Provision Free School bid. The new provision is needed to expand the SEMHD 'in-house' provision offer locally. The application to the DfE was submitted by the Pupil Referral Service back in April. The PRS is currently consulting on becoming a multi-academy trust to satisfy stipulations for who can submit a free school proposal. The final application varied slightly from the draft presented to Forum in March – the planned number of places for the free school has increased to 45. There has been a certain amount of back and forth with the DfE to answer their questions following submission of the bid. There is no final date for a decision as yet.

4. The Learning Summit: feedback from the day

The inaugural Learning Summit took place on Monday morning this week at the John Smiths Stadium. It was well attended and it was good to see the Chief Executive, key Council members and the Children's Commissioner in the same room with local schools and

academies. Feedback gathered from the day is being collated – communication and the Local Development Plan seem to be issues where schools are requesting more focus to be given. A report from the day will be made available for people who were not able to attend and it is hoped that this will be released before the end of this term. The report will be made available to head teachers, governors and the trade unions

The focus of the first Summit had been upon early help and social care and effective collaborative arrangements to support. What happens next is up for shaping – six-monthly update meetings, perhaps one for the North and one for the South, had been suggested as providing a way to get more into the detail of key issues.

In terms of consideration of the future shape of Council services provided to or traded with schools there was a short paper, arising out of the work of the Partnership Reference Group, spoken to on the day at the Learning Summit with feedback forms on the tables for attendees to express a preference for the options mentioned in the paper. The paper was also discussed at yesterday's Kirklees Primary Heads meeting. It is clear that opinion needs to be gathered more widely so the intention is to circulate a questionnaire amongst schools and governing bodies to collect feedback. The three approach options were a) carry on with the current arrangements; b) look to establish some form of management board for the services being provided with schools and councillors represented on the board looking at developing services to better match schools' needs; c) transfer the services to some form of formal company arrangement. From the feedback provided on the day there was some support for approach b). This model is operating successfully in Camden Council and is seen to be less risky than the other two options. If option b) gains traction the unions expressed an interest in having representation on the board. The terms of reference governing the board would need to be carefully considered.

In other news, a decision has been taken to disband the Learning Board. A new Educational Partnership Board will effectively replace and will need to work alongside Schools Forum.

5. Dedicated Schools Grant 2016-17 budget: rollover proposals / decisions

The DSG account

The 2016-17 DSG outturn summary picture was considered.

Summary position

On the bottom-line there is an overall underspend of £2,090,100. This breaks down into the following main headings: -

Early Years budgets	£2,309,700
School Reorganisation reserve	<u>£1,268,800</u>
Underspend	£3,578,500
High Needs budget	- (£922,300)
Miscellaneous other headings	<u>-(£566,100)</u>
(of which the maternity heading accounts for £548.7k)	
Overspends	-(1,488,400)

OVERALL NET UNDERSPEND	£2,090,100
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Dealing with the overspend

The proposed strategy for dealing with the DSG overspends entails the use of a large part of the two-year old funding reserve to cancel out the following amounts: -

High Needs account overspend	£ 922,300
Miscellaneous other DSG headings	<u>£ 518,300</u>
From EY reserve	£1,440,600

Roll forward absence insurance overspend to 17-18	£ 47,800
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Total overspend covered	£1,488,400
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Proposed roll-forward into the 2017-18 account

i) Reorganisation reserve balance into Contingency	£1,268,800
ii) Overall absence insurance deficit	-(£ 47,800)
iii) Reduced rollover of Early Years reserve	£ 709,700
iv) Former EY funds to High Needs account	<u>£ 159,400</u>

Total rolled forward	£2,090,100
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Back when the implications of the Early Years National Funding Formula were being considered, a sum of £1,600,000 was identified within the early years reserve as being available to help address other DSG pressures (mainly in the High Needs account). So the £2,309,700 closing Early Years balance is reduced above to £709,700 rolling forward into 2017-18. A portion of this figure becomes set-aside provision against expected claw-back of funding by the ESFA in response to reduced numbers of children. £1,440,600 of the £1.6m stays in 2016-17 to cancel out DSG overspends in that year. The remaining £159,400 is proposed to roll forward into the 17-18 High Needs account. This decision will need to be reviewed if the ESFA's claw back of nursery funding is larger than anticipated.

It was asked how such a large amount had built up in the Early Years budget. Forum was reminded that the figure is almost wholly attributable to trajectory funding allocated by the DfE to expand the number of places available for disadvantaged two year-olds. Kirklees was able to create places in a more cost-effective way than the grant assumed.

A major part of the rollover proposal is a continuing commitment to the school reorganisation reserve which had reduced from an opening 2016-17 balance of £2.34m to £1.27m by the close of the year. A paper outlining the support given to a number of schools last year was circulated.

£745k had been spent in total in the primary sector. £596k of this total had been spent in support of two recently-opened primary provisions in terms of initial building set-up costs and diseconomy support as the provisions expand by one year group each year. The remaining commitments included support for schools taking in temporary bulge admissions due to exceptional demand for school places in an area, help with temporary logistical costs during a school rebuild and set-up costs for an amalgamation of three schools that happened last May.

£209k had been spent in the secondary sector, the majority on phased support for an amalgamated school to give it time to sort out its cost profile and improve its pupil numbers. Other costs related to support for IT system upgrades linked to the school's move shortly into new premises and the ongoing cost of securing a vacated school site as a result of a previous round of reorganisation.

£531k had been spent in support of two reorganising schools in the special sector. One had been asked to change its specialism and this required significant investment in the school's site and buildings to ensure the safety and security of their new pupils and to make their environment more fit for purpose for their new specialism. The other school has been relocated to a more central location in the authority in newly-rebuilt premises. The reorganisation budget had to step in to help when the move was delayed to pay for the cost of keeping an expanded number of children safe at the school's existing site and to support additional staff costs that had been taken on with a view to dealing with additional children at the new site from an earlier date.

Offsetting the above expenditure was the recurrent school reorganisation budget of £292k. The excess spend of £1.19m was then absorbed from the reorganisation reserve within the school contingency account.

Forum was satisfied with the information provided but concerned that such important support to schools was being funded from temporary, one-off monies. What will happen when the reserves are exhausted?

The information provided about school reorganisation commitments above led to Schools Forum agreeing to the DSG rollover proposal as summarised below...

1) Balance on the reorganisation reserve to school-specific contingency	£1,268,800
2) Absence Insurance scheme deficit to 17-18 insurance account	- (47,800)
3) Reduced roll-forward in the Early Years account [After dealing with the High Needs and other overspends in 16-17]	£ 709,700
4) Balance of the Early reserve reduction to High Needs in 17-18	£ 159,400
Total roll-over into 2017-18	£2,090,100

6. Any other business

No other business was raised.

7. Dates and times of next meetings [start times to be confirmed]

Friday 20th October 2017 Venue: Tolson Museum

Friday 1st December 2017 Venue: Tolson Museum