

AGENDA SUPPLEMENT (1)

Meeting: Schools Forum
Place: Online meeting
Date: Thursday 10 December 2020
Time: 1.30 pm

The Agenda for the above meeting was published on 2 December 2020. Additional documents are now available and are attached to this Agenda Supplement.

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Lisa Pullin, Tel 01225 713015 or email committee@wiltshire.gov.uk, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge.

Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225)713114/713115.

This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

6 **Updates from Working Groups (Pages 3 - 12)**

The minutes of the meetings of the Early Years Reference Group held on 4 November and 4 December 2020 are now attached.

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 7 December 2020

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Early Years Reference Group Meeting

Wednesday 4 November 2020

1. Welcome and introductions

Jane Boulton, Lucy-Anne Bryant, *Rosemary Collard (name missed off original set of minutes issued)*, Emma Cooke, Jenny Harvey (notes), Sarah Hawkins, Bid Lillywhite, Russ Martin, Debbie Muir, John Proctor, Jane Provis, Trudy Surman, Marie Taylor, Emily Wood.

Bid Lillywhite from Bellefield Primary School was welcomed as the new maintained school representative for the group.

2. Apologies

Mark Cawley, Debbie Muir, Claire Shipley,

3. Minutes of last meeting (30 September 2020)

The group approved the minutes as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters arising

Item 3 – LAB/EC confirmed Bid Lillywhite had been successfully appointed as the new maintained school representative for the group, whilst private providers representatives were still being sought.

Item 4 – EW confirmed the new Provider Establishment Portal was launched on Friday 31 October 2020. 389 providers have been sent their registration and login email with a further 74 providers being held back as a result of an issue with some of their children's 30 hour eligibility codes. These issues have now been rectified, and these 74 providers received their registration and login emails on Monday 2 November 2020. A small group of providers have so far been unable to log in to the portal, and these issues have been logged with Liquidlogic. However, 250+ providers have been able to successfully log in and start using the portal. EW also confirmed that if the login issue isn't resolved for this group of providers soon, then there is an alternative way that they will be able to submit a headcount for Autumn 2020. SH raised an issue about a parent's date of birth being required in the portal. EW confirmed that a parent date of birth is only required for an EYPP check, and there is already a section to capture this data on the reverse of the Parent Declaration form.

Item 4 – LAB confirmed that the sector have been contacted for feedback on the format of the new newsletter via this week's weekly attendance survey. Group feedback was positive. Some members of the group hadn't received their newsletter email so LAB will look into this.

Item 4 – JP thanked MT for forwarding him a copy of her summary report and DfE response. JP confirmed he had written to the DfE with all Wiltshire MPs copied in. Despite sending a chasing email, JP has received no acknowledgement from the DfE other than to say the person being contacted was on leave. JP also confirmed that he had received automatic acknowledgments from all MP's, with the exception of John Glen. Michelle Donelan sent a personal response and said she would help where possible. JP was very disappointed in the overall response and will write again shortly.

ACTION: LAB to check the newsletter mailing list for those members who haven't received it.

5. Impact of COVID on settings

LAB confirmed there are 2 providers with very low numbers who are planning to mothball provision and reconsider opening in September 2021. They are small village pre-schools who

are only able to offer funded hours on a term time only basis. JP asked about staff redeployment of these provisions, and LAB confirmed these routes are being considered. There are also some providers expanding as well as new provision opening in the county.

LAB confirmed that Wiltshire Council has an increasing list of newly eligible funded 2 year olds requiring places. The Communications team is due to run a campaign with a slightly different message than previous campaigns encouraging parents to recognise the importance of childcare as well as informing parents that Covid-19 transmission rates within settings are extremely low.

JB confirmed that they are experiencing increased referrals for children with approximately 75% falling in the 2 year old age range. JP queried those children who were held back from starting school in September 2020 and the impact. JB confirmed this is a significant issue as more places are required for the increased 2 year olds and the held back 4-5 year olds are accessing the full 15 hours per week so there is very little capacity. JB informed the group that the bigger issue to be considered is the fact that therapists and OT services/checks currently aren't available to children, and this is and will cause further delays for the children as well as being a barrier to inclusion. If the situation continues, this could cause a need for the potential development of centre staff to temporarily cover these services.

Following the Prime Minister's second lockdown announcement last Saturday, MT read that new guidance from the DfE is in development, and that other forms of support might become available, especially for closed/closing provision. MT also confirmed that other council discretionary funding might also become available, and she will try to ensure that the EY sector is considered as recipients.

ACTION: LAB and EC to take capacity DSC capacity issue to EY cell.

6. Funding Autumn 2020

MT provided a brief synopsis of the current funding situation for Bid Lillywhite as a new member of the group

MT confirmed that directors do not want any significant underspend of the Early Years Entitlement grant at the end of the financial year as it is there to ensure sufficient childcare provision across the county. Current spending on the latest Autumn 2020 round of additional funding payments for providers currently stands at £46,710 (2 year olds) and £376,520 (3&4 year olds). The final round of additional funding applications are due in by 9th November, so these figures will increase.

MT confirmed that current guidance stipulates that from January 2021, providers can only be paid for actual children present, therefore any underspend needs to be actioned before the end of Autumn 2020 (31 December). LAB has submitted a question about this guidance to the DfE and is awaiting their response. Other guidance to be considered is that which states that providers cannot be double funded if they are in receipt of funding from other government schemes. This is especially important as the original furlough scheme has reopened until 1 December 2020, and CJRS has been extended until the end of December 2021. JP noted that if an existing or new staff member has never been furloughed, then they could be now.

JP raised the issue of waiving business rates for the EY sector. MT stated that she will see if she is able to progress this issue.

In advance of the meeting, MC raised the issue of settings being paid broadly in line with 2019 figures and that Wiltshire Council had calculated a 1472 hours average deduction. He questioned how this figure had been calculated as he understood it to be an average loss over the last 3 years, but it appears to be a sector average.

MT confirmed that Wiltshire Council could not use a three year average on a setting by setting basis because there were a significant number of settings with very particular bases which could not provide reliable averages. When a few examples were modelled where the Council operational staff knew that a setting was growing, had contracted due to market forces or taken a decision to reduce in size or close and re-open for another reason, using the individual averages wasn't fair.

Instead, Wiltshire Council has opted for two overall average for a childminder and group settings with a further split of 2 year old and 3&4 year old funding averages. Settings continue to have the option to apply for hardship payments. This seemed the fairest way possible within the confines of the grant available, and the terms of the grant. The only children we are able to support under the terms and conditions of the grant are those entitled to 2, 3 & 4 year old grant and so reductions in private children could be supported at local level. MT confirmed that local authorities have been instructed not to "double fund" as a result of the various national self-employment and furlough schemes. Again, care was needed in limiting the rewarding of childminders and group settings where numbers were purposefully reduced. Where providers felt they were at a disadvantage, they could provide the relevant information in their hardship application so the local authority could reassure itself that double funding was not in place. Wiltshire Council has funded 100% of all children in settings. The "top up" funding which funds above average losses is paid for children who are not attending, and the hardship fund is there to support those who are in need of additional support for Autumn.

MC also questioned that whilst the government are paying local authorities on the January 2020 census figure and not September 2019 figures, he understood that Wiltshire's available funding calculation is based on September funding and not the increased January funds. MT confirmed that EY funding is always calculated on the January census data. If the January 2021 census is lower than the 2020 census then, the funding adjustment will have a detrimental impact on Wiltshire. Modelling work can be done but only once all Autumn hardship applications have been received and processed.

ACTION: MT to investigate possibility of waiving of business rates for EY sector.

MT to liaise with Fay Sissins on grant reduction modelling

7. Sector Work Academy Programme for Early Years

LAB welcomed Mandy Timbrell, Head of Employment and Skills at Wiltshire Council to the meeting. Employment and Skills have identified that the impact Covid-19 has and is having on the EY sector means limited opportunities and skill gaps in the immediate and longer term future. Mandy gave the group a presentation on the possible routes and funding available to the sector to increase opportunities for young people wanting to join the Early Years profession. A copy of her presentation is attached to these minutes.

ACTION: Providers to consider if they would like to use these routes to employ staff

8. AOB

MT informed the group that the FACT board are looking for an Early Years representative. The setup of these meetings is changing so whilst the meetings are monthly, some representatives will only be invited to meetings when agenda business requires. The next meeting is scheduled for 10 December, 11.30am – 1pm, so please contact MT if you are interested.

JP thanked all EY providers and their employees, as well as the whole EY team at Wiltshire Council for all their efforts since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. LAB echoed these

sentiments and said that during the online public meeting held last night (Tuesday 3 November 2020) by Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council, Terence Herbert, Chief Executive, and Kate Blackburn, Director of Public Health, the EY sector were thanked for remaining open and keeping children safe during this unprecedented time.

JP informed the group that Oxford University have cautiously stated that a vaccine could be released for Christmas. We await further confirmation

ACTION: Any member to contact MT if interested in joining the FACT board

9. Next meeting.

The next meeting will be scheduled for 1 December 2020, 1-2pm. A Microsoft Teams meeting request will be emailed out.

Provider name	TWO YEAR OLD FUNDING								THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLD FUNDING								TOTAL Additional Payment			
	2017	2018	2019	Sept 2020 Est	Oct 2020 Claimed hrs	Diff between 2019 and Claimed hrs	Expected hrs to be lost	Lost hrs to be paid	Provider claimed £ amount due	2017	2018	2019	Sept 2020 Est	Oct 2020 Claimed hours	Diff between 2019 and Claimed hrs	Expected hrs to be lost		Lost hrs to be paid3&4	Provider claimed £ amount due	
Provider 1		390	0	0	210	N/A	232	N/A as hours have increased from 2019	-	0	210	1582	630	420	1162	384	778	3267.6		
Provider 2	0	0	168	0	0	168	232	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	301	330	798	308	210	588	384	204	856.8		
Provider 3	0	210	252	0	0	252	232		20	108.00	84	1218	1302	420	420	882	384	498	2,199.60	
Provider 4	0	0	0	210	210	N/A	232	N/A as hours have increased from 2019	-	36	135	1095	273	273	822	384	438	1839.60		
Provider 5	0	0	0	0	0	0	232	N/A as no hours delivered in 2019	-	0	560	630	210	210	420	384	36	151.2		
Provider 6	0	0	0	0	0	0	232	N/A as no hours delivered in 2019	-	0	420	840	0	0	840	384	456	1915.2		
Provider 7	0	0	0	0	0	0	232	N/A as no hours delivered in 2019	-	0	0	1080	420	210	870	384	486	2,041.20		
Provider 8	0	0	210	0	0	210	232	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	0	210	630	210	210	420	384	36	151.2		
Provider 9	0	210	0	0	0	0	232	N/A as no hours delivered in 2019	-	0	345	1120	420	450	670	384	286	1,201.20		
Provider 10	1470	1008	1302	840	840	462	363		99	534.60	8440	3290	9450	5040	5040	4410	1472	2938	12,339.6	
Provider 11	595	840	770	175	175	595	363		232	1,252.80	9884	8043	10318	9114	6930	3388	1472	1916	8,047.2	
Provider 12	1050	1980	1470	840	1050	420	363		57	307.80	13148	12544	13798	12824	12846	952	1472	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	0	307.80
Provider 13	5187	2555	3920	2520	2520	1400	363		1037	5,599.80	11665	9912	10108	9660	9660	448	1472	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	0	5,599.80
Provider 14	588	742	1509	336	336	1173	363		810	4,374.00	6508	5502	3686	3570	3570	116	1472	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	0	4,374.00
Provider 15	1470	1005	405	420	420	N/A	363	N/A as hours have increased from 2019	-	7980	7182	11670	6090	6090	5580	1472	4108	17,253.60	17,253.60	
Provider 16	0	630	210	0	0	210	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	6555	5145	9423	5370.176	5370	4053	1472	2581	10,840.20	10,840.20	
Provider 17	378	741	875	210	210	665	363		302	1,630.80	2338	4854	5036.5	4564	4177	859.5	1472	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	0	1,630.80
Provider 18	154	0	0	0	0	0	363	N/A as no hours delivered in 2019	-	3483	3500	4060	2996	2562	1498	1472	26	109.2	109.20	
Provider 19	840	798	672	420	420	252	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	2478	2478	4298	2898	2688	1610	1472	138	579.6	579.60	
Provider 20	1260	1260	1680	210	630	1050	363		687	3,709.80	7756	9961	14070	11550	11550	2520	1472	1048	4,401.6	8,111.40
Provider 21	405	1260	420	0	0	420	363		57	307.80	9954	8470	12768	5390	5390	7378	1472	5906	24,805.2	25,113.00
Provider 22	660	210	621	294	924	N/A	363	N/A as hours have increased from 2019	-	5656	6286	6498	3024	2982	3516	1472	2044	8584.8	8,584.80	
Provider 23	168	336	420	0	0	420	363		57	307.80	2506	1960	3234	1344	1428	1806	1472	334	1,402.8	1,710.60
Provider 24	0	0	210	420	420	N/A	363	N/A as hours have increased from 2019	-	6720	4830	7770	5880	6090	1680	1472	208	873.6	873.60	
Provider 25	2895	1890	2385	1596	1470	915	363		552	2,980.80	6705	6465	5487	5418	5166	321	1472	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	0	2,980.80
Provider 26	0	540	420	0	105	315	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	6945	6300	8948	4914	5124	3824	1472	2352	9878.4	9,878.40	
Provider 27	0	420	364	210	210	154	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	8134	11004	10108	7686	7686	2422	1472	950	3990	3,990.00	
Provider 28	210	420	210	395.5	395.5	N/A	363	N/A as hours have increased from 2019	-	4928	5460	5641.5	3514	3514	2127.5	1472	655.5	2753.1	2,753.10	
Provider 29	1834	1050	1050	420	420	630	363		267	1,441.80	4350.5	8429	8204	4854.5	3360	4844	1472	3372	14,162.4	15,604.20
Provider 30	930	420	420	210	210	210	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	2520	2415	2898	1470	1050	1848	1472	376	1579.2	1,579.20	
Provider 31	1470	1260	798	0	210	588	363		225	1,215.00	3243	4074	7098	3402	3402	3696	1472	2224	9340.8	10,555.80
Provider 32	382	630	1036	0	0	1036	363		673	3,634.20	13728	10174.5	12215	11788	11788	427	1472	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	0	3,634.20
Provider 33	350	336	1050	1470	770	280	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	6465	9562	7630	4298	5790	1840	1472	368	1545.6	1,545.60	
Provider 34	1239	840	588	420	420	168	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	9789	8813	8406.5	7504	6090	2316.5	1472	844.5	3546.9	3,546.90	
Provider 35	420	0	0	210	210	210	363	N/A as no hours delivered in 2019	-	2433	4536	3303	1274	1484	1819	1472	347	1457.4	1,457.40	
Provider 36	210	210	0	168	210	210	363	N/A as no hours delivered in 2019	-	4592	5173	4284	2100	2436	1848	1472	376	1579.2	1,579.20	
Provider 37	2184	1302	1974	1302	1544	430	363		67	361.80	6888	5376	5964	5334	5754	210	1472	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	0	361.80
Provider 38	882	882	560	0	0	560	363		197	1,063.80	1778	2562	2982	840	420	2562	1472	1090	4578	5,641.80
Provider 39	3990	3360	3570	2870	2870	700	363		337	1,819.80	4536	6521	7840	6090	6090	1750	1472	278	1167.6	2,879.40
Provider 40	1260	1428	1120	1050	1134	N/A	363	N/A as hours have increased from 2019	-	9684	7168	7693	5838	6013	1680	1472	208	873.6	873.60	
Provider 41	1050	1380	1050	420	420	630	363		267	1,441.80	4410	2226	3486	2520	2520	966	1472	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	0	1,441.80
Provider 42	938	1603	833	70	430	403	363		40	216.00	9128	8372	8950	5810	6853	2097	1472	625	2625	2,841.00
Provider 43	420	812	630	532	322	308	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	4676	5936	5428	4550	3668	1760	1472	288	1209.6	1,209.60	
Provider 44	660	630	624	577.5	536	88	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	4466	4054	6323	4542.5	3384	2939	1472	1467	6161.4	6,161.40	
Provider 45	237	210	630	210	210	420	363		57	307.80	2478	3500	3486	2688	2296	1190	1472	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	0	307.80
Provider 46	980	210	378	0	0	378	363		15	81.00	630	1176	910	532	532	378	1472	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	0	81.00
Provider 47	0	0	420	0	0	420	363		57	307.80	210	2961	1890	1848	1848	42	1472	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	0	307.80
Provider 48	1050	420	1260	1050	1260	0	363	N/A as delivering same hours as last year	-	4648	6252	5670	3948	4074	1596	1472	124	520.8	520.80	
Provider 49	180	126	210	0	0	210	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	3125	2664	5374	3150	2940	2434	1472	962	4040.4	4,040.40	
Provider 50	210	630	840	210	210	630	363		267	1,441.80	9376	5860	8611	6825	6825	1786	1472	314	1318.8	2,760.60
Provider 51	420	210	126	126	399	N/A	363	N/A as hours have increased from 2019	-	4074	5524	6594	3850	4395	2199	1472	727	3053.4	3,053.40	
Provider 52	210	0	84	336	378	N/A	363	N/A as hours have increased from 2019	-	2356	2254	3449	2058	1946	1503	1472	31	130.2	130.20	
Provider 53	600	294	585	126	210	375	363		12	64.80	1806	2800	2394	2058	1890	504	1472	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	0	64.80
Provider 54	1190	840	840	210	210	630	363		267	1,441.80	14266	18844	13720	12180	12040	1680	1472	208	873.6	2,315.40
Provider 55	1470	1890	1260	585	585	675	363		312	1,684.80	10485	9370	9380	7800	7800	1580	1472	108	453.6	2,138.40
Provider 56	420	0	210	630	630	N/A	363	N/A as hours have increased from 2019	-	7540	7770	10645	5670	5670	4975	1472	3503	14,712.6	14,712.60	
Provider 57	385	420	546	420	420	126	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	15789	14440.5	10639.5	6356	6356	4283.5	1472	2811.5	11,808.3	11,808.30	
Provider 58	210	210	630	210	210	420	363		57	307.80	17585	16093	12950	10850	10080	2870	1472	1398	5871.6	6,179.40
Provider 59	1050	616	287	1232	1232	N/A	363	N/A as hours have increased from 2019	-	1155	2198	3271	1456	1456	1815	1472	343	1440.6	1,440.60	
Provider 60	1680	1260	840	630	630	210	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	11512.2	13533.25	13234	10143	10143	3091	1472	1619	6799.8	6,799.80	
Provider 61	1428	1638	1680	1050	1050	630	363		267	1,441.80	0	168	840	0	0	840	1472	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	0	1,441.80
Provider 62	210	420	420	630	420	0	363	N/A as delivering same hours as last year	-	13333	7990	10700	6930	5460	5240	1472	3768	15,825.6	15,825.60	
Provider 63	861	770	945	1102.5	1260	N/A	363	N/A as hours have increased from 2019	-	5404	6835.5	6874	3867.5	3570	3304	1472	1832	7694.4	7,694.40	
Provider 64	0	812	210	0	0	210	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	0	2320.5	9894.5	6699	6699	3195.5	1472	1723.5	7238.7	7,238.70	
Provider 65	2486																			

Provider 71	2450	840	1092	840	840	252	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	15750	11534	12906	7812	7812	5094	1472	3622	15212.4	15,212.40	
Provider 72	1470	1596	1190	840	1260	N/A	363	N/A as hours have increased from 2019	-	10808	11565	14420	10500	11550	2870	1472	1398	5871.6	5,871.60	
Provider 73	840	1260	1410	840	630	780	363		417	2,251.80	8640	9660	10514	7311.5	3570	6944	5472	22982.4	25,234.20	
Provider 74	210	84	210	0	0	210	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	8846	9522	7644	4914	4914	2730	1472	1258	5283.6	5,283.60	
Provider 75	630	1330	980	210	210	770	363		407	2,197.80	7091	4144	11830	11298	11459	371	1472	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	0	2,197.80
Provider 76	1135	0	210	0	0	210	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	4898.5	3230	4771.25	2520	2940	1831.25	1472	359.25	1508.85	1,508.85	
Provider 77	0	0	0	0	0	0	363	N/A as no hours delivered in 2019	-	4463.5	3447	4747	3272	3272	1475	1472	3	12.6	12.60	
Provider 78	154	210	182	0	0	182	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	854	1932	3654	1445.5	1400	2254	1472	782	3284.4	3,284.40	
Provider 79	0	630	0	0	0	0	363	N/A as no hours delivered in 2019	-	3192	2982	4364.5	3066	1064	3300.5	1472	1828.5	7679.7	7,679.70	
Provider 80	2100	1550.5	2310	1837.5	2171	139	363	N/A as difference between 2019 and 2020 is less than average market reduction	-	7231.5	4357.5	5827.5	4672.5	4133	1694.5	1472	222.5	934.5	934.50	
Provider 81	168	728	0	168	168	N/A	363	N/A as hours have increased from 2019	-	5031	3336	4270	2240	2408	1862	1472	390	1638	1,638.00	
Provider 82	210	420	0	0	0	0	363	N/A as no hours delivered in 2019	-	5043.5	3444	4623	3045	3045	1578	1472	106	445.2	445.20	
Provider 83	210	546	588	798	0	588	363		225	1,215.00	2964	2716	3248	1428	0	3248	1776	7459.2	8,674.20	
Provider 84	120	0	0	0	0	0	363	N/A as no hours delivered in 2019	-	6874.5	9365	9762.5	6232.5	5828	3934.5	1472	2462.5	10342.5	10,342.50	
Provider 85	0	0	0	0	0	0	363	N/A as no hours delivered in 2019	-	8160	5460	8064	5880	5838	2226	1472	754	3166.8	3,166.80	
Provider 86	1260	2100	1176	1050	1680	N/A	363	N/A as hours have increased from 2019	-	1881	1830	4746	3150	2310	2436	1472	964	4048.8	4,048.80	
Provider 87	630	210	0	210	390	N/A	363	N/A as hours have increased from 2019	-	5206	5194	5600	4200	3443	2157	1472	685	2877	2,877.00	

46,710.00

376,520.55 423,230.55

Summary

Above is the list of providers who lost hours from Autumn 2019 to Autumn 2020

All providers are being paid for the hours of children actually attending their settings

In order to support settings who had lost child hours, additional payments were made to replace hours most likely lost due to COVID

In order to calculate lost hours which were attributable to COVID (rather than market forces) average losses 2017, 2018 & 2019 were calculated and used to ascertain a baseline

Support payments were made to settings over and above these baselines

		Average "lost" hours 2017 -	Payments made
Childminders	2 year old grant	232	£108.00
	3 & 4 year old grant	363	£46,602.00
			<u>£46,710.00</u>
Group Settings	2 year old grant	384	£13,515.60
	3 & 4 year old grant	1472	£363,004.95
			<u>£376,520.55</u>
Overall	Support payments made (round 1)		<u>£423,230.55</u>

There is a second opportunity to apply - deadline 9th November 2020

Early Years Reference Group Meeting

Friday 4 December 2020

1. Welcome and introductions

Jane Boulton, Lucy-Anne Bryant, Mark Cawley, Emma Cooke, Jenny Harvey (notes), Russ Martin, John Proctor, Marie Taylor

2. Apologies

Rosemary Collard, Sarah Hawkins, Bid Lilywhite, Debbie Muir, Jane Provis, Claire Shipley, Trudi Surman, Emily Wood

3. Minutes of last meeting (4 November 2020)

The group approved the minutes (those including the addendum) as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters arising

Item 4 – JP confirmed he has still not received any response from MP John Glen. LAB and MT informed the group that Helean Hughes, Director of Education & Skills is meeting with him today to discuss a range of issues including lack of funding to specifically support the EY sector through the pandemic.

Item 5 – LAB and EC confirmed they are continuing to work on the DSC capacity issue with the EY cell.

Item 6 – MT confirmed she has received no response to date relating to her query on waiving of business rates for EY providers but will follow up.

Item 6 – MT confirmed that the remodelling has been completed and will discuss under item 6 of these minutes.

Item 8 – MT forwarded contact details to JB regarding EY representation on the FACT board. JB confirmed she has emailed but has not heard anything back to date.

**ACTION: LAB and EC to continue progressing DSC capacity issue
MT to follow up waiving of business rates for EY sector**

5. Impact of COVID on settings (All)

MT stated that F40 have been meeting with the DfE and have raised the issue of loss of private income for EY providers.

The DfE are now planning regular meetings with local authorities. MT, LAB and Gary Binstead, Head of Commissioning Families & Children recently met with Sharon Muir, DfE representative and relayed their frustration about the lack of additional funding for the EY sector as well as seeking confirmation on Spring 2021 payments and possible funding reductions as a result of fewer numbers.

EC confirmed there had been 5 complete closures this week as a result of Covid-19, and that 59 providers have had a closure of some sort since 1 September 2020. Not all of these 59 have been as a result of a positive case within the provision; a lot are linked to families or members of staff having to self-isolate as an identified person through the track and trace system.

MC queried how many permanent setting closures there had been since 1 September 2020 and EC confirmed there had been 3 - 1 due to planned retirement and 2 as a result of declining numbers over the last few years. EC and LAB confirmed these closures have had little impact on sufficiency in the area.

MT asked the group about the cost pressures associated with a whole provision or bubble closure. All confirmed that the main pressure is loss of private income, costs linked with cancelling food orders at short notice and food wastage, and staff sickness costs. MT asked how a setting would cover a staff member who had to self-isolate and the group confirmed bank staff would be used along with moving other staff members around where possible.

ACTION: EC to confirm the number of children affected by bubble/provider closures

6. Funding Autumn 2020 – paper to Schools Forum (LAB/MT/All)

MT informed the group that a report has been drafted for the next Schools Forum meeting.

MC queried if providers would receive an increase in their hourly rates in 2021/22 due to Wiltshire Council receiving a proportion of £66 million next year as well as a proportion of an additional £44 million discussed by central government last week. MT said funding figures would be confirmed by the DfE around 18-24 December resulting in further remodelling, but she would passport as much funding to EY providers as she possibly could. However, the DfE will need to offer reassurance on funding reductions or minimum funding levels which could impact available funding levels.

LAB confirmed that the Autumn 2020 headcount is in its final stages, and that the local authority will be reviewing the remaining budget and look to redistribute amongst those settings who have had fewer children in Autumn 2020 than in Autumn 2019.

The group discussed a number of possible grant funding options available to providers including the LA Discretionary Grant Fund. JP confirmed this has now been replaced by the ARG fund which the local authority has the discretion to distribute. MT believes this grant would have to last 18 months. MT will update when she has more info.

ACTION: MT to inform the group of business grant funding options when more detail is available.

7. Supporting vulnerable families over Christmas (£15 per child per week)

MT confirmed the funding is an additional £1.1 million grant from central government and has just become available for spending between now and April 2021. 80% of the funding is to be spent on families with the remaining 20% for vulnerable adults.

JP stated that he is aware of a number of providers who do not wish to be involved with distributing this additional funding to vulnerable families. LAB confirmed an additional SNAP survey is being sent out to providers today informing them of the numbers of eligible children they have and the amount of funding that they could receive, and ask if they are happy to distribute the funding via a range of options to the identified families. Providers will be able to opt out if they wish. She confirmed that a large number of providers have already expressed their support in helping their most vulnerable families where possible.

Following discussion with charity accountants, JB expressed concern about the distribution of the funding and queried the legality of it as there is no agreement in place between the Local Authority and providers on handling funds in this way. The group discussed evidence required by the local authority that the funding had been distributed and the potential for fraud. MT and LAB confirmed that there is a huge element of trust and faith involved but that providers will need to indicate their agreement to passport the funding via the survey. They had hoped that

the funding could have been given in food vouchers but this could have precluded some families from being able to access the funding if they didn't have a particular named supermarket in their area. This route ensures the funding goes to the right families and providers could buy food vouchers for a supermarket local to a family.

MT confirmed the £15 per week is based on the free school meals funding that schools receive, and projected numbers have been used to calculate this weekly amount. The grant needs to be fully spent by 31 March 2021, with funding being paid to providers next week (week commencing 7 December 2020), which ideally will be passported out to identified families by the end of the following week (18 December 2020), this is based on schools term times. If a provider is unable to contact a family within the set timescale, i.e. due to self-isolation, then providers are to get the funding to the family at the next available opportunity.

JB asked about the alternative options in the event of funding not being distributed to families via EY providers. MT confirmed that the Revenues and Benefits Team operate a local welfare provision fund, and this route could be used to distribute the funding to a smaller number of families. The local authority will know those providers able to distribute the funding and those who aren't by Monday 6th December and will then look at how the funding can get to the families in areas not covered by EY providers.

The issue of fuel payments was raised, and LAB and MT confirmed that this will be reviewed in January 2021.

MC asked for a list of Wiltshire foodbanks to be added to the next EY newsletter. RM confirmed he has this list and will forward to LAB. LAB also reminded the group that Healthy Start Vouchers are also available via an online application form, and currently no Health Visitor sign off is required as a result of Covid-19.

JB raised the issue of some eligible Pupil Premium (PP) children who have stayed on at Springboard due to Covid-19, but only schools are entitled to this funding. The children also don't qualify for the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP). LAB will raise this issue with Paul Redford as it was felt that as the children were in attendance at Springboard then they should be eligible for EYPP.

RM informed the group that Spurgeons are offering a £25 food delivery (main meals for a family of 4) from Asda or Tesco to referred struggling families with a child aged 0-5 years old. In addition, as Spurgeons have been unable to deliver group sessions, they are offering assistance to families in accessing health and safety home equipment such as stair gates.

ACTION: RM to forward list of Wiltshire foodbanks to LAB for inclusion in next EY newsletter.

LAB to raise PP funding issue with Paul Redford

8. AOB

JP and MC raised the issue that they have been told to remain open over the Christmas break. EC and LAB confirmed that they do not want people working through the whole period. It is simply to have a member of staff check emails once a day (once a setting has closed for the break) to see if a Covid-19 notification has been received from PHE. The main concern is around the few days after a setting has closed (and maybe a few days before reopening) during which time a PH or family notification might be received, and the setting would need to confirm close contacts and to be aware that this could affect staffing in the new year.

ACTION: None

9. Next meeting.

The next meeting will be scheduled for Tuesday 12th January 1pm – 2.30pm. A Microsoft Teams meeting request will be emailed out.

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