

NORTH YORKSHIRE EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

Date of meeting:	
Title of report:	Minutes of the Education Partnership – 19 October 2017
Type of report:	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
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Presenting officer: If not the originator	N/A

PRESENT:

Chair:	Ian Yapp
Primary Headteachers:	Michelle Hall (sub for Jillian Baker), Robert Campbell
Secondary Headteachers:	Rob Pritchard, Mark McCandless, Nick Hinchliffe
Nursery Headteacher:	Jane Pepper
Special Headteacher:	Jonathan Tearle
Pupil Referral Service:	Nick Bell
Academies:	Helen, Flynn, Catherine Brooker
Governors:	Damien Smith, Gerry Price
Early Years Providers:	
16-19 Providers:	
Diocesan Representatives:	Andrew Smith
Trade Unions:	Stella Smethurst, Chris Head
Observers:	Cllr Janet Sanderson
In Attendance:	Stuart Carlton, Anton Hodge, Sally Dunn, Paul Brennan, Jane le Sage, Marion Sadler (Clerk)
Apologies:	Ian Clennan, John Barker, Catherine Farrell, Jo Robinson, Stephen Payne, Rick Weights, Cllr Patrick Mulligan

739: WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and declared the meeting quorate.

740: MEMBERSHIP OF THE EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

The Chair welcomed Jonathan Tearle, Nick Bell and Andrew Smith to the meeting. Resignations from Marianne Best and Les Bell.

Vacancies now existed for Primary Headteachers (3), Secondary Headteachers (2), Primary Governors (3), Secondary Governors (2) and Diocesan representatives (2).

741: MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed.

742: MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute 744 – Gerry Price raised query re accuracy of the minute for this item with regard to the Improvement Partnerships reporting to the Learning Trust Board. GP recognised that whilst there was a degree of agreement with proposals but that this was not unanimous. There was recognition that no decision had not been agreed but consensus that this should be the subject of further debate and consideration as

proposals developed further. Helen Flynn said that the reporting arrangements should be to the Schools Forum if funding were de-delegated from the Schools Block. SC clarified that reporting and accountability were different issues and it would be hoped that whilst accountability for funding should come to the Forum this should not prevent reporting to the Learning Partnership/Trust.

AGREED: that further thought be given to accountability and reporting arrangements as the work around the development of a Learning Partnership/Trust moves forward. It would be necessary to ensure that the accountability for the Improvement Partnerships was addressed as part of these proposals.

ACTION: further report to come back to the Education Partnership in early 2018.

Item 747 – The Public Accounts Committee had recently announced £4.3 billion as the total school balances for maintained and academies. Government were now publishing information in the public domain around level of school balances. It was noted that the level of balances had fallen over recent years.

743 A NEW CONSTITUTION FOR THE SCHOOLS FORUM

CONSIDERED: report, presented by Anton Hodge, setting out a summary of School Forum's role and responsibilities as defined by legislation and DfE statutory guidance and proposing a draft new Constitution for the Forum in a changing landscape. Anton briefed colleagues on guidelines regarding membership requirements with two thirds of members required to be from the schools' group and the removal of the need for a maximum period of office.

It was proposed that current members of the Partnership would transfer to the Schools Forum until the expiry of their term of office was reached. The composition in terms of maintained vs academy representatives would be reviewed annually.

Catherine Brooker stressed the importance of ensuring that the body was truly representative without vacancies. The group needed to be sufficiently large to be representative but not so large that vacancies were difficult to recruit to.

Helen Flynn asked about the possibility of the Local Authority making direct appointments to the body to fill vacancies if these had remained unfilled. There was a need for a more proactive approach to recruitment.

Robert Campbell indicated that it was the wider role of the body which had attracted him to the role rather than a narrow focus of a traditional Schools Forum. A broader remit may help with encouraging representatives to come forward.

Anton Hodge confirmed that the recently issued guidance had given scope for Headteachers to be represented by other senior managers within the school rather than specifically Headteachers only.

Members voted unanimously in support of adopting the new Constitution and retention of its existing membership size subject to a review of proportional representation in relation to the schools group once October census figures are confirmed.

Mark McCandless expressed concern that the reconstitution of the Forum was being proposed in advance of any decision about the formation of the Learning Trust. Anton confirmed that there was a need to reconstitute due to changes in numbers but there was the option to retain the name of Education Partnership until such time that any possible Learning Trust were formed.

RESOLVED:

1. That the North Yorkshire Education Partnership adopt a new constitution with the group remaining at its current size.
2. That the title “North Yorkshire Education Partnership” remain in place until such time as a decision around the creation of a Learning Trust was taken and implemented.

744. SCHOOL FUNDING: DSG UPDATE AND THE NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA

CONSIDERED: report, presented by Anton Hodge and Sally Dunn, updating members on the recent DfE announcement regarding implementation of a National Funding Formula, implications for North Yorkshire Schools and seeking agreement to recommendations regarding funding for the next financial year including proposed consultation with all schools.

Schools Block would increase by 2.2% in 2018/19, 3.6% in 2019/20 and 4.4% by the time the full NFF was implemented. There was significant pressure on the High Needs Block with only minimal additional funding of 0.3% being made available in 2018/19 and 0.8% in 2019/20. The Central Schools Services Block, covering admissions, Prevention Service, would reduce by -1.5% in 2018/19, -3.6% in 2019/20 and -4.4% upon implementation of the NFF. There were also implications for rural schools through reduction in sparsity factors.

Anton Hodge said that the Partnership’s views were sought on whether the LA should move immediately to the National Funding Formula methodology or continue with current arrangements for the interim period. There was a need to continue to lobby on the issues of sparsity and implications for smaller secondary schools. The LA was required to take the views of the Partnership and to consult with all schools on any proposals to make changes to the funding formula. It was proposed to hold an additional Partnership meeting in December to consider the outcome of the consultation.

Helen Flynn asked whether we were still looking at the same breadth of gap between schools in different areas of the country and Anton confirmed this was the case due to the levels of historic protection built into the arrangements. F40 and other parties would continue to lobby government on the implications of imbalances between different parts of the country and on individual factors as mentioned above.

The Chair put the adoption of the new NFF arrangements as a recommendation in the schools’ consultation to a vote. This was unanimous with one abstention

RESOLVED:

1. That all schools be consulted on using the NFF as a basis for delegated budgets in 2018/19 with the Partnership’s endorsement.

The Partnership then considered proposals set out in section 5.0 of the report regarding services funded by de-delegation from the Schools Block and sought members’ views on their continuance for 2018/19. There was discussion about the following points:

- whether there was any possibility of using reserves to fund some of these services. Anton confirmed that in his view from April 2018 there would be no scope to fund these from reserves;
- the various options to be taken forward in regard to these services: continued de delegation, cessation of de delegation or a mix on a service by service basis;
- LA’s previous expectation that there would be no de-delegation as of April 2018 and its request that the Partnership consider retention of de-delegation for a

further year to allow time to work through alternative models of funding and/or exit strategies.

The Chair put the proposal to a vote. There was one vote against the proposal (Special School representative) and one abstention.

RESOLVED:

2. That the continuation of de-delegated budgets from LA maintained schools in 2018-19 as set out in section 5 be approved pending a further review in 2018 and that this not form part of the consultation with schools.
3. That the exceptions as set out in Section 7 of the report be approved.
4. That ongoing work to identify efficiencies in budgets funded by the Central Schools Services Block be noted and brought back to a future meeting.

745. HIGH NEEDS AND THE IMPACT OF SEND REFORM

CONSIDERED: report, presented by Howard Emmett and Jane le Sage, providing an update on the potential £4M projected deficit on High Needs Block and a £2.4M deficit in Local Authority budgets in relation to SEN home to school transport and work underway to address rising demand. The report sought the Partnership's views on recommendations to review High Needs Block spending in future and sought agreement to consult on a possible top slicing of the Schools Block to assist with funding pressures. The increasing demand in relation to Education, Health and Care Plans and complexity of need was noted alongside increasing trends in the number of permanent and fixed term exclusions and increasing multiple frequent exclusions for some pupils. Colleagues asked for clarification on the following points:

- whether the data on pupil numbers related to 0-19 or 0-25 – it was confirmed that it was up to 19 (ie statutory school age);
- whether the position was the same in London Boroughs – officers confirmed that they did not hold this information currently;
- whether the depth of analysis in relation to excluded pupils had looked at the full range of support being provided to an individual child and whether the reduction of children placed on School Action Plus had been a contributory factor. Colleagues felt there was a need to look more closely at which schools were excluding pupils and the reasons for exclusion and whether this correlated with changes to the narrowing of the curriculum and flexibility offered in terms of vocational education;
- challenges around what was going on in children's lives outside the school gate impacting on needs within schools. This may also be further impacted by withdrawal of support from other agencies due to austerity;
- significant challenge around the availability of appropriate provision and the potential need for additional places in-County and a continuum of support given increasing demands;
- reasons for referrals to collaboratives and some schools' reluctance to make referrals into them as an alternative.

Nick Hinchliffe raised concerns at the bureaucracy of the system to fund high needs support within schools and whether a formula could be developed. Jane le Sage responded that no decision had been taken as to how funding should be allocated alongside the need for accountability. Nick responded that a formula based approach linked to levels of need would be a fairer approach rather than a Panel consideration of requests.

The Chair summarised the proposals on which Partnership's views were requested.

Gerry Price asked whether the proposal to top-slice the Schools Block impact on the statement that no school would lose out. Anton referred to Appendix 4 of the previous report which set out the possible impact on school budgets. It would also be possible to run a different formula model to ensure that no school saw a reduction in overall budget. Gerry Price said on reflection there did not appear to be any school which would lose out significantly and the implications of not proposing a top slice were even greater.

Andrew Smith reflected that this would enable the LA to plan further to address what was a national issue and there was a need for DfE to review its position with regard to High Needs funding. Stuart Carlton confirmed that ADCS were continuing to lobby government on this issue.

The Chair put proposals to the vote which was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

1. That a sub-group be established to look at all options in relation to High Needs Block in detail reporting back to the Partnership with its recommendations.
2. That the proposal to transfer a top slice of £1.6m (0.5%) into the High Needs Block from the Schools Block for 2018/19 be endorsed by the Partnership for inclusion in the consultation with schools.
3. That the Partnership's serious concern on the lack of additional funding for the High Needs Block be noted and relayed as part of national lobbying.

746 EARLY YEARS FUNDING

NOTED: report, presented by Sally Dunn, providing an update on the position in North Yorkshire with regard to the early rollout of the extended entitlement for three and four year old children with national rollout from September 2017 and the financial impact of the retention of the 2016/17 funding rates for Summer 2017. Proposed early years funding rates for 2018/19 were presented for consideration by the Partnership.

Helen Flynn enquired about the position in relation to additional funding for LA maintained nurseries. Jane Pepper said this may continue in the interim but that there was real concern about longer term sustainability for such settings.

Jane enquired when a paper regarding the Early Years Review of central early years services would be brought forward to the Partnership for consideration. The Chair confirmed he would work with Local Authority officers to determine forward planning of agenda items over the next few meetings.

RESOLVED:

That the early years funding rate recommendations for 2018/19 be supported.

747 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

That an additional meeting to consider the outcome of schools consultation on Schools Funding and any other urgent business be arranged for 13 December 2017.