

TITLE OF REPORT: River Tyne Academy Funding Formula

Purpose of the Report

1. To ask for Schools Forum's approval of the proposed changes to River Tyne Academy's funding formula from September 2022.

Background

2. The current funding formula for River Tyne Academy (RTA) was agreed March 2016 and includes Millway and Heworth Hall sites.
3. The formula was based on the provision of a lump sum for fixed costs (funding towards the cost a school will incur irrespective of the number of pupils) and banded top ups ranging from £0 to £10,000.
4. The formula was updated for 2018/19 for the additional Ravensworth Terrace site and the fixed costs were increased for this additional site. From 31 December 2020 RTA vacated the Heworth Hall site, and the site was handed back to the Council.
5. From approximately autumn term 2020 discussions between officers, RTA and River Tees Multi Academy Trust (RTMAT) have been taking place to agree away forward to reduce the fixed cost element of the funding formula. After several meetings and exchanges of e-mails a way forward was not agreed.
6. Following this, and due to new ways of working together, officers and RTMAT agreed on a much-simplified way forward.

Proposal

7. The proposal is that:-
 - Commissioned numbers will remain the same at 103 per financial year
 - Numbers above 103 commissioned will attract place funding on a pro-rata basis.
 - All full-time equivalents (FTE) per pupil top ups will be set at £8,000 and additional funding above this will only be requested in exceptional circumstances
 - There will be no fixed cost lump sum
 - Gateshead Council will guarantee at least 70 full top ups per financial year which will not be subject to clawback if numbers fall below this level
 - 5 places will be reserved for the special education and disabilities (SEND) team
 - 10 places will be reserved for the looked after children (LAC) team
 - The SEN and LAC places will initially be part of the 70 guaranteed places.

- Payments will be made termly in advance for the 70 guaranteed places, and termly in arrears for additional places above this number.
 - The new funding arrangements will start from September 2022 and will follow a financial year basis from April 2023.
 - Places above the 103 commissioned places will be funded on the same basis as above.
8. Although the new funding formula is simplified it still provides stability for the provision due to the 103 commissioned places and the guaranteed top up funding for 70 places.

Recommendations

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

For the following reasons: -

- To enable the funding formula for RTA to be updated and fit for purpose from September 2022.

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