

# SCHOOLS MANAGEMENT FORUM

NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019, 8:15am at Acklam Grange School  
Community Learning Centre.

ATTENDED:

Andrea Crawshaw	Chair – Acklam Grange
Helen Steele	Caldicotes Primary
Adam Cooper	Abingdon Primary School
Faye Revely	Middlesbrough Council
Andrew Humble	Middlesbrough Council
Judith Walls	SEND Financial Support
Jackie Walsh	Green Lane
Beverly Hewitt-Best	Newham Bridge
Helen Malbon	Viewley Hill
Joanne Smith	Beverley School
Andrea Williams	Director of Education
Sarah Lymer	Linthorpe Primary
Chris Wain	Pallister Park Primary
Amy Young	Captain Cook Primary
Afzal Kushi	PVI
Sean Hogg	Middlesbrough Council
Nicola Russell	Observer
Ann McPartland	Observer
Vanessa Lazenby	Observer
Janet Wainwright	Observer
Tessa Smith	Observer
Carl Snowball	Observer
Claire Doyle	Minute Taker – Middlesbrough Council

1. **Apologies for absence:**

John Lees, Gemma Simon, Sheila Marley, Anita Jeffries, David Dawes, Emma Watson, Jenni Cairns, Julie Rodwell, Helen Dalby.

2. **Any Items for AOB**

High Needs Block Budget / Additional Funding Options

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

Misspelling of Chris Wain's name and incorrect school recorded.

**Agenda item 6:** High Needs Budget Block – H Malbon asked that it was noted the decision to fund the School Family Practitioners was only up until October 2019.

Agenda item 10: School Swimming Programme Report – A separate dedicated meeting to be set up to discuss this with Ged Faint – Middlesbrough LA.

4. **Decision/Action Log**

No decision log circulated at today's SMF

5. **Trade Union Representation and Update**

Simon Kennedy (NASUWT) and Jen Elliot (NEU) in attendance. Simon and Jen attended SMF in 2018 to give an update on facility time service. Since then there has been a restructure and more members have been trained to offer facility time support across the schools. The report circulated today from NASUWT has been produced to identify the work that has been carried out by the trade union representatives.

C.Wain questioned why SMF were funding the facility service as most employees are paying monthly fees to their trade union, could this be classed as paying twice for the same service?

Simon clarified that the support given by Russell Sherwood (Trade Union Rep) is at a school based level, Simon also offers his support to more complex circumstances. If the facility time was not funded the monthly costs to union members each month would need to increase.

J. Smith asked who the trade union reps are from NEU and would it be possible to provide a breakdown of the work that is being carried out by them for schools. Jen Elliot to provide this detail to SMF.

H.Steele questioned why her school had received a separate bill when her school have required trade union representation. Simon confirmed this shouldn't have happened, if the school pays in to the facility time service they receive full trade union representation at no additional cost. H.Steele to discuss further with Simon outside of SMF.

A discussion took place around who decides how many representatives are needed and how many days are allocated to employees for facility time, SMF are not a part of any of these decisions. The number of reps depends on how many members there are and the work that is required.

In 2018/19 this service pays for 1 NASUWT rep in Hollis Academy for 3 days per week. The rate the LA pays is to cover the cost of supply cover for the reps, the total cost anticipated for 2019/20 is £32,000 which includes a 2% pay award.

In addition to this there are 3 union representatives working for the NEU. For 2019/20 it is estimated that NEU will require 3 days per week of funding for facility time at a total cost of £21,500.

There was a discussion between SMF members around the difference in money provided to both unions if they are both providing 3 days facility team each. Are SMF paying more to NASUWT to cover the cost of a senior member of staff carrying out the union rep role? Further clarification is needed around this.

There is an option for academies to opt out of the facility time service and pay an hourly rate for union representation as and when needed.

There has been no ask of an increase to funding for facility time as it is felt it is not needed, the amount of money given is reasonable for the amount of members and the work that is provided.

Is it an option for SMF members to decide how much funding is given to the unions to provide the facility time, that way the union can agree how many days/representatives are allocated based on the funding agreed by SMF? Discussions around 2020/21 trade union process will take place throughout the year, with a decision made as to how the facility time will be funded next year.

## 6. **Early Help Practitioners Representation and Update**

John Scadden and Gail Earl in attendance.

The purpose of the report is to provide SMF with an update on the four Family Practitioners which were approved to work exclusively with schools to support children experiencing barriers to learning, prevent problems becoming worse and escalating to specialist services.

The School Management Forum agreed to fund four School Family Practitioners, to be based in the Stronger Families department in Middlesbrough Council. By funding the posts it was hoped the case management of early help in schools would increase and that schools would gain more capacity to provide support to children and families.

### **Recommendation 1**

There is significant challenge as there are four School Family Practitioners working with families from a high number of schools. It is proposed that the School Family Practitioners target three schools: UCA, Trinity Catholic College and Outwood Ormesby, due to the high rate of pupil exclusions and the complexity of the needs of the children and families in those schools. The practitioners would work with other families as time allows.

### **Recommendation 2**

It is proposed that the School Family Practitioners work alongside Education Psychology, Police, CAMHS and Headstart who are helping those families by offering interventions to support the Schools.

### **Recommendation 3**

A further update report is made to SMF in July to demonstrate the positive outcomes achieved by the team for children, young people and families.

### **Recommendation 4**

A report is made to SMF in September 2019 to consider the continued funding of the posts beyond November 2019.

Some SMF members queried the accuracy of the numbers provided about how many children are being supported in each school by the Family Practitioners. There was a concern that if the family practitioners are working with families within their schools then

neither the head teachers nor their PSA's / Family Support Workers are being made aware.

John Scaddon agreed to speak to the family practitioners around information not being communicated back to head teachers and then PSA's.

It was felt there had been a miscommunication on how schools can access this support, to ensure making good use of the money that has been allocated.

It was agreed for a referral pathway to be created and circulated to all schools to make them aware of the process.

**Action: Faye Revely to send Gail Earl & John Scadden the list of school contacts to circulate referral process.**

The list of schools highlighted in the report that are receiving support from family practitioners show Nunthorpe Academy and St Peter's Primary. As these schools fall under Redcar and Cleveland Local Authority, a discussion was held around recouping the funding used for supporting the children within these schools.

**Action: Gail Earl is to look in to this.**

There are concerns around recommendation one only targeting 3 schools due to the high rate of pupil exclusions and the complexity of the needs of the children and families in those schools.

This is universal funded and was granted on the conditions that it was used for early help intervention.

A. Williams advised there has been monthly meetings taking place to look at how partner agencies including the Police, CAMHS, and Early help can work with these schools around the high exclusion rates.

G. Earl suggested coming back to SMF in the summer time to show the outcomes given to the families that are currently being supported and the impact that it has had. G.Earl is appreciative of the comments and feedback given by SMF.

**Action: Gail Earl and Rob Brown to attend the next primary school forum to explain the reason why case workers are being cut from schools, but then Middlesbrough Council are asking SMF for funding for School Family Practitioners**

**Decisions:**

Recommendation 1: No

Recommendation 2: Yes

Recommendation 3 A report to be submitted to SMF in July given precise data and explaining the support given including the impact.

Recommendation 4: Further details needed – how long notice period has to be given to workers if the funding does not continue.

What are the contract end dates for the four School Family Practitioners currently employed?

## Funding & Staffing Info (Early Help Practitioner Posts)

Post	Start Date	End Date	2018/19 Costs	2019/20 Costs (approx.)
1	21.10.18	21.10.19	£11,697	£15,647
2	12.11.18	12.11.19	£11,002	£17,235
3	5.11.18	5.11.19	£11,509	£17,154
4	5.11.18	5.11.19	£10,844	£16,748
<b>Total</b>			<b>£45,052</b>	<b>£66,784</b>

Total funding requirement (estimate) = £111,836

SMF are in agreement to fund posts from the high needs budget, with specific areas of the HNB to be confirmed. The posts will be funded in full until contract end dates of each member, with subject to review by SMF as to the funding/continuity of service going forward.

### **7. Early Help Practitioners Funding – Independent Review of SMF Decision**

Report provided by Sean Hogg.

At the SMF meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2018 a paper was presented requesting SMF approval for four Early Help Practitioner posts to work with schools to support the role of Lead Practitioner and provide a restorative whole family approach.

The funding of the posts was to be from a choice of two sources, centrally retained budgets or direct school grant.

However, after discussion and agreement to fund the posts, the agreed source of the funding was not clearly identified and/or recorded.

It was highlighted that holding the SMF at this time of year is probably not the best time as the meeting cannot always be attended by all SMF members.

Some SMF members are unsure of their voting rights when it comes to making decisions. Name cards/voting rights to be re-introduced at every SMF.

**Action: S.Hogg to sort naming cards/voting rights for next SMF.**

### **8. De-delegation Services Budget 2019/20**

Maintained schools decision on de-delegation will be taken at SMF, academies to be contacted at a later date by the LA to confirm buy in.

Free School Meals Eligibility – Agreed

Trade Union Facility Time – As previously discussed earlier in the meeting there is concern around the different rates given to both unions. SMF members agreed they should provide funding for the facility time, however the amount should be decided by SMF members rather than the unions.

Recommendations:

- Share the concerns with NASUWT about the difference in funding for both unions.
- Look at what other local authorities are paying
- Give fair warning to NASUWT and NEU about what SMF will be willing to fund for next year
- The annual reports submitted by the unions need to justify why one union is being funded significantly higher than an other
- The union representatives to come back to SMF in September/October for a review meeting
- Annual reports to be circulated prior to the SMF to allow time for reading

SMF members agreed to fund the facility time funding for this year.

Licenses/Subscriptions – Agreed

**Action: F. Revely/S.Hogg to look into why all schools are paying for a subscription that is only being used in secondary schools and not primary schools.**

Rules for Academy Conversions – Year end Position – Agreed  
The wording to be changed from unspent funding to any balances.

## 9. Central Services Budget 2019/20

Admissions Team - The request for funding of £190,000 – Agreed by SMF.

Andrea Crawshaw raised a separate issue in regards to the Admissions Appeals Service, Guidance 'Advice for admission authorities on school admission appeals' published 15 March 2019 and referring to Schools Revenue Funding Operational Guide explains that:

*"In relation to centrally retained Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding, local authorities must treat all maintained schools and schools that are their own admission authority in their area equitably.*

*This is set out in Section 156.2 of the schools revenue funding operational guide.*

*This means, if local authorities retain funding from the budgets of all schools to provide an admission appeals service without charge to community and voluntary controlled schools, they must also provide this service without charge to academies, voluntary aided schools*

*and foundation schools, although these schools may instead choose to make their own, self-funded arrangements.*

*Alternatively, where local authorities delegate funding for appeals to all schools in their individual budgets, they may charge the budgets of their maintained schools for the costs associated with administering admission appeals on their behalf. Academies, voluntary aided schools and foundation schools may also wish to buy into the appeals services provided by the local authority or can make alternative arrangements.”*

Andrea queried why academies expected to pay when maintained are not? And also, why LA Democratic Services say that they cannot provide for appeals of academies when they do so for maintained schools – they say that they are not allowed, yet our legal advice is that they could (and should if they are providing the service for maintained schools)?

F.Revely explained that the admissions appeals service is not paid out of centrally held DSG, nor is it top sliced from school budgets. The Central Services Block pays for the admissions team (£190k) and this service is available to all schools as per the guidance. The admissions appeals service is paid out of council resources (£25k), legal services have previously stated that their professional liability insurance does not cover separate legal entities and only those that come under the legal entity of Middlesbrough Council (i.e. maintained schools). Andrea explained that their legal advice is on the contrary to this.

**Action: F.Revely to seek further legal advice to ensure the guidance previously given is still correct, and the LA legal team do not have the authority to provide this service to academies, and also to confirm with ESFA about the admissions appeals budget provided out of council resources to maintained schools, if it should apply to academies also.**

IT Infrastructure and Support – Andy Evans (Head of ICT Services MBC) would like to complete an audit on services provided to schools. Andy is going to contact each school and undertake a mini audit. Once completed each school will receive a simple matrix, highlight the core chargeable services each of them take. Andy is to provide a report of his findings to SMF in July.

It was recommended that Andy contacts each schools IT Technicians to discuss what is being provided from MBC.

It was agreed by SMF members to pay 1 third of the £102,351 (£34,117) until July when the report will be presented to SMF and a decision is made to pay the remainder once the report identifies what the funding is being used for.

Statutory services for all Schools – Asset Management – Questions raised about the salary of this post, has the workload not reduced now that there are less maintained schools? There are less

operational duties on a day to day basis given that the academies now pick these up themselves.

It was agreed that this is something to consider and review next year.

Central overheads – The narrative of information that has been provided is outdated, a breakdown of the current central overheads is provided to SMF. F.Revely explained to SMF that the Central Services Block has not increased this year from 2018/19 meaning the council are absorbing the costs of the pay awards for staff funded out of this block and inflation costs of audit etc. F.Revely agreed that further information on the posts funded by this block should continue to be demonstrated going forward. SMF agree the funding of these statutory services and central overheads for 2019/20.

**10. Resilience & Minute Taking – Verbal**

A.Williams asked to raise an agenda item about the resilience and minute taking of SMF. A member of staff needs to be identified to provide cover for taking the minutes at SMF when the current minute taker is unable to attend.

Suggestions were made regarding School Business Managers or someone from within Governance Services providing cover.

Another suggestion was raised about recording the meetings and then writing the minutes up at a later date. It was agreed this would be difficult with the amount of participants within the meeting.

There was a discussion around School Business Managers not being minute takers and that they would not want the responsibility of taking the minutes at SMF.

No decision reached today.

**11. AOB**

**High Needs Block Budget 2019-2020**

Due to the meeting to decide the proposed use of additional high needs block funding only taking place yesterday, the report produced by Judith Walls has been circulated in today's SMF.

The report is to consider the estimated outturn budget position for 2018/2019 financial year and the projected budget position for the 2019/2020 financial year for the High Needs Block Budget.

There was unease around the savings not being made by RTMAT, and who was responsible for this. Judith chose not to disclose names but has made Andrea Williams (Director of Education) aware.

**POTENTIAL USE OF ADDITIONAL FUNDING:**

- Early Help Practitioners – Further detail required before a decision can be reached.
- Primary Intervention Places – Agreed

- Secondary Intervention Places – Agreed
- Contribution towards additional pupils – Agreed
- Contribution towards training – A lot of the training identified is not necessary, can this be reduced to £30,000 or £25,000
- Sharing best practice – More clarification on what the spend would be on for this
- Contribution towards transition staffing – Agreed
- AP Project Officer – Agreed
- P/T Education Welfare Officer – Agreed
- Additional AP staffing for two year period – More information required from Anne Lewin to evidence how it will be effective.
- Additional AP budget contribution – It was agreed that some of the funding for training could be used for this.

A. Crawshaw advised SMF that this will be Judith Walls last attendance at SMF and thanked her for her hard work and contribution over the years.

**Date of next meeting: Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019 8.15am -  
Community Learning Centre**