

SCHOOLS MANAGEMENT FORUM

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MICROSOFT TEAMS MEETING HELD ON:

WEDNESDAY 13 OCTOBER 2021 @ 9:15AM

ATTENDING:

<u>Maintained Primary School Representatives</u>	
Julie Rodwell	Park End Primary School
<u>Primary Academy Representatives</u>	
Helen Steele (Vice-Chair)	Caldicotes Primary Academy
Sarah Lymer	Linthorpe Community Primary School
Emma Watson	The Avenue Primary School
Amy Young	Captain Cook Primary School
Kate Barkley	Viewley Hill Primary
Anita Jeffries	Archibald
Jackie Walsh	Green Lane Academy
<u>Secondary Academy Representatives</u>	
Michael Laidler	Acklam Grange School
David Dawes	Kings Academy, Chair
Mary Brindle	Macmillan Academy
<u>PVI Representatives</u>	
Afzal Kushi	PVI Sector
<u>16-19 Representative</u>	
Jane Steel	Middlesbrough College
<u>Local Authority Officers</u>	
Rob Brown	Director of Education, Prevention & Partnership
Dianne Nielsen	Senior Accounting Officer – MBC
Trevor Dunn	Head of Access to Education
Sheila Marley	School Readiness Team Manager - MBC
Judi Libby	Head of Resources
Richard Painter	Clerk
Councillor Stephen Hill	Executive Member Education
<u>Observers</u>	
Carole Tonner	TVED
Dawn Kemp	Breckon Hill Primary School
Lisa Marron	Nicolas Postgate
Tracy Houston	Newport
Louise Davies	Linthorpe
1	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/ANY ITEMS FOR AOB</u>
	<p>The following apologies were received:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joanne Smith • Karen Smith • Beverley Hewitt Best • Janis French

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leanne Chilton • Jennie Kitchen • William Guthrie <p>RESOLVED that the apologies received be approved.</p> <p>There were no items notified for discussion as Any Other Business</p>
2	<p><u>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING/MATTERS ARISING</u></p> <p>2.1 Minutes of the meetings held on 19 May and 9 July 2021 were circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p><i>(The Chair left the meeting due to connective issues). Mrs H Steele, Vice-Chair in the Chair.</i></p> <p>The following amendment was made to the minutes held 19 May 2021-</p> <p>In Attendance add “Mrs J Walsh, Headteacher, Green Lane Academy.</p> <p>Paragraph 4.7 remove Mrs H Steele, Vice Chair insert Mrs H Steele, Vice Chair.</p> <p>Minutes of meeting held on 9 July 2021. Ensure that attendees were identified under their categories.</p> <p>RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meetings held on 19 May and 9 July 2021, as amended be approved for signature by the Chair.</p> <p><i>(The Chair re-joined the meeting). Mr Dawes, Chaired the meeting.</i></p>
3.	<p><u>DECISION/ACTION LOG</u></p> <p>There were no matters arising from the decision logs for meeting held on 19 May and 9 July 2021.</p>
4.	<p><u>TERMS OF REFERENCE/CONSTITUTION</u></p> <p>Mrs Nielsen, Senior Accountant informed the forum that a copy of the terms of reference for SMF would be provided at each meeting, and consideration would be given to reviewing the membership. Since the last meeting the following changes were made to the constitution:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMF could no longer make decision on carry forward a deficit on central expenditure to the next year to be funded from the schools budget and any brought forward deficit on de-delegated services which is to be met by the overall schools budget. • School Forums can continue to meet remotely. This includes, but is not limited to:, Telephone conferencing, Video conferencing, Live webcast, Live interactive streaming

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of which Local Authority Officers could attend SMF meetings to present briefing papers and answer questions. Observers can attend the meeting but are not permitted to speak <p>RESOLVED that the constitution be noted.</p>
5.	<p><u>HIGH NEEDS MATRIX FUNDING REPORT</u></p> <p>A welcome was extended to Mrs Libby, Head of Resources, who provided a verbal update of some changes which were proposed to the high needs matrix funding report for post and pre 16 students. The following points were made:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formula utilised was to support the needs of students eligible for SEND Support or EHCP in mainstream schools/colleges • Adding additional resources to include adjustment to the matrix for £16 pound per points, which was accepted by schools and staff were currently working through claims • An increased waiting was made to the sensory element due to the level of need as this group of children needed access to either a deaf teacher or access to braille materials • Hoping inclusion and outreach service can meet the needs of these children and schools were encouraged to utilise these services • Post 16 gone back to way of calculating that, and discussions were held with Further Education colleges regarding this any payment of costs through annex 1 • Schools were asked to complete the high needs matrix to identify support provided and return this to the Local Authority (LA) and deduct the notional £6k to enable this to be claim back <p>RESOLVED that the verbal report be noted.</p>
6.	<p><u>DSG RECOVERY PLAN</u></p> <p>Mrs Libby, Head of Resources, provided a summary of the points contained within her report provided on the DSG recovery plan. The following points were made:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High needs budget is under significant pressure with a budget of £3,902,164 as of 31 March 2021. An overview was provided of the reasons why this was the case • DfE were requiring that authorities achieved best value of provision provided. Work was under way with the DfE and ESFA to ensure that this budget was under control, and recover the deficit • The level of the overspend was reducing over the past couple of years, through cost avoidance and strategies employed • It was predicted the deficit would increase by a further £660k by the end of the financial year

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the written report provided a number of recommendations were identified for SMF to consider the way forward and how the deficit could be reduced • An overview was provided of the key issues impacting on the budget which were lack of capacity in specialist settings, volume of EHCP and SEN Support plans and movers in & out • An overview was provided of the mitigation and strategies utilised to manage the High Needs Budget. • To ensure strategies remain on track and achieve a balanced budget, engagement with all settings locally is vital. It is recommended that a sub-group be established to scrutinise the detail of plans going forward. Volunteers would be sought Mrs Libby in respect of this matter. <p>Mrs Lymer, informed SMF she had attended a Primary Headteacher DfE group meeting recently which had discussed implications with funding for SEND, which would be reviewed nationally as this was significant issue across the country.</p> <p><i>What sort of time demands do you envisage for colleagues joining the sub-group?</i> Commitment to attending a quarterly meeting and to share ideas and identify solutions to areas identified within the report.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the recommendations identified within the report be noted.</p>
7.	<p><u>DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2022-23</u></p> <p>Mrs Nielsen, Senior Accounting Officer, provide an update to the forum regarding 2022-23 Dedicated Schools Grant, National Funding Formulae (NFF). The Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) announced the following indicative allocations:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools Block £120.3m (excluding premises and growth funding) increase of £3.187m • High Needs £32.5m increase of £2.961m • Central Schools Services Block £1.039m reduction of £23.6k (of which the historic element has reduced by £47.6k) • The allocations will be revised following the latest census information collected this month, which could impact on the information provided for this meeting • An overview of NFF unit rates for 2022-2023 was provided in paragraph 4.1.5 of the report, along with any variations. Assurances were given that all rates recommended by the DfE were applied subject to affordability • Growth fund is part of the schools block but is calculated separately. It will be calculated using the same methodology as in 2021-22 based on growth in pupil numbers between October 20 and October 21 census. An update in respect of this will be provided at the next meeting.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Schools Service Block (CSSB) funding is split into two elements: funding for ongoing responsibilities and funding for historic commitments. The total CSSB funding is made up of two elements funding for ongoing responsibilities and funding for historic commitments. • Based on 2022-23 indicative allocation this has resulted in an anticipated pressure of £85.7k in 2022-23 due to historic commitments. Even though the per-pupil rate has increased, funding could reduce further if pupil numbers are reduced in the October 21 census. • The high needs block is calculated for each Local Authority area based on a formula. The funding floor for 2022-23 allows each LA to receive an underlying increase of at least 8% per head of 2 to 18 population. The limit on gains is set at 11%. • SEND review was not looking at making any changes to the formula, although there was • The basic structure of the high needs NFF for 2022 to 2023 is not changing, there have been some technical changes made following the responses to a consultation in early 2021. • Historic spend factor has been updated for 22-23, to use 50% of local authorities actual spend in 2017 to 2018 rather than planned spend. The proportion of funding will reduce from 34% of 2021-2022 formula allocations to 32% in 22-23. • Due to the Covid 19 pandemic there is no appropriate 2020 attainment data for 2 low attainment factors; therefore 2019 data has been used in place of 2020 data for 2022-2023 high needs allocations • The DSG High Needs block allocations will be published in December 21. • The DSG Early Years block is determined by a separate national formula, which was not yet released. Provisional allocations were to be published in December 2021. <p>Mrs Steele, Vice-Chair voiced her concern if that if SALT provisions did not continue that research on speech and language, indicates that this would generate greater behavioural issues, for when children attend secondary schools.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Forum note the changes to the DSG Schools Block, DSG High Needs Block and DSG Central Schools Services Block</p>
8.	<p><u>SCHOOL BUSINESS RATES</u></p> <p>Mrs Nielsen provided Members of the forum with an overview of changes to be made to the payment process of business rates. The following points were made:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From April 22 the ESFA will pay school business rates direct to billing authorities. Therefore state funded schools will no longer be required to process and pay school business rates

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools will retain liability of the rates i.e. community and voluntary controlled schools liability rests with the LA. All other LA maintained schools and academies will retain liability for their own business rates. • The ESFA will continue to cover additional costs associated with buildings in school sites, which are used to deliver education for pupils, an example given is a sports hall that is used by pupils during lessons time and in the evenings by the wider community. • Additional costs will not be covered for buildings that are not used to deliver education for pupils at the school for example a children's centre. • Academies have until the end of March 2022 to submit outstanding historic claims relating to the 2015-2016 financial year onwards. From April 2022, ESFA will no longer accept historic claims. • Schools and Local Authorities (LA's) will have access to the online business rates portal so they can see their rates bills and when bills have been paid. Schools will have observer status. Schools are encouraged to utilise the portal to ensure accuracy and where necessary notify the billing authority of any errors. • For schools with multi-use sites, such as a private nursery attached or a caretaker's house. The ESFA will continue to cover additional costs associated with buildings in school sites, which are used to deliver education for pupils, an example given is a sports hall that is used by pupils during lessons time and in the evenings by the wider community. • Additional costs will not be covered for buildings that are not used to deliver education for pupils at the school for example a children's centre. <p><i>Are the Business Rates department aware of the changes?</i> Yes, they were informed of the changes following receipt of advice and guidance from the ESFA. .</p> <p>RESOLVED that the forum note the contents of this report and that Schools need to register buildings that are not used to deliver education for pupils at the school as a separate entity on the Valuation Office Agency's (VOA) rating list.</p>
9.	<p><u>FAIR FUNDING SCHOOL REVIEW</u></p> <p>Mrs Nielsen, provided the forum with an overview of the consultation undertaken by the Department for Education (DfE) Fair Funding for All: Reform to National Funding Formula (NFF). The following points were made:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government's intention to move closer to the hard funding formula. Middlesbrough apply the rates and funding factors as per NFF and therefore there will be limited impact to schools funding

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the report links were provided to the questions posed via consultation undertaken. • An overview was provided of the responses in blue font in the report to the five questions posed during the consultation under the following headings:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The scope of directly applied NFF, 2. Developing the schools NFF to support the directly applied NFF, 3. Growth and falling rolls funding, 4. Next steps for the transition to the directly applied NFF for schools 5. Do you agree that the additional flexibility for LAs in the EAL factor, relating to how many years a pupil had been in the school system, should be removed from 2023-24 • The ESFA have not specified what timeframe they are working to or specified when this will be implemented • Due to the move towards a hard NFF, this will change the powers and responsibilities of schools forums. The proposal under a hard NFF where a local funding formulae for mainstream schools will no longer continue and therefore the proposal is that schools forum being consulted on formulae will no longer be required. • On issues such as growth, this will no longer fall to schools forum as this will form part of the hard NFF. The current role of schools forum in agreeing transfers from schools block to other blocks will no longer apply once the hard NFF is implemented • A wider review will look at membership and structure of schools forums and consider whether these remain appropriate. • The DfE are wanting a greater understanding of whether there is a desire amongst maintained schools to move the funding cycle to an academic year but retain the financial reporting cycle. • It is not clear what the implications are on budget setting, closure of accounts and financial returns such as CFRs. Guidance on this is awaited. <p>Following discussion it was</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Forum note the contents of the report.</p>
10.	<p><u>SECTION 251 FUNDING</u></p> <p>Mrs Nielsen, informed the forum that the LA was required to prepare and submit an annual budget and outturn statement about their planned and actual spending on education and children’s social care to the Secretary of State for Education. These returns will be uploaded to Middlesbrough Council’s website, before the end of the week.</p> <p>Following discussion it was</p> <p>RESOLVED that the update on Section 251 funding be noted.</p>

<p>11.</p>	<p><u>UNION FACILITY TIME</u></p> <p>Mrs Nielsen informed the forum she had asked that this item be on the agenda, as she administered payments on behalf of this group. The current procedure was that a Union Representative could submit a claim to their Headteacher, for time taken out of school to support a teacher with a grievance/disciplinary or to review policies. In order to facilitate this and ensure there was a clear audit trail it was essential that information was provided as to what schools had bought into union facility time. It was essential that payments were not made if schools had not paid for union facility time, as this is public money which is restricted for this purpose. The claim form completed clearly identified what was claimed for as part of this work. It was not possible for this to be utilised for canvassing, or to support work for a Multi-Academy Trust in reviewing policies. A claim for this work could only be made for those schools in Middlesbrough within the Trust.</p> <p>Concerns were received from representatives from unions that information of which colleagues they were supporting was sensitive and confidential, and that this would not be provided to the forum. An invitation was extended to them to discuss this matter with the forum, to broker a solution, via a data sharing agreement. The role of the Local Authority was to administer payments on behalf of the forum. Confirmation was provided that information within invoices was treated privately.</p> <p>Members of the forum noted that Headteacher colleagues signed a form as budget holders authorising a union representative to support a colleague, and would rather not know which school they were supporting. For claims made for union representative support Trust wide, this needed to be pro-rata'd down just to schools within Middlesbrough. It was suggested that Union Representatives needed to be clear on what they could/could not claim for. Confirmation was provided that a claim was rejected for one representative as they had worked with schools who had not bought into union facility time within Middlesbrough. There is a need for Headteacher colleagues to be clear on what work a union representative is undertaking before they are released.</p> <p>Mr Brown, Director of Education and Partnerships informed the forum that the LA was administering the payment for union facility time. The budget for for staff released to carry out duties for unions sat with the forum. It was proposed a working group be established to investigate this matter further and provide clarification to the forum. Members of the forum were requested to forward their views to Mrs Steele, Vice-Chair, to broker a way forward in respect of this matter.</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p><u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u></p> <p>There were no items for consideration under any other business.</p>

13. DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting be held virtually on Microsoft Teams at 9.15am on Wednesday 24 November 2021. The Chair recorded his thanks to everyone for their attendance.

Meeting Closed: 10:30 am

Approved on _____ (date)

Signature (Chair) _____

Name _____

DRAFT