

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

GATESHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Thursday, 9 July 2020

PRESENT:

Ken Childs (Chair)	Special Schools Governor
Denise Kilner	Nursery Sector Representative
Sarah Diggle	Primary Governors
Julie Goodfellow	Primary Academy Headteachers
Steve Haigh	Secondary Academy Headteachers
Christine Ingle	Diocese Representatives
Peter Largue	Trade Union Representative
Mustafaa Malik	Primary Headteachers
Andrew Ramanandi	Primary Headteachers
Michelle Richards	Special School Headteachers
Councillor Sheila Gallagher	Elected Member
Margaret Rich	Primary Governors
Christina Jones	Pupil Referral Unit
Adele Brown	Pupil Referral Unit

IN ATTENDANCE:

Carole Smith	Gateshead Council
Claire Reid	Gateshead Council
Rosalyn Patterson	Gateshead Council

APOLOGIES:

Matt Waterfield and Alison Hall

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Matt Waterfield, Alison Hall, Cllr Haley and Steve Horne.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2020 were agreed as a correct record subject to Margaret Rich's apologies being noted.

3 EARLY YEARS SUSTAINABILITY GRANT

A report was presented seeking approval to use Early Years Block element of the DSG reserves to create a sustainability fund to support providers that were open during April and May for children of key workers and vulnerable children.

It was reported that from a total of 201 settings in Gateshead; 18 childminders, 9 day nurseries, 5 pre-schools and 7 schools applied for a sustainability grant.

When all information is received from settings that have been requested to provide additional information a further report will be produced for the Forum on the outcome of the process.

RESOLVED - That Schools Forum;

- (i) Approved the use of Early Years DSG reserves to fund successful applications from early years providers for a sustainability grant based on the maximum values of
 - £2500 for childminders
 - £5000 for pre-schools
 - £7500 for day nurseries and schools
- (ii) Approved the use of Early Years DSG reserves to support providers taking children from closed providers during April and May 2020.

4 SCHOOL BALANCES

The Forum received a report on the year end balances of all maintained schools.

It was reported that maintained school balances decreased by just over £1m.

It was questioned whether these balances would include payback for Covid-19 expenses. It was confirmed that this would be included on the 2021 balances. The point was also made that there are a number of schools who do not fit the criteria to claim for additional Covid-19 expenses. It was clarified that if a school increased its surplus balance during the year it could not claim, however if a school was in deficit and could prove the decrease in deficit was due to its recovery plan the school could claim some Covid-19 expenses. The DfE has also made it clear that schools should not be claiming for staffing costs. It was suggested that this should be highlighted to schools in general.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That Schools Forum noted the value of maintained school balances and the in-year decrease of balances by £1.172m to the year-end value of £5.477m.
 - (ii) That the Schools Forum noted the number of schools with a deficit balance at the end of 2019/20.
 - (iii) That the Schools Forum noted the increase in the value of deficit balances at the end of 2019/20.

5 SCHOOL FUNDING UPDATE

A report was presented on the developments in schools funding during the financial year 2019/20. The DfE announced that schools would continue to be funded as normal and that there would be limits on the amount of additional Covid-19 expenditure schools could claim. The report set out the limits on claiming and also what schools are expected to do.

Schools have been advised to continue to spend budgets.

The point was made that some services, such as music services, are being paid through parent contributions, this is not being received during closure however schools cannot make a claim for this because it does not come out of government grants. It was acknowledged that schools have been asked to continue to support such services for this term while the service continues to look at what changes need to be made in order for them to provide a service and to go back into schools next term.

RESOLVED - That Schools Forum noted the guidance and information from the DfE.

6 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT OUTTURN

Forum received the provisional outturn position of DSG for 2019/20.

It was reported that the overspend in the third quarter was not as great as expected. With the final outturn of £101.507m which is an underspend of £0.255m. There was an overspend on the HNB which was off set by a recouplement adjustment for Thomas Hepburn, a reduction in early years spending and an underspend on Premature Retirement Costs.

The balance of DSG reserves stands at £1.212m at end of the financial year.

RESOLVED - That Schools Forum noted the content of the report.

7 PUBLIC PROCUREMENT NOTES 02/20 AND 04/20

The Forum received the guidance on the Procurement Policy Notes. It was noted that schools are not required to pay supplier relief but as schools receive government funding, where applicable they should support their suppliers to ensure services survive and can resume normal trading post Covid-19.

RESOLVED - That Schools Forum noted the content of the report and the information contained in the appendix.

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DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 1 October 2020 at 2pm.