

## **Dedicated Schools Grant Consultations 2023-24**

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To update Schools Forum with the results of the recent Autumn consultations relating to;
  - De-delegation of central services - Maintained Schools only
  - Transfer of funds from Schools Block to High Needs Block – all schools
2. The survey results will help to inform Schools Forum decisions for setting the budgets for the 2023-24 financial year.

### **De-Delegation of Central Services Consultation Responses**

3. Under the “soft formula”, funding should be fully delegated to schools, however certain central services can be ‘de-delegated’ for maintained schools only, with approval of the respective maintained Schools Forum representatives.
4. The funding regulations require that all maintained schools are consulted and given the opportunity to express their preferences for the services which can be de-delegated. The services consulted as part of the 2023-24 consultation process were:
  - Free School Meal Eligibility Checks
  - Access Budget Planning Software Licence (formerly known as HCSS)
  - Trade Union Facilities Costs
  - Maternity Costs
  - Ethnic Minority Achievement Service
  - Traveller Education Service
  - Behaviour Support Service
5. The consultation took place through Right Choice with during the Autumn term to enable schools to consider their responses. The consultations closed on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November 2022. Schools Forum members can see the questions and results of the consultation, detailed in Appendix 1.
6. A total of 21 responses were received, 18 responses from Primary Schools and 3 from Secondary Schools. This compares slightly less favourably than the consultation for the 2022-23 year where 25 responses were received. It is widely known that schools rely on their Schools Forum colleagues to make the appropriate decision on their behalf.
7. The results received were significantly in favour of retaining the de-delegated services in both the Primary and Secondary schools which will inform eligible Schools Forum representatives when voting on the school budgets for 2023-24.

## Transfer of Schools Block to Support the High Needs Block

8. Schools have been consulted during recent years regarding a potential transfer of funds between the Schools Block and the High Needs Block of the DSG. Whilst it has been a generally unwelcome question to ask schools, members of Schools Forum have acted with integrity and in the greater interests of schools and supported a transfer of funds to help with the increasing demand and costs of SEN, within the county.
9. The funding regulations do allow for a transfer of funding between the Schools Block and other blocks within the DSG. In the last four financial years, Schools Forum agreed to the following transfers.
  - 2019-20 - £2.2m which equated to 0.8% of Schools Block funding
  - 2020-21 - £2.065m which equated to 0.7% of Schools Block, which was subsequently reduced to 0.5% by the Secretary of State.
  - 2021-22 - £1.517m which equated to 0.5% of Schools Block funding
  - 2022-23 - £1.628m which equated to 0.5% of Schools Block funding
10. Local Authorities have the flexibility to move up to 0.5% of the Schools Block of funding, with the agreement of its Schools Forum. Anything higher would require approval from the Secretary of State through a disapplication request. It was agreed at previous Schools Forum meetings that a request to transfer greater than 0.5% would not be applied for, due to previous decisions of the Secretary of State, unless the results of the consultation supported a greater transfer.
11. In order for Schools Forum to make a decision about a potential transfer, the autumn consultation was issued through the Right Choice as a survey with a closing date of the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2022 enabling schools to consider their responses.
12. Schools Forum members can see the questions and results of the consultation, detailed in Appendix 2.
13. This consultation was open to all schools, both maintained and academy schools and a total of 21 responses were received, slightly up from the 19 responses received last year and can be broken down as follows.
  - 7 secondary schools
  - 14 primary schools
14. Of the schools that responded, the results can be summarised as below;
  - All 21 respondents supported a transfer of funds from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.
  - Only 1 respondent supported a reduction in Top-Up values.
  - Only 3 respondents supported a 'Hybrid' option of a block transfer and a reduction in Top-Up values.
  - The breakdown of transfer values has been detailed, as below.

<b>Value</b>	<b>Schools</b>	<b>% Support</b>
£0.5m (0.15%)	1	4.8%
£1.0m (0.29%)	3	14.2%
£1.71m (0.5%)	17	81.0%
£2.0m (0.58%)	0	0.0%

15. This data will inform the decision making around the 2023-24 budget for both De-delegation in maintained schools and a transfer of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.

### **Proposals**

16. Schools Forum is asked to note the local consultation responses in relation to the schools delegated budget for 2023-24 financial year.

17. Schools Forum is asked to make 'in principle' decisions in accordance with the consultation responses as below;

- **De-delegation** of central services for Maintained schools
  - FSM – primary and secondary
  - Licences – primary and secondary
  - Trade Union – primary and secondary
  - Maternity – primary and secondary
  - Ethnic Minority Support – primary only
  - Traveller Education – primary only
  - Behaviour Support – primary only
  
- **Block transfer** between Schools Block and the High Needs Block, subject to affordability when school funding for 2023-24 has been confirmed.
  - Transfer of 0.5% of Schools Block to the High Needs Block, the maximum allowable without Secretary of State approval which equates to approximately £1.71m.

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## Appendix 1 – De-Delegation Consultation

### Questions

DfE Heading	Wiltshire Budget	Delegate?	Retain Centrally?
Free school meals eligibility	Free School Meals Eligibility Service		
Licences/subscriptions	HCSS Licence		
Staff costs – supply cover	Trade Union Duties		
	Maternity Costs		
Support for minority ethnic pupils and underachieving groups	Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) – Primary		
	Traveller Education Service – Primary		
Behaviour support services	Primary Behaviour Support Service		

### Results

A summary of the results is set out below.

PRIMARY	FSM	Licences	Trade Union	Maternity	EMAS	Traveller Education	Behaviour Support
Delegate	1	1	0	0	4	3	2
De-delegate	17	17	17	17	14	15	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>

SECONDARY	FSM	Licences	Trade Union	Maternity	EMAS	Traveller Education	Behaviour Support
Delegate	0	0	0	0	N/a	N/a	N/a
De-delegate	3	3	3	3	N/a	N/a	N/a
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>N/a</b>	<b>N/a</b>	<b>N/a</b>

## Appendix 1 – De-Delegation Consultation

### Dedelegated Responses 2023-24

SCHOOL	RESPONSE						
	FSM	HCSS	Trade Union	Maternity	EMAS	Traveller	Behaviour Supp
P1	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
P2	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Delegate	Retain	Retain
P3	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
P4	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
P5	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Delegate	Delegate	Retain
P6	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
P7	Delegate	Delegate	Retain	Retain	Delegate	Delegate	Delegate
P8	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Delegate	Delegate	Delegate
P9	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
P10	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
P11	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
P12	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
P13	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
P14	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
P15	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
P16	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
P17	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
P18	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
S1	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain
S2	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	N/A
S3	Retain	Retain	Retain	Retain	Delegate	Delegate	Delegate

## Appendix 2 – Block Transfer Consultation

Qu 1 – Please enter your DfE Number and school name here:

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Qu 2a – Taking the factors above into account, do you support a transfer of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block?

Yes	
No	

Qu 2b – If you support a transfer, please indicate the amount of transfer:

Value to Transfer	£/Pupil	Please select
£0.0m (0.0%)	£0.00 / pupil	
£0.5m (0.15%)	£7.76 / pupil	
£1.0m (0.29%)	£15.53 / pupil	
£1.71m (0.5%)	£26.63 / pupil	
£2.0m (0.58%)	£31.06 / pupil	

Qu 2c - No transfer of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block for 2023-24. The impact of this would be that Top-Ups and Named Pupil Allowance (NPA) funding levels would have to be reduced to help with cost pressures in the High Needs Block. Do you support a reduction in these rates?

Yes	
No	

Qu 2d - Would you prefer to see a hybrid of the above with a transfer from Schools Block to top up the High Needs Block together with reduced values for top ups and Named Pupil Allowances?

Yes	
No	

Qu 3 - If you do not agree to the transfer of funds or the reduction of top-up funding levels, how else do you suggest that we fill the funding gap that we have for High Needs?

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## Appendix 2 – Block Transfer Consultation

### Consultation Responses

#### High Needs Consultation Responses 2023-24

SCHOOL	Transfer To High Needs		Reduction In Top Ups		Hybrid Option	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	No
P1	✓			✓		✓
P2	✓			✓		✓
P3	✓			✓		✓
P4	✓			✓		✓
P5	✓			✓		✓
P6	✓			✓		✓
P7	✓					
P8	✓			✓		✓
P9	✓			✓		✓
P10	✓			✓		✓
P11	✓			✓	✓	
P12	✓			✓		✓
P13	✓			✓	✓	
P14	✓		✓		✓	
S1	✓			✓		✓
S2	✓			✓		✓
S3	✓			✓		✓
S4	✓			✓		✓
S5	✓			✓		✓
S6	✓			✓		✓
S7	✓			✓		✓

#### Value to Transfer

SCHOOL	Value to Transfer				
	0	0.15%	0.29%	0.50%	0.58%
P1				✓	
P2				✓	
P3				✓	
P4				✓	
P5				✓	
P6				✓	
P7				✓	
P8			✓		
P9			✓		
P10				✓	
P11				✓	
P12				✓	
P13				✓	
P14			✓		
S1				✓	
S2				✓	
S3		✓			
S4				✓	
S5				✓	
S6				✓	
S7				✓	