

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

GATESHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Thursday, 11 November 2021

PRESENT:	Peter Largue (Chair)	Trade Union Representative
	Sarah Diggle	Secondary Maintained Governors
	Jacqui Ridley	Primary Governors
	Alison Hall	Primary Maintained Schools
	Denise Kilner	Nursery Sector Representative
	David Brophy	Secondary Academy Governors
	Julie Goodfellow	Primary Academy Headteachers
	Steve Haigh	Secondary Academy Headteachers
	Mustafaa Malik	Primary Headteachers
	Michelle Richards	Special School Headteachers
	Christina Jones	Pupil Referral Unit
Councillor Sheila Gallagher	Elected Member	
IN ATTENDANCE:	Carole Smith	Gateshead Council
	Terence Appleby	Gateshead Council
	Anthony Ward	Gateshead Council
	Steve Horne	Gateshead Council
	Rosalyn Patterson	Gateshead Council

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Andrew Fowler, Andy Ramanandi, Ethel Mills, Clive Wisby and Domenic Volpe.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

3 MAINSTREAM SCHOOL FUNDING REVIEW

The Forum received a report on the modelling that has been undertaken to review the mainstream school funding formula for 2022/23.

It was proposed that the new National Funding Formula factor values be used and if there is any affordability issues once the APT is received this will be managed via capping and scaling in the first instance and MFG if that is still not affordable.

Concerns were raised that the formula is driven by pupil characteristics and therefore any capping restricts that. It was therefore suggested that if there are any

affordability issues, following receipt of the settlement, that this be dealt with through MFG, then scaling and capping in that order. It was confirmed that through the modelling there had been no need to use scaling and capping and therefore it was hoped this would be the case once the data in December was received.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the Schools Forum approved the proposal to adopt the NFF factor values and any affordability issues be managed through capping and scaling and MFG.
 - (ii) That the Schools Forum agreed that a short consultation be held with all mainstream schools on the proposed changes to the mainstream school funding formula.

4 GROWTH FUNDING

A report was presented on the estimated amount of Growth Funding that will be received for 2022/23.

The modelling tool has been used with October census data to give the rough estimate of £580,425 growth funding expected to be received for 2022/23. The actual allocation will be confirmed in the December 2021 settlement.

- RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum noted the report.

5 FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY FUNDING

The Forum received the proposed updated Schools in Financial Difficulty Procedure.

The point was made that under operational guidance this funding should be from contingencies and therefore separate from DSG reserves. It was confirmed that is correct, however it is within the Schools Forum's gift to decide how to use DSG reserves and that a suitable use of reserves would be to help schools in financial difficulty. It was agreed that this issue would be reviewed before the next meeting.

Concerns were also raised as to how many schools this would relate to over the next few years and that this is merely plastering over the problem. It was suggested that the authority needs a strategy around the problem.

The point was made that this is not an equitable position and therefore it was suggested that the Schools Forum request a review of the primary estate if there is an ongoing problem of increasing numbers of primary schools in financial difficulty.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the use of DSG reserves be reviewed and clarified.
 - (ii) That the Schools Forum did not make changes or amendments to the draft procedure and therefore to proceed on the basis of the report unless the review of the use of DSG reserves states otherwise.

6 MATERNITY CREDITS AND TRADE UNION FACILITY TIME

The Forum received a report on proposals for de-delegation so that maintained school can consult with their sector on the options.

It was noted that the only change is an increase of £0.50 per pupil for maternity credits and TUFT. It was noted that if this was an issue the rates can be reduced next year.

RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum consult with their respective phases on the possible areas of de-delegation and brings their views to enable the Forum to decide on de-delegation.

** The Chair declared an interest in this item.*

7 NATIONAL INSURANCE CONTRIBUTIONS INCREASES

The Schools Forum received a report on the announced rise in National Insurance Contributions. It was confirmed that this will increase by 1.25% from April 2022. It was noted that this will be an additional cost but some additional funding is expected.

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

8 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 9 December 2021 at 2pm.