

**FAIR FUNDING CONSULTATION OUTCOMES 2016-17**  
**WORCESTERSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM (WSF) ISSUES**  
**SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER 2015**

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

- On 9 September 2014 for the outcomes of the DfE policy direction and for consideration of potential local consultation issues for 2016-17; and
- On 6 October for the outcomes of the local consultation issues launched on 10 September 2015.

The main areas discussed are detailed in the following sections.

**SEPTEMBER 2015 DRAFT CONSULTATION ISSUES CONSIDERED AT THE WSF ON 9 SEPTEMBER 2015**

The WSF considered and debated the draft consultation document and questionnaire as required.

The WSF approved the draft consultation and questionnaire including no change **i.e. stability for the local schools funding formula for 2016-17** and for its circulation to all schools.

In doing this the WSF noted even with a no change option individual school budget allocations will differ between 2015-16 and 2016-17 due to: -

- The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) baseline having to roll forward with its start point being the 2015-16 budget.
- Data not yet available from the October 2015 census and other 2015 DfE data sets that have to be used for the 2016-17 allocations.
- The revised MFG and capping calculation for 2016-17 having to be based upon this revised data.
- The final Schools Block DSG quantum for 2016-17 which will not be notified by the DfE until late December 2015
- The potential removal of the additional £1.8m funding allocated in 2015-16 from central DSG reserves – the LA has requested Secretary of State permission to allocate a further £1.8m across all schools for 2016-17 to protect the current 2015-16 base budget position.

**SEPTEMBER 2015 CONSULTATION OUTCOMES CONSIDERED AT THE WSF ON 6 OCTOBER 2015**

The WSF considered the issues for: -

- Stability in the local schools funding formula in 2016/17.
- The consultation outcomes for each of the 5 consultation questions.
- Summaries of the key consultation issues raised by schools
- The recommended actions as detailed in this report paragraphs 42 to 54 and accompanying Appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Overall, the WSF were disappointed by the low level of responses (11%) compared to the previous year (48%), particularly in the primary sector and noted the variations between the sectors. However, the WSF concluded this was a consequence of policy for stability in 2016/17.

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

### **Local Schools Funding Formula 2016-17**

The WSF re-iterated their support for stability and noted it had been supported by the majority of schools responding. The WSF noted and discussed all the summaries of all the main issues made by schools.

The WSF unanimously resolved to approve formula stability in 2016-17 and for no formula change from 2015-16 again noting the impact of this on individual school allocations discussed at its 6 September meeting.

The WSF were supportive of the continuation of the existing formula factors and units of resource for 2016-17 and unanimously resolved to approve the model, using the DfE required data sets and formula factors as detailed in paragraphs 44 of this report.

In doing this the WSF noted the estimated formula units of resource and capping % may need to be adjusted in January 2016, as required, to take account of:

- October 2015 census data impact and requirements including use of estimated data for changes in school age ranges if required.
- Other DfE prescribed data changes including those from prior years.
- The final Schools Block DSG for 2016-17.
- Statutory requirements relating to the MFG and/or the School and Early Years Finance Regulations.
- Whether the LA is able to include another £1.8m of DSG reserve in the local funding formula for 2016-17.

### **Consultation Question 1 – Do you support increasing the PFI subsidy factor in the local schools formula to support a reduction in the amount needing to be contributed by the 7 relevant schools?**

The WSF noted the outcomes of the consultation and that schools were not supportive of increasing the PFI subsidy factor. The WSF resolved to approve the continuation in 2016/17 of the existing already approved PFI factor.

### **Consultation Question 2 – Do you support the proposed change in the definition for Notional SEN for 2016-17?**

The WSF noted the outcomes of the consultation which generally supported the change in definition. The WSF resolved to approve the changes for 2016-17 to the definition for Schools Block Notional SEN as detailed [AWPU 5%, Deprivation FSM 50%, Deprivation IDACI 100%, Low Prior Attainment (LPA) 100% and Lump Sum 10%].

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

The WSF considered its statutory responsibilities in making decisions on the delegation or de-delegation of services currently centrally retained in the DSG.

In line with the Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2012, the WSF maintained school members by phase considered these areas. By phase these WSF members unanimously resolved to approve to either delegate or de-delegate these areas as detailed in this report paragraphs 48 to 50 together with the method of delegation or de-delegation proposed.

### **Consultation Question 4 – Centrally Retained DSG Services**

The WSF also considered its statutory responsibilities in making decisions on other centrally retained DSG services.

The WSF unanimously resolved to approve the continued central retention of the centrally retained services in 2016-17 as detailed in this report paragraph 51 to the same as those retained in 2015-16 limited to the 2015-16 budget level, further DfE prescription or local decision (indicative budgets are shown) for: -

- Funding for significant pre-16 pupil growth to meet basic need and to enable all schools to meet the infant class size requirement i.e. pupil growth fund – £0.5m.
- Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) and Music Publishers Association (MPA) licences – subject to DfE prescription.
- Contributions to Combined Services – the Early Intervention Family Support (EIFS) service budget – £1.5m.
- Capital Expenditure Funded from Revenue (CERA) – £1.030m.
- Termination of Employment/Redundancy Costs – £0.2m.
- Co-ordinated admissions scheme – £0.846m.
- Servicing of the Schools Forum – £0.055m.
- Carbon Reduction Commitment – subject to DfE top slice from DSG.

### **Consultation Question 5 – The Falling Rolls Fund (FRF)**

The WSF noted the consultation outcomes and the varied responses to the issues.

However in doing this, the WSF requested the LA review this position as demographic changes begin to feed through the system and/or the DfE change the parameters with a view to consulting on its potential for re-introduction in future years.

The WSF resolved to approve option 1 in regard to Falling Rolls Fund to FRF to no longer operate a Falling Rolls Fund from 2016-17.

### **Overall**

In terms of all these decisions the WSF resolved that these be communicated to the Worcestershire County Council Cabinet as required.