

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

GATESHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Thursday, 7 July 2022

PRESENT:	Peter Largue (Chair)	Trade Union Representative
	Sarah Diggle	Secondary Maintained Governors
	Jacqui Ridley	Primary Governors
	Denise Kilner	Nursery Sector Representative
	Julie Goodfellow	Primary Academy Headteachers
	Steve Haigh	Secondary Academy Headteachers
	Domenic Volpe	Maintained Secondary Headteachers
	Christina Jones	Pupil Referral Unit
	Councillor Sheila Gallagher	Elected Member
IN ATTENDANCE:	Carole Smith	Gateshead Council
	Terence Appleby	Gateshead Council
	Suzanne Dunn	Gateshead Council
	Rachel Pizzey	Gateshead Council
	Rosalyn Patterson	Gateshead Council

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Andrew Fowler, Michelle Richards, Mustafaa Malik, Alison Hall, Paul Harris, Ethel Mills and Cllr Gary Haley.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

3 DSG OUTTURN 2021/22

The Forum received a report on the provisional outturn position of DSG for 2021/22.

It was reported that the final outturn position of £106.397m against the budget of £106.641m, which is an underspend of £245,000. With the Early Years clawback of £230,000 this will result in the reserve increasing to £2.255m as at 31 March 2022.

It was noted that the underspend generally relates to the growth fund.

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

4 RIVER TYNE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST FUNDING FORMULA

The Forum received a report outlining a proposal to change River Tyne Academy's funding formula from September 2022.

The proposal includes; commissioned number to remain the same, all top ups will be equal, no fixed cost lump sum and 70 guaranteed top ups which will offer some security. 5 places will be reserved for SEND and 10 places for LAC.

Termly payments will be made in advance, with effect from September 2022, then on a financial year basis from April 2023.

A concern was raised about top up for poor attenders. It was noted that a further conversation would be held with the Trust to have something written into the SLA.

RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum approved the change to the funding formula for RTA from September 2022 and going forward on a financial year basis from April 2023.

5 NURSERY SCHOOLS FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY FUNDING

The Forum received a proposal for a Nursery Schools in Financial Difficulty Procedure following the proposal that maintained nursery schools can apply for additional lump sum funding.

It was acknowledged that costs are continuing to increase as well as an increase in the number of children with complex needs.

RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum approved the proposal for maintained nursery schools to be able to apply for additional lump sum funding via the procedure in Appendix 1 of the report.

6 SPECIAL SCHOOLS FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY FUNDING

The Forum received a report around the proposal for a Special Schools in Financial Difficulty Procedure. This will allow Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units to apply for funding from the High Needs Block.

RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum approved the proposal for special schools and pupil referral units to be able to apply for financial difficulty funding via the procedure in Appendix 1 of the report.

7 MAINTAINED SCHOOLS BALANCES MARCH 2022

A report was presented on the movement of school balances for the financial year 2021/22 and the number of schools in a deficit position at the end of the financial year.

At 31 March 2022 maintained school balances increased by £31,000 to £8.94m.

It was acknowledged that Kingsmeadow School have a sizeable balance but that this amount would be taken up with planned building work.

RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum noted;

- (i) The value of maintained school balances and the in-year increase of balances by £0.031m to the year-end value of £8.94m
- (ii) The number of schools with a deficit balance at the end of 2021/22
- (iii) The increase in the value of deficit balances at the end of 2021/22

8 OPTIONS FOR MAINSTREAM MAINTAINED SCHOOLS IN FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY

The Forum received a report which provided options for mainstream schools in financial difficulty. Mainstream maintained school representatives on the Forum were asked to seek the views of their sector on the level of de-delegation.

Using October 2021 data, to have a fund of approximately £1m, would be £95 per pupil. Therefore schools would de-delegate between £8,550 and £39,615.

RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum will seek the views of mainstream maintained schools on the option to de-delegate funding for a financial difficulty fund to assist schools in a deficit situation.

9 SEND REVIEW - RIGHT SUPPORT RIGHT PLACE RIGHT TIME

The Forum received information on the recent consultation on special education needs and disabilities and alternative provision.

It was noted that the consultation has now been extended until 22 July 2022 so there is still time for any comments to be submitted.

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

10 OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL - SCHOOLS WHITE PAPER

A report was presented on the schools policy paper 'Opportunity for All – strong schools with great teachers for your child'.

It was noted that the biggest impact of the paper is the intention to raise teachers starting salaries to £30,000 by 2023.

Concerns were raised that budgets have been set on initial estimations, therefore if a pay award comes through schools will be constrained in terms of what they can afford. It was suggested that potential lobbying would be required to ensure a good pay award is fully funded.

RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum noted the report.

11 DIRECT NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA CONSULTATION

The Forum received a report on the second stage consultation on implementing the Direct National Funding Formula (DNFF). It was acknowledged that the lack of detail made it difficult to answer the consultation.

RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum noted the report and decided not to submit a response in the name of Gateshead Schools Forum.

12 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 22 September 2022 at 2pm.