

NORTH YORKSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM

Date of meeting:	Thursday 12 March 2020
Title of report:	Minutes of the North Yorkshire Schools Forum
Type of report:	For information only
Executive summary: Including reason for submission	The minutes of the previous meeting of the North Yorkshire Schools Forum 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:	Marion Sadler – Clerk to the Schools Forum Tel: 01609 532234 E-mail: marion.sadler@northyorks.gov.uk
Presenting officer: If not the originator	N/A

PRESENT:

Chair:	Ian Yapp
Primary Headteachers:	Jillian Baker, Nick Styles, Karen O'Donnell, Fiona Beetles
Secondary Headteachers:	Nick Hinchliffe, Mark McCandless, Jacky Staniforth (deputy for Kath Jordan)
Nursery Headteacher:	
Special Headteacher:	Ann-Marie Ellis (deputy for Jonathan Tearle)
Pupil Referral Service:	
Academies:	Helen Flynn, Helen Channing, David Read, Andrew Krlic, Michelle Hockham
Governors:	
Early Years Providers:	
16-19 Providers:	
Diocesan Representatives:	Andrew Smith
Trade Unions:	Chris Head
Observers:	
In Attendance:	Howard Emmett, Sally Dunn, Martin Surtees, Jane Le Sage, Mandy Lambert (Clerk)
Apologies:	Rob Campbell, Michael Pettavel, Stuart Carlton, Judith Kirk, Julia Polley, Rob Campbell, Damien Smith, Jonathan Tearle (deputy Ann-Marie Ellis), Kath Jordan (deputy Jacky Staniforth)

911: WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and informed the group of the current membership situation.

912: MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Current vacancies were outlined, 4 x primary, 1 x PRS Academy, 1 x PRS LA, 1 x Unison Rep, 1 x 16-19 Providers, 1 x early years / childcare.

913: MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 23 January 2020 be agreed as an accurate record.

914: MATTERS ARISING**915: NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no notification of any other urgent business.

916: HIGH NEEDS BUDGET

NOTED: The expected budget for the High Needs Block in 2020-21. It also highlights the significant financial pressure anticipated in 2020-21.

There has been additional DfE funding for High Needs but it will be insufficient for the LA to address underlying financial pressures. Since 2015, EHCPs have increased by 68%. However, in 2017 to 2019, there was only a 1% increase in funding. The LA continue to feedback and lobby to North Yorkshire MPs and the DfE regarding high needs funding. Within the Chancellor's Budget Statement, it was announced that the comprehensive spending review would occur earlier, and was expected to be completed by July 2020.

Tightening on ring-fencing funds is a problem for the LA regarding setting a balanced budget. DfE expressly prohibit LA providing additional financial support to schools.

80% of High Needs Budget is spent on High Needs commissioning and the remaining 20% is spent on alternative provision for inclusion and SEN support.

+1.84% increase in top-up funding for 2020/21 proposed. LA ensuring a balance between affordability and an increase in line with minimum funding guarantee. For special schools, +4% minimum funding guarantee applied.

Further work during 2020 highlighted. List not exhaustive and additional reviews / developments consistent with strategic plan added in due course.

AGREED: That the North Yorkshire Schools Forum notes the High Needs Block budget for 2020-21.

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS:

Selby has no primaries to promote provision of excluded students in intervening periods – *High Needs group to address*

PRs currently under microscope, increasing number of pupils but PRs not managing to clear deficits

Implication of paragraph 2.5 and 2.6 – *High Needs overspend impacts DSG. LA cannot use general sources of funding raised or received to support schools (those functions that should be funded from DSG). LA were planning £5m to underwrite shortfall on High Needs – however, DfE's intention is to prevent this underpinning. Any interest foregone on funding the DSG deficit will be added to the DSG deficit. Overall impact is an unfunded projected £11m deficit to LA. If the LA is in excess of a +1% DSG deficit, the DfE will regard the LA as in breach and will need to submit a High Needs recovery plan to DfE. The LA have invited DfE to visit but they have declined.*

Benchmarking exercises shown LA is in an average position, not untypical in terms of % relative to LA and value.

Case studies from DfE – approx. 30 LAs breached +1%. DfE not processed all 2019/20 recovery plans until December due to limited resource. LA to follow up with DfE for lessons learned and commonalities of LAs in deficit.

917: DFE RESPONSE TO SF LETTER / TONY MCARDLE VISIT

NOTED: Letter from Michelle Donelan, no longer in post. To be followed up with new ministerial team.

Visit from Tony McArdle, National Systems Leader SEND. TM an independent advisor to contribute to ministerial discussions and decision making.

LA have advanced the argument that more capital funding is needed to reshape provision in order to make savings. £8m spent on out of county provision / private sector, money that could be saved if LA had capital funding to provide own provision.

The LA will seek to continue to lobby MPs, civil servants; Schools Forum members to lobby local MPs where there is an opportunity to do so.

AGREED: Item to be kept on agenda for future meetings. Briefing note to be prepared and circulated to members.

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS:

A question was asked about the National Systems Review and what examples of waste they had identified in the system - *Examples include transport, e.g. taxis for school journeys, and tribunals.*

918: SPECIALIST PROVISION – CAPITAL INVESTMENT

NOTED: The need for investment in North Yorkshire Specialist Provision and the proposal to develop a Specialist Provision Targeted Capital Programme. The concept of a Specialist Provision Targeted Capital Programme was explained and the need to explore how this may impact upon the School Condition Capital Programme from 2020 / 21 onwards.

Pressures due to increase in EHCPs but limited deployment of capital funds for special schools. Investment in modernising special schools comparable to private sector reduces need for independent placements in future.

Potential funding sources include DfE, LA subject to business case, schools' capital funding. £1m set aside in revenue budget of LA to develop project and build business case.

Schools Condition Grant; this is only provided for maintained schools, reducing in line with increase of academy conversions. Divided 50/50 between planned maintenance, worst condition / high priority and condition suitability / development programmes.

Specialist Provision Targeted Capital Programme would receive 40% / £2m contribution from Schools Condition Grant. Item to return to Schools Forum if 40% / £2m required to be exceeded.

AGREED: Schools Forum to note the content of the report.

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS:

A comment was made that LA maintained schools should not sacrifice £2m capital funding to improve provision that benefits academies if not funded by academies. This would not be equitable for maintained schools unless academy schools contribute to match that of funding earmarked for maintained schools.

Academies do not have access to capital unless they place a bid with trust or exceed minimum pupil numbers for a formula allocation.

Some sites available for use, rather than investing in new e.g. Springhead – *NYCC actively exploring options.*

919: MEDICAL TUITION UPDATE

NOTED: The arrangements that will be put into place to ensure that in the case of young people being referred to the Medical Education service, who are already the subject of Education, Health and Care plans, that there is optimal alignment of the resources within the Medical Education Service and Element 3 funding arrangements.

LA centralised service in operation September 2020, to be led by Sarah Fawcett. Current budget of £800k. Taking demand into consideration, estimated expenditure of £896k. Two options to address this:

- (a) Pupils may already have allocated member of staff who may be able to work within service
- (b) Recover cost from school

Potential introduction of AV equipment and an opportunity to engage with pupils on border of attending school. Cost effective use of tutor time and AV may relieve pressures.

Paper to be reviewed Spring Term 2021.

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS:

Other classes e.g Ed Class looked into.

Demonstration of AV at High Needs Group, good feedback.

Clawback mechanism (option b) needs to be investigated further, schools would continue to have expense of support staff.

Approximately 100 pupils accessed provision last year for approx. 20-25 weeks.

Difficult for schools to access this provision, schools then paying for a number of alternatives.

The above paper related to statutory provision for pupil out of school 15 days +, opportunities for broader provision in future.

Operating through locality hubs.

To be brought back to Schools Forum in future.

920: RISK PROTECTION ARRANGEMENTS

CONSIDERED: The Risk Protection Agreement offered by the DfE (alternative to current Insurance arrangements for LA maintained schools). The tight timescales for the 2020/21 insurance year and the proposed actions of the Insurance and Risk Management Service over the 2020 / 21 period were highlighted. There would be a potential impact on maintained school budgets and Insurance and Risk management.

AGREED:

- (a) To consider the information provided in relation to the RPA.
- (b) To consider the timing of schools in joining the RPA due to lack of clarity regarding the cover for maintained schools and tight timescales provided by the RPA and recognising that it is essential that maintained schools continue to be insured.
- (c) To note that the Insurance and Risk Management Service will undertake the following during 2020/21 and then report back to the Schools forum in May 2020.
 - Review the clarified cover provided by the RPA for maintained schools to ensure that it is suitable and will cover the same risks as the Council cover.
 - Liaise with insurers to see whether maintained schools are bound by the current Insurance Long Term Agreement.

921: MEMBERSHIP OF THE HNF SUB-GROUP

School Forum members invited to join High Needs Funding Sub-Group.

922: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Potential impact of Covid-19; advise on how to support pupil on free school meals if school closures; *LA working on response to address Covid-19, free school meals will be included.*

923: FUTURE MEETINGS

Thursday 21 May 2020 – Scarborough – Newby and Scalby Primary School

Thursday 17 September 2020 – Richmondshire

Thursday 12 November 2020 – Harrogate

Thursday 10 December 2020 – County Hall (if required)