

## Wiltshire Council

### Schools Forum 12<sup>th</sup> November 2015

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## Delegation of Central Expenditure 2016-17

### Purpose of report

1. To provide details of the responses from maintained schools to the consultation on the delegation of central services. .

### Background

2. In order to give schools greater choice over how to spend their budgets LAs are required to work on the basis that services within the notional Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Block, and the funding for them, should be delegated to schools in the first instance. This means that a number of DSG funded budgets that have previously been retained centrally must now be delegated to schools. There are a number of exceptions to this and there are also a number of budgets that maintained primary and/or secondary schools can agree to de-delegate so that they continue to be provided centrally.
3. De-delegation cannot be applied to amounts delegated to academies or to special schools. Delegation or de-delegation cannot be agreed on an individual school basis for maintained schools but can be agreed by phase so a different outcome can be agreed for primary and secondary schools. Approval for de-delegation is by the relevant phase members of Schools Forum following responses to this consultation.
4. A consultation document was sent out to all maintained schools in the middle of September to seek views on the delegation of central budgets. The results have been analysed and are provided at Appendix 1 to this paper. The budgets/services being consulted on are as follows:
  - Schools contingency
  - Free School Meal Eligibility Service
  - Licences and Subscriptions (including SIMS, HCSS)
  - Trade Union Facilities costs
  - Maternity costs
  - Ethnic Minority Achievement Service
  - Travellers Education Service
  - Behaviour Support Service
5. There are a number of outcomes that could flow from the proposals to delegate the budgets. These include:
  - a. Following consultation with all schools, maintained schools agree that budgets should be de-delegated and retained centrally with services provided to all maintained schools;

- b. Schools agree that budgets should be delegated and schools make/purchase their own provision as appropriate;
  - c. Schools agree that budgets should be delegated and they then cluster together to purchase or deliver services.
6. Under scenario (a) the LA would be able to retain a level of service to provide to maintained schools, this service may be reduced from current levels unless there is also buyback from academies. The size of the service may also need to reduce over time as the number of academies increases.
7. Under scenarios b and c the LA would not be able to continue to deliver a service unless there is sufficient buy back on a traded basis from schools (maintained or academy) to enable retention of sufficient staff. This will be difficult to predict and the LA will need to decide whether it can afford to continue to deliver services centrally on a fully traded basis with full cost recovery. This would require a risk assessment.

## **Responses**

8. The outcomes of the consultation on the delegation of central services are summarised in Appendix 1. Responses were received from 59 schools, which is a 36% response rate, 56 from primary schools and 3 from secondary schools..
9. The majority of maintained schools who responded have indicated that they would prefer budgets to be retained centrally. Budgets will be delegated to academies and special schools in accordance with DfE requirements.
10. It is noted that only 3 of the 7 secondary schools responded to the consultation. Of the 3, one school abstained from answering the preference for the budgets for the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service and Traveller Education Services. The remaining two schools were split on this decision. In previous years it has been agreed that these budgets should be delegated to secondary schools and this was confirmed as the preference for 2015-16.

## **Proposals**

11. That Schools Forum decide on the delegation/de-delegation of budgets for central services within the schools block after consideration of the outcomes of the consultation with maintained schools.