

# GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## GATESHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Thursday, 16 February 2023

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Peter Lague (Chair)	Trade Union Representative
	Sarah Diggle	Secondary Maintained Governors
	Paul Harris	Primary Maintained Schools
	Denise Kilner	Nursery Sector Representative
	Julie Goodfellow	Primary Academy Headteachers
	Steve Haigh	Secondary Academy Headteachers
	Mustafaa Malik	Primary Headteachers
	Michelle Richards	Special School Headteachers
	Domenic Volpe	Maintained Secondary Headteachers
	Councillor Sheila Gallagher	Elected Member
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Carole Smith	Gateshead Council
	Councillor Gary Haley	Gateshead Council
	Suzanne Dunn	Gateshead Council
	Rachel Pizzey	Gateshead Council
	Rosalyn Patterson	Gateshead Council

### 1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Jacqui Ridley, Andrew Fowler and Alison Hall.

### 2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

#### Matters Arising

**Item 10** – It was queried whether setting up a sub-group to look at the use of DSG reserves in June or July would give enough time to do anything meaningful in time for the next academic year. It was noted that this was to allow officers time and capacity to do some of the background work as officers would be working through final accounts and would have no spare capacity until July.

It was therefore agreed that ideas, issues and expressions of interest for the sub-group would be sought from the Schools Forum prior to July. Steve Haigh to collate potential ideas to feed back to officers in July.

### 3 MAINSTREAM SCHOOL FUNDING

The Forum received a report following on from January's meeting regarding the

amended APT for approval.

It was reported that following submission of the APT to the DfE queries were raised. An error was detected due to double counted rates adjustment. Therefore, in order not to affect funding factor it was proposed to offset this through the Growth Fund. This means the Growth Fund in the APT has been reduced to £23,993.11.

It was also reported that the APT now asks for estimations of rates bills for 2023/24. However, NNDR bills have not yet been calculated by the authority which could impact on funding for schools. It was therefore proposed to leave the APT and pick up any adjustments to rates bills in the following year as it was previously.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the Schools Forum approved the reduction of the Growth Fund to £23,993.11 to balance the APT to the funding available for mainstream schools.
  - (ii) That any adjustments to rates bills be picked up in the following year.

#### **4 EARLY YEARS SINGLE FUNDING FORMULA CONSULTATION**

The Forum received a report on the outcome of the Early Years Single Funding Formula Consultation.

It was noted that the response to the consultation was good and that there was clearly a real squeeze on the early years sector.

- RESOLVED -
- That the Schools Forum approved the proposed updates to Gateshead's EYSFF that will allocate the former TPPG to nursery classes in mainstream schools.

#### **5 EARLY YEARS SINGLE FUNDING FORMULA**

The Forum received a report on the results of the Early Years Funding modelling for 2023/24.

The funding formula is allocate via;

- 88% universal base rate
- 5% deprivation supplement
- 5% quality supplement – qualification
- 2% additional quality supplement – mainstream nursery class

It was noted that it is clear settings are being severely squeezed and it was questioned whether there was any recourse to support if settings were struggling to survive. It was noted that funding is not yet finalised and sometimes the Early Years allocation is underspent, however there is no other funding available.

The point was made that the whole sector is in crisis following wage increases and increased energy costs. Finances were stretched before these increases therefore potentially a lot of settings will close. It was also noted that there are problems in

staffing due to low wages with a lot of responsibility.

Concerns were raised regarding the pressure on PVI's to move to 30 hours which will therefore impact on private nurseries losing places. The point was made that there has been no strategic look at the sector which is important to ensure the best start in life for young children.

RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum approved the updated EYSFF factor values and noted the two-year-old funding rate and approved the allocation of unspent centrally held inclusion funding.

## **6 SPECIAL SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA 2023/24**

The Forum received a report on the proposal to increase Special School top up unit of funding by 3%.

In 2023/24 there was additional allocation in the HNB for additional costs and the DfE requested authorities to look at what special schools and PRU's received in top-ups. It is proposed that Gateshead special schools allocation is based on 3.4% of the total funding received. For the PRU the DfE provided an amount for them because this is more complex.

The Forum agreed this was a sensible way to allocate the funding. It was suggested that for transparency the formula should be shared in the same way it is for mainstream schools. It was noted that all special school Headteachers sit on the funding sub-group therefore they have transparency within the sector, however it was agreed this would be included in future reports.

RESOLVED -

- (i) That the Schools Forum approved;
  - The 3% increase in the special school unit of funding for special school top ups
  - The methodology for allocating the additional grant payment to special schools.
- (ii) That the Schools Forum noted that the DfE have already provided the additional grant funding allocation for Gateshead's AP Academy.

## **7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The proposed meeting schedule for 2023/24 was discussed and it was suggested that December's meeting be brought forward by a week.

The Forum agreed to check the schedule and advise of any potential clashes. The final schedule will be brought back to the next meeting for agreement.

## **8 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 16 March 2023 at 2.00pm.

