

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

GATESHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Thursday, 17 October 2019

PRESENT

Ken Childs (Special Schools Governor) (Chair)

Denise Kilner	Nursery Sector Representative
Sarah Diggle	Primary Governors
Julie Goodfellow	Primary Academy Headteachers
Peter Largue	Trade Union Representative
Mustafaa Malik	Primary Headteachers
Elaine Pickering	Secondary Governors
Andrew Ramanandi	Primary Headteachers
Michelle Richards	Special School Headteachers

IN ATTENDANCE: Carole Smith

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Steve Haigh, Ethel Mills, Matt Waterfield, Domenic Volpe, Chris Toon, Allan Symons and Cllr Sheila Gallagher.

2 MINUTES

RESOLVED - The minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

3 NEW GROWTH FUND

Following the comments made at the last meeting a further draft of the Growth Fund Procedure was presented to the Forum. Additional information was provided around the movement of Thomas Hepburn pupils and how many secondary schools were over Planned Admission Numbers (PAN) without the Thomas Hepburn effect.

It was noted that the only school to increase its PAN was Emmanuel College, the rest of the schools took over their PAN's but were not prepared to increase their numbers permanently.

Comments were made regarding the inclusion of out of borough pupils in Gateshead and that this should not be included. It was noted however that Gateshead has a statutory responsibility to find school places for all Gateshead young people and that the information was included to ensure funding goes to the right pupils.

It was suggested that the test for these procedures is if there was another Thomas Hepburn situation, would it allow for schools to cope. It was acknowledged that there is enormous pressure on schools currently and that the point of rewriting the Growth Funding Procedures is to allow additional funding for those schools taking on more

pupils. Funding should follow pupils which is what the growth fund allows.

It was agreed that the growth fund procedure would be reviewed should circumstances change in the future as this is an ongoing issue.

The point was made that now primary schools have been aligned with secondary schools and where there are not enough places in the secondary school for all the pupils from the feeder schools, they should be helped to increase their PAN. It was confirmed that the local authority is currently working on this.

It was noted that there are a lot of out of borough pupils in Gateshead schools and it was confirmed that that is why not every child over PAN would be funded. A lot of over subscription is down to historic school choice, therefore only the pupils who moved into schools from Thomas Hepburn are the ones who will be funded.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the Forum reviewed the updated Growth Fund procedure and the information in appendix 2 of the report.
 - (ii) That the Forum agreed the Growth Fund procedure be submitted to the DfE for approval.

4

SCHOOLS BLOCK FUNDING FORMULA COMPARISONS

Forum received a report on the values and funding factors used by all LA's in England to fund mainstream schools.

It was identified that Gateshead is not an outlier, although it still retains the Looked After Children factor which not all LA's do. In addition, the mobility factor for Gateshead is quite high.

The point was made that funding is still disproportionately affecting those areas with high disadvantage. It was acknowledged that the South West and South East get the most funding where the North East had the second lowest increase, with London the lowest although that area would receive area cost adjustment.

- RESOLVED - That the Forum noted the report.

5

DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT - QUARTER 1

Forum received the quarter one projected outturn position of DSG for 2019/20. The projected outturn is over £103m against a budget of £102m, therefore an overspend of just over £1m.

The biggest overspend is in the High Needs Block, it is expected that the DSG reserve will be required to meet the final overspend, the balance of which is currently £816,000. Therefore, this will put the reserve into a deficit position of £261,000 if the overspend is £1m.

The position is expected to worsen through the year, however it is expected that

there will be additional funding for 2020/21 which will be reported in the quarter two report.

It was noted that in terms of the High Needs Block overspend it is expected that a deficit recovery plan will be put in place and some invest to save then recovery of the deficit going forward.

The point was made that it is about pupils, if there are more pupils requiring that level of support it cannot be managed as they need the support. Also, the PRU comes out of the HNB which costs more than Special Schools. It was noted that austerity is feeding SEN because schools are no longer able to manage need at the earliest stage. It was suggested that more needs to be done at a national level to find out where the growth of SEN has come from as the position is no longer sustainable. It was acknowledged that work is ongoing looking at the link between SEND and Children's Services pressures and what can be done about it.

It was also questioned whether the move from reserves constitutes a transfer from schools block to HNB and therefore breaches the 0.5% limit. It was confirmed that this is not the case as the schools block is ringfenced to mainstream schools with the exception of any transfer agreed by Schools Forum e.g. the 5% top slice agreed for 2019/20.

It was confirmed that the DfE was challenged about allocating additional funding on population because it is not based on need in deprived areas. The DfE advised that this was a proxy indicator.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the Forum noted the contents of the report
 - (ii) That the Forum approved, in principle, the use of DSG reserves to fund the projected overspend in 2019/20.

6

SCHOOLS CONSULTATIONS

Forum received a report outlining ongoing DfE consultations.

In terms of the Local Authority Transparency Consultation it was noted that, although individual academies do so, it would be difficult for LA's to produce a three year forecast as it would be an onerous task to do so for all maintained schools as this is currently undertaken on an individual school basis outside the accounting system.

It was noted that the LA will be responding to these consultations and as the timescales are short it was suggested that a response be written on behalf of the Schools Forum.

- RESOLVED -
- That the Forum considered the information in the report and agreed a response be made in its name by officers of the LA.

7

TRADE UNION FACILITIES TIME

Forum was presented with a letter from the National Union of Head Teachers

(NAHT), the National Education Union and the Association of School and College Leaders around de-delegation of TU facility time.

There was no challenge to this and it was noted that the request for de-delegation would be brought back to Forum in December.

RESOLVED - That the Forum noted the information contained in the letter.

8 SCHOOL FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Schools Forum received a report on the funding announcements for 2020/21.

It was noted that the schools block will get additional £4m, £2m for the HNB.

The following announcements were highlighted;

- £600m for Early Years
- No breakdown between blocks
- Post 16 one year settlement
- Minimum NQT salary range – no additional funding available for this
- MFG between 0.5% - 1.84% - this is targeting non-deprived areas
- No growth fund methodology
- Mobility factor changed

It was agreed that a sub-group would be established to consider formula changes. Ken Childs, Sarah Diggle, Andy Ramanandi and Steve Haigh agreed to form the sub-group, and Domenic Volpe would be contacted to sit on the group.

RESOLVED - (i) That the Forum noted the contents of the report
(ii) That sub-group be formed to consider formula changes due to the anticipated additional funding.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was agreed that the constitution of the Forum be looked at as there are currently a number of vacancies. A report may need to be brought back to the Forum.

10 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 14 November 2019 at 2pm.