

**DARLINGTON SCHOOLS FORUM  
16<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2023**

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**MINUTES OF MEETING TUESDAY, 11<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 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); H Dummett (Federation of Darlington Nursery Schools); J Blackham (Mount Pleasant); P Richardson (Head of Skills & Employability); J Skirving (St Georges Academy CofE, CE Diocese); K Reid (Polam Hall); P Norman (St Bedes RC); K Lyle(Rydal Academy); Shirley Welsh (Whinfield); Sally Hudson (Rise Carr College); D Lythgoe (St Aidan's); T Abbott (Carmel RC College)

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

E Clennell (Finance Manager); Tony Murphy (Assistant Director Education & Inclusion), Joanne Littler (Head of SEN); Councillor Clarke

**APOLOGIES**

Marco Ramsey (St Johns); M Fryer (Hummersknott); M Shorten (Bishop Hogarth);

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

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Minutes of Meeting 17<sup>th</sup> May 2022**

Minutes were agreed from the previous meeting as a true record with one adjustment to the recorded attendance, the minutes have been subsequently updated.

### **3. Budget Update 2022/23**

The Finance Manager outlined the budget position for 2022/23 as per the previously circulated report.

The overall DSG position is projected to have an in-year underspend of £141,041 bringing the projected deficit to £5,754,539 once the brought forward deficit from the prior year is added. This is mainly due to savings within the growth fund of £65,000, savings in the Central School Block of £159,124 which is a combination of Early Career Teachers slippage and unallocated funding that will be used to smooth the 20% annual reduction in the historic element of the block. However, the high needs block is projected to overspend in year by £107,033, mainly due to growth in pupil numbers and inflationary increases in high cost, independent placements. The Early Years block is projected to underspend slightly, but the final allocation is not known until the census information is received and is subject to clawback.

It was noted that the projections to the year-end were based upon one term of information and dependant on pupil numbers, therefore the projections were likely to change.

#### Recommendations

Forum noted the year end budget position

Forum noted the ongoing high needs budget pressures

### **4. High Needs Update – Written Statement of Action**

The Assistant Director of Education outlined the key points in the previously circulated Written Statement of Action report. Detailing the findings for the recent Ofsted inspection of Special Educational Needs, discussing the areas that have been assessed as performing well and areas that were identified with significant weaknesses. Followed by details of the Written Statement of action in response to the Ofsted Inspection and the mechanisms to monitor the plan.

#### Recommendations

Forum noted the written statement of action report

### **5. Future Forum Meetings**

The following dates for future school forum meetings were agreed:

Tuesday, 11th October 2022 - 2pm

Monday, 16th January 2023 - 2pm

Tuesday, 7th March 2023 – 2pm

Tuesday, 16th May 2023 – 2pm

## **7. Any Other Business**

- A list of current membership and substitutes will be circulated for verification and required updates to be shared in the next forum meeting.

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

**16<sup>th</sup> January 2023, 2pm – 5pm**

**Microsoft Teams**