

**FAIR FUNDING CONSULTATION OUTCOMES 2020-21**  
**WORCESTERSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM ISSUES, DECISIONS AND**  
**RECOMMENDATIONS SEPTEMBER AND NOVEMBER 2019**

As the statutory consultation body for schools funding issues and local schools' formula development, the Worcestershire Schools Forum (WSF) met to receive and discuss the national Fair Funding Policy Direction and Consultation Issues as follows: -

- On 26 September 2019 for the overall outcomes of the Department for Education (DfE) policy direction for the National Funding Formula (NFF) and for consideration of potential local consultation issues for 2020-21.
- On 28 November 2019 for the outcomes of the local consultation issues launched on 1 October 2019.

The main areas discussed are detailed in the following sections.

**CONSULTATION ISSUES CONSIDERED AT THE WORCESTERSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM ON 26 SEPTEMBER 2019**

The WSF considered and debated the Government's school funding and NFF policy announcements and the WCC draft consultation document and questionnaire as required.

The WSF approved the draft consultation and questionnaire including details on a proposal for the Local Schools Funding Formula (LSFF) for 2020-21, other consultation matters and for its circulation to all schools and other consultees.

In doing this the WSF noted with LSFF the need for stability so supported the continuation of a LSFF based upon the NFF parameters Year 3 and that school budget allocations will differ between 2019-20 and 2020-21 due to: -

- The MFG and capping calculation for 2020-21 having to be based upon the revised NFF parameters.
- Data not yet available from the October 2019 and other 2019 DfE data sets, including prior years, which must be used for the 2020-21 allocations.
- The final Schools Block Dedicated Schools Grant quantum for 2020-21, which will not be notified by the DfE until late December 2019.
- The need to incorporate the mandatory DfE sector Minimum Funding Levels (MFLs) in the LSFF.

**CONSULTATION OUTCOMES CONSIDERED AT THE WORCESTERSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM ON 28 NOVEMBER 2019**

The WSF considered the issues for:

- The LSFF for 2020-21 to continue to be based as far as is practicable and affordable on the DfE NFF Year 3 parameter.
- The consultation outcomes for each of the other consultation questions.
- Summaries of the key consultation issues raised by schools.
- The recommended actions as detailed in this report paragraphs 33 to 43 and accompanying **Appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5**.

Overall, the WSF were disappointed by the lower response rate of 19% against the 42% in the November 2017 local consultation. The WSF noted how this varied by sector and it was highest in the secondary sector and lowest in the primary sector and commented there would be need for further engagement in that sector. They further noted the reduced level was a consequence of stability proposed for the LSFF and no significant changes to the other statutory matters.

#### **IN TERMS OF THE DETAILED CONSULTATION ISSUES THE WSF COMMENTED AS FOLLOWS: -**

The WSF considered the summary of the overall consultation responses as detailed in **Appendix 2** of this report.

#### **Local Schools Funding Formula (LSFF) 2020-21**

The WSF further considered and discussed all the summaries of all the main issues made by schools on the LSFF as detailed in **Appendix 3** of this report.

The WSF noted as follows:

- The proposal by the DfE for mandatory Minimum Funding Levels (MFLS) in LAs LSFF.
- Despite the LSFF being based upon the DfE NFF there is still not enough resource in the school funding system to support significant demands and cost pressures.

The WSF respected the consultation outcomes from schools across all phases and concluded overall that this gave credence to continuing with the DfEs NFF based model in 2020-21.

The WSF **resolved to endorse** this approach for the LSFF in 2020-21 and for it to continue as far as is affordable and practicable to using the DfE Year 3 NFF parameters using the DfE required data sets and formula factors as detailed in paragraph 35 of this report, noting the potential impact of this on individual school allocations discussed at its previous meetings.

In doing this the WSF **noted** the requirements of the NFF as the LSFF in 2020-21 as far as affordable and practicable including the effect of:

- The actual schools block DSG allocated.
- The mandatory sector Minimum Funding Levels (MFLs) per pupil.
- The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) of between +0.5% and +1.84% per pupil in each year.
- The potential need for a relevant cap per pupil yet to be determined for affordability purposes.

The WSF **further noted** the estimated LSFF NFF units of resource and there may be a need for a capping % yet to be determined in January 2020, as required, to take account of:

- October 2019 census data impact and requirements including use of estimated data for changes in school age ranges if required.
- Other DfE prescribed 2019 data changes including those from prior years.

- The final Schools Block Dedicated Schools Grant for 2020-21.
- Statutory requirements relating to the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG)/Capping and the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations.

As in previous years the WSF noted the LSFF model for 2020-21 will **not** include factors for:

- Pupil Mobility – although part of the NFF not deemed to be a significant issue.
- Looked After Children (LAC) – not part of the NFF and previous funded reflected in the previous increase in the separate LAC Pupil Premium Grant.
- Higher Teacher Costs – only applies to London fringe Local Authorities.

### **Consultation Question 2a) – Potential to Transfer Schools Block Funding to Support High Needs Budget Pressures**

The WSF noted and discussed the consultation outcomes and the detailed responses made by a number of schools regarding the potential to transfer Schools Block funding to High Needs as detailed in **Appendix 4** of this report.

The WSF considered its statutory responsibility in making a decision on the proposed transfer.

In line with the Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2012, the Worcestershire Schools Forum **resolved NOT to approve** any transfer of funding from the Schools Block to support High Needs budget pressures.

### **Consultation Question 3 – Delegation and De-delegation of Centrally Retained Dedicated Schools Grant Services for Maintained Schools**

The WSF considered its statutory responsibilities in making decisions on the delegation or de-delegation of services for maintained schools only currently centrally retained in the Dedicated Schools Grant.

In line with the Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2012, the WSF maintained school members by phase considered these areas. By phase these WSF members **resolved to approve** to either delegate or de-delegate these areas in 2020-21 as detailed in this report in paragraphs 38 to 40 together with the method of delegation or de-delegation proposed.

### **Consultation Question 4 – Centrally Retained Dedicated Schools Grant Services**

The WSF also considered its statutory responsibilities in making decisions on other centrally retained services for all schools retained in the Dedicated Schools Grant.

The WSF noted the outcomes of the consultation results which supported continued central retention overall. It was felt there needed to be ongoing dialogue and debate with WCC on the issues raised.

In line with the Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2012, the WSF **resolved to approve** the continued central retention in 2020-21 of the centrally retained services as detailed either limited to the 2017-18 budget level or as prescribed by the DfE (indicative budgets are shown either limited to previous year levels or **estimated** funding subject to final clarification and change) as detailed in this report paragraph 41 for:

- Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) and Music Publishers Association (MPA) licences (subject to DfE prescription) – £0.41m **estimated**.
- Contributions to Combined Services – the Early Intervention Family Support (EIFS) service budget – £1.20m **actual** (reflecting the 2019-20 amount being reduced by 20% because of the DfE change to the Central Services Schools Block DSG).
- Co-ordinated admissions scheme – £0.60m **actual**.
- Servicing of the Schools Forum – £0.06m **actual**.
- Services previously funded by the retained rate of the Education Services Grant – £1.26m **actual**.

### **Overall**

In terms of all their deliberations and decisions above, the WSF **resolved** that these be communicated to the Worcestershire County Council Cabinet as required.