

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

GATESHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Thursday, 14 January 2016

Present

Ken Childs – Special School Governor
Sarah Diggle – Primary Governor
Mustafaa Malik – Primary Heads
Allan Symons – Primary Governors
Christine Ingle – Diocese Representative
Denise Henry – Nursery Sector

In Attendance

Carole Smith – Corporate Resources
Frank McDermott – Corporate Resources
Roselyn White – Corporate Services and Governance

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Peter Largue, Cllr Malcolm Brain, Julie Goodfellow, Martin Flowers, Ethel Mills, Jim Thomson, Chris Richardson, Elaine Pickering, Steve Haigh, Clive Wisby, Jane Bryant and Matt Younger.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2015 were agreed as a correct record.

3 DSG SETTLEMENT 2016/17

The Forum received a report on the 2016/17 funding settlement which was received on 17 December. It was noted that overall the position for Gateshead is good because there are more pupils. For 2016/17 DSG the Schools Block Unit of Funding and the Early Years Block will remain the same. It was reported that primary numbers have increased but are down in the secondary sector, however overall there has been an increase in mainstream school pupils.

In terms of the Early Years Block there has been an increase of £246,000 in 2, 3 and 4 year old funding. There is also an estimate allocation of £250,000 for Early Years Pupil Premium. The mainstream block has been increased by just over £1M due to the increased numbers of pupils. Proposed deductions are; £1.2M for centrally retained funding, £100,000 to support Growth Fund and £128,000 DfE top slice for school licences. Therefore there will be £104M to distribute to mainstream schools

for 2016/17.

The high needs block is £19M after the deduction of centrally funded high need places, this is an increase of £182,000 from last year due to an increase in post 16 numbers in special schools.

It was reported that DfE announced the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) would remain at -1.5%. Pupil premium, free school meal and year 7 catch-up rates remain the same, however summer schools funding will not continue. It was noted that the SEND implementation grant will continue as will the home to school transport grant.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the Schools Forum approved the centrally retained funding increase to £1.335M to take into account the estimated amount for the central services and for the central purchase of school licences.
 - (ii) That the Schools Forum noted the top slice of £100,000 for the provision of a Growth Fund.
 - (iii) That the Schools Forum noted the estimated Early Years Block.
 - (iv) That the Schools Forum noted the High Needs Block allocation.
 - (v) That the Schools Forum noted the rest of the funding information.

4 **MAINSTREAM SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA**

The Forum received a report on the proposed Authority Proforma Tool (APT), the APT was received on 11 December. The Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations were issued by the DfE on 23 December and came into force on 12 January.

The schools block has been calculated at £105M, this includes £33,000 for newly qualified teachers training, with £104 available for distribution to mainstream schools.

Prior to modelling the PFI factor was re-calculated to take into account the changes in pupil numbers. Adjustments to registered pupil numbers for ARMS units was also made and de-delegation was input as agreed by the Forum.

The APT issued had updated IDACI data using 2015 scores as opposed to 2010 scores. The new data showed an unexpected large deprivation decrease. Data analysis officers within the Council were contacted to ascertain the reason for the change in the data. It was noted that IDACI is a relative measure therefore because some lower super output areas decreased, for example due to demolition and new builds in other areas, this had a massive impact. Free School Meals showed only small swings in numbers, in addition Acorn funding was looked at; this showed there

were not as significant changes as IDACI was showing.

Nine models were completed, and a summary of five models were provided to the Forum. The proposed model increases both primary and secondary IDACI bands 3 to 6, and sticks to the principle of targeting approximately 11% of funding at as deprivation previously agreed.

The Forum thanked the officers for their hard work over the Christmas period.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the Schools Forum approved the proposed amendments to the APT.
 - (ii) That the Schools Forum approved model 4 for mainstream school funding for 2016/17.

5 **CONTINGENCY FUNDING APPLICATION**

A report was presented to the Forum around the decision to provide White Mere Primary School with funding as a school in crisis. A contingency application was made under category C after it was found that the school hit all five areas of concern;

- School performance
- Standards and achievement
- Quality of education
- Behaviour and safety
- Leadership and management

The application was to fund Headteacher time and resources, this would cover the time when the school was paying for two Headteachers. The school was awarded £34,721.

It was queried what the current position with regards to the school is. It was confirmed that the school is not eligible for more funding because the governing body are now in control and previously the situation was out of the governing body's control.

- RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum noted the funding provided to White Mere Primary School.

6 **COUNCIL BUDGET CONSULTATION**

The Forum received a report outlining the current position in relation to the Council's budget. There is an estimated gap of £77M, with £50M to be saved over the next two years. Currently there are 66 savings proposals of £34M. The consultation closed on 30 December 2015.

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

7 **RIGHTS TO REQUEST CHILDCARE CONSULTATION**

A report was presented to the Forum on the 'Rights to Request Childcare Consultation' and was asked if a local authority response should be collated on behalf of the Forum.

It was noted that the consultation is around responses to requests for childcare and in Gateshead this looks to formalise processes already in place. The guidance states that if a number of parents request child care, schools must respond and review their arrangements. It is likely that schools will be asked to have formal processes in place.

RESOLVED - That the Forum agreed to respond to the current Rights to Request Childcare consultation and make colleagues aware that the consultation is live until 29 February should they wish to respond.

8 **HEALTH EDUCATION ENGLAND FUNDING APPLICATION**

The Forum received information on the availability of £1M fund from Health Education England, to support children and young people's mental health. Gateshead would like to apply for £72,000 for mental health worker and asked Schools Forum for matched funding as this would increase the chances of the application being approved.

It was noted that there is a need for mental health worker in Gateshead, in particular there is a gap in transition work. There are issues with transition from PRU's to either alternative provision or back to mainstream provision. Therefore an application for a mental health worker has been made to increase resilience and work with families. Therefore it is proposed that the bid and matched funding of £72,000 from DSG reserves be supported by the Forum.

It was queried whether this would be used only for the secondary sector. It was noted that the provision would be based in the PRU, however it would be too early to predict whether there would be capacity for the primary sector.

RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum approved the funding of £72,000 from reserves to provide matched funding for the HEE Innovation fund application.

9 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 11 February 2016 at 2.00pm