

Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum

10 May 2012

Subject: Schools Funding Reform: Next Steps Towards a Fairer System – Consultation Response

Purpose of Report

1. To inform members of the Schools Forum of the DfE consultation on School Funding Reform and the consultation questions.

Background

2. During 2011 the government issued two consultations on the principles of a new school funding system, including the move towards a national funding formula for the distribution of funding to local authorities from which each LA and Schools Forum would agree a formula to distribute funding locally.
3. On 26 March 2012 the government issued further proposals to explain how it is planned to move forward from April 2013. This document is available on the DfE website via the link below:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1817&external=no&menu=1>

4. Whilst the document mainly consists of proposals to be implemented in April 2013, views are sought on a number of areas where there are different options. Because the consultation element of the document is relatively limited, and LAs and Schools Forums need to be working on the detail of the proposals, the timeframe for the consultation is shorter than normal and the response date is 21 May 2012. The consultation response document is included at Appendix 1 to this report.

Main Considerations

5. As discussed in the previous report on this agenda the government has not proposed the implementation of a national funding formula within the current comprehensive spending review period. The new proposals therefore need to be implemented within the current funding levels received by each LA and this may influence responses to the consultation.
6. Whilst the consultation timeframe is limited it is necessary to do some modelling work on the new local formula in order to formulate a response to some of the questions, for example differential AWPU levels and the appropriate value of the lump sum. The DfE issued details of its modelling tool to assist LAs and Schools Forums in developing their local formula on

Friday 27 April so at the time of writing this report it has not been possible to complete the detailed modelling work that might be required in order to fully respond to the questions. More modelling work will have been completed prior to the date of the meeting and this will inform Schools Forum's discussions on the proposed response.

7. Prior to the meeting further work will also be completed on the issues relating to high needs pupils in order to inform the discussion on those questions.

Proposals

8. To note the consultation questions issued by the DfE included within the document *School Funding Reform: next steps towards a fairer system*.
9. Through discussions at the meeting, incorporating the results of further discussions and modelling work that will be completed prior to the 10 May, agree Schools Forum's response to the DfE consultation.

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29 April 2012

Background Papers

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

None

Appendices

1. School Funding Reform: next steps towards a fairer system – Consultation Response Form
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