

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet **DATE:** 19th January 2015

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WARD(S): All

PORTFOLIO: Commissioner for Education & Children – Councillor Pavitar Kaur Mann

PART I **KEY DECISION**

5-16 FUNDING FORMULA CHANGES 2015-16

1 Purpose of Report

To ask Cabinet to agree the 2015-16 School block formula changes.

An urgent decision is required because the School block budget needs to be returned to the DFE by 20th January 2015.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Cabinet is requested to resolve:

- a) That the 2015-16 School block funding formula changes to include the Reception uplift, which recognises reception children that start after the October census date, but would be included in the January census date and therefore would have been funded under the “old” funding rules, now be funded for 2015-16. Last year the number of children was 14.
- b) That the gains on school block budget increase should be capped by a percentage rate determined by the Council. By limiting gains we will ensure funding is distributed fairly and maintain affordable within the formula.
- c) That apart from the above changes, Slough Borough Council should keep the existing factors the same as last year.
- d) That the Chief Executive, following consultation with the Leader and the Commissioner responsible for schools, be authorised to submit the funding formula on the 20th January 2015.
- e) That the review of funding allocations in the 2015-16 be approved to ensure a fairer allocation between primary and secondary schools

3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Corporate Plan

Not applicable.

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

This will ensure that the Schools will receive a greater degree of fairness which will maintain affordability within the formula and provides greater stability in School budgets which will in turn benefit the children of Slough.

4 **Other Implications**

(a) Financial

There are no financial implications for the Council of proposed action.

(b) Risk Management

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
Legal	None	
Property	None	
Human Rights	None	
Health and Safety	None	
Employment Issues	None	
Equalities Issues	None	
Community Support	None	
Communications	None	
Community Safety	None	
Financial	None	
Timetable for delivery	May delay the implementation of the School block budget	
Project Capacity	None	
Other	None	

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There is no Human Rights Act Implications.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

If there is no identified need for the completion of an EIA.

5 **Supporting Information**

Slough Borough Council notified the Department for Education (DfE) of provisional planned changes to its funding formula on 31 October 2014. This means changes such as adding or removing one of the allowable factors, and implementing or removing the use of tools, within the formula, to ensure that it is affordable.

A consultation with all schools was conducted after a meeting was held by the Task & Finish Group (T&F) that consists of Head teachers, a governor and Council officers. The T&F Group looked primarily at introducing the use of Capping and Reception uplift into the formula, which was not currently part of the Slough formula, and it is believed their introduction would lead to a fairer distribution of funding and ensure it

is affordable. Also recommended was maintaining the existing factors within the formula.

Response to the consultation:

- 7 Schools replied. 6 were in favour of the changes and 1 not in favour of all the changes.

Now that the provisional budget has gone to the DfE, formal approval for these changes is required.

IMPACT

Capping the increases to no more than 3% will not reduce School budgets, it just reduces the amount these budgets can increase by year on year and adding fourteen more children to the number on roll does not cause a significant affect on school funding. The aim was not to adversely affect schools but to create a fairer, affordable formula for Slough. The School Block budget is due to be finalised in January 2015.

The T&F Group considered the impact of introducing capping and the reception uplift into the formula and has recommended the introduction of both capping and reception uplift into the formula. It was also recommended that the existing factors within the formula should be maintained.

6 **Comments of Other Committees**

Not applicable.

7 **Conclusion**

That the cabinet agree to agree the reception uplift so that all children under the old school funding rules receive funding under the new School funding rules. A cap on the increase Schools budgets can receive year on year and for all other factors to remain the same.

8 **Background Papers**

None