

**SLOUGH SCHOOLS' FORUM**  
**6<sup>th</sup> May 2015**

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**School Improvement Savings suggested allocation 2015-16**  
**(Directorate of Wellbeing)**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Schools' Forum that savings of £308k have been identified in the centrally-retained budgets for School Improvement in 2014-15.
- 1.2 To ask Schools' Forum for permission to use £200k of these savings to contribute to the Council's funding of the schools' PFI scheme.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that this saving be kept within the centrally retained budget and used in a different way for the following reasons:
  - Once this money is taken back from the centrally retained budget it can never be returned
  - The Council has made savings of over £31m over the past three years and is required to deliver further savings of 35% of its budget over the next four years. With these planned future cuts it is now making it difficult for the Council to carry on funding this commitment.
  - Each year the LA will continue to come to the Schools' Forum to gain approval for the centrally held items and in that meeting the School Forum can change the proposal. Hence this is a one year commitment.
- 2.2 Please see Appendix A which outlines the future school block increase which will be put through the Slough's Authority Proforma Tool in future years.

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1.1 The Council is facing significant pressures to balance its budget under the current financial constraint from central Government. Savings are required of £34m over the next four years.
- 3.1.2 The Council has been innovative in reducing its budget in recent years with a variety of transformation and efficiency schemes to deliver savings. However, the 2015-16 budget contained significant disinvestment, and in light of the financial planning assumptions, this will continue over the medium term.
- 3.1.3 Non-ringfenced grants, like the Education Services Grant (ESG), has been reduced year on year by the DFE, and is also reduced by Academy conversions. The Council currently does not link education-

related spend to the ESG; if it did, there would be significant reductions to education-related support services to Schools.

3.1.4 The schools' and Academies' budget has remained relatively stable with a maximum yearly reduction of £1.5%.

3.1.5 The Local Authority is asking the School's Forum to assist the Council in achieving its savings plans to ensure as many priority services, including those to Schools, can continue to be delivered.

#### **4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

4.1 Not applicable.

#### **5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

5.1 Not applicable.

#### **6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

##### Borough Solicitor

6.1 The relevant legal provisions are contained within the main body of this report.

##### Section 151 Officer – Strategic Director of Resources

6.2 The financial implications of the report are outlined in the supporting information.

##### Access Implications

6.3 There are no access implications.

#### **7 CONSULTATION**

##### Principal Groups Consulted

7.1 None.

##### Method of Consultation

7.2 Not applicable.

##### Representations Received

7.3 Not applicable.

Contact for further information

Paul Wilson (Interim Head of Strategic Commissioning – SEN & Early Years)

(01753 474037)

[paul.wilson@slough.gov.uk](mailto:paul.wilson@slough.gov.uk)