

THE KIRKLEES SCHOOLS FORUM

meeting held on Friday 1st December 2017

10:00am at the Tolson Museum, Huddersfield

Present:

	Nursery School Heads (1)
Claire Minogue, Jenny Shore, Diana Wilson	Primary School Heads (5)
Ian Ellam, Loz Wilson	High School Heads (2)
	Special School Heads (1)
Sarah Wilson	Special Academy Heads (1)
Michelle Lee [Chair]	Academy Heads (3)
Martin Ridge	Pupil Referral Units (1)
Paul Davies	Kirklees Governors (1)
Gillian Collins (NEU – ATL section), Paula Wescott (NASUWT),	Non-school members (5)
David Gearing (Financial Delegation Manager); [Minute Clerk]	Officers in Support
Jo-Anne Sanders (Acting Service Director – Learning & Early Support)	
Martin Wilby (Childcare Sufficiency Manager, acting Dep Asst Director)	
	Observers

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Hazel Danson (NEU – NUT section), Catherine Jubbs (Academy Heads), Anne Lawton (Special School Heads) and Marcus Newby (Primary School Heads).

2. Minutes of the Schools Forum Public meeting held on 20th October

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

3. Matters arising from the Schools Forum Public meeting 20th October

3.1 Forum membership update

With regard to the unfilled third academy representative vacancy, it had been intended that the matter be considered at the recent Kirklees High School Heads meeting. However, that meeting had not been well-attended due to a late change to the original date. It was agreed that a second election process should be run to try to secure a third academy representative.

4. Kirklees Education & Learning Partnership Board (standing item)

Jo-Anne Sanders gave a verbal report on developments at the Kirklees Education & Learning Partnership Board since the last Forum meeting. KELPB had met on 29th November. Included on the agenda was a proposal to transfer the school swimming service across to Kirklees Active Leisure to work in a different partnership arrangement (see item 10 below for more detail on this). There had also been a presentation on the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which comes into force next May. The meeting considered ways for the Council and schools to work together to ensure that schools have what they need to be GDPR-compliant. As a result, a training/briefing session on GDPR will now take place immediately after the Kirklees Primary Heads meeting on 18th January, with all schools being invited. Links will also be provided to the Information Commissioner website. There is also a summary available setting out the rules and regulations concerning the retention of records (which will be circulated with these minutes). Other items discussed included the High Needs Strategic Review – a brief update was given with participation in the review process

encouraged – and issues around the collapse of ICT4C and future IT connectivity. 85 schools to date have signed up to the Council offer, which is a viable number for the new arrangement to operate.

The Education Services Committee had already chosen seven areas for initial exploration (Attendance & Pupil Support, Cliffe House, Kirklees Supply Service, Legal Services, Maintained School Banking, Procurement and Asset Management). To this list has been added School Crossing Patrols. It has also been noted that officers would like the International New Arrivals Service to be considered by the Committee. The next meeting of this committee takes place next week. The full KELPB meets again later in December.

The Education Improvement Committee is set for its first meeting on 13th December. The Cross-phase heads meeting that day will form part of that first committee meeting.

A question was asked by a member of the public about whether the changes being considered to the swimming service arrangements would affect the three PFI schools whose pools are part of the programme. It is not expected that the proposal will produce huge changes to the existing arrangements. There would need to be a TUPE transfer to KAL for staff employed to deliver the swimming training. The development has entered a period of engagement with stakeholders and the three schools with pools will be contacted as part of that process.

[At this point Loz Wilson left the meeting].

5. Confirmation of submission of exceptions applications to the ESFA

It was confirmed that the two exceptions applications previously agreed by the Forum had been submitted to the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) in advance of their deadline of 30th November 2017. The exceptions relate to a second year of (reduced) lump sum protection for the amalgamated Oak C of E Primary School and an adjustment to the operation of the minimum funding guarantee for Royds Hall Community School to prevent their growth in primary pupil numbers being protected at a secondary-age funding rate.

6. Feedback from the consultation event on National Funding Formula implementation

The documentation used at the National Funding Formula (NFF) implementation session on Monday this week was made available to the Forum meeting. This included a copy of the Powerpoint presentation used on the day. The options tabled at the event were as follows...

Option 1: Move to the 'shape' of the NFF but spread the cash floor protection funding proportionately over all pupil factor values

Option 2: Move to the 'shape' of the NFF but spread the cash floor protection funding proportionately over just the NFF AWPU values

Hybrid approach: Illustration mixing option 2 above with a continuation of the local formula. In 2018-19 the allocation would use one third of option 2 and two thirds of the local formula. The year after this would switch to two thirds of option 2 and one third of the local formula.

Option 3: To mirror the approach the ESFA illustrated for Kirklees schools this sets the Minimum Funding Guarantee at plus 0.5% per pupil to ensure that all schools gain by at least 0.5% in comparison to their 2017-18 per pupil baseline.

For options 1, 2 and the Hybrid a comparison between the pupil funding allocation that the local formula would produce and that provided by the option was recorded for each individual school and academy. The schools were ranked from the largest gain to the largest loss of funding under each option. A summary of the total funding movements for each pupil-led funding factor was also provided. The more extreme changes would be moderated by the application of a minimum funding guarantee set at minus 1.5% per pupil. Option 3, by necessity, used a different presentation because it effectively sidelines the NFF calculations which happen early on in the process to instead refer to the school's baseline funding per pupil in 2017-18 to then increase this by the 0.5% floor protection. This outcome relative to the NFF-produced outcome determines the MFG protection for every school. Some schools at the consultation event did struggle to get to grips with why Option 3 was not directly comparable to the other three approaches.

The written feedback collected on the day of the event and subsequent feedback comments received had been pulled together into a report to help Forum consider the way forward. The option with the largest number of supporters was option 3 with the next largest grouping being in favour of the hybrid approach. There was a minimal amount of support for options 1 / 2. A small number of respondents felt that they didn't have sufficient information to be able to make a choice. A common concern amongst respondents was the potential for some schools to be facing a 'cliff edge' in their funding when the NFF goes live in 2020. Because Kirklees' pure NFF outcome is so far below the cash-protected outcome that potential probably exists no matter what decision we make for next year and the year after! (Although the DfE discount the possibility of the minimum funding guarantee being removed anytime soon). Others mentioned the potential for the NFF to still be changed given current political uncertainty and unhappiness in certain quarters about the current NFF outcomes. Several argued for stability and predictability, with the option 3 approach of an uplift for all schools viewed as the most appropriate to the circumstances. Some had clearly chosen the most advantageous / least damaging option for their school. Others had chosen what they saw as the fairest option even though other approaches stood to give their own school a better outcome.

There was much consensus around the table that, given the small number of respondents in favour of either options 1 or 2 that these options should be removed from the picture. The choice came down to one between the hybrid approach and option 3. After a lengthy debate, it was agreed that Option 3 accorded most strongly with the principle of not taking actions to destabilise any school within the system. Option 3 at least provides a bit of extra funding per pupil for all schools in the system. It also means that the outcomes for schools in 2018-19 and 2019-20 become fairly predictable and this intervening period provides some planning and preparation time for schools to consider actions that may need to be taken as the hard NFF looms on the horizon. It also provides a little breathing space to see how the NFF develops in an unpredictable political climate and react accordingly. Option 3 also closely matches how the ESFA has illustrated the NFF outcome for Kirklees with all schools benefitting from the cash floor protection the Government has introduced.

Not all schools were able to take part in the NFF implementation event this week although a sufficiently large sample did. It was agreed that all Kirklees schools and academies should be written to as soon as possible to explain and show the options considered for formula funding schools next year and the reasons behind the eventual choice of Option 3. This is important so that schools can begin to plan ahead for the coming budget round. The same communication can also be expanded to gather views from maintained schools about de-delegation for 2018-19 and from schools and academies about central budgets within the Central School Services Block and the Early Years Block.

7. De-delegation for 2018-19

Maintained primary and secondary school Forum members decide for their respective phases upon annual de-delegation proposals made by the local authority. Those representatives usually make their decisions having engaged in some form of consultation with their constituencies. This will be conducted this year via the general communication to schools next week about funding arrangements for the next two years. Feedback received will be provided to the 15th December Forum meeting to help the maintained school members reach decisions about the pattern of de-delegation for each sector for 2018-19.

A briefing note to remind Forum of the purposes of each of the 2017-18 de-delegated budgets and the amounts de-delegated this year was made available to Forum. The 2017-18 figures are replicated in the table below.

Budget heading	Primary / pupil	Total	Secondary / pupil	Total
Schools Contingency	-£13.29	£432,800	-£16.65	£149,600
Free School Meals eligibility checks	-£1.03	£33,600	-£1.29	£11,600
Maternity, paternity, adoptive leave	-£16.25	£529,300	-£20.37	£183,000
Trade Union facilities time	-£5.72	£186,300	Nil	£0
Public Duties	-£0.16	£5,200	-£0.20	£1,800
International New Arrivals	-£1.58	£51,500	-£1.98	£17,800
School Improvement Commissioning	-£4.50	£146,500	-£12.01	£107,900

A lengthy discussion about trade union facilities time ensued. An update joint statement from the HR Service and the Unions was circulated. The Council is working alongside the various trade unions to provide further guidance to schools about the operation of local facilities time to dispel some of the apparent misapprehensions about the arrangement and to give examples of the benefits involved and the potential risks faced by those schools not participating. It was asked if the guidance note could include information about how neighbouring local authorities are organising their TU facilities time and the relative costs of those arrangements.

8. Retained DSG budgets 2018-19 – Central School Services Block and Early Years Block

Schools Forum has to make an annual decision on local authority proposals for retained central spend from the Early Years Block, from the new Central School Services Block and provision retained from the Schools Block to operate a Pupil Growth fund and a Falling Rolls Fund. Proposals for the Early Years central spend were not available for today's meeting. The table below sets out the other central spend items as they apply to this financial year.

Central School Services Block	2017-18 Budget	Notes
Servicing of the Schools Forum	£31,000	
Historic ongoing pension commitments	£170,400	Fixed maximum level
National Copyright Licence charge	£299,600	Inflation + volume rise to account for
Pupil admissions	£401,900	
School Organisation & Planning	£139,600	
School Reorganisation	£292,000	
Provision for LAC / NEET etc	£45,100	
Former ESG-funded duties	£986,300	
Total	£2,365,900	

The indicative sum for our Central School Services Block for 2018-19 is £2,311,000. There will need to be adjustments made to the above pattern to save the £54,900 difference. This exercise will also need to take into account the inevitable rise in the national copyright licence charge for 2018-19. The local authority would propose to balance the account by removing the provision for LAC/NEET (it is doubtful that this meets the 'combined budget' criteria for continued central retention) and reducing the former-ESG funded duties figure to achieve a balanced position.

The local authority would propose to maintain the Pupil Growth Fund at its current level of £600,000 but, given the lack of schools meeting the criteria for Falling Rolls Fund support, it is proposed to reduce this provision to £50,000 from 2018-19. This would at least set aside funding for one teacher should a school meet the conditions for a support allocation to be made.

Views from constituent groups will be sought via the general communication to schools about funding arrangements for the next two years. Feedback received will be reported to the 15th December meeting to inform the final decision on central budgets for 2018-19.

9. Cabinet paper on School Funding 2018-19

The annual Cabinet report to explain the operation of local school funding arrangements for the coming funding year will be considered at a cabinet meeting in January. The Authority Planning Tool to be submitted by 19th January 2018 to the ESFA has to certify that local political sign-off to the allocations has been secured.

10. Any other business

No other business was raised.

11. Date and time of next meeting

Friday 9th March 2018

Venue: to be confirmed

Start: 10:00am