

DATE & TIME OF MEETING:	Wednesday 16 September 2015 @ 2pm (Please note that a 45 minute workshop on “Future in Mind” will follow at the close of the meeting) – see note at end of this agenda.
VENUE:	The Grand Meeting Room County Hall, Northallerton, DL7 8AD
Please confirm attendance by e-mail to jayne.laver@northyorks.gov.uk or telephone 01609 534416.	

Important information for those attending:

Declaration of Interests

Members of the Education Partnership who have an interest in an agenda item beyond the generality of the group they represent are required to declare the existence and nature of that interest to the Chair prior to the start of the meeting. *Further information can be found in paragraph 13 of the constitution of the North Yorkshire Education Partnership.*

Voting

Voting on proposals in relation to the school and early years funding formulae may only be undertaken by (i) those listed as “Schools’ Members” on the Membership page of this agenda and (ii) the Early Years representative.

Where a phase-related de-delegation proposal requires a vote, only schools’ members representing schools within that phase may vote.

All members are entitled to vote on proposals other than those relating to the funding formulae.

Observers cannot vote on any proposal brought before the Education Partnership.

Voting requirements will be clearly identified in the agenda item.

Information only reports

Reports marked for information only will not, under normal circumstances, be presented to the Education Partnership. Any comments or questions arising from the report should be directed to the Clerk who will either (i) seek a response from the author or (ii) request their attendance in order to respond directly to the members of the Education Partnership.

General Public

Meetings of the Education Partnership are public meetings

The Chair will request that any members of the public leave the meeting for items marked as confidential and which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local government Act 1972.

Further information can be found in paragraph 11 of the constitution of the North Yorkshire Education Partnership.

Agenda

Part 1: Procedural

Item	Title	Lead
1.1	Welcome and apologies	Chair
1.2	Membership update	Chair
1.3	Minutes from the previous meeting and matters arising	Chair
1.4	Notification of other urgent business	Chair

Part 2: School Funding

Item	Title	Lead
2.1	School Funding 2016-17	Anton Hodge
2.2	Review of Falling Rolls and Pupil Growth Contingency Funds	Helen Coulthard
2.3	Traded Services update	Anton Hodge / Ian Yapp
2.4	Presentation - High Needs Review	ISOS Partnership

Part 3: School Improvement

Item	Title	Lead
3.1	2015 School Outcomes	Jill Hodges
3.2	Peer Review	Jill Hodges
3.3	Setting up a Task and Finish group to look at the provision of information to school leaders and governors	Pete Dwyer

Part 4: School Organisation – no items

Part 5: Future Agendas

Dates of future meetings	Title
15 Oct 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) School funding 2016-17 b) 2014-15 final school balances c) Redundancy process and costs d) NYEP Meeting Dates 2016 Proposal

Members of Education Partnership are positively encouraged to join a short workshop to be held at the conclusion of the meeting of the partnership meeting on the 16 September. We anticipate this will be between 3.30-4.15. The workshop will update the partnership on intense planning underway to respond to a national opportunity (Future in Mind) to enhance emotional and mental health services for young people including school based investments. We will be joined in the discussion from lead officers working on behalf of the CCGs with the LA to make the most of this opportunity. Your engagement in shaping this opportunity would be invaluable.

Membership

Schools Members (29)			
Headteachers (16)			
Primary	Tammy Cooper	Ruswarp CoE VC Primary School	Jan 2016
Primary	Ian Clennan	Selby Community Primary School	Dec 2017
Primary	Rachel Wells	West Heslerton CE Primary School	Dec 2017
Primary	Ian Yapp	Riverside Community Primary School	Jan 2018
Primary	David Barber	Hambleton CoE Primary School	Aug 2019
Primary	Vacancy		
Primary	Vacancy		
Primary	Vacancy		
Secondary (Chair)	Carl Sugden	King James's School	Nov 2016
Secondary	Michele Costello	Settle College	Sep 2017
Secondary	Mark McCandless	Ryedale School	May 2018
Secondary (IP Chair)	Rob Pritchard	St John Fisher Catholic High School	Apr 2019
Secondary	Sue Whelan	Eskdale School	Aug 2019
Secondary	Vacancy		
Special	Hanne Barton	The Dales Special School	Nov 2016
Nursery	Jane Pepper	Childhaven Nursery	Aug 2015
School Governors (8)			
Primary	David Gill	Long Marston Primary School	Aug 2015
Primary	Ken Blackwood	Appleton Wiske Primary School	Oct 2015
Primary	Helen Flynn	Hookstone Chase Primary School	May 2017
Primary	Jim Martin	Newby and Scalby Primary School	Nov 2017
Primary	Geoff Archer	Applegarth Primary School	Apr 2019
Secondary	Denise Powley	Lady Lumley's School	Apr 2019
Secondary	Gerry Price	Bedale High School	Apr 2019
Secondary	Rosemary Rees	Settle College	Nov 2016
Academy Representatives (4)			
Secondary	Andrew Cummings	South Craven Academy	Sep 2016
Secondary	John Barker	Skipton Girls' High School	Dec 2017
Special	Annette Fearn	The Woodlands Special School	Aug 2019

PRS	TBC by Academy	The Grove Academy	Aug 2019
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Pupil Referral Service Representative (1)

PRS	Les Bell	Selby PRS	Oct 2018
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Non-Schools Members (6)

Early Years	Vacancy - tbc		
RC Diocese	Vacancy		
CoE Diocese	Vacancy		
Unison	Stella Smethurst		Dec 2016
Teachers Unions	Vacancy		
16-19 Providers	Debra Forsythe-Conroy	Harrogate College	Aug 2018

Observers (4)

County Councillor	Arthur Barker	Lead Member for schools, 16-19 year old education and early years provision
County Councillor	Janet Sanderson	Lead Member for children's services, special needs, youth justice, youth service and adult education
EFA Observer	Keith Howkins	Education Funding Agency
	Chris Head	Teachers' Association

Vacancy Update:

Primary headteachers – 3

Secondary headteachers – 1

Academy – PRS representative not advised

Non-schools vacancies - 4

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NORTH YORKSHIRE EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

Date of meeting:	Wednesday 16 September 2015
Title of report:	Minutes of the Schools Forum – 21 May 2015
Type of report: Delete as required	For information only
Executive summary: Including reason for submission	The minutes of the previous meeting of the North Yorkshire Education Partnership are presented for approval.
Budget / Risk implications:	N/A
Recommendations:	The minutes are approved as an accurate record
Voting requirements:	N/A
Appendices: To be attached	N/A
Report originator and contact details:	Jayne Laver – Clerk to the NYEP Tel: 01609 534416 jayne.laver@northyorks.gov.uk
Presenting officer: If not the originator	N/A

PRESENT:

Chair:	Carl Sugden
Primary Headteachers:	Tammy Cooper, Ian Clennan & Ian Yapp
Secondary Headteachers:	Michele Costello, Mark McCandless & Rob Pritchard
Nursery Headteacher:	Jane Pepper
Special Headteacher:	Hanne Barton
Pupil Referral Service:	Les Bell
Academy Representative:	John Barker & Andrew Cummings
Governor Representatives:	Primary: Geoff Archer, Ken Blackwood, Helen Flynn & Jim Martin Secondary: Denise Powley & Gerry Price
16-19 Education Providers:	Josie Guinness
Observers:	Chris Head
In Attendance:	Carolyn Bird, Helen Coulthard, Suzanne Firth, Anton Hodge, Jayne Laver & Judith Walls
Apologies (as advised):	School Members: Rosemary Rees & Rachel Wells. Non-School Members: Stella Smethurst & Debra Forsythe-Conroy County Councillors: Arthur Barker

630: WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the North Yorkshire Education Partnership and thanked the Clerk for the work undertaken to reach this point.

631: MEMBERSHIP OF THE EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

The Chair advised that there had been two resignations: Francis Loftus and Josy Thompson. On behalf of the Education Partnership, he will formally write to extend thanks to both for their commitment and support to the work of the Schools Forum.

New members Geoff Archer, Denise Powley and Gerry Price were warmly welcomed to the Partnership.

Following the recent annual Council meeting a number of portfolio changes have been made including that of Lead Member for children's services, special needs, youth justice, youth service and adult education. Cllr Tony Hall has been replaced by Cllr Janet Sanderson.

In terms of the current vacancies:

- i. Sue Whelan – Headteacher at Eskdale School will be joining the Partnership in September. A secondary headteacher vacancy is still to be filled.
- ii. Primary headteachers are currently being sought to fill four vacancies.

- iii. The Early Years Improvement Partnership is to determine their representation over the summer months for September's meeting.
- iv. Replacements are to be sought for the non-schools vacancies for the RC Diocese and the Teachers Unions.

The Chair advised the Partnership that the current membership of 33 would have to be increased to 35 following direction from the DfE in relation to the representation of special school academies and pupil referral service academies. There is one of each in North Yorkshire and each is required to nominate their representative. The Clerk has formally written to both to request their cooperation.

632: MINUTES**RESOLVED –**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2015 were approved as an accurate record.

633: MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

634: NOTIFICATION OF OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There were no notifications of other urgent business for consideration.

635: REVISED CONSTITUTION OF THE NORTH YORKSHIRE EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP & UPDATE

Pete Dwyer, in his introduction, expressed his delight at having reached the point at which the Education Partnership was now established. With reference to the revised constitution, the membership of the Partnership has been amended to reflect the difficulties in securing primary chairs due to capacity issues. An alternative model of a single independently chaired Primary Improvement Partnership has been discussed with the Teaching School Alliances which has greater potential and would release more funding for school improvement activity.

RESOLVED –

The Partnership fully endorsed the recommendations made in regard to membership.

636: PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE SUB-GROUP STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

Report prepared by: Jayne Laver – Clerk to the Education Partnership.

Purpose of report: to review the structure of the Schools Forum sub-groups as inherited by the Education Partnership.

Anton Hodge advised that the proposed new structure would reflect the funding arrangements more closely. The satellite groups would be replaced by “task and finish” groups set up specifically to look at particular pieces of work. Pete Dwyer

added that the expansion of the Schools Forum's remit coupled with the reduction in the number of sub-groups would create the freedom to do this.

The Traded Services Panel would retain its close relationship to the Partnership and would now be a standing item on the agenda with a summary report being produced following the meetings of the Panel.

In response to questions, Ian Yapp, Chair of the Traded Services Panel, advised that members were traditionally recruited through JDP and the electronic Red Bag. Breadth of representation across schools was actively sought. He added that it was important to maintain the Traded Services Panel's links into the Education Partnership.

Anton Hodge added that the restructure would result in the budget being halved with funds being redirected back into the Schools Block.

Pete Dwyer added that the link with the Children's Trust Board, whilst not a statutory function of the Forum for funding purposes, would not be weakened by the restructure.

Carl Sugden acknowledged the invaluable work of the Funding Reform sub-group and the breadth of membership which enabled High Needs to be incorporated so successfully. He encouraged members of the Partnership to continue to support this sub-group. Jim Martin echoed the Chair, adding that the special school representation on the sub-group kept everyone focussed and informed to what was a complicated area.

RESOLVED –

The Partnership fully endorsed the recommendations to have a single sub-group and for individual task and finish groups to be set up as and when necessary.

637: LEGIONELLA FUNDING

Report prepared by: Anton Hodge, Assistant Director - Strategic Resources.

Purpose of report: to consider the issue of legionella related funding for one school and whether an application should be made to the DfE to waive the normal timescales for applications where there is an impact on academies.

A letter in support of their request sent by the Chair of Governors of the school was circulated. As both an academy member on the Partnership and the local secondary for the school in question, Andrew Cummings had already been made aware of this item. Dr Cummings said that the school was feeling bruised by the situation and the DfE's attitude was not particularly helpful. The school's assumption that the Local Authority could bid for funding from the DfE was disputed by Anton Hodge.

Given that the DfE expects schools to convert without any liabilities, Geoff Archer questioned whether this issue should have been addressed as part of the due diligence for conversion.

Anton Hodge advised that the school was advised of the costs in December 2014. He and Jon Holden are to visit the school in June 2015 to consider options.

Ken Blackwood felt that, whilst the school was maintained, the Local Authority should continue to support but once it became an academy it became the academy's issue to resolve.

Pete Dwyer assured members that academies are part of the Partnership and the whole education community of North Yorkshire. The decision is a financial one only.

RESOLVED –

The Partnership voted not to make an application to waive the normal timescales. The results of the vote were:

For	3
Against	12
Abstained	3

638: SCHOOL SIXTH FORM FUNDING 2015-16

Report prepared by: Jayne Laver, Finance Officer – Children and Young People's Service.

Purpose of report: to provide details of the school sixth form for allocations for the 2015/16 academic year.

Helen Flynn requested that a report be brought to the Partnership that highlighted post-16 destinations so that data can be used to inform schools. She added that changes to post-16 transport were also having an impact on a young person's choice. Chris Head advised that the falling numbers in post-16 provision were a factor in the redundancy rounds this year; particularly difficult to manage have been rural school sixth forms. NI and pension cost pressures exacerbate the problem with schools looking to create efficiencies through collaboration or dropping subjects that are not cost-effective.

Denise Powley added that competition from other institutions was an issue and the impact of the planned opening of the Scarborough Technical College was not yet known.

Pete Dwyer advised that demographic changes and pupil-led funding were discussed strategically on a regular basis. The 10% growth in pupil admissions this September will take time to filter through the school system to post-16. He suggested that a piece of work be commissioned to ensure that short term demographic changes did not impact on the provision of a broad curriculum and that models of collaboration could be a valuable tool.

RESOLVED –

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and requested that further reports on post-16 destinations and demographic changes be brought to a future meeting.

639: SCHOOLS FINANCIAL VALUE STANDARD – ANALYSIS OF RETURNS 2014-15

Report prepared by: Ian Morton, Audit Manager - Veritau

Purpose of report: to provide an analysis of the schools returns received by 31 March 2015.

In response to Ken Blackwood's question as to whether this report was required, Les Bell said that it acted as useful tool for benchmarking his own school against. Ian

Yapp also acknowledged its value in highlighting particular areas of concern where further advice and guidance was needed for schools.

Denise Powley identified an error in paragraph 2.5. Whilst no one question received 357 “yes” responses, five questions received 356 (not 367) “yes” responses.

RESOLVED –

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and agreed that it should remain on the agenda.

640: TRADED SERVICES PANEL UPDATE

Report prepared by: Ian Yapp, Chair of the Traded Services Panel, and Anton Hodge, Assistant Director, Strategic Resources.

Purpose of report: to provide a summary of the meeting of the Traded Services Panel held on 10 February 2015.

Traded Service Panel meetings have been scheduled in advance of the Partnership meetings to enable this summary report to be a standing item on the agenda.

RESOLVED –

The Partnership noted the contents of the report.

641: CLOSING THE GAP STRATEGY

Report prepared by: Jill Hodges, Assistant Director, Education and Skills.

Purpose of report: to provide background on the North Yorkshire closing the gap strategy.

Pete Dwyer introduced this report by highlighting the need to address a gap that widens as children progress through the education system. The strategy provides reassurance that approaches should not require significant investment nor complete redevelopment but builds on the innovation work already undertaken in the County.

Ian Clennan who sits on the strategic group advised that data highlights particular areas where work has been done to identify best practice such as the outcomes of boys at the end of early years, Y2 and Y6.

With reference to the London Challenge, Helen Flynn asked if any similar initiative had been considered in North Yorkshire and how can successes in north Yorkshire be best shared. Pete Dwyer advised that Ofsted’s annual report highlighted the shift of focus from urban to rural and coastal localities where significant improvements had been seen. In respect of the Partnership, he added that the monitoring of impact and performance driving outcomes was an area for the Partnership to challenge.

Ken Blackwood asked what mechanism there was to share the headlines with individual schools. Pete Dwyer advised that the strategy was based on national evidence. Ian Clennan added that there was a wider plan to share progress post validation by the University of York. Education and Skills are working to identify three year trends.

Gerry Price highlighted the risk of not achieving the first of the ten principles “we will put high quality teaching and learning at the heart of this strategy” when the

recruitment of high quality teachers was so difficult and asked if there was any collective means of addressing this issue. Carl Sugden advised that his school's greater involvement in initial teacher training was a positive move and enabled the school to grow their own teachers. Rob Pritchard added that this was a county wide issue and endorsed the initiatives available such as that at King James's School.

Pete Dwyer suggested that a piece of work be commissioned to look at recruitment and retention across the county's schools.

RESOLVED –

The Partnership noted the contents of the report.

642: PUPIL REFERRAL SERVICES AND ALTERNATIVE PROVISIONS: EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT

Report prepared by: Les Bell, Headteacher, Selby PRS and Andrew Terry, Assistant Director, Access and Inclusion.

Purpose of report: to consider the current and proposed arrangements to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the five pupil referral services and the two alternative provisions that are commissioned by the Local Authority.

Andrew Cummings expressed his frustration that was felt in relation to the provision in the Craven area and added that the report did not reflect what was actually happening. With regard to the 100% school satisfied with PRU headline, Michele Costello said that her school had not been asked for their view nor had they received any data. Les Bell advised that the PRS heads should be sharing data and entering into communications with their schools. He advised that the matter be taken up with the head of the Craven PRS.

Pete Dwyer added that the report was a partial picture of what the Partnership should be seeing. He noted that there was some good work but that improvements were still needed and there needed to be a move towards the production of a richer set of data that assists schools. Whilst it was accepted that the five PRS differ in size and set up, there needed to be more consistency in outcomes.

RESOLVED –

The Partnership noted the contents of the report.

643: SCARBOROUGH EDUCATION SUMMIT

Report prepared by: Patrick Scott, independent adviser.

Purpose of report: to provide background information on what is being done on the Coast to help young people realise their potential.

Jane Pepper highlighted the need to identify if any financial support was available and expressed concern at the accountability processes where a multi-agency approach was in place.

Ian Clennan asked that any good practice be shared with areas where indicators are lower than in Scarborough.

RESOLVED –

The Partnership noted the contents of the report.

644: SCHOOL ORGANISATION

Report prepared by: Suzanne Firth, Strategic Planning Manager.

Purpose of report: to provide a briefing on current school organisation issues.

In response to Ken Blackwood, Suzanne Firth advised that the capital funding received by North Yorkshire was specific to growth in this county although there is dialogue with cross-border colleagues to address basic need issues.

RESOLVED –

The Partnership noted the contents of the report.

645: CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

The Chair closed the meeting after thanking Judith Walls for her support of the Schools Forum over the years. Judith is leaving North Yorkshire County Council after 37 years of service at the end of July.

646: DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**2015 North Yorkshire Education Partnership Meeting Dates**

Wednesday 16 September

Thursday 15 October

All meetings are to be held in the Grand Meeting Room at County Hall, Northallerton, commencing at 2pm.

Jayne Laver

26 May 2015

Date of meeting:	Wednesday 16 September 2015
Title of report:	School Funding 2016-17
Type of report: Delete as required	For decision and information
Executive summary: Including reason for submission	The outturn position for the 2014-15 Schools Budget was as expected, and this fed into the 2015-16 budget process. Additional funding was allocated to North Yorkshire – and delegated to schools – in 2015-16. Nevertheless there are a number of financial challenges which face the LA and schools. No major changes are proposed to the formula for 2016-17 although some areas are highlighted for future work and there is a small number of requests for 2016-17 – the Partnership is asked for its views on these.
Budget / Risk implications:	Cost pressures as highlighted
Recommendations:	That the North Yorkshire Education Partnership endorses the proposals.
Voting requirements:	Schools only
Appendices: To be attached	Appendix A – F40 School Funding Briefing
Report originator and contact details:	Anton Hodge, Assistant Director – Strategic Resources anton.hodge@northyorks.gov.uk 01609 532118
Presenting officer: If not the originator	Anton Hodge and Helen Coulthard

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets out the current financial position of the Schools Budget, including the overall position on individual school balances, as demonstrated by the 2014-15 outturn.
- 1.2 It also highlights work which this LA is involved in to try and achieve more equitable funding for schools across the county, noting the financial pressures which are arising in the near future.
- 1.3 The report asks for agreement for a small number of proposals in the Schools Block to be looked at for 2015-16 but also that, unlike the last three years, there will be no major changes in 2016-17.
- 1.4 Finally, the report notes that work continues on the High Needs and Early Years blocks.

2 2014-15 Outturn

- 2.1 The table below shows the change in school balances between March 2014 and March 2015.

	Revenue	Capital	Total
31.03.14	28,985,657	4,832,231	33,817,888
31.03.15	30,723,213	2,720,233	33,443,446
change	<u>1,737,556</u>	<u>-2,111,998</u>	<u>-374,442</u>

- 2.2 This shows that although capital balances have reduced, revenue balances increased by around 6%. These figures exclude academies.
- 2.3 In addition, there was an overall underspend in the centrally-managed Schools Block and the following summary highlights the key variances.

Schools Block

Education Welfare Services	-187	Centrally-managed
Strategic Planning and School Organisation	-36	Centrally-managed
Asbestos	269	Centrally-managed
Falling Rolls	-278	Centrally-managed
Pupil Growth	-89	Centrally-managed
Schools Forum	-26	Centrally-managed
Legionella	-45	Centrally-managed: delegated from 2015-16
Trade Union Duties	35	De-delegated
Behaviour Support	-45	De-delegated
Unreasonable school expenditure	-32	De-delegated
Schools in Financial Difficulties	-158	De-delegated

School Leader Training programme	-42	De-delegated: delegated from 2015-16
General funding for schools	<u>-1,165</u>	
	<u>-1,798</u>	

High Needs

Access and Inclusion	-136
High Needs - Assessment and Commissioning	440
MEA Hubs	<u>-72</u>
	<u>232</u>

Early Years

EY/PVI Training	-700
Early Years contingency	-59
Early Years Funding	<u>-413</u>
	<u>-1,172</u>

2.4 The largest single variance (£1,165k) in the Schools Block was the result of a late payment to the Council in respect of rates revaluations. These date back a number of years and this is a one-off amount of money. It has been shown as an underspend in the Schools Block and therefore has been added to the DSG Reserve, which now stands at just over £9m.

2.5 A report brought to the Schools Forum in May 2014 noted that:

The largest single reserve that the Council holds to support schools is around £7.5m. It has already been agreed that this fund will help schools deal with the effects of funding reform and this may be through a variety of ways, such as:

- *Assisting schools with transitional organisation costs in the light of funding changes. This may be support from the LA or other organisations, or it may be direct costs incurred by schools (employees, premises, etc) on a one-off or short-term basis.*
- *Assisting schools facing short-term financial pressures where there is evidence or a strong likelihood that additional funding will eventually flow through to the school. An example of this may be where schools are capped but are faced with one-off pressures (e.g. caused by temporary demographics), and where a permanent restructure would not necessarily be a sensible or worthwhile option*

In all of these cases, it will be important to have the longer term perspective in mind: it is not the intention to allocate such funds to individual schools on a long term basis.

2.6 This reserve has now increased to £9m, as most of the net underspend on the Schools Block is added to this. It is also being used to fund loans to schools on a short/medium term basis, following discussions at the Forum earlier this year. All such loans make use of the cash available, and the loan is eventually repaid into the reserve.

2.7 There remain a small number of separate reserves as below:

Schools in Financial Difficulty: £270k. This supports the recurring de-delegated budget of £702k. Traditionally, as a reserve, this has not been subject to the same requirement as the recurring budget – i.e. approval by and reporting to the Forum

depending on level of spend. However it is envisaged that any funding remaining in this reserve will come within the oversight remit of the Education Partnership.

Pupil Growth: £89k. This is the underspend from the 2014-15 budget and this has not been rolled into the general reserve as it was agreed at the Schools Forum meeting on 18th September 2014 that any underspends on this budget would be ringfenced for the projected increase in demand on this budget in future years.

Falling Rolls: £278k. This is the underspend from the 2014-15 budget and this has not been rolled into the general reserve as it was agreed at the Schools Forum meeting on 18th September 2014 that any underspends on this budget would be ringfenced for the projected increase in demand on the Pupil Growth budget in future years.

- 2.8 A more detailed report will be brought to the Partnership in October which will include details of all school balances, any work triggered by the Balances Control Scheme, and where funds have been used to assist schools as above.
- 2.9 A number of underspends in the Early Years block were anticipated and this was discussed by the Forum in January 2015, as part of the budget setting process for 2015-16.
- 2.10 The Early Years Reserves now stand at £2.8m.
- 2.11 Finally, there was a planned contribution from reserves in respect of a number of budgets within the High Needs Block as set out in the report to the Forum in March 2015. The total reserves used amounted to £440k, compared with the original estimate of £589k. This has meant the SEN Reserves now stand at £715k.

3 2015-16 Schools Budget

- 3.1 The amount currently allocated for 2015-16 is in line with assumptions made in the spring. In the past few years, the Council has been part of a campaign to ensure a more equitable distribution of funding to LAs across the country and this has manifested itself in the allocation of the equivalent of an extra £9.8m (or 3.1%) compared with 2014-15. All of this additional funding has been allocated to schools and has impacted positively in reducing the overall level of Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) from £3.6m to £1.4m. Conversely, the “cap” for schools has increased from 1.67% in 2014-15 to 7.4% in 2015-16.
- 3.2 The initial DSG figure did not include funding for the early education for 2-year olds. This will continue to be funded – albeit at a lower level – from the DSG but the final allocation for 2015-16 will not be announced until next year. Our own estimates put this at £3.6m.
- 3.3 The DSG allocation is based on pupil numbers and although primary numbers have started to increase, the impact of lower numbers of students in secondary schools means there is a net reduction of £590k. Further additional funding has also been provided to cover the new Early Years Pupil Premium and national pressures related to High Needs pupils. In summary therefore, the expected change in DSG (before deductions for Academies) shows:

	£,000
Baseline DSG for 2014-15	384,719
Additional Funding via MLF	9,825
Reduction in pupil numbers	-590
Reduce for 2-year old funding	-4,747
EY Pupil Premium	257
Extra funding - High Needs	513
Revised DSG as notified Dec 2014	389,976
Other Expected Adjustments	
EY Census Jan - impact of pupil numbers	305
2-year old funding	3,650
Final DSG Expected	393,931

- 3.4 The final allocation is dependent on final early years numbers which will not be confirmed until later in this financial year. The current allocation from DfE suggests this final level is still expected and therefore our working assumptions are based on the figures presented in March, shown below.

	£000
Schools Block	£324,329
High Needs	£45,146
Early Years	£24,456
Total	£393,931

- 3.5 A full summary of the Schools Block in 2015-16, including a list of de-delegated and centrally-managed budgets is shown below:

ISB (delegated budgets)	316,693	97.6%
De-Delegated Budgets		
Schools in Financial Difficulty	693	
Unreasonable School Expenditure	90	
Behaviour Support Services	202	
Ethnic Minority	925	
Free School Meals Eligibility	21	
Trade Union Costs	85	
	<u>2,016</u>	0.6%

Central Budgets

Commissioning of Services	57	
Strategic Support	11	
Outdoor Learning	387	
CYPFT Schools Block	29	
Preventative Services	1,712	
Property Service	330	
School Admissions	886	
Schools Forum	100	
Asbestos Removal	260	
Broadband, etc	767	
IMPULSE System	90	
Copyright Licences	409	
Falling rolls	299	
Pupil growth	200	
Other Overheads	84	
	<u>5,620</u>	1.7%
	<u><u>324,330</u></u>	

4 Cost Pressures

- 4.1 Schools have seen cost pressures during the current financial year and these will continue into 2016/17, most notably:
- the full impact of the increase in Teachers Pensions employers contributions which came into effect from September 2015
 - increase to national insurance employers contributions with effect from April 2016 as a result of the introduction of the flat rate state pension
 - the introduction of a Living Wage of £7.20 an hour from April 2016 – this will impact on staff employed directly by schools and services that schools contract in
 - potential changes to relief workers contracts
 - pay awards for teaching and non teaching staff
 - inflationary increases, particularly for electricity and gas
 - for schools with Sixth Forms, a continuing reduction in Sixth Form Funding
 - for schools on the Minimum Funding Guarantee, a continuing reduction of funding protection
- 4.2 Most of the cost pressures relate to staffing costs which form the major part of any school's budget. The Local Authority is currently examining the potential impact of these changes on individual school budgets.

5 National Funding Issues

- 5.1 As stated above, in recent years the Council has been part of a campaign to ensure a more equitable distribution of funding to LAs across the country and this has manifested itself in the allocation of the equivalent of an extra £9.8m (or 3.1%) compared with 2014-15. Attached at Appendix A is a recent briefing from the f40 group of LAs and provides an update on its campaign for better funding for its members, of which NYCC is one.
- 5.2 We have been working with a small group of f40 representatives over the past two years to develop proposals around the DfE's statement of intent concerning a national funding formula (NFF) and have met with senior DfE officials on a number of occasions to present the work we have carried out on this issue.
- 5.3 The DfE remains committed to a NFF although it is now clear that this is more about ensuring that Local Authorities and schools around the country receive equitable funding levels, rather than trying to set every school's budget from Whitehall. To that end, our work has tried to identify how a national DSG formula might help to even out some of the inequities of funding in the current system. LAs would, with School Forums, then have some flexibility both in terms of how the money was allocated to schools (although there would be rules about the factors that could be used) and also in determining what responsibilities and funding could be managed on a local authority basis (rather than at individual school level). The work undertaken has also looked at funding for High Needs and Early Years and how that might be allocated across the country.
- 5.4 The f40 group has asked that schools and the Partnership support its campaign for a better distribution of funding which would impact positively on the DSG allocated to North Yorkshire.

6 Schools Block – Proposals for 2016-17

- 6.1 The DfE has confirmed that the schools block per pupil unit funding for 2016-17 will be the same as for 2015-16. This means that the additional £9.8m which North Yorkshire received in 2015-16 as an uplift related to minimum funding levels, will be included in our base funding for 2016-17. However, whilst this is welcome it does mean that there is no additional funding to address the cost pressures described in section 4.
- 6.2 Unlike recent years, there are no major proposals being made in the Schools Block for 2016-17, either for delegated budgets or de-delegated and centrally-managed funds. It has been a relatively quiet year in terms of output from the DfE's funding unit, with no changes required for the first time since 2011. Similarly, as agreement was reached in principle following a lengthy exercise regarding centrally-managed and de-delegated budgets for the period 2015-17, there is no proposal to change the arrangements for 2016-17.
- 6.3 There are two areas that it is proposed are reviewed over the next 12 months alongside national and local developments. These are:
- Deprivation factor – Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI). The values attached to each band in the current formula, were designed to create the least turbulence compared to the deprivation factors used in the previous North Yorkshire formula. This has created a situation where

some of the band values are not logical and a review would enable the North Yorkshire factor to be benchmarked against the national position.

- Minimum Funding Guarantee – where the normal operation of the MFG would produce perverse results for very small schools with falling or rising rolls, it is now possible for a disapplication request to be made to the EFA. It is proposed that this is considered alongside the strategic review of school organisation.

There are however a small number of areas that are brought before the Partnership for consideration for 2016-17 and these are outlined below.

Water Hygiene

- 6.4 In June, the Partnership rejected a proposal to request an in-year change in funding for Lothersdale school with regard to costs for water treatment at the school. The normal timescale for requesting such an exemption, which must be approved by the DfE, is by the end of September. In this instance, special rules were allowed for a school if it were converting to an academy, but the school's request was not widely supported
- 6.5 Nevertheless the issue has highlighted a potential cost for schools which are not connected to the main supply. Our intention was to assist any schools who have such costs through the unreasonable expenditure contingency. However as this is a de-delegated budget, any academy in this situation would have a share of this budget – rather than the actual costs – delegated to it and would not be able to apply for additional support.
- 6.6 The alternative is to include such costs as an exception to the formula, such as is the case for rents, and fund any such school at cost. Latest figures show this affects only a handful of schools as below:
- 6.7 The rules around such an exception are that it can only apply where less than 5% of schools are affected and where the impact on any individual schools is a "significant additional cost" (defined as more than 1% of a school's budget). In this case the schools which would currently be affected are:

	Cost	S251	
Long Preston	1,955	300,615	0.7%
Boyle and Petyt	1,540	285,379	0.5%
Bilsdale	3,116	180,019	1.7%
Lothersdale	21,866	394,633	5.5%

- 6.8 The Partnership is therefore ask for its view on whether to request an exception – from April 2016 – for all schools with unreasonable costs, which would currently cover only two schools – Bilsdale and Lothersdale. This funding would be found from top-slicing the overall allocation available for the funding formula

Split Site Factor

- 6.9 A Split Site factor was incorporated into North Yorkshire's school funding formula for 2015-16. The criteria to qualify for this factor are:
- Sites are separated by a public highway OR
 - Sites are more than 200 metres apart via the shortest walking route between the closest access entrances
 - Classroom teaching and learning must take place on all sites
 - Separate sixth forms, early years provision or sports facilities are not eligible
 - Federated schools who each receive individual school budget shares are not eligible
 - The creation of any new split site school will require prior agreement with the LA to ensure it is unavoidable in delivering core education
- 6.10 For schools meeting the above criteria the funding is £50k for a primary school and £100k for a secondary school.
- 6.11 A proposal for schools operating on more than two sites was also considered by the Schools Forum at the meeting in October 2014. A decision was deferred on the basis that this would only apply to one school which was due to amalgamate in April 2015 and would receive transitional funding therefore allowing time for a review of the implications of operating on three sites to be conducted post amalgamation.
- 6.12 It is therefore proposed that further analysis is undertaken with the school concerned and that this is presented to the October meeting of the Partnership along with a recommendation as to whether the split site factor should be revised for 2016-17.

Prior Attainment

- 6.13 For 2014/15 and 2015/16 financial years, it was agreed to apply a weighting to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Due to concerns over the robustness of the new EYFSP introduced in Summer 2013, the DfE allowed Local Authorities to weight the Summer 2013 and 2014 data. The new EYFSP identified significantly more children compared to previous years, as not achieving a good level of development. The weighting allowed the number of children counted under the new profile to be adjusted to a level more closely representing the number of children eligible under the old profile.
- 6.14 Summer 2015 is the third year of the new EYFSP. 50% of children in Primary schools have now been assessed under the new framework and 50% under the old framework. We will need to make a decision whether to continue to weight the new EYFSP assessment scores for 2016/17 or use the unweighted results.
- 6.15 An analysis of the prior attainment data for primary schools will be undertaken and presented to the October meeting of the Partnership.

7 High Needs

- 7.1 Earlier this year, the Isos Partnership was commissioned to carry out a fast-paced diagnostic review to inform a new SEND strategic approach in North Yorkshire. The review was undertaken during the spring and summer terms of 2015, and has

reported to North Yorkshire's SEND Commission. Throughout the review, Isos has engaged young people, parents / carers, early years settings, schools and colleges, local authority officers and health partners.

- 7.2 A presentation is being made to the Partnership today from Isos based on that work.
- 7.3 This will help to inform, along with other relevant data, a discussion at the Partnership meeting in October which will outline any implications on school budgets in 2016-17.

8 Early Years

- 8.1 The early years block per pupil unit of funding for 2016-17 will not be confirmed until after the government spending review. The DfE conducted two surveys over the summer relating to early years spending. The first was a call for evidence about the cost of childcare and the second a questionnaire on centrally held early years expenditure. The results of neither have been published yet.
- 8.2 It is assumed that the delay in confirming early years funding levels for next year and the two surveys commissioned by the DfE are linked to the government commitment to offer 30 hours free childcare to all 3+4 year olds from working families. Whilst this is not due to be implemented until September 2017, there will be pilots from September 2016.
- 8.3 In addition to the increase in funded hours, the introduction of the living wage from April 2016 will have a significant impact on early years providers, as a large number of staff employed in the sector are currently paid below the living wage.
- 8.4 The Early Years Improvement Partnership will be considering the impact of these issues and further reports will be brought to the Education Partnership, including proposals that impact on the Early Years Single Funding Formula and Early Years Block central expenditure.

9 Recommendations

- 9.1 The Partnership is asked:
- To note the 2014-15 outturn position on the schools budget and individual school balances
 - To note that a more detailed report will come to the Partnership in October regarding school balances
 - To note the current 2015-16 budget position
 - To note the arising cost pressures
 - To note national funding issues and determine whether to respond to the request from the f40 group
 - To agree that no major proposals for change in 2016-17 be made and to agree that the Deprivation calculation used is reviewed and that the Minimum Funding Guarantee is considered as part of the strategic review of school organisation
 - To consider whether a LA-wide exceptional factor is requested for water hygiene costs as per 6.3 – 6.7 above
 - To agree that analysis is undertaken on split site costs as per 6.8 – 6.11 above and brought to the October meeting
 - To agree that analysis is undertaken on prior attainment funding as per 6.12 – 6.14 above and brought to the October meeting

- To note the current position on High Needs and Early Years and that further work is being undertaken

PETE DWYER

Corporate Director – Children and Young People’s Service

APPENDIX A

School Funding Briefing Paper – May 2015

This Briefing Paper outlines the f40's view of the current school funding situation.

1. The f40 group represents 36 English local authorities with historically low funding for education. We have been campaigning for a fairer system for the allocation of funding for schools for nearly two decades. Our aim has been to influence a change in the way the government allocates funding to local education authorities and schools. We maintain that:

- The existing funding model has no rationale and is clearly unfair. Mainstream school funding has become more and more of a 'mess' with a tangle of funding caught up in the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) and capping. There is no rationale for the funding of Early Years or High Needs either. A new start is needed.
- The inconsistencies in funding for individual schools with similar characteristics across the country are too great.
- A national funding formula allocating the same funding for all mainstream pupils nationally would resolve the problem of a child attracting very different levels of funding if they attend a school on one side of a local authority boundary rather than another.
- Schools in low funded areas have inevitably had to prioritise meeting their core costs and have struggled to improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils as a consequence. Fair funding will enable schools to be judged fairly on the outcomes their pupils achieve.

2. The case for fair funding for schools has been made, and was fully accepted by the former Coalition Government. It acknowledged the problem, agreeing that the existing system is unjustifiable and unfair. It promised a new national funding formula at some stage following the May 2015 election. The Lib Dem and Conservative parties made commitments to fair funding in their election manifestos.

3. Following the Conservative Party's significant win on May 7th we will now be looking to them to deliver on their manifesto promises that the extra funds provided for 2015-16 will be base-lined in future budgets and that it will introduce a new national funding formula as quickly as possible.

4. f40 has been proactive in developing a solution to the problem of unfair funding. We want a new national funding framework introduced from 2016-17 and have presented proposals to the government based on the following key principles and features:

- A formula for distributing the national budget for schools based on a clear rationale: from 2016-17 education funding can be geared towards improving educational standards across the country rather than perpetuating an inequitable distribution of the national budget.

- Core entitlement at a pupil level as the main building block to enable a school to have access to similar resource levels for a child's basic classroom costs i.e. the share of a teacher and teaching assistant. The core entitlement will reflect different needs and costs at the various Key Stages.
- Factors to reflect pupil level needs beyond the core entitlement (e.g. deprivation and high incidence Special Educational Needs (SEN)) and factors to reflect the needs of small schools that are necessary in a local authority's structure.
- The existing Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) structure will continue, with blocks for Schools, Early Years and High Needs, with each element based on a proper formula. Local authorities, with the advice of the local Schools Forum, would be free to move funding between the three blocks.

5. In July 2014, the government announced that an extra £390m will be allocated to the poorest funded authorities in 2015-16. Just over half of this additional funding will benefit 40 member authorities. Whilst 40 welcomed the additional funding it expressed concern that the methodology for allocating the extra cash is flawed, in particular because it is solely based on the Schools Block of the DSG. This has resulted in significant allocations to authorities, including some that are already comparatively well-funded, whilst some very low funded authorities will receive little or no increase. 40's view is that fair funding will only be achieved by introducing a formula-based approach covering the whole of DSG. The introduction of a funding model based only on the mainstream schools budgets still leaves an allocation system that is neither transparent nor fair.

6. We wish to see this new formula-based approach introduced from 2016-17 and phased in over a three year period. We appreciate the need for year-on-year changes to be manageable for individual schools but contend that, should ministers wish to continue some form of MFG for schools, greater flexibility will be needed in order to manage the position where budget allocations through MFG are clearly excessive for some schools and avoid a lengthy transition period which then perpetuates unfair funding.

7. We acknowledge that the government is not yet able to offer certainty about funding beyond 2015-16. However, this leaves local authorities and Schools Forums with real difficulties in financial planning. It is absolutely essential that, as promised, the extra funding is base-lined in budgets for future years.

8. Schools are managing major cost increases in 2015-16 - at a time of 'flat cash' funding settlements, particularly:

- ✓ September 2014's 1% pay increase for teachers (typically, teacher's salaries account for 65% of school costs)
- ✓ The increase to non-teaching staff pay from January 2015
- ✓ The increase in the employer's superannuation contribution from 14.1% to 16.4% from September 2015
- ✓ The introduction of a flat rate state pension from April 2016, the impact of which will be to increase schools' costs of in excess of 2% for teaching staff and most ancillary staff.
- ✓ Reduction in the Education Services grant.
- ✓ For schools with sixth forms, a continuing reduction in sixth form funding

- ✓ Energy, fuel and other cost increases.

It is imperative that these cost pressures are fully taken into account in the Spending Review for 2016-17 onwards. Without additional funding a typical secondary school will need to identify compensating savings of around £500,000, the equivalent of ten teachers.

9. f40 wants to secure a firm commitment that a fair national funding formula, along the lines the group has proposed, will be fully delivered in 2016-17. The group has always acknowledged that rectifying the root funding inequity will be politically difficult, but the first steps in the right direction have now been taken to secure the life chances of children in f40 areas.

10. f40 has welcomed the support for fair funding given by many key organisations involved in education, including ASCL, NAHT and NAG. We hope that everyone interested in our children's education will play their part to maintain pressure on the government to deliver a new national funding formula.

Date of meeting:	Wednesday 16 September 2015
Title of report:	Falling Rolls and Pupil Growth Contingency Review
Type of report: Delete as required	For decision
Executive summary: Including reason for submission	<p>The Falling Rolls and Pupil Growth contingency budgets were introduced in the 2014-15 financial year. When the Schools Forum endorsed the criteria for both budgets, it was on the understanding that a review would be undertaken after the completion of the first year to ensure that the criteria achieved what it was intended to.</p> <p>This report summarises that review, addresses a number of issues raised by the Funding Reform sub-group and colleagues in Children and Young People's Service, and informs the Partnership of the use of both budgets in 2014-15.</p>
Budget / Risk implications:	None
Recommendations:	That the North Yorkshire Education partnership endorses the proposals.
Voting requirements:	Schools and non-schools
Appendices: To be attached	N/A
Report originator and contact details:	<p>Jayne Laver – Accountant, Integrated Finance Tel: 01609 534416 E-mail: jayne.laver@northyorks.gov.uk</p>
Presenting officer: If not the originator	Helen Coulthard – Head of Finance for Schools and Projects

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Falling Rolls and Pupil Growth contingency budgets were introduced in the 2014-15 financial year. When the Schools Forum endorsed the criteria for both budgets, it was on the understanding that a review would be undertaken after the completion of the first year to ensure that the criteria achieved what it was intended to. This report summarises that review and addresses a number of issues raised by the Funding Reform sub-group and colleagues in Children and Young People's Service.

2.0 FALLING ROLLS

2.1 DfE Guidance

- 2.1.1 The DfE allows local authorities to topslice the DSG in order to create a "small" fund to support good schools with falling rolls where local planning data shows that the surplus places will be needed in the near future. Criteria for allocating falling rolls funding should contain clear objective trigger points for qualification and a clear formula for calculating allocations.
- 2.1.2 The DfE's guidance¹ has not changed since the NYCC policy was endorsed.

2.2 NYCC's Current Criteria

- 2.2.1 The Fund was established to support good schools experiencing short term falling rolls to deliver an appropriate curriculum and to avoid the need to take costly steps to reduce capacity when the demographic data shows that capacity will need to expand again in the near future.
- 2.2.2 The fund is ring fenced for use to support both maintained schools and recoupment academies² that meet the agreed criteria.
- 2.2.3 The contingency cannot be used to support schools with permanently falling rolls as a result of unpopularity or a permanently reduced school aged population.
- 2.2.4 Schools must meet all of the following criteria to access funding:
- i. be judged Good or Outstanding at their last Ofsted inspection;
 - ii. be classed as a "necessary"³ school;
 - iii. be experiencing temporary falling rolls (as determined by planning data held by the Local Authority);
 - iv. pupil rolls must have fallen by at least 15% for primary and 25% for secondary over the previous three years (base year less base year minus 3 years); and

¹ Latest version - Schools revenue Funding 2016 to 2017 Criteria for allocating the growth fund, falling rolls fund and targeted high needs funding V1: July 2015.

² A recoupment academy is a school that converted after 2008; Free Schools and those schools that converted to academy status prior to this are known as non-recoupment academies and cannot be supported by the Falling Rolls fund.

³ A "necessary" school is defined as "one which, based on pupil place planning, the local authority considers is and will continue to be required in order to ensure that the Local Authority can meet its statutory duty under the Education Act (EA) 1996, Section 14 to secure sufficient schools in their area or under Section 14 (3A) added by Section 2 of the Education and Inspections Act (EIA) 2006 to secure diversity of provision of schools and to increase opportunities for parental choice."

Falling Rolls and Pupil Growth Review

- v. pupil numbers are expected to increase in the next three years (as at base year plus 3) to at least the average of the previous three years (base year minus 1 to base year minus 3).
- 2.2.5 Funding is based on the AWPU values (for secondary schools the average of the KS3 and KS4 values will be used).
- 2.2.6 The advice of the Lead for Admissions and the Strategic Planning Manager will be sought in all cases before the Finance Manager – Schools and Early Years⁴ makes a recommendation. If the case is supported and the above criteria are met, the school will be notionally allocated funding.
- 2.2.7 Funding approval must be sought from the Schools Forum or its sub-group in all cases.
- 2.2.8 The Schools Forum oversees the use of the funds and funding decisions relating to the fund will be reported on a regular basis. Should it become clear that the fund is likely to overspend, the agreement of the Forum or its sub group to overspend will be required. Any overspend will either be off-set against underspends elsewhere in the DSG or deducted from the following year's ISB.
- 2.2.9 Any unspent funding at the end of the financial year can be carried forward to the following year to be used for the same purpose.
- 2.2.10 In the academic year when falling rolls occur, the school will receive 7/12's of funding at the previous census level. The falling rolls payment will therefore be made in the later part of the academic year – the next financial year. (A falling roll intake in 2014 will be a claim in the financial year 2015-2016).
- 2.3 Use of the Fund in 2014-15
- 2.3.1 Only one application was received in 2014-15. Whilst that application met four of the five criteria, it did not meet the criterion for regrowth. No funding was allocated to schools in 2014-15.
- 2.4 Review
- 2.4.1 The review is based on two main issues:
- i. The Funding Reform Group raised concerns that the % threshold level for the fall in pupil numbers used in the NYCC criteria was set too high at 25% for secondary schools.
 - ii. The value of the potential allocation to a single secondary school would utilise the fund in full.
- 2.4.2 Whilst addressing these issues, it was also an opportunity to compare NYCC's criteria to those of other local authorities to see if there is any good practice that could be modelled.
- 2.4.3 Any change to the methodology will require the endorsement of both the North Yorkshire Education Partnership and the EFA.

⁴ Following a restructure of the County Council's Finance function, now the Head of Finance for Schools and Projects.

2.5 Findings

- 2.5.1 Research into the criteria employed by other local authorities did not highlight any significant elements that it is felt should be considered under this review other than the following:
- i. Some LAs require schools to demonstrate that they are unable to fund the request themselves (with budgetary evidence) or that the falling rolls will create a substantial disruption to the education provision at the school. The Children and Young People's Service already identifies schools at the earliest opportunity that are likely to experience challenging circumstances that would give cause for concern and determines a programme of support which may include, amongst other things, a curriculum review to ensure that a sustainable curriculum can still be provided. It is proposed that the view of colleagues in Education and Skills will be sought in relation to future applications.
 - ii. Following on from (i), the consideration of year end balances. The NYCC criteria states that a school's balance would not be taken into consideration unless it was excessive and in danger of contravening the Balances Control Scheme. It was not the intention to penalise schools for managing their finances effectively – some of which may be committed to a future project – but it was acknowledged that it would not be appropriate to allocate further funds to a school that was in danger of having funding recovered. However, given that the funding for the Falling Rolls contingency is top-sliced DSG and any requirement to increase the fund in the future would require NYEP approval to a further top-slice so reducing the overall ISB for all schools, it seems prudent to assume that some of a school's balance should be applied. It is proposed that where a school's balance had reached 15% in the previous financial year, this would be taken into consideration.
 - iii. The application of a maximum allocation. Given the £300k value of the annual budget and the concern that the fund could be used up by a single application, it is proposed to introduce a maximum cap to any one allocation.
 - iv. The application of a minimum threshold for the reduction in pupil numbers below which the cost of falling rolls would be expected to be absorbed by the school. A number of other LAs have suggested that it is not unreasonable for a school to absorb a 5% reduction in pupil numbers in one year. NYCC has not applied this but given (i) the value of the budget and (ii) that a number of schools are experiencing falling rolls and managing that fall within their three year budget planning cycle without the need to request additional financial support, consideration has been given to introducing a minimum threshold. However, rather than applying a threshold, a proposal is made under paragraph 2.5.5.ii to limit the allocation to 75% of the calculation.
- 2.5.2 In a number of respects, the research endorsed the decisions taken by NYCC, in particular:
- i. Applying the Ofsted rating from the latest inspection – a number of other LAs are applying the rating from the previous October census date which would prevent any school which had secured a Good or Outstanding rating from a lower position since from applying.
 - ii. The decision not to use the school's PAN which can be unreliable and for which there is no scientific calculation for its determination.
 - iii. Applying a clear criterion relating to regrowth. Other LAs are either not stipulating a requirement or are applying a broad definition of growth, in one

Falling Rolls and Pupil Growth Review

instance, referring to “the continuing existence of the school within the next seven years”.

2.5.3 In terms of the 25% threshold for the fall in pupil numbers, the current criterion has been modelled on the latest available pupil data for each of the secondary schools and academies in North Yorkshire. The findings were:

- i. At 25% only one school would qualify for Falling Rolls support. This school had been identified at an early stage as experiencing challenging circumstances and has been subject to additional support. As such, the school would be unlikely to receive Falling Rolls funding as well.
- ii. The % level would have to fall below 7.5% for another school to qualify.
- iii. The value of funding which would be allocated under the existing criteria for the one qualifying school would be £278k (115 pupil places), almost 93% of the overall budget.

The proposal is made to reduce the threshold for the fall in pupil numbers for secondary schools to 15% in line with that used for primary schools. To reduce the threshold further would potentially lead to more qualifying schools; schools which have been seen to be managing the fall from within their existing resources.

2.5.4 Following on from this, a review of the growth criterion was undertaken. Instead of applying the average of the pupil roll of the previous three years, 50% of the overall reduction over the previous three years was applied. The results remained the same. However, it is proposed that we revise the criterion to use the 50% calculation for clarity.

2.5.5 In terms of the value of any allocation, it is proposed that:

- i. The allocation is seen as a contribution towards the management of the falling roll by the school and is not intended to meet the full cost.
- ii. The calculation of the contribution will continue to be based upon the average of the key stage AWPU's for the secondary phase multiplied by the number of pupil places required between the current year and growth forecast figure at the end of three years. This actual contribution will be 75% of this value so acknowledging that it is not unreasonable for a school to experience some fall in numbers and to manage that fall from within their own resources.

3.0 PUPIL GROWTH

3.1 DfE Guidance

3.1.1 In its *Schools revenue funding 2015 to 2016 operational guide v3 October 2014*, the DfE extended its compliant criteria to include that the growth fund may not be used to support general growth due to popularity. This needs to be reflected in North Yorkshire's Pupil Growth Fund criteria.

3.1.2 In determining any application to access the Pupil Growth fund, this needs to be borne in mind and careful consideration needs to be given as to how popularity is evidenced. It is proposed to undertake:

- i. An analysis of pupil numbers of the schools in the same area as any applying school; and
- ii. An assessment of socio-economic factors which may affect growth including housing developments, etc.

Also, the advice of Strategic Planning and Admissions will be sought.

3.2 NYCC's Current Criteria

- 3.2.1 The Pupil Growth Fund exists to support schools experiencing exceptional pre-16 pupil growth in relation to basic need in both maintained schools and recoument academies.
- 3.2.2 The fund is allocated to support the revenue budget impact of pupil growth and cannot be used to meet any related capital expenditure such as the remodelling of existing accommodation.
- 3.2.3 It is ring fenced and cannot be used to support growth in under-5 or post-16 pupils, changes in a school's age range or the transfer of pupils from closing schools, schools experiencing fluctuations in pupil numbers that would normally be managed as part of the budget planning process or schools in financial difficulty.
- 3.2.4 The current criterion covers:
- i. Class expansion to meet basic need
 - ii. In year pupil number increases
 - iii. New schools
- 3.2.5 It was determined that a school's revenue balance would only be considered if it was deemed to be excessive and, therefore, at risk of contravening the DfE's limits (Balances Control Scheme). Where this is the case, the school would be expected to meet the cost of pupil variances from that balance.

3.3 Use of the Fund in 2014-15

- 3.3.1 The table below illustrates the use of the budget in the previous financial year.

	Nos	£	£
Pupil Growth budget 2014-15			200,000
Number of applications received (all primary)	10		
Number of applications not progressed by the school	1		
Number of applications approved and funding allocated	4	111,353	
Number of applications that did not meet funding criteria	5		
Pupil Growth underspend carried forward to 2015-16			88,647

3.4 Review

- 3.4.1 As well as taking account of the changes to the DfE's guidance (highlighted in paragraph 3.1.1), this review will also address a number of issues that have been raised by colleagues in schools and other parts of Children and Young People's Service in the last year:
- i. Pupil growth in service schools as a result of significant troop movements; and
 - ii. Pupil growth in secondary schools.

- 3.4.2 Any change to the methodology will require the endorsement of both the North Yorkshire Education Partnership and the EFA.
- 3.5 Class Expansion to meet Basic Need
- 3.5.1 The only call on the Pupil Growth Fund in 2014-15 has been in relation to primary phase class expansions resulting from basic need.
- 3.5.2 The methodology has proved to work; it is clear and simple to understand. In evaluating an application to the Pupil Growth Fund, a school's class structure and class sizes have been assessed to ensure that an additional class is, indeed, required. We have based this on ensuring that class sizes are of, on average, about 30. Schools have often been creative in their restructuring in order to manage pupil growth from within existing resources, for example, having mixed year group classes.
- 3.5.3 Consideration has also been given to extenuating factors that prevent a school from reaching an average class size of about 30 such as the size of the school and the capacity of its classrooms.
- 3.5.4 Whilst it is felt that this has worked well in 2014-15, research has been undertaken into the methodologies used by other local authorities to see if there is any good practice that could be modelled. However, it was found that, of those researched, a number of local authorities have either adopted a similar set of criteria to North Yorkshire or have had to completely review their original methodologies as they have proved to be financially unsustainable.
- 3.5.5 As such, given that the NYCC methodology has been proven to work and research has not highlighted any more appropriate options, it is proposed not to change the methodology for class expansion to meet basic need but to categorise this for the Primary phase only.
- 3.5.6 However, the funding level may be considered generous at £29k. This is calculated on the basis of a mainscale teacher at SP4 with no additional allowances (£19.6k) and a GTA at B4 (37hrs fte for 39wks), pro-rated (£9.4k). This assumes that a school would recruit a TA to work with each class which may not necessarily be the case. Given the pressure on the Pupil Growth Fund over the next few years, it is proposed to allocate the funding to support the additional teacher required, with a top up to £25k for the school to use as a contribution towards either resources or additional TA support.
- 3.6 In Year Pupil Number Increases
- 3.6.1 The NYCC criterion for in year growth is the same as for class expansion. No applications have been received in relation to this in 2014-15 so, again, it is not proposed to change this criterion.
- 3.7 New Schools
- 3.7.1 The criteria for supporting the pre-opening and diseconomies of scale costs of a new school were only agreed in September 2014. This criterion is being applied to the new build primary school that is progressing in the Selby area.
- 3.7.2 It is not proposed to review the criterion for new schools at this stage. Once the Selby project is complete, a review will be undertaken to consider how successful this criterion was in its application. As part of that review, Finance will undertake

Falling Rolls and Pupil Growth Review

research into how other local authorities are applying their Pupil Growth Funds for new schools.

- 3.7.3 The EFA has not provided any guidance to LAs on how to address the funding of new schools other than stating the responsibility for pre-opening and diseconomies of scale costs lies with LAs.

3.8 Service Schools

- 3.8.1 No other local authority has been found that has singled service schools and significant troop movements out as a separate growth issue.
- 3.8.2 In 2015-16 funding has been committed to support two schools in the Catterick Garrison area and one in Ripon (all primary) where troop movements will result in a net increase in pupil numbers. The funding allocated equates to the establishment of two additional classes in each of the Catterick schools and one in the Ripon school. These additional classes have been established from the start of this term.
- 3.8.3 This methodology appears to be effective and so it is proposed not to have a separate set of criteria for service schools but to treat them under that for class expansion and growth in secondary schools.

3.9 Growth in Secondary Schools

- 3.9.1 When the Pupil Growth Fund was first under consideration, it was decided to concentrate on the primary phase as this was where Strategic Planning data was forecasting growth to be most significant at that time.
- 3.9.2 Despite data showing a continuing fall in pupil numbers in the secondary phase, a small number of secondary schools are experiencing growth. It is expected that the decline in secondary pupil numbers is likely to plateau in 2017-18. As such, a secondary growth criteria is now required.
- 3.9.3 The methodology used for primary class expansion cannot be applied for the secondary phase given that the nature of provision varies significantly between the two. Numbers in secondary schools are much higher and the curriculum more varied for us to equate numbers to additional class requirements. Secondary schools also have greater flexibility around provision.
- 3.9.4 Only one local authority has been found that has established a set of secondary growth criteria. This compares the pupil numbers in the transitional years only, i.e. between those leaving in Year 11 and those arriving in Year 7 in the following term. Whilst the main variance in pupil numbers is likely to be between the Year 11 leavers and the Year 7 starters, this methodology takes no account of any changes in the year groups in-between.
- 3.9.5 The proposed secondary growth criterion is as follows:
- i. Determine the nature of the growth, i.e. that it is not due to “popularity” or “a more permanent and significant change” or “exceptional circumstances” (i.e. troop movements which may not be a permanent change):
 - Identify if there is a similar pattern across other schools in the area
 - Identify if the growth is resulting from capacity issues in other schools in the area and/or appeals outcomes
 - Identify if there has been any housing development in the school's catchment area that has resulted in an increase in pupil admissions (at any point in the school year)

Falling Rolls and Pupil Growth Review

- Identify if this growth is in relation to any seasonal related growth and is, therefore, possibly a short term increase in numbers which will, in a short period of time, fall back down to previous levels.

If the growth is as a result of the school being popular and attracting pupils from the catchment areas of other schools that have the capacity to admit them, Pupil Growth funding would not be allocated.

If at least one of the above applies, Pupil Growth funding could be allocated if other criteria were also met.

- ii. Where growth across years 7 to 11 on the previous academic year exceeds 25%, funding will be allocated on the basis of a contribution of £50k. The funding will be a one-off as the additional pupils will be funded through the school funding formula from the following financial year.
 - iii. A school's revenue balance would only be considered if it was at least 15% at the end of the previous financial year. In such cases, the school would be expected to meet the cost of pupil variances from their balance before it was utilised for any other purpose.
- 3.9.6 At present, none of the small number of secondary schools experiencing growth meets the criteria for funding to be allocated.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Falling Rolls

4.1.1 The following recommendations are made in relation to the Falling Rolls criteria:

- i. That the views of Education and Skills will be sought as to whether or not the falling roll will create a substantial disruption to the education provision at the school.
- ii. To reduce the secondary reduction threshold of 25% to 15% in line with the primary threshold.
- iii. To revise the re-growth criterion to be applied to 50% of the overall reduction over the previous three years.
- iv. The introduction of the consideration of the school's balance should it reach at least 15% in the previous financial year.
- v. That any funding allocated be acknowledged as a contribution towards the management of the temporary fall in pupil numbers.
- vi. The contribution to be 75% of the calculated amount.

4.2 Pupil Growth

4.2.1 The following recommendations are made in relation to the Pupil Growth criteria:

- i. Not to change the methodology for class expansion to meet basic need but to categorise this for the Primary phase only.
- ii. To reduce the funding allocation for primary class expansion to £25k per additional class.
- iii. Not to change the criterion for in year pupil increases.
- iv. Not to change the criterion for new schools but to undertake a review once the Selby new school project has been completed.
- v. Not to introduce a separate set of criteria for service schools but to apply the criterion for class expansion to meet basic need (primary) and secondary growth.

- vi. To introduce a set of criteria for growth in secondary schools as set out in paragraph 3.9.

PETE DWYER

Corporate Director – Children and Young People’s Service



**NORTH YORKSHIRE
EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP**

Date of meeting:	Wednesday 16 September 2015
Title of report:	Traded Services Update
Type of report: Delete as required	For information only
Executive summary: Including reason for submission	A synopsis of the Traded Services Panel meeting held on 16 June 2015.
Budget / Risk implications:	
Recommendations:	That the Partnership notes the contents of the report
Voting requirements:	N/A
Appendices: To be attached	N/A
Report originator and contact details:	Bryony Clark – SmartSolutions Bryony.clark@northyorks.gov.uk 01609 533222
Presenting officer: If not the originator	Anton Hodge – Assistant Director, Strategic Resources / Ian Yapp – Chair of the Traded Services Panel

Traded Services Panel

Synopsis of the meeting held on 16th June 2015

The synopsis below will provide you with a summary of what was discussed at the Traded Services Panel meeting.

There are currently 3 vacancies on the Traded Services Panel: 1 representative for primary schools, 1 representative for secondary schools and 1 representative for governors. If you are interested in taking up one of these positions, please contact Bryony Clark via bryony.clark@northyorks.gov.uk

Employment Support Service

Kirstie Paterson, the Head of Employment Support Service, updated the panel on key changes to the service over the past year. A new phone system, team structure and training team have been introduced. The training team is for new starters and to up-skill all staff. The Wednesday morning closure, which was introduced in January 2015, has helped the service focus on training and development.

Statistics were presented to panel members, which showed that the error rates have remained below 3% since December and that there has been an increase in the answer rate of calls to the service over the past 10 months.

Training for RAS schools has moved from the HR Service to ESS from June 2015, all schools should have been contacted and the service will be visiting schools in September. A trial with schools to have increased access to MyView is also taking place in June and July. This will be discussed in more detail at the autumn term meeting.

Property Service

Jon Holden, Investments and Delivery Manager, informed the panel of developments in the Property Service, including the transition to a multi-function Facilities Management Service. A new two-year Water Hygiene & Legionella package has also been made available to all schools.

The Authority has recently undertaken a re-procurement exercise in respect of the provision of PE and External Play Equipment inspection services. As a result Sportsafe UK have been appointed and are now undertaking the service for those schools who subscribe, which is now via the MASS Scheme.

Sportsafe have been appointed to undertake the inspection of equipment only. Although schools are able to commission Sportsafe to repair existing equipment or provide new equipment, they are under no commitment to do so and are able to contact other organisations in accordance with the FMS rules.

The County Council will monitor the performance of Sportsafe in the provision of its services, as it does with all other works and framework contractors.

Sportsafe have undertaken a programme of inspections of external play equipment within schools. This programme was undertaken following 3 incidences of failure within external play equipment and advice being offered by the County Council that external play equipment that had been installed more than 7 years previously should be inspected.

Financial Report 2014-15

2014-15 saw strong financial performance across most of the SmartSolutions traded services. The net surplus for traded services was £598k, before the allocation of some central overhead costs, with only 6 of the 22 services failing to make a positive return.

The largest deficit was incurred in the Building Cleaning Service (£250k). This was an unplanned-for loss and solely due to the higher-than-anticipated pay award in December 2014 which was a particular cost to services with staff on lower pay bands. The service will be combining with grounds and catering during 2015-16 and, with reduced overheads, is expected to reverse the overspend.

Net underspend for the three insurance services was just over £1m. These are treated separately from the traded services as balances are used to manage fluctuations in demand and cost.

Turnover in 2013-14 was £45m. This increased to £46.8m in 2014-15.

Inclusive Education Service

Andi Henderson, the Lead Educational Psychologist, came to the meeting to discuss the new partly traded Educational Psychology service, which was launched on SmartSolutions in April. The service is working with parents and the Relationship Managers are contacting schools to make it clear what will be core and what will be traded. The panel will be updated at the next meeting on further developments in Inclusive Education.

SmartSolutions General Update

Susie Whitaker, the Performance and Quality Officer in SmartSolutions, provided an update on the key focusses of SmartSolutions since the last Traded Services Panel meeting in February. SmartSolutions have launched 5 new Traded Services to the Early Years Sector, have assisted schools with the 'buy back' of 2015/2016 Traded Services SLA's and launched the Education Psychology Service.

Queries & Issues

The Queries & Issues letter that is sent to schools prior to the Traded Services Panel will be amended to clearly explain the process of what will happen when a query is sent for discussion at the meeting. When a school sends a query they have, it will be forwarded to the relevant service and they will respond to the query directly to the school and then subsequently this response will be shared at the Panel meeting. It was decided at the meeting that individual and wider responses need to be included, for example the service would need to be asked if the query is something that they would need to review more widely in order to improve the service to other customers.

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Date of meeting:	Wednesday 16 September 2015
Title of report:	North Yorkshire Provisional School Outcomes 2015 – Early Indications
Type of report: Delete as required	For information only
Executive summary: Including reason for submission	<p>To provide an early indication of school outcomes in 2015 which will be used to support strategic planning. The report includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of the data – interpret with caution • Early Years Foundation Stage Profile achievement • Key stage 1 attainment • Key stage 2 attainment and progress • Comparisons with other LAs - attainment • GCSE attainment and progress • A level attainment • Floor standards • Coasting schools • Closing the gap • Ofsted outcomes • Early actions being taken in response to early indications of 2015 results
Budget / Risk implications:	N/A
Recommendations:	Provisional data and early indications from schools – interpret with caution. Updated results will be shared with the Education Partnership and Improvement Partnerships as it becomes available.
Voting requirements:	N/A
Appendices: To be attached	North Yorkshire Provisional School Outcomes 2015
Report originator and contact details:	<p>Kirsty Hallett – Lead Adviser, Standards and Research kirsty.hallett@northyorks.gov.uk 01609 798635</p>
Presenting officer: If not the originator	Jill Hodges – Assistant Director, Education and Skills

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an early indication of the 2015 North Yorkshire school outcomes which will be used to support strategic planning.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Status of the data - interpret with caution.

All data in this report is provisional and from a variety of sources, and is subject to change following remarks and adjustment at key stages 2, 4 and 5.

In particular, the GCSE and A level data are early indication figures provided from schools on results days, with some known errors and omissions currently being checked by schools.

- 2.2 2015 was the final year of the current key stage 1 and key stage 2 tests and teacher assessment using National Curriculum levels. From summer 2016, new tests will be used for 7 and 11 year olds which will return a scaled score. For 2016, it is not yet known how Teacher Assessment (for example of key stage 2 writing) will be recorded, or how progress will be measured from National Curriculum level at key stage 1 to the new scaled score at key stage 2. Most schools have chosen to administer the new Early Years Baseline in early autumn 2015; the Baseline will be used as the starting point for progress in accountability measures for primary schools from autumn 2016.
- 2.3 At GCSE the accountability methodology for schools is in a transitional year, with 9 North Yorkshire schools having opted in early to be held accountable to the new Progress 8 measure which will apply to all schools in 2016. For 2015 results, those 9 schools' GCSE A*- C results are included in the overall figures for North Yorkshire.
- 2.4 At A level, most sixth forms in North Yorkshire deliver predominantly an academic programme of study, but some have a high number of vocational entries with implications for the methodology applied to published accountability measures.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Updated attainment and progress data will be provided as it becomes available from appropriate validated data feeds.

PETE DWYER

Corporate Director – Children and Young People's Service

North Yorkshire School Outcomes 2015 – Early Indications**Contents:**

- Status of the data – interpret with caution
- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile achievement
- Key stage 1 attainment
- Phonics
- Key stage 2 attainment and progress
- Comparisons with other LAs - attainment
- GCSE attainment and progress
- A level attainment
- Floor standards
- Coasting schools
- Closing the gap
- Ofsted outcomes
- Early actions being taken in response to early indications of 2015 results

Status of the data - interpret with caution

All data in this report is provisional from a variety of sources, and is subject to change following remarks and adjustment at key stages 2, 4 and 5. In particular, the GCSE and A level data are early indication figures provided from schools on results days, with some known errors and omissions currently being checked by schools.

2015 was the final year of the current key stage 1 and key stage 2 tests and teacher assessment using National Curriculum levels. From summer 2016, new tests will be used for 7 and 11 year olds which will return a scaled score. For 2016, it is not yet known how Teacher Assessment (for example of key stage 2 writing) will be recorded, or how progress will be measured from National Curriculum level at Key Stage 1 to the new scaled score at Key Stage 2. Most schools have chosen to administer the new Early Years Baseline in early autumn 2015; the Baseline will be used as the starting point for progress in accountability measures for primary schools from autumn 2016.

At GCSE the accountability methodology for schools is in a transitional year, with 9 North Yorkshire schools having opted in early to be held accountable to the new Progress 8 measure which will apply to all schools in 2016. For 2015 results, those 9 schools' GCSE A*- C results are included in the overall figures for North Yorkshire.

At A Level, most sixth forms in North Yorkshire deliver predominantly an academic programme of study, but some have a high number of vocational entries with implications for the methodology applied to published accountability measures.

In this report percentage point difference is shown by the % symbol when describing change over time.

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

The percentage of 5 year olds who have achieved a good level of development (GLD) is slightly above national for the second year, and has improved at a rate in line with national. This confirms the restoration of North Yorkshire to its position of being broadly in line with national; the low outcomes in the first year of the new assessment in 2013 were atypical.

% GLD	13	14	15	Improvement 2014/15
National	52	60.2	66.1	5.9
North Yorkshire	43.7	60.9	66.5	5.6
Difference	-8.3	0.7	0.4	

Key stage 1 attainment

The percentage of 7 year olds who have attained level 2 above continues to be above national, with slightly more rapid improvement than national.

Gender: Attainment of girls continues to be higher than attainment for boys, in all aspects other than maths L3+. However, early figures suggest that whilst outcomes for boys improved in almost all aspects, the attainment of girls did not always improve as rapidly and declined at level 3 for all of reading, writing and maths.

% reading L2+	13	14	15	Improvement 2014/15
National	89	90	90.6	0.6
North Yorkshire	89.2	90.2	91.1	0.9
Difference	0.2	0.2	0.5	
% writing L2+	13	14	15	Improvement 2014/15
National	85	86	87.7	1.7
North Yorkshire	85.9	86.7	88.7	2
Difference	0.9	0.7	1	
% maths L2+	13	14	15	Improvement 2014/15
National	91	92	92.9	0.9
North Yorkshire	92.1	92.7	94.2	1.5
Difference	1.1	0.7	1.3	

Phonics

The proportion of Year 1 pupils working at the expected level in 2015 is 77%, below the provisional national average of 73%. The proportion of pupils working at the expected level by the end of Year 2 is 71%, no national comparator is yet available.

Key stage 2 attainment

Level 4+: North Yorkshire is again 1% below provisional national for the combined headline figure of reading, writing and mathematics at level 4 or above (RWM 4+). Whilst reading and writing are in line with the provisional national proportion of pupils at level 4+, outcomes in mathematics level 4+ are 2% below the provisional national. Outcomes in English grammar, punctuation and spelling at level 4 or above (GPS 4+) are 3.6% below national.

North Yorkshire outcomes have improved by 1.8% for pupils attaining RWM4+, and by 2% for pupils attaining 4+ for writing. Less strong improvement is evident in reading and maths at 4+.

% RWM L4+	13	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	76	78	79.9	1.9
North Yorkshire	73.3	77	78.8	1.8
Difference	-2.7	-1	-1.1	
% reading L4+	13	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	86	88	89	1
North Yorkshire	84.6	88.1	88.8	0.7
Difference	-1.4	0.1	-0.2	
% writing L4+	13	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	83	85	86.7	1.7
North Yorkshire	82.5	84.7	86.7	2
Difference	-0.5	-0.3	0	
% maths L4+	13	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	85	85	86.8	1.8
North Yorkshire	82	84.5	84.8	0.3
Difference	-3	-0.5	-2	
% EGPS L4+	13	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	74	76	80	4
North Yorkshire	69.7	73.8	76.4	2.6
Difference	-4.3	-2.2	-3.6	

Level 5+: North Yorkshire is 0.7% below provisional national for the combined reading, writing and mathematics at level 5 or above (RWM5+). Outcomes in maths level 5+ are 1.7% below national, and reading and writing are slightly below.

At the higher level of % pupils attaining RWM5+, there has been no overall change. Although the % of pupils attaining L5+ for writing increased by 2%, there was a decline of 2% for reading and of half a percent for maths.

2015 School Outcomes – Early Indications

Gender: Attainment of girls continues to be higher than attainment for boys. However, early figures suggest that whilst outcomes for boys improved in almost all aspects, the attainment of girls did not always improve as rapidly and declined in maths.

% RWM L5+	13	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	18	23	24	1
North Yorkshire	20.4	23.4	23.3	-0.1
Difference	2.4	0.4	-0.7	
% reading L5+	13	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	45	49	48.1	-0.9
North Yorkshire	45.2	49.9	47.8	-2.1
Difference	+0.2	+0.9	-0.3	
% writing L5+	13	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	30	33	35.8	+2.8
North Yorkshire	30.5	33.0	35.1	+2.1
Difference	+0.5	0	-0.7	
% maths L5+	13	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	41	42	41.1	-0.9
North Yorkshire	37.7	39.9	39.4	-0.5
Difference	-3.3	-2.1	-1.7	
% EGPS L5+	13	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	48	52	55.4	+3.4
North Yorkshire	42.1	48.5	50.0	+1.5
Difference	-5.9	-3.5	-5.4	

Key Stage 2 Progress

There has been little change in the proportion of pupils making expected progress in reading, writing or mathematics nationally.

In North Yorkshire, outcomes in reading and writing remain in line with national. However, the percentage making expected progress in maths has declined from 88% in 2014 to 87% in 2015, meaning North Yorkshire is 3% below the national average of 90% and is in the bottom quartile of Local Authorities for this measure.

% reading EP	13	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	88	91	91	0
North Yorkshire	87	91	91	0
Difference	-1	0	0	
% writing EP	13	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	91	93	94	+1
North Yorkshire	91	93	94	+1
Difference	0	0	0	

2015 School Outcomes – Early Indications

% maths EP	13	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	88	89	90	+1
North Yorkshire	85	88	87	-1
Difference	-3	-1	-3	

Comparison with other local authorities - attainment

Indicator	Most recent rank out of 150 nationally	Quartile (A highest, D lowest)
EY % GLD (2014)	57	B
KS2 % RWM4+ provisional (2015)	89	C
GCSE 5 A*C including Eng & ma (2014)	29	A
A Level Points Per Entry (2014)	21	A

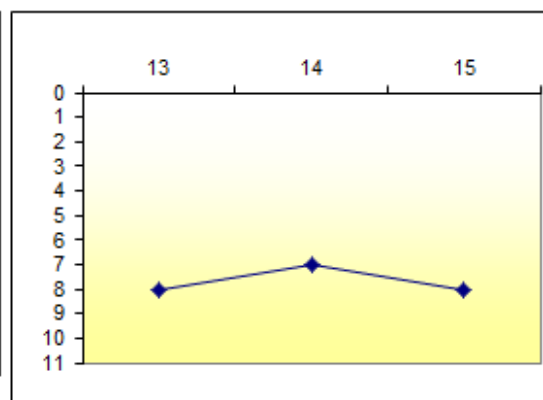
Comparison with other local authorities – progress

Indicator	Most recent rank out of 150 nationally	Quartile (A highest, D lowest)
KS1 – KS2 reading provisional (2015)	72	B
KS1 – KS2 mathematics provisional (2015)	125	D
KS2 – KS4 English (2014)	107	C
KS2 – KS4 mathematics (2014)	46	B

Statistical Neighbours

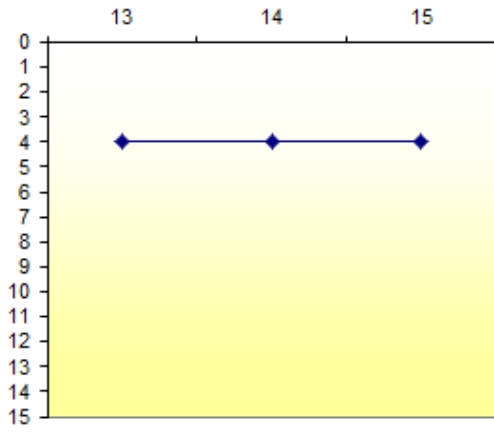
Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above at Key Stage 2 - Reading/Writing/Maths

	13	Rk	14	Rk	15	Rk
Central Bedfordshire	71	10	77	7	77	10
Cheshire East	80	1	83	1	81	3
Cheshire West & Chester	77	3	79	6	81	3
East Riding of Yorkshire	77	3	80	4	81	3
North Yorkshire	73	8	77	7	79	8
Rutland	70	11	71	11	83	2
Staffordshire	75	7	76	9	80	7
Warrington	80	1	83	1	84	1
Warwickshire	77	3	80	4	79	8
West Berkshire	77	3	81	3	81	3
Worcestershire	72	9	76	9	76	11
England	76		78		80	



Yorkshire and Humber								
Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above at Key Stage 2 - Reading/Writing/Maths								
	13	Rk	14	Rk	15	Rk		
Barnsley	71	7	76	6	▲	79	4	▲
Bradford	68	15	71	15	—	74	14	▲
Calderdale	76	3	78	3	—	81	1	▲
Doncaster	72	6	73	14	▼	73	15	▼
East Riding of Yorkshire	77	1	80	1	—	81	1	—
Kingston Upon Hull	70	9	74	10	▼	79	4	▲
Kirklees	70	9	77	4	▲	78	7	▼
Leeds	73	4	75	7	▼	77	10	▼
North East Lincolnshire	69	14	75	7	▲	76	12	▼
North Lincolnshire	70	9	74	10	▼	78	7	▲
North Yorkshire	73	4	77	4	—	79	4	—
Rotherham	70	9	75	7	▲	78	7	—
Sheffield	70	9	74	10	▼	77	10	—
Wakefield	71	7	74	10	▼	76	12	▼
York	77	1	79	2	▼	81	1	▲
Yorkshire and Humber	72		75			77		
England	76		78			80		

North Yorkshire's rank amongst Yrk&Humb neighbou



All Local Authorities in England – large shires, and large shires with coastline highlighted

2015 Key Stage 2	% RWM4+	RANK
ENGLAND (state-funded schools) ⁵	80	
City of London ⁷	*	
Isles of Scilly ⁷	*	
Kensington and Chelsea	90	1
Richmond upon Thames	88	2
Sutton	87	3
Greenwich	86	4
Trafford	86	4
Redcar and Cleveland	86	4
Bromley	85	7
Wokingham	85	7
Camden	85	7
Havering	85	7
Lambeth	85	7
Kingston upon Thames	84	12
Harrow	84	12
Bexley	84	12
Hounslow	84	12
Warrington	84	12
Wigan	84	12
Solihull	83	18
Surrey	83	18
Hertfordshire	83	18
Lewisham	83	18
Redbridge	83	18
Hampshire	83	18
Rutland	83	18
Wandsworth	83	18
Newham	83	18
St Helens	83	18
Hackney	83	18
Tower Hamlets	83	18
Hartlepool	83	18
Buckinghamshire	82	31

2015 School Outcomes – Early Indications

Windsor and Maidenhead	82	32
Hammersmith and Fulham	82	32
Barnet	82	32
Stockport	82	32
Devon	82	32
Brighton and Hove	82	32
County Durham	82	32
Gateshead	82	32
North Tyneside	82	32
Northumberland	82	32
Telford and Wrekin	82	32
Islington	82	32
Bath and North East Somerset	82	32
South Tyneside	82	32
Westminster	82	32
Darlington	82	32
Southwark	82	32
North Somerset	82	32
West Berkshire	81	50
Cheshire West and Chester	81	50
Hillingdon	81	50
Gloucestershire	81	50
Cheshire East	81	50
Calderdale	81	50
Sunderland	81	50
Bolton	81	50
Sefton	81	50
Shropshire	81	50
Lancashire	81	50
East Riding of Yorkshire	81	50
York	81	50
Essex	81	50
Haringey	81	50
Swindon	81	50
South Gloucestershire	81	50
Salford	81	50
Derbyshire	80	68
Merton	80	68
Oxfordshire	80	68
Kent	80	68
Liverpool	80	68
Leicestershire	80	68
Herefordshire, County of	80	68
Staffordshire	80	68
Milton Keynes	80	68
Cumbria	80	68
Wirral	80	68
Nottinghamshire	80	68
Dudley	80	68
Ealing	80	68
Enfield	80	68
Waltham Forest	80	68
Blackburn with Darwen	80	68
Oldham	80	68
Tameside	80	68
East Sussex	80	68
Knowsley	80	68
Bournemouth	79	89
Warwickshire	79	89
Southend on Sea	79	89
Brent	79	89
North Yorkshire	79	89
Wolverhampton	79	89
Barking and Dagenham	79	89
Southampton	79	89

2015 School Outcomes – Early Indications

Cornwall	79	89
Stockton-on-Tees	79	89
Torbay	79	89
Bury	79	89
Kingston upon Hull, City of	79	89
Bracknell Forest	79	89
Barnsley	79	89
Blackpool	79	89
Newcastle upon Tyne	78	105
Reading	78	105
Lincolnshire	78	105
Cambridgeshire	78	105
Dorset	78	105
Somerset	78	105
Middlesbrough	78	105
Rochdale	78	105
Kirklees	78	105
North Lincolnshire	78	105
Rotherham	78	105
Sandwell	78	105
Isle of Wight	78	105
Slough	77	118
Wiltshire	77	118
Bristol, City of	77	118
Sheffield	77	118
Central Bedfordshire	77	118
Suffolk	77	118
Croydon	77	118
Leeds	77	118
Northamptonshire	77	118
West Sussex	77	118
Manchester	77	118
Stoke-on-Trent	77	118
Halton	77	118
Plymouth	77	118
Portsmouth	77	118
Wakefield	76	133
Birmingham	76	133
Coventry	76	133
Worcestershire	76	133
Thurrock	76	133
North East Lincolnshire	76	133
Norfolk	75	139
Derby	75	139
Nottingham	75	139
Leicester	75	139
Walsall	75	139
Peterborough	74	144
Bradford	74	144
Bedford	73	146
Poole	73	146
Medway	73	146
Doncaster	73	146
Luton	73	146

GCSE attainment and progress

Early indications from schools on results days suggest that the percentage of students attaining 5 A*C GCSEs including English and maths (5 A*C including E&M) will increase by 2% in North Yorkshire in 2015. The national figures for overall attainment and progress are not yet available, but it is known that attainment in North Yorkshire for the separate GCSEs of English and maths has improved

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in line with national change for English (+4%), and more rapidly than national for maths (+2%, compared to +1%). Attainment in both English and mathematics is expected to again be well above national at 73% A*C in English and 75% A*C in mathematics. Mathematics is more secure at KS4 than at KS2, with many schools reporting notably strong progress figures in this subject.

For the headline indicator of 5 A*-C including E&M it is likely that North Yorkshire will maintain or improve on the position within top 25% of Local Authorities for attainment. It is also likely that NY will maintain its position in the top 3 of 15 regional LAs.

Progress has improved in North Yorkshire, up 3% for English and 7% for mathematics.

% 5 A*C including E&M	13 BEST*	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	61	56	n/a	n/a
North Yorkshire	65	61	63	+2%
Difference	+4%	+5%	n/a	
% English Expected Progress	13 BEST*	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	72	72	n/a	
North Yorkshire	71	70	73	+3%
Difference	-1	-2	n/a	
% maths Expected Progress	13 BEST*	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	72	67	n/a	
North Yorkshire	75	68	75	+7%
Difference	+3	+1	n/a	

*2013 results not directly comparable as include resits.

A level attainment

Early indications from schools on results days suggest that the average point score per A level entry appears to have remained static, as was the case nationally. This means North Yorkshire is likely to maintain a strong position in the top quartile of Local Authorities. Nationally there was a dip in the % of A*-B grades, and this along with the exclusion of vocational subjects from some calculations probably explains the seemingly reduced proportion of students who attained 2 or more A*-B.

Average Points Score Per Entry	13	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	213	214	n/a	
North Yorkshire	216	217	217	0
Difference	+3	+3	n/a	
% students 2 A*-B	13	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	45	46	n/a	
North Yorkshire	49	53	50	-3
Difference	+4	+7	n/a	

% students 2 A*-G	13 BEST	14	15	Change 2014/15
National	97	98	n/a	
North Yorkshire	98	99	96	-3
Difference	+1	+1	n/a	

Floor standards - primary

Schools with more than 10 pupils fall below the floor if fewer than 65% of KS2 pupils attain reading, writing and mathematics combined at level 4 or above, and if progress in all of reading, writing and mathematics falls below the national median. It seems likely that 17 schools will fall below floor standards in 2015. In 2014 17 schools were below the floor - most have improved their outcomes in 2015 but 5 may again be below the floor in 2015.

Because school level progress figures and the national median comparator are not yet available from a recognised datafeed, schools potentially below the floor are not listed here. Fewer than 75% of schools sent their progress data in before the end of summer term, which compromised analysis and planning over the holiday.

Floor standards - secondary

Secondary schools fall below the floor if fewer than 40% of pupils attain 5 GCSEs A*-C including English and mathematics, and if progress in both English and mathematics falls below the national median.

Early indications suggest that 3 schools may fall below the floor standard.

Because school level progress figures and the national median comparator are not yet available from a recognised data feed, schools potentially below the floor are not listed here.

Coasting schools – primary and secondary

In June 2015 the DfE announced a new category of coasting schools, which does not apply to any school until the summer of 2016 at the earliest.

Schools will be defined as coasting if they are below a range of attainment and progress measures for three consecutive years, from 2014 onwards. For 2014 and 2015 the progress measures for both primary and secondary will be those used in the existing floor standard definition (national median), but the attainment measures in the definition of coasting are above those which apply to the current floor standards (rising from 65% to 85% RWM4+ at primary, rising from 40% to 60% 5 GCSEs at A*C including English and mathematics at secondary).

It is not yet possible to predict how many North Yorkshire schools will be defined as coasting in 2016, but – based on 2014 and 2015 data - the maximum possible number appears to be 24 primary and 5 secondary. Details will be shared with the relevant Improvement Partnership Board when expected 2016 outcomes are received from schools this term.

Closing the gap

Limited information is currently available about outcomes for specific groups of pupils. More detail will be shared with the Improvement Partnership Boards when it is available.

Early indications for key stage 2 suggest that outcomes for disadvantaged students have improved in 2015 with an increase of 3% in the proportion attaining the combination of reading, writing and maths level 4+ to 63%.

RWM4+	13	14	15	Change
NY FSM6 disadvantaged pupils	54	60	63	+3 (+9 over 2 years)
NY not disadvantaged pupils	78	81	83	+2 (+5 over 2 years)
NY FSM6 gap	23	21	20	- 1 (- 3 over 2 years)
National FSM6 gap	17	16	n/a	
Difference NY and national gap	6	5	n/a	

Ofsted outcomes

Improvements in North Yorkshire at both primary and secondary were more rapid than the national average during the academic year 2014/15, with the result that at the start of September 2015 North Yorkshire remained above national for the % pupils in good or outstanding secondary schools and had improved to a position in line with national for: % primary schools good or outstanding, % secondary schools good or outstanding and % pupils in good or outstanding primary schools.

The percentage of Early Years settings and childminders good or outstanding in North Yorkshire remains above national.

Changes to the focus of Ofsted inspections for the academic year 2015/16: Schools judged good at their last inspection will now be subject to a one day inspection, although this will be extended to two days where a rapid confirmation of the previous outcome is not deemed possible.

Primary % schools good or outstanding	1.9.14	1.9.15	Change during academic year 2014/15
National	81	85	+4
North Yorkshire	79.5	85	+5.5
Difference	-1.5	0	
Primary % pupils in good or outstanding schools	1.9.14	1.9.15	Change during academic year 2014/15
National	80	84	+4
North Yorkshire	77	84	+7
Difference	-3	0	

Secondary % schools good or outstanding	1.9.14	1.9.15	Change during academic year 2014/15
National	71	75	+4
North Yorkshire	68	75	+7
Difference	-3	0	
Secondary % pupils in good or outstanding	1.9.14	1.9.15	Change during academic year 2014/15
National	75	77	+2
North Yorkshire	76	80	+4
Difference	+1	+3	

EY % settings good or outstanding	31.8.14	31.3.15	Change year to date (Source: Ofsted Dataview)
National	83	87	+4
North Yorkshire	91	92	+1
Difference	+8	+5	
EY % childminders good or outstanding	31.8.14	31.3.15	Change year to date (Source: Ofsted Dataview)
National	78	84	+6
North Yorkshire	85	87	+2
Difference	+7	+3	

Early actions being taken in response to early indications of 2015 results

- 1) Priority planning for primary, secondary, early years and special schools
 - Analysis from agreed criteria for priority schools, levels and providers of support – through Improvement Partnerships
 - Analysis and identification of potential providers of support

- 2) Key stage 2 mathematics
 - Forensic analysis of: outcomes at school level, impact of support 2014-15, geographical variation, successful strategies, size of school variation

- 3) Key stage 2 grammar, punctuation and spelling
 - Forensic analysis of: outcomes at school level, impact of support 2014-15, geographical variation, successful strategies, size of school variation

- 4) Closing the gap

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- Forensic analysis of outcomes for specific groups of pupils at school level, impact of initiatives in 2014-15 for cohort one and two of the Wrea Head Trust funding, geographical variation, size of school variation
- 5) Early Years
- Understand the implications of the new Early Years Baseline and how to accelerate progress from this starting point
- 6) Key stage 4
- Analysis of progress in English GCSE and successful strategies to inform school to school support through the Secondary Improvement Partnership
 - Analyse the implications of Progress 8 through analysis of progress across a full range of subjects
- 7) 2016 outcomes
- Analysis of expected outcome data provided by schools each term to identify potential coasting schools at KS2 and GCSE so any issues can be addressed early
 - Continued comparison of expected with actual attainment and progress, with identification of reasons for any discrepancies

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Date of meeting:	Wednesday 16 September 2015
Title of report:	Peer Challenge - School Improvement in North Yorkshire
Type of report: Delete as required	For information and discussion
Executive summary: Including reason for submission	<p>The Peer Challenge process developed for Children's Services across Yorkshire and the Humber builds on the peer review model that was developed by the Local Government Association (LGA) and all 15 Local Authorities are engaged in the process. Across the region two key areas of focus were initially identified: Local Authority arrangements to safeguard and look after children and Local Authority processes for securing school improvement.</p> <p>As a result of the review over 125 strengths and areas for development were identified. These were refined into the four broad headings from the School Improvement Inspection framework previously agreed with colleagues in North Yorkshire, plus a fifth 'wicked issue' heading. These provided a framework for the Challenge, initial feedback and this letter.</p>
Budget / Risk implications:	None directly, but the areas for development will feed into the Improvement Partnerships priorities
Recommendations:	That the Education Partnership accept the report and its findings and request an update on the areas for development in the New Year.
Voting requirements:	N/A
Appendices: To be attached	The report from the Peer Challenge team
Report originator and contact details:	Jill Hodges, Assistant Director, Education and Skills jill.hodges@northyorks.gov.uk 01609 532166
Presenting officer: If not the originator	



June 2015

Dear Pete

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PEER CHALLENGE: NORTH YORKSHIRE, JUNE 2015

Thank you for taking part in the eleventh Children's Services Peer Challenge activity in the region and the fifth to have school improvement as its focus. More specifically, you asked us to address the following:

School improvement in the context of the Local Authority School Improvement Inspection framework and specifically in relation to four other areas:

- *Corporate Leadership and Strategic Planning*
- *Monitoring, Challenge, Intervention and Support*
- *Support and Challenge for leadership and Management (including Governance)*
- *Use of Resources*

Your preparatory work for this Peer Challenge was extensive and was immensely helpful in enabling the peer challenge team to focus its activity appropriately. The team received a really good welcome and excellent co-operation and support throughout the process. It was evident to us all that all those we met were interested in learning and continued development.

We agreed to send you a letter confirming and elaborating on our findings as presented at the end of the Peer Challenge process.

It is important to stress that this was not an inspection. A team of peers used their experience to reflect on the evidence you presented through documentation, conversation and observation. We hope their conclusions, captured in our final presentation to you and in this report will assist you in your on-going improvement. It is also important to note that many of the school improvement challenges you face are equally challenges for all local authorities.

1. Background

The Peer Challenge process developed for Children's Services across Yorkshire and the Humber builds on the peer review model that was developed by the Local Government Association (LGA) and all 15 Local Authorities are engaged in the

process. Across the region two key areas of focus were initially identified: Local Authority arrangements to safeguard and look after children and Local Authority processes for securing school improvement.

In order to support the Peer Challenge process all Local Authorities have nominated key members from their senior leadership teams including their Director of Children's Services (DCS) to be trained in the Peer Challenge process and to lead Peer Challenges.

2. Process

The Peer Challenge in North Yorkshire was led by Ian Thomas, Strategic Director of Children's Services, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. He worked with a team comprising Gill Ellis, Assistant Director, Learning and Skills, Kirklees Council and Phil Weston, Head of the Bradford Achievement Service, Bradford Metropolitan District Council. The process was managed and coordinated by Rob Mayall (SLI Manager, Yorkshire and the Humber).

The team of three peer challengers spent a total of nine person days working in the Local Authority collecting evidence with which to frame their findings and drawing together their conclusions. This activity took place on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, the 24th, 25th and 26th June 2015. Prior to the Peer Challenge on-site activity, colleagues in North Yorkshire shared a wide range of information with the team to support its preparations and there were 2 preparatory team meetings.

As well as a desk-based analysis of documentation, the Peer Challenge process included 26 separate on-site activities, with over 80 participants – including a number of head teachers and some governors. We had individual discussions with political and corporate leaders and senior managers in North Yorkshire Council and two school visits. A range of focus groups enabled sample coverage of internal and external partners.

As a result of this activity we identified over 125 strengths and areas for development, which were refined into the four broad headings previously agreed with colleagues in North Yorkshire, plus a fifth 'wicked issue' heading. These provided a framework for the Challenge, initial feedback and this letter.

Initial findings, against the five key headings, were presented to the portfolio holder and senior managers of the Local Authority on 26th June.

3. Detailed Findings

3.1 Corporate leadership and Strategic Planning

Strengths

- Excellent drive and ambition at the highest level. This was something we observed and had described to us consistently. We observed consistency, clarity and passion amongst most senior officers and politicians we spoke with during the

challenge process. This drive and ambition is something we noted has had an effect across and through the system.

'Schools have now got a thirst for it' (Head teacher)

- System-wide acceptance of the need to improve. We saw no evidence of complacency, despite the risk of this which comes with some of your performance levels being of a consistently good standard. There is a clear understanding of where performance needs to improve and the driving ambition for improvement is seen as one which is no less than what children and young people in North Yorkshire deserve
- Clear, widely endorsed vision. Nearly everyone we saw, from politicians, to officers, to head teachers and governors supported and was able to articulate the vision of 'closing the gap' and 'every school good or outstanding.' We also had described to us, the strong links between a vision for school improvement and a broader economic vision – with examples of these links being a strong emphasis on the development of advice and guidance for young people and strong engagement with the Local Enterprise Partnership
- A broad consensus that there has been a step change for the better over the last two years. One head teacher remarked that there has been:

'A real change in culture over the last 18 months.'

Some head teachers commented on the build-up of trust between schools and the local authority over the last two years and a clear vision for a partnership approach to improvement. Others commented favourably on the accessibility and visibility of senior officers and their willingness to tackle difficult issues 'head on'.

Areas for development

- Communicate the vision and clarify the actions required to implement the vision effectively. Whilst nearly everyone was able to articulate the headline aspirations ('Every school good or outstanding' and 'Closing the gap'), there were various interpretations of what 'closing the gap' means and few could describe the steps that need to be taken to achieve these broader aspirations, or the emerging context in which these aspirations sit. For instance, there is a need for a greater understanding and articulation of the impact of demographic change and, we felt, a need to share with schools a vision for the future which helps them to think about implications for a future curriculum, particularly one which addresses the divide between the academic and vocational.
- It would be helpful to develop, and then describe, the range of inter-connected actions which need to underpin the vision and for these to be disseminated as part of a measured and clear communications strategy. This will aid understanding, but more significantly help secure a common focus on the actions that will make most difference and smooth the transition to a self-improving school system:

- Develop a clear vision for non-statutory education, i.e. early years and post 16 education and training. A number of the head teachers we spoke to were grappling with the creation of visible and meaningful post 16 learning, but this seemed to be in the absence of a clear strategic steer, which some would have valued. Equally, consideration needs to be given to the development of a clear strategic position for early years learning
- Articulate the role that education, learning and skills play in economic growth and development. Whilst we noted some good links with the economic agenda, we think there is more you could do to describe how education inter-relates with emerging 'people' and 'place' agendas and secure common understanding and commitment across the system for the place of education in achieving North Yorkshire's ambitions

3.2 Monitoring, Challenge, Intervention and Support

Strengths

- There is a good knowledge of school performance. In several meetings we heard of how an understanding of school performance, informed by qualitative and quantitative analysis is informing actions. The cycle of regular visits to schools helps the LA to further their understanding of how schools are doing. Head teachers, particularly in schools causing concern, reported high levels of support from the LA. Head teachers described high visibility of LA staff and a generous responsiveness to their needs in terms of advice and resources. Some of this support is provided from within LA resources and is now increasingly brokered from within the school system, for instance, one head teacher had received NLE support brokered by the LA and had found this particularly helpful.
- A leadership team that is ready for the challenge. We were impressed with a leadership team that had a shared view about the change required to secure improvement and a common commitment to delivering services to achieve this. Part of this readiness is a change in culture, which we observed throughout the challenge, and which was described by one person as:

'A move from 'we can't do it here because...' to, 'we can do it''

- Some good examples of closing the gap initiatives. This includes work on the 'stronger families' agenda, addressing prejudices faced by LGBT young people, recognised by Stonewall as best practice, progress towards the SEND reforms and innovative use of pupil premium to improve progress and raise attainment of children in care. . Your high numbers of care leavers in University (30) is also noteworthy.
- Some emerging examples of school to school support and challenge. Although the examples were limited, they may be indications of the 'green shoots' of a change towards a self-improving school system – and as such, need to be captured and

disseminated. As an example we heard of schools working together in one partnership on self-developed peer challenge activity.

'The LA has taken a positive strategic lead. The challenge now is for schools to take responsibility for all schools across the system' (Head teacher)

'Support from the LA has been fantastic' (Head teacher)

Areas for Development

- Some examples of a lack of pro-active early intervention where there are indicators of school decline. Whilst we noted a good understanding of school performance, we heard of cases where the LA was not as responsive as desirable, with several months gap between identification and proactive and effective intervention. This may, in part be linked to the lack of availability of appropriate capacity to meet need. In one extreme example, a head teacher said

'A year was lost before a meaningful package was provided' (Head teacher)

Some governors expressed a view that EDAs had not been good at spotting early signs of decline – but moved quickly when a school went into an Ofsted category. This was corroborated by a number of headteachers.

We also noted in one case (April to December 2014) that the LA action plan and the school's own action plan were not consistent

- The LA needs to consider whether there is an appropriate balance between challenge and support. We heard of some examples, mainly recent, of high levels of challenge from EDAs, but had described to us a number of examples where the emphasis seemed to be on generous support, rather than incisive challenge, underpinned by rigorous analysis. There was a view that expressed to us that EDA reports were not felt to be challenging enough. The balance is important and it would be appropriate for the LA to reflect on how it would wish both challenge and support to be provided and then how to ensure a consistent approach across its teams. There were also some comments about inconsistent support from EDAs – but these were mainly historical and related to turnover. Head teachers reported a greater consistency of late. Nevertheless, the LA might want to consider how it ensures consistency across EDA support.
- The LA needs to reflect on the *impact* of initiatives to close the gap. Whilst we heard of numerous good examples of closing the gap activity, we saw less evidence of the impact of this. We would recommend that the impact of CtG activities needs to be strategically evaluated before deciding whether this broad strategy could be more effective if there was greater focus, maybe through a programme management methodology.
- The LA needs to ensure that head teachers have the skills to provide effective challenge to their peers in the new model for school-led improvement. We heard that relationships between and across schools are good – but saw little evidence

of where robust headteachers' peer challenge had had a significant impact to date. We heard that cluster arrangements currently focus more on support and 'soft' challenge. A culture of respectful challenge is a key ingredient in any self-improving school system and we were not provided with evidence that this is yet fully in place.

3.3 Support and Challenge for Leadership and management (including Governance)

Strengths

- Initiating and carrying through a Commission to move toward an innovative, education partnership approach. The Commission was a powerful activity – it put a marker down about the way the LA wanted to conduct itself, emphasising rigour, vision and partnership. It is a model that might usefully be applied to other complex issues in the improvement arena (see 'Your wicked issue')
- A clear understanding of the importance of governance in delivering the vision, demonstrated in several ways: A well respected governor support service, with the advice and guidance it provides being highly valued; there has been an investment in the Governor Support Service with new senior leadership resources. This has enabled the Service to be seen as integral to North Yorkshire's school improvement journey and is already bringing a greater rigour to its activity, an example being the work that is in progress to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the health of governing bodies (due to conclude in autumn 2015). This will inform existing intelligence from governor clerks and might usefully be enhanced with a systematic gathering of intelligence from EDA visits, to enable a more informed targeting of support; the governor support service has responded positively to requests from schools to explore new structural solutions and provided workshop activity – appropriately joined up with EDA colleagues.

'School governance has the potential to be the biggest barrier and also the greatest enabler' (Head teacher)

- There has been an up-skilling of LA officers who now provide better challenge and support than in the past. Any criticism we heard about the skills and abilities of LA Officers, and particularly EDAs was historical. Some examples were given of improved knowledge and skills of individual officers over the last year which has made a significant and positive difference to their ability to support and challenge.
- A clear view that leadership across the school system should be led by teaching school alliances. The closure of the leadership Academy was a bold, but considered action, demonstrating the LAs commitment to leadership being taken forward in a self-improving school system.

Areas for Development

- It would be appropriate for the LA to review its position on the use of statutory and non-statutory powers of intervention. We noted a small number of warning notices

issued of 9 over the last 6 years and would suggest that the thresholds you have previously used may be set too high to provide the swift and incisive interventions necessary to aid progress towards your aspirations.

- There is a clear need for school governors to have greater understanding and ownership of the bigger picture. You have recognised the importance of the contribution that governors can make in the journey to 'good or outstanding schools' and some of the work you are already doing to develop their potential, but we feel that there is more you could do in a systematic way to help governors understand the challenges they will face and the opportunities that present themselves in working towards your shared vision for school improvement. There was some feedback that the quality of governor training was variable.
- It would appear that plans to develop leadership capacity across the system are under developed and not widely understood. Whilst it was a bold and symbolic move to close the Leadership Academy, this has left many with a feeling that there is a leadership development void, with the anticipated lead from TSAs not yet realised in terms of a tangible, coherent and consistent offer. This may in part be perception rather than reality, but head teachers and others need some reassurance about the ways in which leadership talent will be spotted, nurtured and developed, particularly as high quality leadership will be so central to your continuous improvement. There may also be a capacity issue which is less to do with identifying leaders who can support others, and more to do with the viability of leaders being released when in so many schools there is no economy of scale to enable the absence of a leader to be managed.
- As TSAs and MATs continue to grow and develop their relationships with historic arrangements, e.g. clusters, require clarity. Some head teachers were unclear about the respective roles of clusters and TSAs. There is a certain inevitability that a system which is being encouraged to grow organically (which is a positive reflection of your commitment to distribute leadership of the agenda) will have some 'rough edges' as it evolves and develops, but you might want to reflect on the stating (or re-stating) of your intentions for what these emerging arrangements will deliver in terms of outcomes, in order that head teachers and others can operate with some freedoms but within a framework. An example of the need for greater clarity came from conversations with some head teachers where they described the need for a 'mandate' – or explicit 'permissions' to explore new structural solutions. You may be clear that they already have this - which then turns this into a communication challenge. Some schools are 'getting on with it'

'Because there is no Teaching Alliance in the area we have set up our own challenge partners' (Head teacher)

The fact that this is happening may give some comfort to the LA that school leaders are taking ownership of the agenda - but it was expressed by head teachers as a default position rather than part of a strategy to transfer ownership of the agenda.

3.4 Use of Resources

Strengths

- You have made financial commitments which are a tangible and powerful indicator of your intent to drive forward improvement. The most obvious examples of this would be your investment in the Scarborough area and the funding you have devolved to the Partnership Board as a commissioning budget. We also noted investment in the school governance service and investments to improve capacity.
- There is a clear rationale for traded services via SmartSolutions, which goes beyond a financial imperative. Some of your traded services are provided because of your belief in supporting music/outdoor learning and although it is important that the overall offer is viable, you have created space for activities for which you believe there is a philosophical/educational imperative. You have a strong traded offer, through SmartSolutions, which is led from the top, with the CX, DCS and Finance Director making up the executive group. There are high levels of take up for your offer and you are also exploring how your traded offer and the emerging offer from teaching school alliances can be made coherent.
- Evidence of sound, medium-term financial planning with plans in place to reduce the budget for school improvement whilst still retaining sufficient capacity to drive the school improvement agenda. This is due to innovative solutions in planned to reduce high cost areas such as numbers of, and provision for, LAC. The handle on financial challenges is a reflection of the corporate strength in how the council is managed.
- Basic need sufficiency planning is understood and in hand, with £55m available through a range of sources to ensure there are sufficient school places to meet the demand of an additional 7,000 primary and 1700 secondary pupils anticipated over the coming years.

Areas for Development

- We think that you should risk assess the market for traded services in light of the likely increased plurality of the school economy compounded by a decrease in real term funding for schools. Some calculations suggest an increase in costs to school budgets of estimates of 7 to 12% by 2020 and if so, then their financial flexibility will be reduced and it will be the variable rather than fixed costs that will be most vulnerable.
- Ensure that officers apply a VFM approach in relation to allocating resources to improvement priorities in every school. We noted an apparently generous allocation of resources to schools causing concern, not always underpinned with a careful analysis of the solutions most likely to lead to positive change and often without reference to the school's ability to purchase or contribute towards the solution. We were also unsure about how equitably resources were distributed or whether the distribution was overseen at a strategic level. This might further a

culture of dependency and high expectation of central solutions to local challenges which runs counter to the culture you are trying to develop.

- You need to accelerate the increase in the number of system leaders and teaching schools to increase school improvement capacity. Leadership is a key issue for North Yorkshire and an immediate challenge is to create greater leadership capacity to support development in schools and particularly across the school system.
- We noted that individual strategic groups often had a clear remit, but saw less of a clear description of the way in which the parts of the whole work together – what is the inter-relationship of the various fora?
- Your aspirations for teaching school alliances was unclear to some – and perhaps need to be reinforced/articulated differently to ensure a shared understanding across the system.

3.5 Your wicked issue- Small schools

Over half your primary schools have less than 120 on roll, with about 25% having 60 pupils or fewer, and slightly under half of your secondary schools have less than 700 pupils, with over a quarter having less than 500 on roll. We understand that many of these schools perform valuable functions as centres of communities and have a role to play in both the people and place agendas.

We also recognise that smaller schools are good and outstanding with strong outcomes. However, given your focus on sector-led improvement, building capacity and tightening resources we think these questions are worthy of consideration :-

- How can the sector maximise leadership opportunities across all schools, recognising that smaller schools cannot provide the remuneration of bigger ones and can find it more challenging to provide leadership development?.
- How will the sector meet the challenge of increased costs on school budgets over the next few years which will inevitably impact on smaller schools? Given the number of small schools across the county, how is the sector addressing this strategically and pro-actively.?
- How can the sector build capacity and release leaders to provide support to others and engage in developments and collaborative working around school improvement?
- We heard of good examples of federations that have the ambition to raise performance, improve learning opportunities and maximise resources. Does the lack of capacity in smaller schools creates challenges in releasing leaders to provide or receive support and development or engage in collaborative working?

You might want to consider applying the Commission methodology to this challenge – it has already been effective and was generally well received and presents as an excellent model to move this agenda forward.

4. Next Steps

You and your colleagues will now want to consider how you incorporate the team's findings into your improvement plans. We hope that you find our reflections helpful.

It is important that this letter describes accurately what we have observed and analyzed and that it provides you with an appropriate summary to facilitate change. If this letter contains any factual inaccuracies, please do not hesitate to contact me and amendments will be made as appropriate. If you have any concerns or comments about the analysis or recommendations, do not hesitate to contact me in the first instance. If we are unable to resolve any issues, there is a mechanism for escalating concerns, which would normally be to the Chair of the SLI Executive group. A sub group of the SLI Executive will consider any concerns you may have.

Once again, thank you for agreeing to receive a Peer Challenge and to everyone involved for their participation.

Yours sincerely



Ian Thomas
LEAD DCS for Peer Challenge in North Yorkshire