

**DARLINGTON SCHOOLS FORUM**  
**11<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

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**MINUTES OF MEETING TUESDAY, 11<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2022**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

D Judson (Swift Academies (Chair)); P Ayto (Reid Street (Vice Chair); M Butler (Education Village); P King (Fed of Mowden Schools); S Welsh (Whinfield Primary); S Hudson (Rise Carr College); H Dummett (Federation of Darlington Nursery Schools); J Blackham (Mount Pleasant); P Richardson (Head of Skills & Employability); J Skirving (Bishopton Redmarshall CofE, CE Diocese); J Moorhouse (Carmel RC College, RC Diocese); K Reid (Polam Hall); M Ramsay (St Johns Academy), M Shorten (Carmel); N Gibbon (St Aidans Academy); M Fryer (Hummersknott); P Norman (St Bedes RC)

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

T Murphy (Head of Education & Inclusion) ; E Clennell (Finance Manager); J Aconley-Foster (Finance Officer)

**APOLOGIES**

Councillor Clarke; Sally Hudson (Rise Carr College)

**1. Welcome, Introduction & Register/Declaration of business interests**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Minutes of Meeting 12th October 2021**

A correction to the attendance of the previous minutes was noted and forum agreed the minutes to be a true record.

### **3. Budget Update 2021/22**

The Finance Manager outlined the budget position for 2021/22 as per the previously circulated report.

It was noted that there could be potential further clawback for early years in June/July time when the January census information is completed for 2021/22.

High needs budget pressures were discussed particularly around the Post 16 pressures.

#### Recommendations

Forum noted the current budget position.

Forum noted the ongoing pressures within high needs budgets.

### **4. School Funding Formula 2022/23**

The Finance Manager discussed the previously circulated School Funding Formula report for 2022/23. Key Notes have been included:

- The school budget share for 2022/23 was provided with a comparison to the funds received in 2021/22 at school level. This allows for the recoupment of rates funding in 2022/23. It was noted that since last year there has been a reduction in 80 pupils across the borough.
- The funding formula submission deadline is the 21<sup>st</sup> January following forum decisions.
- The growth fund has been proposed at £100,000 for 2022/23 as lower usage has been evident this financial year.
- There will be no changes to the minimum funding guarantee.
- We are now fully online with the national funding formula.

#### Recommendations

Forum noted the funding formula budgets for 2022/23

Forum approved the growth fund criteria and budget for 2022/23.

### **5. Budget Setting 2022/23**

The Finance Manager discussed the previously circulated Budget Setting Report for 2022/23. Key Changes have been included:

- The formula based central commitments are in line with 2021/22 with increases for licenses based on the actual figures and 2% inflation costs for school admissions, TPC and TEPG.
- It was noted that whilst historic commitments have been proposed to be the same level as this year, going forward there is an expected of reduction of 20% each year. There is still funding in the central block which can be utilised for now, but this will need to be monitored in the future.
- The finance manager proposed that the £16,492.09 surplus on the schools Block was to be held within the school's block for future years.
- Early Years block is based on the October census and will be updated for January Census.
- Supplementary funding has been confirmed for the health and social care levy, to cover increased national insurance contributions and with some flexibility to fund other pressures. This will be allocated at school level and further guidance will be published in Spring 2022.
- The breakdown of the early years block cost increases STC was shown to forum. It was noted that early years for 3&4 year olds have a 17p per hour increase & a 21p per hour increase for 2 year olds. Disability Access Fund was increased by £185 per pupil.
- The Finance Manager proposed that the increases stated above should be fully passported.
- The table of provisional formula funding rates was shown. There were no proposed changes to deprivation factors

### Recommendations

Forum noted the budget allocations for 2022/23 from ESFA.

Forum noted early years funding rates and agreed to passport the uplifts to the early years providers based on the hourly rate, the deprivation factors were agreed to remain at the same level.

Forum agreed to the proposed usage of the central school's block in 2022/23.

Forum agreed that the £16,492.09 surplus in the school budget share is to be held within the school block reserve for future years.

## **6. High Needs Update**

The Assistant Director of Education & Inclusion updated the Forum regarding high needs. Key points included below. Forum noted the on-going high needs pressure.

- Covid pressures for young people in a post 16 setting were discussed – particularly with remote learning in years 11 & 12 which has led to an increase in numbers in the

post 16 cohort. The increase in rates for Individual Specialist Providers was also highlighted.

- Forum was made aware of the increase in demand of assessments for new education, health and care plan applications since summer of last academic year. Up until 19/20 there was a reduction in requests per year but in 2020/21 it started to spike again. It was noted that these trends need to be monitored going forward.
- Judgement from the SEN services is that there has been an increase in assessments and this is indicative of increased needs. The refusal to assess number has remained low.
- It was also noted that teacher assessed, and centre assessed grades may have had an impact on the reduction of pupil numbers going straight into employment from Year 11 due to the current economy and Covid, this pressure could be repeated next year depending on covid.

#### **6. Any Other Business**

- No other business.

#### **Date/Time/Location of next meeting**

**08<sup>th</sup> March 2022, 2pm – 4pm**

**Microsoft Teams**