

SCHOOLS MANAGEMENT FORUM

**NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON Wednesday 18th September 2019, 8:15am at
Acklam Grange School Community Learning Centre.**

ATTENDED:

Chris Wain	Chair / Pallister Park
Emma Watson	Avenue Primary
Adam Cooper	Abingdon Primary
Joanne Smith	Beverley School
Julia Rodwell	Park End Primary
Helen Malbon	Viewley Hill
Sarah Lymer	Linthorpe Primary School
Leanne Chilton	River Tees Multi-Academy Trust
Beverley Hewitt-Best	Newham Bridge
Jo Smith	Breckon Hill
Jenni Cairns	Middlesbrough College
Mary Brindle	Macmillan Academy
William Guthrie	PVI
Afzal Khushi	PVI
Andy Rodgers	UCA
Anita Jefferies	
Craig Povey	Finance Business Partner
Barrie Cooper	Councillor - Middlesbrough Council
Faye Revely	Trainee Accountant - Middlesbrough Council
Andrea Williams	Director of Education - Middlesbrough Council
Helen Dalby	Secondary Academy
Kevin Duffy	Diocese of Middlesbrough
Trevor Dunn	Head of Access to Education and Alternative Provision - Middlesbrough Council
Dianne Nielsen	Senior Accountant - Middlesbrough Council
Judi Libbey	Head of Resources and SEN - Middlesbrough Council
Ann McPartland	Observer
Nicola Russel	Observer
Brendan Fox	Observer
Vanessa Lazenby	Observer
Samantha Corbyn	Minute Taker – Middlesbrough Council

1. Apologies for absence

Sheila Marley, Jackie Walsh, Amy Young, Andrea Crawshaw, Helen Steel

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting / Matters Arising**

A number of name corrections were raised and actioned.

3. **Decision / Action Log**

Items within the decision/action log were agreed by the group that all actions had been completed.

4. **School Improvement Funding – Verbal Update**

Savings have had to be made for Children's Services for the year 2019/20. There has been a significant overspend already and £1.9 million in savings are to be made. Safeguarding takes priority over the School Improvement Strategy. Around £420,000 in funding has been withdrawn from School Improvement funding.

Some work will continue until December 2019 / April 2020 dependent on funding.

Savings discussed:

- Emma Wright's post will be maintained for 2 years and Graham Alison has been appointed.
- Funding has been secured for an apprentice position in Inclusion. The Child's voice needs to be heard in future planning and conversations.
- Steve Mumby's role will be maintained. This position has been helpful in directing work.
- Funding has already been committed to York St John's University to complete an evaluation project in terms of understanding the impact of improvements that have been made and where funding may be needed in the future. A full report will be submitted.
- There is sufficient funding for the SEND, English and maths and Leadership Hubs.
- MAP is secured until 2020.

All other areas of funding have been closed down however this does not necessarily mean that any work will stop.

There may be further Controlling Migration Funding. The number of children moving into Middlesbrough has decrease marginally in the last 2 years from 427 to 400. This is being monitored close to the UK leaving the EU.

Work involving the achievement team and Learning Hubs has not stopped and will continue however the incentive for the funding will not be honoured. Schools that have planned projects will be consulted.

Chair noted that Learning Hubs have made a considerable difference to standards in Middlesbrough and the lives of children. They do not have a large budget and one term of funding is not a positive outlook. The Hubs are of benefit to all schools as they provide free training and access to events and courses that would usually be of great cost to schools.

Chair requested that the cost of Steve Mumby's services and the MAP Group is made transparent to SMF as the loss of the Hubs would be a tragedy for Middlesbrough Schools. They offer the opportunity for collaboration and development of Middlesbrough professionals.

Andrea Williams added that the contribution of the Hubs is not being undervalued and a meeting has been held to discuss TBCA funding. There is a possibility of funding from the Innovation Fund. It has always been known that funding would cease eventually however it was not planned to be part way through the school year. Schools buying in through SLA has been discussed so that support continues.

5. High Needs Fund – Verbal Update

A robust picture of spending towards the end of quarter 2 is available.

The budget for Independent Schools and IDF is on track to spend £150,000 this year. Matrix Funding and Special Schools budget is on track to be spent.

Local schools have been consulted in relation to managing the alternative provision and exclusions which is currently mostly funded by the High Needs budget.

RTMAT are still dealing with legal issues around procurement and the Local Authority is seeking further advice from the executive team. Should conclude in December 2019.

It has been agreed that a RAG rating would be provided at each meeting and a report alternately.

Noted that information in reports is often complex and should be made available before the meeting.

6. School Admissions Report

Appeals have been a significant problem for secondary schools this year and there has been some debate around liability for costings. The new school opening in Middlesbrough will hopefully alleviate some pressures in the new academic year.

The guidance stipulates that the Local Authority must not differentiate between academies and maintained schools. I.E if the Local Authority has liability to pay for appeals at maintained schools it must also be liable to pay for academies.

In Middlesbrough, the Local Authority do not use the DSG to pay for appeals at maintained schools – as such it is the view of the legal team that it is also not liable for payment at academies.

Nearby authorities were reluctant to release what they consider confidential information around appeal funding. Redcar and Cleveland and Darlington schools fund their own appeals although costs vary between £200 and £400. Hartlepool Local Authority fund Academy appeals.

Currently, Middlesbrough appeals are heard in Hartlepool which can be off-putting for parents as they need to travel. Middlesbrough Local Authority could provide a service that would be paid for by schools however there is no guarantee that it could be provided cheaper than is already being paid.

One advantage of buying from another authority is the lack of bias in the appeals process however if Middlesbrough provided the service, it would be more time efficient.

There is potential to set up a panel within the Local Authority however no guarantee of improved service.

It was raised that that a trade of service could be set up with neighbouring local authorities to preserve the absence of bias. Setting up a panel could potentially be costly involving training and legal representation.

Beverley Hewitt-Best raised that some parents are bypassing the usual admissions service and going through an appeal when places are available. Trevor Dunn will discuss this outside of the forum.

7. IT Audit – Verbal Update

IT will invoice schools individually.

There is £66,201 of unallocated money from the Essential Services Funding and this has an operation guide. Queried if this could be

used to find Hubs throughout the school year. This will be explored and discussed at the next meeting.

Schools raised that they have not been consulted with by IT Services but have been sent emails. Faye Revely will discuss with head of IT so that schools are clear about what services are being paid for.

8. Voting Rights Card

Constitution updated.

John Lees has resigned.

Jo Smith appointed as governor for Primary and Secondary.

9. AOB

The date of the March 2020 SMF will be rearranged as the CLC is not available on this date.

It was raised that reports often include complex information and verbal updates do not offer enough time to prepare queries and discussion. Judi Libbey added that she is happy to discuss reports before scheduled meetings.

Chair shared that John Appleyard passed away 2 weeks ago. His memorial service will be held at Great Ayton on the 23rd of September at 11:30am for colleagues that knew him.

10. Date of next meeting:

Wednesday 13th November @ 8:15am

Venue: Community Learning Centre, Acklam Grange School