

Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum

6 October 2016

Report from the School Funding Working Group

Purpose of report

1. To report on the meetings of the School Funding Working Group held on 5th July 2016 and 20th September 2016.

Main considerations for School Forum

2. The minutes of the meetings are attached at Appendix 1 and 2.

Key Issues from the Meeting of 5th July 2016

3. In relation to the requests for split site allowances for two schools the working group agreed the following:

Greentrees Primary School

On consideration of the schedule of costs submitted by the school it was agreed that:

- a) The majority of costs were associated with the increase in size of school;
- b) The school had received additional funding from the Growth Fund to reflect the initial increase in pupil numbers
- c) There would therefore be no recommendation to Schools Forum to amend the Wiltshire formula in future years. The formula for 2016-17 is already in place and therefore cannot be changed.
- d) It was further agreed that it would not make sense to propose a change to the local formula whilst details of the proposed national funding formula were still awaited.

Exeter House School

It was agreed that split site funding should not be allocated to Exeter House School for the following reasons:

- a) There is no formal mechanism for the allocation of a split site allowance within the High Needs Block
- b) That the original business case was supported by the LA on the basis that it did not build in any assumption of additional split site funding and was affordable within the estimated place and top up funding allocated to the school

- c) That the proposal does not require the expansion of place numbers at the school. The SEN strategy does not propose an increase in capacity as a result of the use of the John Ivie Centre.
4. A discussion took place on the current mechanism for funding exceptional numbers pupils with statements/EHCPs in schools. It was agreed that a proposal should be brought to the October Schools Forum meeting to amend the exceptional SEN formula to allocate funding to schools where more than 10% of pupils in any year group have a statement/EHCP (excluding pupils in Resource Bases/ELP) with a cap of £100,000 on the amount to be paid in any one year.
5. In relation to the delegation/de-delegation of funding for specific services to maintained schools the group considered a potential timetable for the full delegation of budgets to schools in line with the government requirement for 100% delegation of schools block funding by April 2019. It was noted that no further guidance had been received but it was agreed that work should continue in line with the initial government proposals. The proposed timetable is as follows:

Budget	Proposed Year of Delegation	Notes
Maternity Costs	2017-18	Early delegation but schools will need guidance on the costs they will be expected to meet.
Free School Meals Eligibility Service	2017-18	Would need to be delivered on fully traded basis – expectation that most schools will purchase. Noted that the service will be included within the Traded Services review which will determine final timescale
SIMS Licence	2017-18	Already agreed by Schools Forum
HCSS Licence	2019-20	LA currently requires maintained schools to use HCSS therefore delay delegation
Subscriptions	2017-18	
Trade Union Facilities Costs	2019-20	Concern about the impact on the Wiltshire Collective Agreement if the budget is delegated and schools do not pay in
Schools Contingency Budget	2017-18	
Behaviour Support Services	2018-19	Propose delegate in year 2 – to give momentum to the work on traded services and ensure services not left without a plan. Final timescale will need to fit within outcomes of development of traded services

Key Issues from the Meeting of 20th September

6. In relation to the report on Schools Revenue Balances 2015-16 it was agreed to propose to Schools Forum that Wiltshire Council incorporate the School Financial Management Statement in the Wiltshire Scheme for Financing Schools, including it as part of the compliance process.
7. The working group considered the proposal that the guidance for Enhanced Learning Provision (ELP) in secondary schools should be reviewed and agreed to recommend to Schools Forum that the review should be actioned.

Proposals

8. That Schools Forum notes the minutes of the School Funding Working Group meeting.
 9. That Schools Forum do not agree to amend the current formula for split site allowances for mainstream schools (*paragraph 3*)
 10. That Schools Forum do not agree to allocate a split site allowance from the High Needs Block for Exeter House (*paragraph 3*)
 11. That in considering proposals for the delegation and de-delegation of budgets to maintained schools, Schools Forum note the recommendations of the School Funding Working Group (*paragraph 5*)
 12. That Wiltshire Council incorporate the School Financial Management Statement in the Wiltshire Scheme for Financing Schools, including it as part of the compliance process (*paragraph 6*).
 13. That in considering the proposal to review ELP guidance, Schools Forum note that the Schools Funding Working Group is in support of the proposal (*paragraph 7*)
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