



# Northumberland County Council

## Wellbeing and Community Health Services Group

Education and Skills Service

Meeting: Formula Funding Sub Committee of the Schools Forum  
Date: Tuesday 7th November 2018  
Time: 1.30pm  
Venue: Chairman's Dining Room

<p><b>Present:</b> Graeme Atkins (<i>HT QEHS &amp; Hexham Middle</i>) Jane Kennedy (<i>HT at Corbridge Middle</i>) Kieran McGrane (<i>HT Ponteland High</i>) Bruce Parvin (<i>Education and Skills Business Manager</i>) Zephania Parkin (<i>School Funding and Business Relationship Manager</i>)</p>	<p>Ian Walker (<i>Chair and GOV The Duchess's High</i>) Ben Watson (<i>Gov St Robert's RC First</i>) Graham Wilkins (<i>Gov St Wilfrid's RC Primary</i>) Richard Woolhouse (<i>Trade Union</i>)</p>
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Notes Lisa Headington

### DRAFT MINUTES

Start time:		Action:
1.	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	
2.	<b>In Attendance</b>  As above.	
3.	<b>Apologies:</b>  Sue Aviston, Maurice Hall, Mike Hodgson.	
4.	<b>Membership and Membership Update</b>  Current membership confirmed although still have gaps, waiting for Schools Forum to confirm.	
5.	<b>Terms of Reference</b>  All happy with the Terms of Reference document that was circulated and it was agreed.	
6.	<b>Declaration of personal or pecuniary interest in any agenda item.</b>	

	No declaration of pecuniary interest declared by members.	
7.	<p><b>Minutes of the previous meeting/Matters arising from Previous Minutes:</b></p> <p>First and Primary School representatives to be confirmed by Schools Forum.</p> <p>NFF paper received by Schools Forum.</p> <p>All extra paperwork that was requested has been circulated.</p> <p>Teachers pay grant to be discussed at today's meeting.</p> <p>Minutes accepted as a true record.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Schools Financial Information: School Balances Data</b></p> <p>School balances information was shared with committee members which has been published by the DfE regarding the revenue balances held by local authority maintained schools.</p> <p>BP stated that it is important to note that at £38,000 Northumberland had lowest average revenue balance per school compared to the national (£106,000) and regional (£80,000) averages, as shown in Table 11 of the DfE information.</p> <p>It was suggested that this information could demonstrate the challenges Northumberland face due to the geography of the county.</p> <p>Table 12 shows the individual maintained school balances, 2016/17 figures are the latest currently available in the public domain.</p> <p>It was noted that there is no information published for academies as academy balances are held and reported on by the Trust and not at individual school level.</p> <p>GA commented that Northumberland 2017/18 picture is missing and asked why we have not got these details.</p> <p>BP confirmed that aggregated balances were provided to Schools Forum in September but not individual school figures. The figures showed an 24% overall fall in balances held by maintained schools from £5.531 million to £4.486 million. There was general decreases</p>	

	<p>across all phases, with the exception of Special Schools who saw an increase in their balances collectively. GA commented that this information is valid for them and should be provided when available for 2017/18. .</p> <p>BP suggested bringing information to January Schools Forum meeting once the information has been published by the DfE.</p> <p>The figures provided in the report shows last 2 years, but the DfE figures go back further to 2010/11.</p> <p>RW stated that as a committee we looked at carry forwards in the past , reviewing how schools were spending the money.</p> <p>The September forum paper highlighted that there were maximum accrued balances for Schools to carry forward - 16% Primary and Special, 10% for Middle and High Schools.</p> <p>KM asked if there is a restriction on Schools carrying forward deficits. A recovery plan will be required - generally over a maximum of 2 years, in conjunction with Corporate Finance.</p> <p>IW requested when the DfE publish figures to bring back to January meeting.</p> <p>GA suggested that we need to do on an informed basis as an LA although accepted this does not include Academies to show overall picture regarding balances.</p>	BP
9.	<p><b>2018/19 Formula Value Information &amp; Initial Modelling for 2018/19</b></p> <p>A report was shared with members by ZP to discuss and recommend the preferred model option regarding the local formula for funding in schools.</p> <p>BP reminded the Committee that previously the view of School and of the Forum had been to move in measured steps towards the NFF to protect AWPU, which had been higher for Primary and Key stage 4 in Northumberland.</p> <p>In terms of 2019/20 funding, the provisional Schools Block allocation was £178.396 million lower than the final 2018/19 figure of £179.924 million, though this figure had subsequently been reduced by the transfer of £1.799 million from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. In practice £178.126 million was distributed to Schools in 2018/19. Final figures will not be available until mid</p>	

<p>December 2018, and will be used for the confirmation of the Final settlement report to Schools Forum in January 2019.</p> <p>With regard to how the Schools Block funding was going to be distributed, Committee were requested to consider whether their preference was to maintain AWPU values and reduce MFG, or alternatively retain a positive MFG while moving AWPU towards NFF values. 2 models were produced :</p> <p>Version 1 - Increase in MFG at 0.5% Version 2 - Includes everything but AWPU and reducing the MFG to 0%.</p> <p>Members thoughts were requested .</p> <p>GA stated that version 1 will align funding formula rather than version 2 for most schools, it was noted that version 1 allocated £178.073 million to schools compared to £177.332 million under version 2.</p> <p>KM queried why version 2 had £1.5 million unallocated. BP confirmed these figures were before any high needs block transfer. While no specific figure was yet available, it was felt that a transfer would again be required for 2019/20. High Needs block pressures were continuing to increase in relation to permanent exclusions, independent special school placement and increasing demand for SEN top up payments driven by the growth in EHC plan numbers.</p> <p>After further discussion it was agreed that :</p> <p>Given the increasing pressures reported, there was no felt to be enough funding in the system for Schools and High Needs.</p> <p>For Schools Forum, options should be provided showing the respective impacts for Schools of maintaining AWPU values or using a positive MFG to distribute funding to Schools. 3 versions of each should be provided distributing 99%, 99.25% and 99.5% for the total School Block funding back to Schools, showing the figures if 1%, 0.75% or 0.5% was transferred to High Needs Block.</p> <p>BW suggested ring fencing the 1% for high needs block as in previous year as a realistic approach.</p> <p>Changes have been introduced in SEN, such as the new SEND commissioning panel arrangements to ensure a standardised, more graduated approach, however this takes time to make a financial impact. Children are not generally moved from a SEN school placement once it is made, it is about making more effective</p>	
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	<p>arrangements for new placements.</p> <p>RW raised that there is a need for more government funding which he will raise at FACS.</p> <p>BP reminded Committee that the majority of HN funding is returned to Schools via top up.</p> <p>KM suggested looking in detail at high needs not simply agreeing further 1% transfer, but to see where pressures are arising from. BP indicated that this due to higher demand, greater activity levels with more schools seeking support for more children.</p> <p>KM also suggested to look at influence of year to year pupil population.</p> <p>It was asked whether SEN could be a feature of the Northern Education challenge - Heads are to speak to Wayne Daley.</p> <p>Bottom line 0% or 0.5% what comes back need to get like for like for each version.</p> <p>GA requested if we can factor in October Census to help to decide.</p> <p>BP stated that we currently don't have all figures, this can be explored but the DfE tool did not lend itself to this easily. Overall pupil numbers were approx 200 less in the provisional 2019/20 figures compared to final 2018/19.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b>Teachers Pay Grant</b></p> <p>BP confirmed that we have reported to Schools Forum meeting on mechanism element per pupil basis figures.</p> <p>Funding allocations 18/19 have come through and shared.</p> <p>There is over £1 million for distribution across all schools in Northumberland. Detailed figures were in the papers shared with members.</p> <p>It was queried when schools get money. BP not sure but confirmed it is paid to LA in February 2019 and will be included in indicative budget meetings in budget statement for 2018/19. Clarification would be sort.</p>	

	<p>Pupils dictated individual school amounts.</p> <p>JK raised a query about the “little extras” money announced in the Budget.</p> <p>ZP confirmed it is calculated the same as formula capital money is. and should be able to carry forward.</p> <p>GA mentioned about a letter received from the DFE recognising them as a High School not Secondary categorised separately with regard to minimum per pupil funding an would be subject to review for subsequent years. This was felt to represent some progress.</p> <p>BP thanked all for their input at today's meeting.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>Provisional date suggested Tuesday 8th January 2019 3pm-4.30pm if required.</p> <p>Additional Information to be shared mid to late December 2018 with Committee members.</p>	BP
<b>End: 3.15pm</b>		