

## **DARLINGTON SCHOOLS FORUM**

**19<sup>th</sup> November, 2013**

**PRESENT** Keith Cotgrave (in the Chair), David Ackroyd (Northwood Primary School), Craig Alderson (High Coniscliffe Church of England Primary School), Richard Gartland (Education Village Academy Trust), David Hall (Darlington School of Maths and Science), Dean Judson (Hurworth Secondary School), Kay Kelly (Rise Carr College), Peter King (Corporation Road Community School), Christine Large (St John's Church of England Academy), Lindsay Long (PVI), Martin Proud (St Aidan's Academy), Paul Rhatigan (Reid Street Primary School), Paul Richardson (16-19 Education), Francis Shorten (St Bede's RC Primary School), Catherine Thompson (West Park Academy), Lynne Walden (PVI), Brian Watkinson (The Federation of Mowden Schools), Shirley Welsh (Whinfield Primary School)

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** – Councillor Cyndi Hughes, David Leane (Carmel College)

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE** – Jenni Cooke, Assistant Director – Children, Families and Learning, Rachel Kershaw, The Head of School and Pupil Support Services, Brett Nielsen, Finance Manager Resources Department and Elaine Sayers, Finance Officer, Resources Department.

**APOLOGIES** – Christine Boyce (St Teresa's RC Primary School), Elizabeth Charlton (PVI), Mike Fryer (Hummersknot Academy) and Mike Shorten (Carmel College), Lynn Millar (Borough Rd Nursery School), Sue Richardson (Education Village), Maura Regan (Carmel College), Jennifer Moorhouse (Carmel College).

**DS24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

**DS25. MINUTES** – Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Forum, held on 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2012.

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

**DS26. MATTERS ARISING** – Pursuant to Minute DS23/8/10/2013, it was highlighted that the funding formula had been submitted and feedback had been received to confirm that the Forum was compliant with the guidelines.

**RESOLVED** – That the update be received and a further update be given later in the year.

**DS27. VOLUNTARY/TRUST ADMISSIONS CONTINGENCY 2013/14** – Pursuant to Minutes DS14/23/04/2013 and DSAA4/11/06/2013, the Head of School and Pupil Support, People Services submitted a report (previously circulated) providing School Forum with further information regarding the Voluntary Aided/Trust school admissions contingency.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

**DS28. FUNDING TO SUPPORT THE ADMISSION OF VULNERABLE PUPILS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS** – The Head of School and Pupil Support, People Services submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that School Forum support the Local Area Primary Panel's (LAP Panels) to draw down funding from the High Needs element of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) to support the admission of vulnerable pupils as part of the Fair Access Protocol.

Apologies were given for the late submission of the report and it was requested that members look over the report and that it be resubmitted at the next meeting of School Forum for consideration.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be resubmitted to School Forum on 14<sup>th</sup> January, 2014.

**DS29. BUDGET UPDATE 2013/14** – The Finance Manager, Resources Group submitted a report (previously circulated), updating the Schools Forum on the use of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget in 2013/14.

The Finance Manger reported that the projected year end position with regard to the DSG budget would be an underspend of £1,256,000. The Finance Manager noted that the projected underspend did not include 2 year old nursery funding. This was because it was proposed that underspend in this area would be converted into capital resources to allow capacity to be increased in line with the growth in the required number of 2 year old places. A submission would be made to the EFA following this meeting to request this conversion of revenue funding into capital resources. Discussion ensued on; how the underspend came about and how the underspend would affect the next years' budget.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

**DS30. BUDGET SETTINGS 2014/15** – The Finance Manager, Resources Group submitted a report (previously circulated), requesting that consideration be given to the use of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in 2014/15.

The Finance Manager reported that although no budget allocations had been received, it was important the Forum begin the process to agree the 2014/15 budget. The estimate provided was based on the current years DSG allocation, with adjustments made to account for any resources carried forward from 2012/13 and one off funding received from Education Funding Authority (EFA) for 2013/14. It was also highlighted to members that although the initial draft budget was showing a deficit in funding, it was expected that additional funds would be received through the funding allocations to offset the shortfall.

Discussion ensued on the potential budget allocations of the services provided, how the Forum could scrutinise these services and amend the funding if necessary.

**RESOLVED** – (a) That the report be noted.

(b) That the funding of each service with a provisional budget allocation be agreed by the Forum.

**DS31. SCHOOL FORUM OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE AND MEMBERSHIP** – The Finance Manager, Resources Group gave a verbal update regarding the composition of the Forum. It was reported that, in line with the Constitution, the current members' term of office would cease in April 2014. Members were advised that before this time all eligible Schools and organisations would be contacted to nominate members and substitutes to sit on the Forum for the 2 year term. At this point, a new Chair and Vice Chair would also be sought.

The Finance Manager, Resources Group submitted the "Schools Forums: operational and good practice guide, October 2013 – Education Funding Agency" (previously circulated) to the Forum for information

**RESOLVED** –That the report be noted.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS** – (1) Discussion ensued on Union Facilities Time within schools and the financial constraints.

(2) Discussion ensued on the possibility of a Commissioning and Contracts Monitoring post, what this would entail and how it would affect the Forum.

**RESOLVED** – That more information be submitted to the Forum regarding the Commissioning Contracts and Monitoring post, in January 2014.