

**DfE Consultation – High Needs Block (HNB) National Funding Formula (NFF)
Proposed Changes**

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the DfE consultation on the HNB funding formula for 22-23 and beyond, to share the local authority response and to seek Schools Forum views on the consultation questions.

Main Considerations

2. The link to the DfE consultation can be found here;
<https://consult.education.gov.uk/funding-policy-unit/high-needs-nff-proposed-changes>
3. The consultation closes on 24th March 2021.
4. The high needs National Funding Formula (NFF) calculates funding allocations to local authorities for children and young people in England with complex special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or who require alternative provision (AP).
5. This DfE consultation forms the first stage of a longer-term review of the High Needs NFF. This review will be taken forward following the SEND review and will consider how the distribution of High Needs funding can be improved, to achieve the highest quality support for the most vulnerable children and young people.
6. The HNB funding consultation was not anticipated but appears to be a pre cursor to the SEN review which will then feed into a longer-term review of high needs funding.
7. The interim funding proposals for the 22-23 financial year around changes to the historic funding (Questions 1 & 2) would reduce Wiltshire's HNB funding by £1.2M and an estimated £1.5M. With a overspend in excess of £11M for the 20-21 and a DSG deficit anticipated to be in excess of £19M, this is not acceptable.
8. In question 3 acknowledges use of the historic factor in itself is not ideal and asks for alternative models which, could come into use from the 23-24 financial year onwards.
9. Question 4 seeks views on the impact of the pandemic on use of attainment datasets in the formula.
10. Question 5 seeks detailed views on effective proxies for SEND & AP in the formula.
11. The local authority has prepared a factsheet which will be shared with all interested parties including, senior officers at the local authority, WASSP, WASSH, PHF, school leaders, SENCOS, Wiltshire councillors and MPS. Schools Forum are asked to share and promote colleagues to respond to the consultation.

12. The views of Schools Forum are sought on questions 1-5 however, input is particularly welcomed on questions 3-5.

13. The local authority briefing, and draft response is found at Appendix 1.

Proposals

14. Schools Forum is asked to note the DfE consultation and proposed local authority responses

15. Schools Forum is asked for views on the consultation questions.

16. Schools Forum is asked to promote completing the consultation within their school community.

Report Author: Marie Taylor,

Head of Finance, Children & Education

Tel: 01225 712539

e-mail: marie.taylor@wiltshire.gov.uk