



HEADS COUNT

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide the Schools Forum with an overview of the work of the Heads Count organisation and to request that an annual allocation **of £37,950 is** made to the group from the Dedicated Schools Grant underspend continues in line with previous years.

Information and Advice

2. **Background** Heads Count is a Nottinghamshire initiative that over the years has gained national recognition for its pastoral work with head teachers from all phases of education, and at all career points.
3. **Concept of the organisation** Heads Count was established in May 2004, by the then Director of Education Pam Tulley. The vision for Heads Count from its inception was to offer peer support for the health and wellbeing of Nottinghamshire head teachers.
4. **Organsiation** Heads Count is managed by a steering group of serving head teachers and over the past few years has been actively and financially supported by the Director of Education and then Corporate Director, Children Families and Cultural Services.
5. **Role of Area Representatives** Each of the seven Nottinghamshire districts has an area representative, a serving head teacher, who is responsible for the co-ordination of pastoral support and delivery of support required personally from head teachers facing difficult and stress inducing issues and organising district well-being networks and area head teacher meetings.
6. **Area Meetings for Head Teachers** District reps. facilitate termly network meetings for Heads to provide a safe and confidential outlet for matters of concern, which are usually stress-related. In most districts it has been due to the Heads Count representatives that the termly area head teacher meetings have been revived, and attendance increased, thus facilitating communication between head teachers and the local authority at area level, as well as providing an important networking and support infrastructure. between head teachers.
7. **Relationship with the Local Authority** The Local Authority, with increasing frequency, refers heads for support to the district representative, which helps the LA fulfil its responsibilities for duty of care to its employees. When required Heads Count representatives meet with LA officers on behalf of all head teachers to facilitate communication about concerning issues,

this allows a two-way communication process and another interface between head teachers and the LA

8. **The role of the Steering Group** The steering group meets twice a term to discuss generic issues from each district, which are then then communicated directly to the appropriate Service Director so the Local Authority has peer-led intelligence from across Nottinghamshire. Heads Count steering group uses its financial assistance to put money into school budgets to facilitate the equivalent of 35.5 days per year Head teacher time to enable the area link representative to undertake their role. It is also for administrative support, consultant time and conference organisation and administration costs. The daily costs is much less than LLE work
9. **Relationship with Governor Services** This is a key element of the work of Heads Count, as governing bodies have a duty of care for the well-being of Head teachers. Governor Services receive minutes from our meetings and, when staffing allows, send a rep to our meetings. Governor Services support the steering committee by providing a valuable means of communication with governors through articles in the Nottinghamshire Governor Newsletter which is circulated to every governor in every school.
10. **Well-being Conference** Annually the steering group plan and deliver a physical and emotional well-being conference which is open to all serving head teachers and acting head teachers. This year 80 delegates attended, it was very well received. In the feedback **100%** of attendees said they came because of the focus on their well-being, the speaker and the opportunity to network. Many commented that events like the well-being conference supports their emotional resilience to the challenging role of headship. Below are some quotes from the conference
 - *An excellent day. Time well spent and very much appreciated!*
 - *It is incredibly important to look after our own well-being – or how can we support everyone else?*
 - *May be a good idea to contact the chairs of governors through Governor Services to ensure that all governing bodies are aware of this supporting opportunity*
 - *Much needed opportunity to reflect!*
 - *Very useful, pleasant morning to explore burnout and address it positively and mindfully.*
 - *Fabulous! A time for me to reflect and take care of me!*
 - *Excellent – really important to think about ourselves and our own mental health.*
 - *Excellent! Lots of strategies to keep me sane.*
 - *I really loved the opportunity to reflect on personal well-being – thank you*
11. **Evaluating Impact** It is difficult to collect hard data about the impact of Heads Count due to the depth and scale of the work, e.g. there might six calls in one week that are quick to address, then the following week there maybe a need for support of greater length and complexity that results in many return calls/visits/meetings. The same applies to face to face meetings, some are brief and resolve issues, some are prolonged and complex.
12. **The services provided by Heads Count:**
 - ✓ Telephone advice
 - ✓ Face to face support
 - ✓ Is part of the induction offer to newly appointed Heads and Acting Heads

- ✓ Coaching and mentoring
- ✓ Networking opportunities
- ✓ Collaboration
- ✓ Helps to attract Heads to Nottinghamshire
- ✓ Informs LA officers about current issues from Head teachers perspective across all districts and phases
- ✓ Provides a link with governor services
- ✓ Provides Chairs of governors a named area link for well-being support
- ✓ Celebrates success and retirements

13. **Cost Effectiveness** As Heads Count is non-subscription all head teachers at every stage of their career and every phase of education are covered, which equates to a cost of approximately £114 per Nottinghamshire Head Teacher. The organisation aids the LA's duty of care as an employer; clearly the cost to a school of the head teacher being away from school can be devastating on many levels. We know from feedback given by supported colleagues that Heads Count Support has frequently either supported heads remaining in post or facilitated their return to work.

Activity	£
7 Area Link reps. £150 x 35 ½ days (less than half the cost of most HT consultation days)	36,750
Admin support- Chair of steering group	1,200
Total	37,950

14. Without the financial input to provide cover so that area reps can undertake their role, the steering group co-ordination wouldn't exist and therefore Heads Count would disappear. This year we are seeking the same allocation as last year..

15. **Proposal for Continuation of Heads Count** With the agreement of the Schools Forum, in previous years an annual allocation of **£37,950** has been made to Heads Count from the underspend on the Dedicated Schools Grant. It is requested that the Schools Forum agree to the continuation of this allocation for the 2017/18 financial year.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Schools Forum:

- 1) Note the contents of the report;
- 2) Agree to make an allocation to Heads Count of **£37,950** in 2017/18 from the DSG underspend

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