

SLOUGH SCHOOLS' FORUM
9th December 2020

Directorate of Children, Learning and Skills

2021-22 Schools' Block Consultation Outcome

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Schools' Forum of the outcome of the Schools' Funding consultation which ran from the 16th to the 24th November 2020.
- 1.2 To inform Schools' Forum of the recommendation from the 5-16 Schools Task Group following the meeting on the 26th November to discuss the results of the consultation

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Schools' Forum **note** the level of responses to the consultation:
- 18 responses (36%) of which;
 - 14 in favour of a moving to a Full National Funding Formula (NFF) - utilising all NFF factor rates except Mobility
 - 3 in favour of staying at 85% of the way to utilising all NFF factor rates except mobility
 - 4 in favour of utilising the maximum percentage transfer out of the Schools Block (SB) of 0.48%. This is split as 0.41% transfer to the High Needs Block (HNB) and 0.07% transfer to the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB)
 - 5 in favour of utilising a transfer of 0.07% to the (CSSB)
 - 8 in favour of not transferring any funding from the Schools Block (SB) to any other block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

Q1	Full NFF	14
	85% NFF	3
Q2	0.48% HNB and CSSB	4
	0.07 CSSB only	5
	No transfer	8

- 2.2 That Forum note that any movement towards implementing the full NFF funding rates is dependant on affordability within the final DSG settlement. If the funding is insufficient to implement the full NFF rates then rates will be moved as close as possible within the available funding.
- 2.3 That Forum takes into consideration the recommendation of the 5-16 schools funding task group when making a recommendation for implementation of their preferred options.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 This the fourth year of a 'soft' National Funding Formula Essentially this means that there is still an element of local decision making in how the authority distributes its Schools Block. There are several reasons why the DfE have not yet implemented a 'hard' national funding formula, the main one being that primary legislation needs to be amended and approved in order for it to be implemented and secondly many authorities nationally have made headway in mirroring the NFF or at least made some headway to moving closer to the NFF

3.2 Task Group recommendations

1. Local funding formula for 2021-22 to be based on the full NFF funding rates, or as close to full NFF as the final DSG settlement will allow.

The consultation response showed a clear majority in support of this position.

2. In-principle support for the transfer of up to £100k from Schools Block to the CCSB to fund the admissions team expansion in 2021-22 only, subject to:
 - Affordability – can this transfer be made without compromising the move to full NFF rates?
 - Clear presentation of the business case for this funding at December Forum by SBC officers
 - Confirmation of how the ongoing commitment to the admissions team will be funded in 2022-23 and beyond.

The consultation response indicated a 50-50 split in opinion on support for this transfer.

3. Rejection of the proposal to transfer approx. £600k (0.41%) from Schools Block to High Needs Block.

The consultation response showed a clear majority in support of this position.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Various options were modelled and considered at the Task Group meetings. The selection of models agreed upon were then sent out to schools for wider consultation.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 Not applicable

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

6.1 Monitoring Officer

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

6.2 Section 151 Officer – Strategic Director of Finance and Resources

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

6.3 Access Implications

There are no access implications.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Concluded on the 26th November 2020.

Contact for further information

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