

THE KIRKLEES SCHOOLS FORUM

meeting held on **Friday 29th November 2019**

10:00am at the Tolson Museum, Huddersfield

Present:

Andi Gilroy-Sinclair	Nursery School Heads (1)
Claire Minogue, Jenny Shore, Diana Wilson	Primary School Heads (5)
	High School Heads (1)
Paul Evans	Special School Heads (1)
Laura Flynn	Special Academy Heads (1)
Catherine Jubbs, Michelle Lee [Chair]	Academy Heads (4)
Martin Ridge	Pupil Referral Units (1)
	Kirklees Governors (1)
Hazel Danson (NEU), Paula Wescott (NASUWT)	Non-school members (5)
David Gearing (Financial Delegation Manager); [Minute Clerk] Harkireet Sohel (Head of Service – Outcomes for Children) Martin Wilby (Senior Strategic Manager – Education Places and Access)	Officers in Support
	Observers

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Louise Brown (Primary Heads), Karen Colligan (High School Heads), Darren Christian (Academy Heads), Paul Davies (Kirklees Governors), Kath Duffy (Early Years Learning Alliance), Carmen Gonzalez-Eslava (Post-16), Ronnie Hartley (Head of Service – Education Safeguarding & Inclusion), Natalie McSheffrey (Relationship Manager, Schools & Settings), Cllr Carole Pattison (Portfolio Holder for Learning, Aspiration & Communities), Jo-Anne Sanders (Service Director, Learning & Early Support) and Martin Vayro (Primary Heads).

2. Minutes of the Schools Forum Public meeting held on 18th October 2019

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

3. Matters arising from the Schools Forum Public meeting 18th October 2019

3.1 Disapplication requests 2020-21 (minute 6 of the 18th October meeting)

The Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) has recently responded to two out of the three disapplication requests signalling their 'intention to approve'. For the request concerning a second adjustment to the baseline funding of one particular primary school to continue the process of removing the identified element of over-funding there has, as yet, been no proper feedback. However, the ESFA had been in touch querying why the Forum had not held a formal vote on the matter. Officers had replied to say that a formal vote had not been needed because unanimous support for the action had been evident and that the ESFA had not queried the absence of a formal vote when approving last year's disapplication request. In case the ESFA come back to say a formal vote of Forum members is actually required in this case the Forum meeting was kept for the minutes for today to record their unanimous support (by show of hands) for the action proposed in the disapplication request.

4. Forum membership update

An update was given about the latest Forum membership developments...

Laura Flynn was attending her first meeting today as the Special Academy representative replacing Sarah Wilson who was taken up another role within the multi-academy trust. The Forum wished to record their thanks to Sarah for her service over the past few years and also extended a welcome to Laura.

Martin Vayro has agreed to replace Marcus Newby as a maintained primary school representative with immediate effect. Thanks to Marcus for his service on Forum and welcome to Martin (who unfortunately, due to the short notice, was unable to attend today's meeting).

Two nominations for the fourth mainstream academy position have been received so the intention now is to organise a ballot of the academy sector to decide who the new representative will be.

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

Draft minutes from the last Board meeting (20th November) were made available to today's meeting. The Partnership Board had received a briefing and provided feedback on the draft SEND 10-point action plan. The Board had also received reports back from its committees on the business they had considered...

Education Improvement Committee

Improved terms of reference for the committee were discussed, the draft Learning Strategy and various early interventionist programmes such as the Centre on the Developing Child approach, the Best Start Partnership, "50 things" and work undertaken by Musica and Kirklees libraries around a core portfolio of nursery rhymes to help with speech and language development.

Education Services Committee

David Gearing and Karen Hatch from the Schools Finance Team had attended to talk about maintained schools financial arrangements – why financial returns have to be conducted in the way that they do, what schools can do to operate more smartly within the system (eg sign up to do BACS payments, tailor SAP reports to present monitoring information to governors) and to listen to suggestions for improvements (a merged budget form that carries forward information on separate tabs – draft to final, a 3-year projection tool that lets schools explore changes to parts of their budget share other than those produced by changes to pupil numbers).

Updates were also given to the Board from the Community Hub Co-ordinator network meeting and the Schools Forum. Just like the Forum has a standing agenda item for reports from the Education & Learning Partnership Board, the Board now has a similar standing item for updates from Schools Forum meetings.

6. High Needs Budget (standing item)

No-one was able to confirm whether a secondary representative had been secured at last week's Kirklees High School Heads meeting for the High Needs Task & Finish Group. It is intended that meeting dates for the Group be put in place soon.

Looking ahead to 2020-21 funding, an issue had been raised by one of our special school providers about whether the local authority was intending to include some provision for pay and price inflation within the top-up values next year. Mainstream schools will receive at least a minimum increase of 1.84% per pupil next year with a minority benefitting to a further extent from the average 4% increase to national funding formula factor values. (The amount of further benefit is largely determined by how much funding floor protection a school is in receipt of in 2019-20). Given that the mainstream sector is set to receive an inflationary increase for 2020-21 it would be seen as unfair if a similar inflationary increase was not allocated to the specialist sector out of the £6m increase in Kirklees' High Needs settlement for 2020-21. [A 1.84% increase to match the minimum mainstream rise would cost around £400k in a full year].

The meeting took a view in favour of an inflationary increase in funding for specialist providers for funding year 2020-21. Officers agreed to feed this back to the Centre for consideration.

7. School funding 2020-21 – latest news

At this stage in the process there was not much to report upon. The October 2019 school census submission has been analysed by officers and it confirms that there will not be much by way of overall pupil growth within the system for 2020-21 funding. Whereas the last few years have regularly seen growth of the order of 700-800 pupils each year the latest census shows a growth of just 114 pupils in comparison to the October 2018 census. This breaks down between the Age-Weighted Pupil Unit bands as follows: -

Primary	- (366) pupils
KS3	+ 368 pupils
KS4	+ 112 pupils

It is unlikely therefore that there will be much by way of a growth 'bonus' (the difference between the units of funding provided in the DSG settlement and what has to be paid out in terms of the National Funding Formula factors) in 2020-21 to enhance the outcome for schools.

It is hoped that the DSG settlement for 2020-21 and the new pupil data set to govern next year's funding allocations will be published in early December (although the election period could cause a delay to that publication?). Forum agreed to bring into play the reserve meeting date of 13th December in order to consider the latest information. The briefing meeting on the 13th will also have agenda items on the 2019-20 Pupil Growth Fund and the required decisions on central budget retention for 2020-21.

8. Schools funding 2020-21 – annual consultation on de-delegation, Central School Services budget etc

The local authority is required to consult with schools on an annual basis about Dedicated Schools Grant funding it proposes to retain for the financial year ahead. More detail about the proposals is set out below.

- **De-delegation (mainstream maintained schools)**

A briefing paper showing the 2019-20 de-delegation arrangements was amongst today's agenda papers. This included for each budget heading the deduction amounts per primary

and secondary pupil to support each area of activity and the total amount collected to provide the necessary budget to operate each arrangement. No changes are proposed to the de-delegated arrangements and the amounts collected per pupil for financial year 2020-21.

- **Central Schools Services Block (maintained schools and academies)**

A paper was considered which set out the planned spend from the Central Schools Services Block for 2019-20 and a draft spending plan looking ahead to 2020-21. It is estimated that the Council's CSSB allocation will reduce from £2.30m in 19-20 to £2.21m next year. Out of the illustrated £87k reduction, £53k relates to the next step in phasing to a lower eventual allocation but the rest is due to an unexpected 20% cut applied to Kirklees' historic commitments allocation. The draft breakdown of the 2020-21 CSSB proposal is as follows...

Budget heading	2019-20 Budget	2020-21 proposed	
Servicing of Schools Forum	£31,000	£31,000	
Historic pension commitments	£170,400	£170,400	
School Admissions	£401,900	£401,900	
School Organisation & Planning	£139,600	£139,600	
School Reorganisation	£292,000	£292,000	
National Copyright Licence invoice	£323,500	Est'd	£336,400
Former ESG stat & regulatory duties	£943,300	Bal fig	£843,000
CSSB total	£2,301,700	£2,214,300	

The first five budget lines are not allowed to be increased from their original levels. There is no point in cutting the pensions budget (as the costs cannot be saved) even though some of the reduction in the CSSB allocation is linked to this line. The actual national copyright licence charge amount for 2020-21 should be revealed next month. The budget contribution to the statutory and regulatory duties the Council has for all pupils in the district acts as a balancing figure within this funding block. [A paper explaining what those duties are was also amongst today's agenda papers]. The final CSSB block allocation for 2020-21 will be calculated from the number of pupils on the October 2019 census.

- **Growth funding (maintained schools and academies)**

2019-20 saw the introduction by the ESFA of a formula-based method to include an element of future growth funding within the DSG Schools Block allocation. The increase in the growth allocation (£698,500 in comparison to 2018-19) was retained in 2019-20 and added to the existing Pupil Growth Fund of £600,000. This was done in anticipation of significant calls against the PGF for this year, particularly from the secondary sector as increased student numbers continue to feed through from the primary sector. The formula-based growth allocation is not easy to anticipate in advance as it uses the individual school-level 'positive' changes in number on roll when comparing the latest October pupil census with the previous October census. The actual growth allocation for 2020-21 will be published in December. The LA will be looking to retain any uncommitted element of the new growth allocation to again supplement the Pupil Growth Fund next year.

- **Funding retained within the Early Years Block**

Budget provision	Proposed £	Notes
Early Learning and Childcare	585,000	Free Early Education, Childcare Sufficiency and Early Years Outcomes Teams – funding to providers, free entitlement place sufficiency, supporting standards of delivery
Back office / management costs	71,200	Finance, payroll, HR, Legal, IT etc
Inclusion Support	40,400	Contribution to the Inclusion Officer team
Miscellaneous	12,000	Contribution to admissions, maternity, union duties etc
TOTAL	£708,600	

The introduction of '30 hours free childcare' and the resulting increase in the number of providers eligible to claim funding for the free entitlement (mainly after school-clubs and childminders) has placed unprecedented volume pressures on the teams which support children, families and early learning and childcare providers. Efficiency improvements have helped ensure that these pressures can continue to be met within existing resources. The proposed Early Years Block retention amounts to 2.5% of the total allocation, well within the 5% level permitted by the government.

Further consultation about 2020-21 Early Years funding and retention arrangements will be held with all local providers of the free entitlement with the aim of providing feedback to Schools Forum at a meeting early in the New Year.

The consultation on retained budget arrangements for 2020-21 will be launched shortly to mainstream schools via Google Survey with the background papers setting out the proposals being placed on Perspective Lite. Schools and academies will have until noon on the 12th December to complete the survey and the results will be made available to the Forum briefing meeting on 13th December.

9. Annual cabinet report on school funding consultation and decisions

The annual report to Cabinet on school funding consultation and decisions for the year ahead is scheduled for consideration on 14th January 2020. This fits in nicely with the 2020-21 Authority Proforma Tool (APT) submission deadline to the Education & Skills Funding Agency which is 21st January 2020. The APT asks for confirmation that political sign-off has happened. The draft report will be shared with the Forum once available.

10. Any other business

No other business was raised.

11. Date and time of next meeting

Friday 6th March 2020

10:00am start

Tolson Museum