

# Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee – 29 November 2018

## Addendum to the report Business Planning 2019-2024 (agenda item 9)

### Report on Schools Budget consultation and the decisions of the Schools Forum

#### 1. Introduction

At its meeting on 1 October 2018, the Schools Forum received three proposals from the local authority relating to the Schools Budget and noted that the local authority proposed to consult schools on the proposals before bringing them back to a special meeting of the Schools Forum at the end of November for further consideration and decisions.

The three proposals are:

1. A proposal to fund some services, previously funded from the Education Services Grant, from the budget shares of maintained primary and secondary schools.
2. A proposal to increase De-delegation from maintained school budgets in order to continue the school improvement (LNI) service in its current form.
3. A proposal to transfer 0.5% of the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.

Consultation documents were issued on 1 November to headteachers and chairs and vice-chairs of governing bodies. The proposals were then presented to and discussed at:

- the termly Director’s meeting with headteachers on 1<sup>st</sup> November;
- an extraordinary meeting of Chairs and Vice-chairs of school governing bodies on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2018;
- the meeting of the Secondary Headteachers Forum on 15<sup>th</sup> November.

Separate consultation documents were sent to maintained schools and Academies/Free Schools, the former covering all three proposals and the latter covering only the third proposal relating to the proposed transfer of funds to the High Needs block. The consultation documents (one on all three proposals for maintained schools only, and one on proposal 3 only, for Academies and Free Schools) can be accessed via the background papers section of the main report: ‘Business Planning 2019-2024’ (agenda item 9).

Only primary and secondary maintained schools were consulted on proposals 1 and 2 (funding ESG services and school improvement de-delegation), in line with DfE guidance. All schools were consulted on proposal 3 (transfer of funds to the High Needs block), again in line with DfE guidance.

Schools were asked to submit one response per school, based on consultation between the headteacher and the chair of governors, for each of the questions relevant to them.

The consultation period was from 1st to 23rd November.

The Schools Forum met on 27th November to consider the outcome of the consultation and the council’s recommendations.

#### Consultation Responses

Individual school responses are summarised in the tables below:

#### **Proposal 1: To fund some services, previously funded from the Education Services Grant, from the budget shares of maintained primary and secondary schools.**

##### *Maintained Primary and Secondary Schools*

Do you agree with the proposal?	Yes	% Yes	No	% No
School responses	7	10%	65	90%

**Proposal 2: To increase De-delegation from maintained school budgets in order to continue the school improvement (LNI) service in its current form.**

*Maintained Primary Schools*

Do you agree with the proposal?	Yes	% Yes	No	% No
School responses	35	51%	34	49%

*Maintained Secondary Schools*

Do you agree with the proposal?	Yes	% Yes	No	% No
School responses	1	25%	3	75%

**Proposal 3: To transfer 0.5% of the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.**

*All Schools*

Do you agree with the proposal?	Yes	% Yes	No	% No
School responses	22	21%	84	79%

In addition to the individual responses to the consultation, headteachers, governors and other stakeholders have made the following submissions to the council. These were shared with the Schools Forum and considered at the meeting on 27 November:

- Appendix 1 – Letter from Barnet Headteachers on the issue of school funding
- Appendix 2 – Paper submitted by the Barnet Primary and Secondary Headteacher Forums, entitled ‘Responses from 53 Barnet schools regarding 2019-20 budget projections and any impact on school resources’.
- Appendix 3 – A letter submitted by a group of Barnet Governors, entitled ‘Key Points and Questions from Governors’, annotated with the council’s responses to the questions raised.
- Appendix 4 – A letter from Barnet Secondary Headteachers Forum to the Secretary of State concerning funding for SEN provision and the council’s proposal transfer 0.5% of the schools block funding in to the high needs block

**Recommendations to the Schools Forum**

**Proposal 1: To fund services, previously funded from the Education Services Grant, from the budget shares of maintained primary and secondary schools.**

**Recommendation 1:** The council recommended that the Schools Forum agrees to charge £1m towards the cost of services, previously funded from the Education Services Grant, to the budget shares of maintained primary and secondary schools at the rate of £32.37 per pupil.

**Voting:** Representatives of Maintained Primary, Secondary and Special Schools and PRUs

The Schools Forum voted *against* this recommendation by 10 votes to 2.

**Proposal 2: To increase de-delegation from maintained school budgets in order to continue the school improvement (LNI) service in its current form.**

**Recommendation 2a) Maintained Primary Schools**

In order to increase the amount of de-delegated funding for the school improvement service from £101,000 to £310,000, the council recommended that the Schools Forum agrees to de-delegate funding for 'additional school improvement provision' (provision beyond any that is funded from the DfE's school improvement grant) at a rate of £11.28 per Primary pupil.

**Voting:** Representatives of Maintained Primary Schools

The Schools Forum voted *for* this recommendation by 8 votes to 2.

**Recommendation 2b) Maintained Secondary Schools**

In order to increase the amount of de-delegated funding for the school improvement service from £101,000 to £310,000, the council recommended that the Schools Forum agrees to de-delegate funding for 'additional school improvement provision' (provision beyond any that is funded from the DfE's school improvement grant) at a rate of £5.83 per Secondary pupil.

**Voting:** Representatives of Maintained Secondary Schools

The Schools Forum voted *for* this recommendation by 1 vote to 0.

**Proposal 3: To transfer 0.5% of the Schools Block funding to the High Needs Block in 2019-20**

Recommendation 3: **The council recommended that the Schools Forum agrees to transfer 0.5% of the Schools Block (£1.26m) to the High Needs Block.**

**Voting:** All members of the Schools Forum.

The Schools Forum voted *against* this recommendation by 12 votes to 8.

**Next steps**

Proposal 2 has been agreed by Schools Forum and will not be included in the schools budget as part of the budget setting process.

As set out in section 6.8.8 of the main report, 'Business Planning 2019-2024' (agenda item 9), if the Schools Forum does not support the council's recommendations on Proposals 1 and 3, and the council wishes to go ahead with the proposals, it may refer either or both proposals to the Secretary of State for a decision.

**Recommendation**

As Schools Forum did not support either proposal 1 or proposal 3, as set out in section 6.8.8 of this report, at its meeting on 27th November, the Committee give delegated authority to the Strategic Director, Children and Young People to submit an application to the Secretary of State for a decision, following discussion with the Chairman of the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee.