

## 2021-22 SCHOOLS' REVENUE BUDGET CONSULTATION

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Schools will be aware of the Government's plans to transition the school funding methodology to a National Funding Formula (NFF) based model, rather than the current Local Funding Formula based model. The stated aim of the Government's policy is to tackle long-standing disparities in funding for schools in similar circumstances.
- 1.2 As part of the governments commitment to increase funding for schools and high needs there is an additional £4.8bn incorporated within the funding allocation for 2021-22. It has been incorporated by way of the uplift in pupil rates and Minimum Funding Level Per Pupil (MFLPP) and the positive Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG).
- 1.3 Teachers Pay and Pension grants have been incorporated into the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and will no longer be paid as separate grants. £180 has been added to primary pupil rates and £265 has been added to secondary pupil rates at both the DSG unit of funding level and the local formula level.
- 1.4 The primary Unit of Funding (PUF) has increased from £4,216 to £4,492 (+£276) Secondary Unit of Funding (SUF) increased from £5,706 to £6,117 (+£411) These are the basic units of funding used to calculate the DSG / LA allocation
- 1.5 The minimum per-pupil funding values for 2021-22, have been confirmed at £4,180 for Primary Schools ( +£250 base increase and an additional £180 for teachers pay and pension grants) KS3 from £5,215 (+£150 base increase and an additional £265 for teachers pay and pension grants) KS4 from £5,715 ( +£150 base increase plus an additional £265 for teachers pay and pension grants). In addition, the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) has been set at a positive rate of between +0.5% to +2.0% meaning all schools, will see an increase in their per pupil level of funding over 2020-2021.
- 1.6 Further details on the funding of the schools block for 2020-21 can be found in the schools block National Funding Formula Technical Note on the following link

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-funding-formula-tables-for-schools-and-high-needs-2021-to-2022>

## 2 Context

- 2.1 The Council is required to consult annually with all schools regarding the local formulaic mechanism for allocating funding through the Schools' Block. This consultation fulfils this statutory requirement.

- 2.2 In 2020-21 Slough moved 85% of the way towards using all of the National Funding Formula (NFF) factor rates, excluding mobility and lump sum
- 2.3 This consultation will explore the options of either continuing to utilise 85% of the NFF factor rates or moving to fully utilising all of the NFF factor rates except mobility. The 5-16 working group considered the mobility factor and the schools it targets and agreed that as in previous years the funding did not accurately target the schools in need and would be better distributed as part of the overall schools block funding. Therefore when considering the funding models the mobility factor was not utilised as part of the NFF allocations.
- 2.4 Local authorities, with the agreement of schools forum are permitted to transfer a maximum of 0.5% of the schools block to another block within the DSG. For the financial year 2021-22 this percentage is effectively reduced to 0.48% to allow for the element for teachers pay and pensions grants to remain within the schools block. These grants have been merged into the DSG for 2021-22 and will no longer be funded as separate grants.
- 2.5 As allowed for in the regulations additional funding can be requested to support the Admissions service. As part of this consultation schools are asked to consider a transfer of £100k from the schools block to the Central Schools Services Block, this is the block where admissions service is funded from. The following information is to support the need for this transfer.

Admissions is a statutory service so will service all schools (Including academies).

- Since 2010 there have been 3 new primary schools, 3 new secondary schools and 1 all-through school created in the borough
- The money is needed for the re-organisation of the team to create extra capacity and staffing to support all school admissions
- The reorganisation is intended to have an overall group manager with an Admissions and Access Manager and two team leaders with Admissions and Access Officers below them.
- Slough Council will be subsidising with approximately 160k to create a team more fit for purpose in supporting all schools. So the contribution of schools forum is 39% with the LA contributing 61%.
- The additional staffing will also create additional resource for processing of fair access pupils which impacts all schools. It will also support the monitoring and tracking of vulnerable pupils through the Fair Access Protocol and Managed Move protocol of which all schools are a part.
- Staffing needed to process additional demands for transport pupils within the mainstream and SEND.
- Staffing has remained the same in Slough since at least 2010 despite changes and updates to admissions code and a more complex system
- There has been more complexity in school admissions since the introduction of OAA school admission arrangements.
- Slough has particularly more complex admissions criteria than other LAs with a range of different settings and academies in the town

- Whilst academies, free schools and VA schools are their own admissions authority; and some manage their own in-year admissions, the council still has a responsibility for phase co-ordination and the overall statutory role to get all children into schools..
- Schools that are their own admissions authority will still benefit from expertise and advice from the service. (HOW? By tracking all children to ensure that no children fall through the crack..
- A new admissions code is in consultation phase and requires more close working between the LA and all schools.
- The DSG criteria for asking for additional funds is in place in particular for the admission service as this is recognised nationally as an area where LAs need funds to support their schools.
- Supporting and monitoring trends in allocations of school places which impact the projections for place planning across the LA (the projections are part of statutory submission to the DfE which attract annual capital grant allocations and also part of the discussions with the developers when requesting 106 contributions).

2.6 There are three options to consider when answering the block transfer question (Q3) Option 1 is whether schools wish to transfer 0.41 % to the high needs block to help reduce the high needs overspend and support other items within that block and also to transfer 0.07% to the central schools services block to allocate additional funding to the Admissions team (please see details for this transfer in the previous point). Option 2 agree to transfer just 0.07% to the central schools services block for the Admissions team and Option 3 do not agree to any transfers out of the schools block

### **3. Consultation Process**

- 3.1 The consultation is being conducted by email exchange and will open on the **16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and close on the 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at Midday.**
- 3.2 Schools are asked to select one preferred option, either stay at 85% of the way to utilising the NFF factor rates or to fully implement the NFF factor rates. Both options exclude mobility. The authority's ability to fully implement the NFF will depend on the settlement the authority receives and the pupils numbers derived from the October 2020 census, therefore if the option to move to a full NFF is agreed and there isn't sufficient funding to do that, the authority will move as close possible to mirroring the NFF within the settlement received.
- 3.3 The outcome of the consultation will be discussed at the Schools' Block Task Group scheduled for the **26<sup>th</sup> November (TBC)**. The outcome from that meeting will be shared with Schools' Forum on the **9<sup>th</sup> December (TBC)**. The Schools Forum will then make a recommendation to the Authority on which option to implement for the 2021-22 financial year.

## **4 Consultation items**

- 4.1 The budget allocation is illustrative only, and is unlikely to reflect the exact budget your school will receive. This is for two reasons:
- The modelling has been predicated on the October 2019 census with an element for growth. The final allocation will be predicated on the October 2020 census and the 2021-22 funding settlement.
  - As neither of the above statistics are yet confirmed, your consultation responses should be based on the consideration of the underlying principles of the changes.
- 4.2 Any changes to the way an authority bases the funding formula on can cause turbulence for schools funding. To mitigate these variances as much as possible the funding formula contains a minimum funding guarantee, for 2021-22 the MFG has to be set at a rate between 0.5% and 2%.
- 4.3 The Schools' Block allocation contains a provisional top-slice for the Growth Fund of £750k. This is to support schools which are expanding and have not yet got pupils in every year group.
- 4.4 The outcome of the modelling of the proposed changes can be seen in **Appendix 1** of the consultation.

## Consultation Response Form

Please complete the following details about your school

School Name

Federation/Academy/Multi Academy/Trust Name

Full Name

Position

Q1 Do you want to fully adopt the NFF formula in 2021-22 or keep at 85% of the way towards a full NFF?

Full NFF

85% NFF

Comments

Q2 Do you want to Transfer 0.48% (£706,245) of schools block funding to other blocks £606,245 to HNB and £100,000 to CSSB (Admissions), just 0.07% (£100k) to the CSSB or make no transfers at all.

0.48% HNB and  
CSSB

0.07% CSSB Only

No Transfer

Comments