



# Northumberland County Council

## Wellbeing and Community Health Services Group

Education and Skills Service

Meeting: Formula Funding Sub Committee of the Schools Forum  
Date: 05/11/2019  
Time: 3.00pm  
Venue: Chairman's Dining Room

<p><b>Present:</b> <b>Ian Walker (Chair)</b> (Gov The Duchess High) <b>Mike Deane-Hall</b> (HT Wooler First and Glendale Middle) <b>Maurice Hall</b> (HT The Duchess High) <b>Bruce Parvin</b> (Education &amp; Skills Business Manager)</p>	<p><b>Ben Watson</b> (Business Manager Seaton Valley Federation) <b>Richard Woolhouse</b> (Trade Union) <b>Abigail Russell</b> (Principal Accountant)</p>
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Notes Lisa Headington

	Start time:	Action:
1.	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	
2.	<b>In Attendance</b>  See above.	
3.	<b>Apologies:</b>  Andrew Thelwell, Darren Warburton, Kieran McGrane, Ben Ryder, Graeme Atkins, Graham Wilkins, Colin Pearson, Sue Aviston.	
4.	<b>Membership and Membership Update</b>  No further update.  Under represented for Primary.	
5.	<b>Declaration of personal or pecuniary interest in any agenda item.</b>  No declaration of pecuniary interest declared by members.	
6.	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting/Matters arising from Previous Minutes:</b>  The Chair confirmed that the minutes were tabled at Schools Forum.  Actions covered elsewhere on today's agenda.	

	<p>Request from MH about factoring in 3 yearly, year on year increase with medium term projections.</p> <p>BP confirmed that Abi and her Team are working on this currently.</p> <p>All agreed minutes to be a true record of the meeting.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Implementing mandatory Minimum Per Pupil Funding Levels</b></p> <p>A discussion took place around the consultation response that has been submitted.</p> <p>The new DFE proposals represents progress for Northumberland as it better reflects 3 tiers. The proposal that the premises costs are to be excluded was also highlighted - Elements for PFI will also be excluded from MFG and minimum per pupil funding calculations under the proposed arrangements, subject to the outcome of the consultation.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Disapplication Requests: Sparsity/School Reorganisations</b></p> <p>Sparsity used historically to distribute funding.</p> <p>2 key qualifying criteria :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Minimum per pupil year group</li> <li>2. Average per pupil distance in excess of 2 miles from home-school (Second nearest school)</li> </ol> <p>Work has been done over the summer and examples discussed and shared with members.</p> <p>The DFE use “as the crow flies” to measure distances which does not show a true reflection.</p> <p>Demonstrated to ESFA and maps shared.</p> <p><b>Agreed to proceed as appropriate.</b></p> <p>BP confirmed have had initial response from ESFA which permits their inclusion in funding calculations. While we can include in calculation but ESFA have been asked if this will attract additional funding - even if on a historic or lagged basis. NCC needs to know if going to be funded from ESFA for over 2 miles rather than "as the crow flies" which is not appropriate.</p>	

	<p>Waiting for feedback to move forward. Need to highlight and reflect.</p> <p><b>Agreed</b> - FF support sparsity disapplication request and to push for extra funding.</p> <p>To discuss at SF.</p> <p><b>Disapplication in respect of Middle School reorganisation was shared.</b></p> <p>Schools in question to be consulted. The initial views of the Committee were sought in respect of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• guidance re the consultation and to inform SF view in respect of the approach to be taken;</li> <li>• whether to pay on lagged or forecast data, given challenges of forecasting pupil numbers when accepting reception entry and in year transfers from yr1 to yr6 simultaneously.</li> </ul> <p><b>Agreed</b> – It was felt that the proposal, including the flexibility to increase or decrease funding subject to numbers was an appropriate one and agreed to look at level of flexibility depending on numbers.</p>	
9.	<p><b>National Funding Formula Update</b></p> <p>BP circulated NFF update report.</p> <p>To be shared also with SF.</p> <p>A discussion took place around the proposed options for schools funding formula for 2020/21.</p> <p><b>Option 1</b> - This maintained the differential around the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU), matching NFF increases of 4% to the previous NCC Values. This meant reducing the Free School Meals (FSM) values towards NFF as we are currently higher than FSM.</p> <p>There may be some scope for increasing primary low prior attainment in this model - which is still significantly under NFF levels, due to historic funding patterns.</p> <p><b>Option 2</b> - This option meant that while AWPU level for primary &amp; KS4 would be maintained at levels higher than 20/21 NFF values, the gap would be reduced - by 50% in the example. This would enable higher FSM levels to be maintained and an increase in primary low prior attainment.</p>	

	<p><b>Option 3</b> - There is provision within the school funding arrangements to limit increases above a certain level via the use of “capping and scaling”. In the example shown, any increases over 4% (“the cap”) are reduced by 50% (scaling). This can make the overall cost of values more affordable by reducing the benefit to those schools with the highest level of increases.</p> <p><b>Option 4</b> - National Funding Formula values were used with capping and scaling 2020/21 to make this affordable</p> <p>.          BW asked why the NCC values were originally different from the NFF values. BP answered that prior to NFF, more funding had been distributed via the AWPU, and correspondingly less by primary low prior attainment.</p> <p>In relation to FSM originally Northumberland did not use the FSM6 element and correspondingly its FSM figure was higher. FSM6 was introduced for 2018/19 in line with the NFF, but the FSM rate had remained higher - this could be considered.</p> <p>FFC asked if the impact on options for individual schools level could be demonstrated for some example schools.</p> <p>The overall financial position of schools should also be considered in respect of this, it was generally the case that on average primary maintained schools were in a better financial position than secondaries.</p> <p>This was seen as a key agenda item for Schools Forum for the meeting on 20 November 2019. It was felt that it was not feasible to move directly to NFF for 2020/21, and this was contrary to the position previously expressed.</p> <p><b>FF agreed to drop version 4 and that the other 3 options be provided to Schools Forum</b></p>	<p><b>All</b></p>
<p>10</p>	<p><b>Illustrative 2020/21 School Funding levels</b></p> <p>Information was shared with members to illustrate potential funding allocations based on October 2018 data. Clearly this was subject to change as October 2019 census data became available, but this approach enabled the production of some illustrative examples.</p> <p>Minimum per pupil funding was a key feature in these figures, this would have a significant impact on some schools for 2020/21.</p>	

	<p>MFG protection had been included at the minimum level of +0.5%.</p> <p>MH asked about the differential in percentage increase between schools.</p> <p>BW suggested seeing background examples broken down would be helpful.</p> <p>MH also queried about the IDACI deprivation element and how it applied in bandings and the influence in certain areas.</p> <p>It was confirmed that is was based on a national index based on postcodes, not an actual financial assessment of individual families like pupil premium.</p> <p><b>It was again indicated that specific individual schools as examples could prove helpful for School Forum members. BP requested that FFC members sent him suggested schools for the purpose of specific illustrative modelling examples by the end of Wednesday 06 November.</b></p>	BP
11.	<p><b>Any other Business</b></p> <p>No other business discussed.</p>	
<p><b>End: 4.40pm</b></p> <p><b>Date and Time of Next Meeting: Agreed to leave open and confirm after Schools Forum meeting,</b></p> <p><b>Agreed Formula Funding meeting to be held on a Wednesday</b></p> <p><b>High Needs meeting to be held on a Tuesday.</b></p>		