

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING HELD ON 14 MARCH 2013 AT MAIN HALL - ST JOHN'S PARISH CENTRE, 2 WINGFIELD ROAD, TROWBRIDGE, BA14 9EA.

Present:

Dr Peter Biggs, Mr Steve Clark, Mr Tim Gilson, Jan Hatherell, Mr J Hawkins, Mr J Proctor, Ms I Sidmouth, Mr Martin Watson (Vice-Chair) and Mrs C Williamson

Also Present:

Julia Cramp, Stephanie Denovan and Cllr Lionel Grundy OBE

13 **Apologies and Changes of Membership**

Apologies were received from Neil Baker (Chairman), Julia Bird, Andy Bridewell, Ann Ferries, Sue Jiggins, Rev. Alice Kemp and Dr Tina Pagett.

The Vice- Chairman, Martin Watson, took the Chair.

14 **Minutes of the previous Meeting**

The Chairman drew attention to the minutes found on pages 1 to 6 of the agenda.

A proposal to amend the wording of the second resolution in item no. 10 to read

- (2) To agree an hourly rate for 2 year olds in private, voluntary and independent settings at £5.43, plus an additional 25p per hour as a start up rate per pupil for 2013-14, to be reviewed on an annual basis

was accepted.

A further proposal to amend the ninth resolution for minute no. 10 to read

- (9) To recommend to Council that the overall schools budget be set at £302.184 million

was accepted.

Resolved:

The Forum agreed

1. To accept the amended wording for the second resolution from minute no. 10
2. To accept the amended wording for the ninth resolution from minute no. 10
3. To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes from the meeting held on 24 January 2013, subject to the amendments detailed above.

15 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

16 Chairman's Announcements

Simon Burke and Councillor Grundy OBE were thanked for their contribution to the work of the Forum and wished every success for the future.

17 Children and Young People's Trust Board Update

Julie Cramp, Service Director – Commissioning and Performance provided updates on the following:

Safeguarding Peer Review

A sector-led review took place at the end of January. OFSTED's message since this review was to keep up the pace and complete the plan.

Early Intervention Strategy

The Safeguarding Trust Board had approved a multi-agency thresholds document, which was being taken to PHF next week and hopefully WASSH in the near future. The strategy would also be brought to Schools Forum.

18 Budget Monitoring

Liz Williams, Head of Finance introduced the report and noted the projected underspend of £0.6 million. Work was ongoing to support vulnerable schools through the funding mechanism, and it was agreed that details of this support would be brought to the next Schools Forum meeting.

Resolved:

The Forum noted the report.

19 Reports from Working Groups

School Funding Working Group (SFWG)

Liz Williams, Head of Finance introduced the report and minutes from the SFWG. She highlighted the recommendations which gave support for an amendment to the funding scheme to withdraw the control mechanism on

surplus balances scheme, a request for additional information to be made available to the Forum to assist with consideration of the Review of 2013-14 School Funding Arrangements consultation and a recommendation that no cash back be distributed to schools in 2012-13 within the Free School Meals Pooling Scheme.

Resolved:

The Forum noted the report and recommendations contained within.

SEN Working Group

Liz Williams, Head of Finance introduced the report and minutes from the SEN Working Group. She highlighted the recommendations which requested a review of Top Up Rates for 2013-14 and recommendations for the response to the Review of School Funding Arrangements 2013-14 consultation.

Resolved:

The Forum noted the report and the recommendations contained within.

Schools Services Working Group

Simon Burke provided a verbal update from the Schools Services Working Group.

He confirmed that the existing contract for broadband would finish on 31 July 2013 and the preferred provider was South West Grid for Learning. He highlighted the important decision to de-delegate and confirmed that the offer to special schools was made on the same basis as academies, and that a review had been agreed.

Wiltshire Council was now acting as an appropriate body for qualified teachers. There was a new online system for schools to access, and the charges for this service were £175 registration and £75 per NQT.

Changes had been made to the pupil advisor programme with a move from 4 to 3 and a half days from central funds. A request to increase music services by 2.5% was agreed.

Work on modernising the payroll system was ongoing however it was unlikely to be implemented before the autumn.

A query was raised over whether the charges to some schools for broadband provision from SW Grid for Learning between the period 1 April 2013 and 31 July 2013 being higher than previously for a whole year could be overcome. It was confirmed that this would not be possible as changes to the Schools Funding regulations meant delegation to DSG with the schools having to pay back, however they were seeking to reduce across the board and were hoping to offset costs. Concern was raised over the lack of understanding on and confidence in the broadband offer from SW Grids for Learning and it was agreed that they would attend the next meeting of the PHF. Schools would have to reach a decision by 31 March 2013.

20 Review of School Funding Arrangements 2013-14

Liz Williams, Head of Finance, introduced the report circulated at the meeting and attached to these minutes which provided detail around the consultation questions. She explained that the document was split into 4 sections, and the Forum were asked for their steer for the response.

Section 1: Are we moving towards national consistency

The move to a pupil led system with funding following the pupil was noted. In 2012-13 80% of funding in Wiltshire was allocated through pupil-led factors; in 2013-14 this went up to 88.9%. The Forum agreed that a minimum threshold should be set for the pupil-led factors, but noted that if rules were changed to allow differential lump sums between primary and secondary this may impact on the amount allocated through pupil led factors.

Section 2: Areas of concern and possible change for 2014/15

The difficulty in commenting on prior attainment given the concern over the new set of data was highlighted.

It was confirmed that Wiltshire Council had opted not to use a pupil mobility factor in the new funding arrangements and the Forum noted that the impact of mobility included sudden reductions in pupils numbers in addition to large increases and that it may be better to have a facility to set a deficit budget to support schools in managing this.

The Forum recommended that there should be different lump sums for primary and secondary, which would negate the need for a sparsity factor. It was agreed that the proposed sparsity factor was complex and questions were asked if it would take into account safe walking routes.

The issues around service schools were likened to those of deprived area and therefore not triggering deprivation factors and it was suggested that some issues could be tackled in conjunction with the MOD. Concern was raised over falling rolls with a suggested solution of licensed deficits; however it was acknowledged that this would not be easy for academies.

Section 3 – Options for adjusting high needs funding in 2014-15 and beyond

This section and the questions contained within had been considered by the SEN working group and the Forum agreed with the responses suggested.

Section 4 – Schools Forum

The Forum felt that as given in feedback previously they worked in a collaborative way and any additional restrictions may work against that.

Resolved:

The Forum agreed to submit a response to the DfE consultation based on the points made.

21 **Schools Budgets 2013-14 - Update**

Liz Williams, Head of Finance introduced the report and drew the Forum's attention to an error relating to Secondary School Budgets 2013-14 detailed in a briefing note circulated at the meeting and attached to these minutes.

The error in the calculation of number on roll for secondary schools affected 22 out of 29 schools, and the following two options were considered:

- a) Adjust in the following year
- b) Recover the overpayment by adjusting the top ups to be paid to schools in 2013-14

The Forum noted that it was possible to recoup the overpayments for all but 1 secondary school by adjusting the top up payments payable in 2013-14 for high needs pupils and which enabled the funding for each school to be corrected within the financial year, avoiding any knock on impact to 2014-15.

It was explained that the budgets had been sent out to schools on 1st March and should be earlier next year.

Further work was needed on the funding of high needs provision for 2014-15 and it was agreed that SENCO / Business Managers should be approached for involvement in a working group to look at potential changes to the banding system for provision across mainstream schools and report back via the SEN Group to the October meeting of Schools Forum.

It was confirmed that funding rates were inclusive of all new delegation and budgets could not be adjusted to correct errors once issued.

The impact of funding changes showed a significant increase in schools protected through the MFG. Work was ongoing on how to support schools that are financially vulnerable as a result of the new funding formula and proposals would be brought to the June meeting of Schools Forum

Resolved:

The Forum agreed

- 1. To note the progress on the 2013-14 schools budget to date**
- 2. To recommend the recovery of overpayments to secondary schools by adjusting the top-ups to be paid to schools in 2013-14**
- 3. For the SEN working group to consider how high needs funding should be allocated across mainstream schools and report back to Schools Forum in October.**
- 4. For proposals to support schools who are financially vulnerable as a result of the formula changes to be brought to the June meeting.**

22 **Expectations for SEND Green Paper Pathfinders during the Extension Period (April 2013 to September 2014)**

Julia Cramp – Service Director, Commissioning and Performance, introduced the report and highlighted the huge piece of work being undertaken which included the identification of unit costs for personal budgets. She confirmed that the legislation had been delayed and was currently scheduled to come into effect on 1 April 2014.

The following key days were noted:

June 2013: Personal budgets to be offered to all those with a new Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP).

September 2013: My Plan would be offered to all new applicants. Work would start on converting existing statements to EHCP.

In response to questions Julia confirmed that they would be writing to people with existing statements explaining what the options were.

Wiltshire Council's success as a regional pathfinder supporting other authorities in the region was noted, and it was confirmed that they had been chosen as a national pathfinder.

Resolved:

The Forum noted the report.

23 **Controls on Surplus Balances scheme - outcome of consultation**

Liz Williams, Head of Finance introduced the report detailing the results of the consultation with schools on the withdrawal of the Controls on Surplus Balances Scheme with effect from 2013-14.

The results of the consultation showed the schools in agreement with the proposal to withdraw the scheme and initiate an alternative approach which maintains a balance between encouraging prudent financial management whilst also embracing the DfE's guidance that schools should operate autonomously.

Resolved:

The Forum recommended a revision to the Wiltshire scheme for funding schools to withdraw the control mechanism on surplus balances with effect from the 2013-14 financial year.

24 **Free School Meal Pooling Scheme**

Liz Williams, Head of Finance introduced the report which detailed the estimated balance as being £80k, which had previously been believed by officers to be adequate to offset any growth in free meals in 2012-13.

Resolved:

The Forum recommended that no cash back be allocated from the Free School Meal Pool in the current year.

25 Confirmation of dates for future meetings

The following dates were noted:

27 June 2013

3 October 2013

12 December 2013

23 January 2014

13 March 2014

26 Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 1.40 - 3.35 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Kirsty Butcher, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718211, e-mail samuel.bath@wiltshire.gov.uk

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Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum

14th March 2013

Subject: Review of 2013-14 School Funding Arrangements – DfE Consultation

Purpose of Report

1. To inform members of the Schools Forum of the DfE consultation on a review of 2013-14 school funding arrangements and to consider the Wiltshire response to the consultation.

Background

2. On 11th February 2013 the government issued a consultation document Review of School Funding Arrangements 2013-14. A copy of the document has previously been circulated to Schools Forum members and can be accessed via the [DfE Website](#).
3. The purpose of the consultation is to review the 2013/14 arrangements to ensure the changes applied are paving the way for the National Funding Formula and whether, following implementation of the changes for 2013-14, adjustments are necessary in 2014/15. The document is split in to 4 sections:
 - Section 1: Are we moving towards national consistency?
 - Section 2: Areas of concern and possible changes for 2014/15
 - Section 3: Options for adjusting high needs funding in 2014-15 and beyond
 - Section 4: Schools Forums

Main Considerations

4. In considering the Wiltshire Schools Forum response to the consultation it is helpful to consider the main issues within each section of the document. In considering the questions around potential changes for 2014-15 some modelling work had previously been done in the response to the initial consultation in March 2012 and this has not been repeated. There are a number of issues raised in Section 2, however, that have not previously been considered and some further work may still be required.

Section 1: Are we moving towards national consistency?

5. Section 1 examines the move towards national consistency based on a survey of local authority's simplified funding formulae.
6. The data submitted by LAs in October shows that while the funding reforms allow for a more consistent and comparable allocation to schools, there is still variation. This is to be expected given that per-pupil funding allocations vary across the country, making each local authority's starting point different from its neighbours. Results also show considerable variation in the proportion of funding allocated

through deprivation factors and per-pupil allocations for prior attainment factors (some LAs chose not to use this formula factor at all).

7. Within the document the DfE considers progress towards the Department's aims of moving to a more pupil-led system. To ensure that even more money is targeted to the needs of pupils, rather than to the circumstances of schools DfE is considering whether to set a minimum threshold for either the Age Weighted Pupil Units (AWPUs) or a combination of all the pupil-led factors. Setting a minimum threshold for the AWPUs alone may not be meaningful given that the variation in deprivation across the country requires some local authorities to target more funding to deprived pupils than others. DfE are therefore inclined to set a minimum threshold for all the pupil-led factors although this would have an impact on the level of the lump sum.
8. The questions to be considered in this section of the document are:

Q1: Should we set a minimum threshold for the pupil-led factors and, if so, at what level?

Q2: On what basis did local authorities decide on the quantum or proportion of funding to target to deprived pupils?

Q3: On what basis did local authorities decide on the per-pupil amounts for the prior attainment factors?

9. As outlined in the separate budget update report the Wiltshire position in relation to pupil led funding is as follows:
 - a. The Wiltshire per pupil funding rates are within the normal range for authorities across the country.
 - b. 82.5% of funding in Wiltshire is allocated through the basic per pupil funding element. The overall range for all LAs is between 60% and 87%.
 - c. 88.9% of funding in Wiltshire is allocated through pupil-led factors (AWPU, deprivation, prior-attainment, EAL, etc). The minimum level across the country is 77% and just under half of authorities are allocating between 90% and 95% of funding this way.
10. Should a minimum threshold for pupil led factors be set it is likely that Wiltshire would be able to comply with this without significant change to the local formula although it is possible that if a larger lump sum were allowable for secondary schools Wiltshire may want to consider increasing the lump sum and this would have an impact on per pupil allocations. Wiltshire Schools Forum has prioritised a pupil led approach to the allocation of funding, particularly in recent years as increasing amounts of funding have been mainstreamed in to the local formula.
11. In response to questions 2 and 3, the amounts to be distributed for deprived pupils and per pupil funding were based on the amounts distributed this way in previous years. This approach was favoured by Schools Forum in order to reduce turbulence to budgets and to maintain the previous ratio between per pupil funding and deprivation.

Section 2: Areas of concern and possible changes for 2014/15

12. In light of feedback on the 2013/14 arrangements DfE are seeking specific views on whether changes are needed to three of the twelve allowable factors; prior

attainment; pupil mobility; and the lump sum. The questions asked are as follows:

Q4: Do you agree that local authorities should continue to use EYFSP data as an attainment-related proxy or should we consider use of a different indicator to identify low cost SEN in primary schools? If so, what indicator?

Q5: Would it help to allow additional weighting to be given if a school experiences in-year changes to pupil numbers above a certain threshold? If so, where should this threshold be set?

Q6: In areas with large numbers of small schools, could the problem of having a fixed lump sum be overcome by reducing the relevant AWPU?

Q7: Would having the ability to apply a separate primary and secondary lump sum avoid necessary small schools becoming unviable? If so, how should we deal with middle and all-through schools?

Q8: We said in June that we would review the level of the lump sum cap (currently £200,000) for 2014-15 in order to establish whether it is the minimum cap needed to ensure the sustainability of necessary small schools. If we continued with one lump sum for both primary and secondary, what would be the minimum level of cap needed to ensure the sustainability of necessary small schools? If we had separate lump sums for primary and secondary, what would be the minimum cap needed for each in order to ensure the sustainability of necessary small schools?

Q9: Would using a school-level sparsity measure to target a single lump sum, based on distance between pupils and their second nearest school, avoid necessary small rural schools becoming unviable?

Q10: What average distance threshold would be appropriate?

Q11: If we had a sparsity measure, would it still be necessary to have a lump sum in order to ensure that necessary schools remain viable? Why? What is the interaction between the two?

Q12: What alternative sparsity measures could we use to identify necessary small schools in rural areas?

Q13: Would the ability for both schools to retain their lump sums for one or two years after amalgamation create a greater incentive to merge?

Prior attainment

13. Under the new arrangements LAs are allowed to use Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) and Key Stage 2 data. The current EYFSP comes to an end this year and the new framework is being updated and will come into effect from this autumn. DfE are looking at pilot data from the new EYFSP framework to create a new proxy indicator to identify low cost SEN. An announcement on this will be made in the summer. In the meantime DfE expect LAs to continue with the current proxy using data they have for all of their EYFS pupils and KS1 pupils (apart from those entering the system this year) until analysis is completed on the new framework.
14. Within the Wiltshire local formula the number of pupils achieving less than 78 points at EYFSP has been used as a measure of prior attainment at primary level and this has been combined with deprivation and per pupil allocations to drive funding to meet high incidence, low cost special educational needs (SEN). The measure of 78 points is used to describe a "good level of development" for an individual child.

15. Under the new EYFSP it is understood that this measure of “good level of development” will still exist but it will be derived in a different way, through progress towards early learning goals. As a result there may be issues of comparability of data from one year to the next if EYFSP continues to be the single measure of prior attainment within the formula. Until we have clarity as to how data from the new framework is to be used it is difficult to consider what the impact might be.
16. Previously in Wiltshire a combination of EYFSP and Key Stage 1 data has been used as a measure of prior attainment in primary schools. This reduces reliance on a single set of data, although may not be consistent with the aim of achieving a simpler formula. It may be that use of a more established data set such as KS1 could cause less turbulence to budgets than use of a new measure from the new EYFSP.
17. For secondary schools DfE propose continuing with the attainment-related proxy for KS2 whereby all pupils who fail to achieve Level 4 or above in both English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 will be eligible for low cost SEN support. Whilst the DfE are not proposing to implement any changes to the use of KS2 data Schools Funding Working Group did note that there will be changes to how KS2 is assessed in the future and that there will be no single result for English. The Group requested that this be raised in Wiltshire’s response to the consultation.

Pupil Mobility

18. A pupil mobility factor was introduced in the new funding arrangements for 2013-14. Following initial modelling work Wiltshire opted not to use this as a factor in the local formula. The main reason for this was that the factor reflected all in year pupil movement and therefore allocated funding very thinly across all schools rather than enabling a targeted approach to support schools with high levels of mobility. As a result, for the factor to be used successfully a significant amount of funding would have to have been diverted from the per pupil funding element in order to achieve the aim of targeting funding to support high levels of mobility.
19. Previously in Wiltshire a funding factor to support schools with high proportions of service children has been used to recognise the turbulence caused by high levels of pupil movement. This factor was based on a threshold to enable funding to be targeted at those schools where it was needed most. The threshold was not set according to the level of mobility but was based on the proportion of service pupils within the school.
20. If a mobility factor is to be used it would make sense to apply a threshold. According to the data issued by DfE the pattern of in year mobility within Wiltshire schools over the previous 3 years is as follows:

Mobility level	Primary	Secondary	% Primary	% Secondary
Over 20%	10	0	5%	0%
15-20%	19	0	10%	0%
10-15%	34	2	17%	7%
5-10%	99	10	50%	34%
<5%	37	17	19%	59%
	199	29	100%	100%

21. 63 primary schools and 2 secondary schools have mobility of greater than 10%, with 29 of those primary schools having mobility of greater than 15%. In 2012-13 Wiltshire allocated £0.572 million to 19 schools through the service school

turbulence factor, not all of those schools correspond with the schools identified above with the highest levels of mobility.

22. Any threshold needs to be set to enable funding to be targeted at the highest level of need. If the threshold is set too low then either funding is spread thinly or a large amount of funding has to be allocated via that funding factor, taking funding away from other pupil led factors. Each £1 million removed from the per pupil funding element reduces per pupil funding rates (AWPU) by approximately 0.5%. It would also be important to distinguish mobility from planned in year growth, which is funded separately through the pupil growth fund. The data provided by DfE includes in year starters in the previous 3 years so there could be the possibility of some double counting for schools who have received growth funding and then retrospectively show high mobility.

Lump Sum

23. The DfE has consistently stated that the aim of the single lump sum is to provide sufficient funding for small schools, particularly those in rural areas, who may not be able to operate on the basis of per pupil funding alone. Within Wiltshire the introduction of the single lump sum has had the most significant impact on school budgets of all of the changes to the formula. The impact has been greatest on secondary schools because the lump sum had previously been set at a level no longer allowable under the new system. This has led to a greater reliance on per pupil funding in the secondary sector and has disadvantaged smaller schools.
24. Within the consultation document the DfE considers whether separate primary and secondary lump sums could avoid necessary small schools becoming unviable and also introduces the idea of a sparsity factor to target funding at necessary small schools in rural areas. For each school the sparsity factor would:
 - Identify the pupils for whom this is their nearest school; and
 - For those pupils only, measure the distance from where they live from their second nearest suitable school. The average distance that relevant pupils live from their second nearest school would allow a sparsity factor to be based on set distance thresholds.
25. School Funding Working Group considered whether this approach could be modelled for a number of small Wiltshire schools to see if an appropriate distance threshold could be arrived at. It has not yet been possible to generate the data required to do this however a number of points should be considered in relation to the proposed sparsity factor:
 - a. Within Wiltshire the introduction of separate primary and secondary lump sums, with an allowable secondary lump sum of greater than £200,000, would be the simplest solution to the impact of the funding changes on small schools. This would allow the fixed costs of primary and secondary schools to be appropriately reflected in the funding formula.
 - b. In the initial modelling work for school funding reform it was clearly demonstrated that increasing the lump sum for small primary schools in Wiltshire leads to those schools becoming very costly, with a significant redistribution of resources across the primary sector. This again emphasises the view that the single lump sum does not achieve the aims laid out by DfE.

- c. A sparsity factor has the ability to support small rural schools but not all small schools in Wiltshire, particularly at secondary level, would necessarily meet the criteria to trigger a sparsity payment.
 - d. Wiltshire currently applies a rurality factor within the Early Years Single Funding Formula to recognise that a small setting may be necessary because of its rural location. This factor is based on distance between settings rather than distance travelled by pupils. The proposed sparsity factor seems heavily data reliant and complex to calculate.
26. The final question on the lump sum considers whether allowing schools to retain two lump sums for one or two years after merging may create an incentive for smaller schools to merge. In simple terms the answer to this would be yes but it needs to be considered alongside the split site allowance which is also designed to support schools operating on more than one site.

Service Pupils

27. In addition to the changes above the DfE is also seeking views on the evidence to support additional funding allocations for service pupils in schools, over and above support for deprivation, mobility (discussed above) and pastoral care (through pupil premium grant). Wiltshire has previously supported schools with a service schools turbulence factor and a safety net factor to protect against the impact of significant reductions in pupil numbers. Achievement by service pupils in Wiltshire is good and this has been commented on by HMI Inspectors on a visit to Wiltshire in 2010.
28. Service Pupil Premium Grant currently allocates £250 per service pupil, increasing to £300 per pupil in 2013-14. The provisional allocation for Wiltshire schools in 2013-14 is calculated at £1,093,680.
29. In response to the initial consultation on school funding reform a working group was established to look specifically at the issues experienced by schools with high numbers of pupils from service families. The main issues highlighted by the group are shown in Appendix 1 to this report.
30. Service pupils do not trigger deprivation criteria within the funding model. Previous work carried out nationally by groups of LAs with high numbers of service pupils have equated the issues associated with high numbers of service pupils to those associated with having high numbers of deprived pupils in a school. If service pupils do not meet the deprivation criteria it is difficult to target funding to support some of the issues listed in Appendix 1 in the same way as it is possible to do so in other schools.

Schools with falling rolls

31. Question 17 of the consultation document focuses on the situation of falling rolls in the secondary sector because of demography:
- Q17: In cases where a population bulge is imminent, what is preventing good and necessary schools from staying open?
32. The funding mechanism itself, being driven by pupil numbers, potentially prevents good and necessary schools from staying open. A possible solution could be to retain a central fund, in parallel with the growth fund, to support schools where population estimates indicate that places will be required within a certain number of years. Setting the level of this fund would be challenging as the Dedicated Schools Grant allocation is based on the numbers of pupils in

schools and to retain funding centrally to support schools where pupils have yet to arrive would reduce the funding available to allocate to pupils already on the rolls of other schools.

Section 3: Options for adjusting high needs funding in 2014-15 and beyond

33. A number of issues are considered in relation to the funding arrangements for high needs pupils however the base values of £10,000 per place for SEN places and £8,000 per place for alternative provision are considered to be at the right level and are not to be reviewed. Having implemented the changes in Wiltshire for 2013-14 it is clear that the £10,000 base value in special schools is a relatively small proportion of the overall cost of a place and can make schools financially vulnerable if they have unfilled places or high levels of in year pupil movement.

34. The questions in the consultation document are:

Q19: Would a formula factor that indicates those pupils who receive top-up funding be a useful addition to help deal with the funding of high needs?

Q20: To address the variation in base funding between neighbouring local authorities, how fast should local authorities be required to move towards the £6,000 threshold? Should it be made a requirement from 2014-15?

Q21: Should the Department play an active role in spreading good practice and model contracts/service level agreements?

Q22: Do you have ideas about how the pre and post-16 high needs systems might be brought closer together?

35. These questions were discussed by the SEN Working Group who considered that the following responses should be made:

- Q19 – the difficulties in collecting accurate data from the annual census were discussed and it was agreed that this should be fed back as part of the response.
- Q20 – it was agreed that Wiltshire would support a move towards the £6,000 threshold for low cost high incidence SEN as this would increase consistency between local authority areas. It was noted that in the SW only 2 authorities had not implemented the recommendation to delegate the first £6,000 for SEN.
- Q21 – it was agreed that the DfE should play an active role in spreading good practice and model SLAs etc
- Q22 – in relation to post-16 funding streams the group requested that we note the need to work more closely with Adult Care services for students aged 18 and over. This will be made easier through the development of services for 0-25 year olds in line with the SEND Green Paper.

Section 4: Schools Forums

36. In response to concerns that Schools Forums were not being entirely run fairly or transparently, DfE made a number of changes which came into effect on 1 October 2012. These were:

- a. Removed the requirement to have a minimum of 15 people on a Forum;

- b. Limited the number of LA meeting attendees unless they are a Lead Member, DCS, DCS representative or are providing specific financial or technical advice;
 - c. Restricted voting arrangements by only allowing schools members and the PVI members to vote on the funding formula;
 - d. Required LAs to publish Forum papers, minutes and decisions promptly on their websites;
 - e. Required Forums to hold public meetings; and
 - f. Gave the Education Funding Agency observer status at Schools Forum meetings.
37. DfE are not inclined to make any further changes in 2014/15 since the changes made in 2013/14 need time to embed but would be keen to hear stakeholders' views on the running of Schools Forums.

Q23: Do you think that Schools Forums are operating more democratically and transparently? If not, what further measures could the Department take in order to improve this?

38. Previously Wiltshire Schools Forum has fed back that the Schools Forum worked in a collaborative way and that additional restrictions may work against that. Schools Forum will wish to consider a response to the question posed by DfE.

Proposals

39. To note the consultation questions issued by the DfE included within the document *Review of 2013-14 School Funding Arrangements*.
40. Through discussions at the meeting agree Schools Forum's response to the DfE consultation.

Carolyn Godfrey
Corporate Director

Report Author: Liz Williams, Head of Finance

13 March 2013

Background Papers

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

None

Appendices

1. Summary of issues highlighted by working group on service schools
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Appendix 1

Summary of Issues Highlighted by Working Group on Service Schools

Work has been carried out with those schools currently in receipt of the service school funding to identify the additional costs associated with being a service school. That work identified that the types of additional costs were as follows:

Staffing

(i) Administration

- The administration associated with the movement of pupils in and out of a service school is significant with the process for each pupil taking approximately one hour when starting and leaving
- On leaving, school records must be packed and forwarded to the next school
- The task of completing the annual service and refuge return is enormous due to the disproportionate amount of pupil movement
- Administration staff are involved in, and support, issues around admissions and LA application deadlines
- The School Business Manager manages and monitors the budgetary issues around a midyear restructure, contractual changes etc

(ii) Teaching Assistants

- Teaching assistants (TAs) prepare resources for the pupils on arrival
- TAs support pupils arriving in year with any learning or emotional needs and specialised TA support is often required

(iii) Teachers

- Difficulty is experienced in setting the number of teachers required in some year groups. An extra teacher may be employed for the start of the academic year only for NOR to dramatically drop
- Service pupils frequently arrive with emotional, learning or behavioural difficulties which require significant additional support from the SENCO and other staff.
- Supply cover is required to release teachers for induction and pastoral meetings, in year assessments and target setting for new arrivals, and additional monitoring and evaluation
- Headteacher time involved in service school issues may account for 30% of the workload. This covers meetings, restructuring the school midyear, managing behavioural and pastoral issues and data analysis

Other associated costs

(iv) Other staff costs

- Specialised training
- Staff wellbeing initiatives

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Briefing Note – Error Relating to Secondary School Budgets 2013-14

1. An error has arisen in the calculation of number on roll (NOR) for secondary schools for the allocation of budgets in 2013-14.
2. The calculation of NOR for the funding formula needs to exclude pupils who are funded through the High Needs block on a place plus basis. For secondary schools this means that any pupils in a Resource Base or in receipt of ELP funding must be excluded from the NOR. These pupils are funded on the basis of planned places plus top up funding and therefore do not generate AWPU funding via the mainstream formula.
3. In calculating the number of pupils to be deducted from the NOR ELP pupils without statements of SEN (ie those on School Action +) have not been taken in to account and therefore not deducted from the NOR. As a result schools have been funded for them through the mainstream formula in addition to receiving place funding and top-ups.
4. Budget allocations for the mainstream formula are therefore too high in 22 of the 29 secondary schools in Wiltshire.
5. In previous years, once an error of this sort had been identified, budgets would be recalculated and a revised budget and funding certificate issued to schools.
6. Under the new funding system budget adjustments are not allowed to be made once budgets have been submitted to the EFA in January. The EFA have therefore confirmed that budgets cannot be re-issued but that we have two options to correct the error:
 - a. Adjust in the following year
 - b. Recover the over-payment by adjusting the top-ups to be paid to schools in 2013-14.
7. Budgets have been recalculated to identify the extent of the overpayment for each school and the net impact of that after taking in to account the impact of the MFG or Cap. The full cost of the overpayment is £320,157 however the net amount to be recouped is £86,474.
8. For all but 1 secondary schools it is possible to recover the over payment by adjusting the top up payments payable in 2013-14 for high needs pupils. this would enable the funding for each school to be corrected within the financial year and avoid any knock on impact to 2014-15.

Liz Williams
Head of Finance
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Schools funding formula statements - correction of ELP numbers cap at 0.989

	Previous (declared) position Change in position				Calculation of overpayment and potential top-up adjustment, to recover overpayment of AWPU					
	School population KS3	School population KS4	School population KS3	School population KS4	1 Over/(under)pa yment of AWPU £	2 MFG/Cap adjustment already applied to funding £	3 MFG/Cap adjustment that should have been applied £	Cash recovery due from school (1+2-3)	Top-up funding due to school £	Net Top Up payment to school £
4000 Abbeyfield School	375	313	0	-3	£13,983	-£50,795	-£36,646	-£166	£22,356	£22,522
4001 Wyvern College	194	151	0	0	£0	£128,990	£128,990	£0	£5,825	£5,825
4006 The Trafalgar School at Downton	325	221	1	-1	£841	£91,072	£90,645	£1,268	£24,648	£23,380
4013 MELKSHAM OAK COMMUNITY SCHOOL	645	404	-4	-2	£24,604	-£59,994	-£34,436	-£954	£28,479	£29,433
4070 THE STONEHENGE SCHOOL	361	288	-3	-3	£25,444	£0	£0	£25,444	£41,235	£15,791
4071 AVON VALLEY COLLEGE	316	211	-2	-3	£21,624	£179,506	£195,990	£5,139	£47,878	£42,739
4610 ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL	275	162	0	0	£0	£177,760	£177,760	£0	£14,895	£14,895
5408 BRADON FOREST SCHOOL	557	416	-2	-1	£12,302	-£105,997	-£92,262	-£1,433	£16,001	£17,433
5415 Matravers School	488	364	0	-1	£4,661	-£35,834	-£33,996	£2,823	£43,363	£40,540
LA Maintained School totals	3,536	2,530	-10	-14	£103,459	£324,708	£396,045	£32,122	£244,679	£212,557
6905 The Wellington Academy	474	309	0	-3	£13,983	£173,534	£185,556	£1,961	£19,208	£17,246
6906 Sarum Academy	205	230	7	-2	-£17,420	£0	£0	-£17,420	£491	£17,911
4064 MALMESBURY SCHOOL	602	445	-1	-2	£13,143	-£22,133	-£8,640	-£351	£14,788	£15,139
4066 The Corsham School, A Visual Arts College	634	486	-2	-1	£12,302	-£75,880	-£63,802	£224	£18,938	£18,714
4067 ROYAL WOOTTON BASSETT ACADEMY	812	472	-4	-2	£24,604	£0	£0	£24,604	£14,625	-£9,979
4069 The Clarendon College	447	429	0	0	£0	-£34,595	-£34,595	£0	£16,824	£16,824
4072 Kingdown School	763	517	-1	-2	£13,143	£0	£0	£13,143	£17,624	£4,482
4075 THE JOHN OF GAUNT SCHOOL	690	397	-7	0	£26,743	£0	£0	£26,743	£27,122	£379
4511 St. Edmund's Girls' School	510	310	-1	-1	£8,481	-£59,500	-£50,504	-£514	£10,479	£10,994
4537 St. Laurence School	652	439	-1	0	£3,820	-£46,299	-£42,631	£153	£15,770	£15,617
5400 St Augustines Catholic College	452	316	0	0	£0	£14,859	£14,859	£0	£7,042	£7,042
5402 LAVINGTON SCHOOL	418	276	0	0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£12,333	£12,333
5403 PEWSEY VALE SCHOOL	190	124	-1	-3	£17,804	£146,465	£161,305	£2,963	£11,895	£8,932
5404 SHELDON SCHOOL	814	559	-3	-2	£20,783	-£115,789	-£95,401	£395	£21,229	£20,834
5405 St John's Marlborough	778	532	-1	-2	£13,143	-£28,248	-£14,190	-£916	£10,750	£11,665
5406 THE JOHN BENTLEY SCHOOL	506	408	-2	-1	£12,302	-£20,392	-£7,844	-£246	£10,750	£10,995
5411 DEVIZES SCHOOL	533	395	-2	-1	£12,302	-£17,335	-£8,149	£3,116	£25,374	£22,258
5414 Hardenhuish School	706	530	-6	-4	£41,567	-£71,003	-£29,934	£498	£34,978	£34,480
Academy totals	10,186	7,174	-25	-26	£216,698	-£156,316	£6,030	£54,352	£273,397	£235,869
27 All schools	13,722	9,704	-35	-40	£320,157	£168,392	£402,076	£86,474	£534,900	£448,426

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