

Schools Forum meeting 16 January 2013

Report on Feedback from Consultation on Centrally Retained Funding, De-delegation and Pooled Services

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1. Introduction:

Since November 2011 Schools Forum and Schools have been informed about the new school funding arrangements being introduced by the DFE for 2013-14. These arrangements were finalised in July 2012. As previously advised to schools, central funding will be split over three funding blocks called the Schools Block, the Early Years Block and the High Needs Block. School forum held on 17 October was informed that within the Schools Block the new regulations allow certain functions to be retained centrally for the benefit of schools. There are three groups of functions that can be retained centrally and they all need approval from Schools Forum. Consultation documents were sent out to head teachers and governors on 20 November 2012. The deadline for responses was 20th of December 2012.

2. Consultation Feedback:

Two consultation documents were sent out to each school, one for head teachers and one for the chair of governors. There was individual responses from 21 out of the 55 schools.

The issues were discussed at the primary area partnerships in December and their feedback is attached as Appendix A.

At the time of writing this report the Secondary Head group had yet to meet. A paper will be provided after their meeting on Thursday 10th January.

Table 1: Analysis of schools participation in the consultation

Sector	Number of schools in sector	% of schools within the sector that responded	Number of responses received
Infant, Junior & Primary	43	34%	15
Secondary	10	40%	4
All Through	2	100%	2
Total	55	38%	21

3. Centrally Retained Funding

Centrally retained funding has of two groups. The first group consists of:

- Growth funding for significant pre-16 growth
- Equal pay back pay
- Places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils.

For these three functions, the Local Authority requires the approval of Schools Forum on the amount to be retained before delegation of funding occurs. Approval has already been agreed on the above in September 2012.

Consultation was on the second group which consists of the following

Function	Explanation
Admissions and Appeals service	This is a local authority function under S85a of the 1998 Act (as inserted by s46 2002 Act
Servicing Schools Forum	This is local authority function under section 47a of the 1998 Act(addition under section 43 of the Education Act 2002)
Termination of Employment Costs	This is expenditure in respect of premature retirement costs, or for the purposes of securing the resignation of any person employed in a school where there are consequential savings to the schools budget. This is in respect of commitments from 2012-13 and for 2013-14 only.
Carbon Reduction Commitment-Allowances	All maintained schools and academies are required to participate in the Carbon Reduction Commitment Scheme.
Capital Expenditure Funded from Revenue	This relates to capital expenditure which an authority expects to charge to a revenue account of the authority within the meaning of section 22 of the Local Government Act 2003.

Table 2: Summaries the responses received from the schools for Centrally Retained Functions

<i>Centrally Retained Functions</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Total</i>
Admissions and Appeals service	13	62%	0	6	2	21
Servicing Schools Forum	13	62%	0	8	0	21
Termination of Employment Costs	12	57%	1	8	0	21
Carbon Reduction Commitment	10	48%	2	8	1	21
Capital Expenditure Funded from Revenue	11	52%	0	9	1	21

Comments from the consultation:

From the responses received there is a common understanding among schools that Admission and appeals service needs to be managed centrally. However there are concerns on the effective running of the service.

One of the schools requested more information on Carbon Reduction Commitment.

Conclusion:

Schools Forum is asked to note that these services will be centrally retained.

4. De-Delegation Budgets

De-delegation applies to following functions:

Function	Explanation
Contingencies Basic	This includes support for schools in financial difficulty, new/closing/amalgamating schools, and closing school deficits. It is proposed to de-delegated a sum of £300,000 from maintained schools budgets to establish a General Contingency Budget
Contingencies -Additional	An additional sum above £300,000 can be de delegated. Please advise on your preferred option
Occupational Health	The existing contracts with providers expire in June 2014. The LA needs the budget to be de delegated to meet its contractual obligations until 2014 . This budget will be delegated to schools thereafter.
Trade Union Staff costs	This is the local agreement as presented to Schools Forum held in October 2012. This is proposed to be de-delegated from maintained schools budgets and continue to allow schools access to local NUT ,NASS and Unison officers .

Table 3: Summaries the responses received from the schools for De-delegated Functions

Functions	Agree	%	Disagree	N/A	Comment	Total
Contingencies Basic	12	57%	1	5	3	21
Contingencies -Additional	4	19%	9	6	2	21
Occupational Health	12	57%	2	6	1	21
Trade Union Staff costs	2	10%	13	4	2	21

Comments from the consultation:

A majority of the schools agreed that a minimum sum of £300,000 be held for contingency . If underspends arose then these would be returned back to school. The additional contingency, was not accepted.

From the feedback received 12 schools out of 21 were of the opinion that Occupational Health should be De delegated . However in the case of Trade Union Facility time this proposal was not accepted by 13 of the 21 responses . The key feedback was that trade union costs should be met from union member subscriptions.

Recommendation:

Primary and Secondary representatives are required to vote and approve the following:

Contingency budget of £300,000

Occupational Health budget approved up to June 2014.

Primary and Secondary representative are required to vote on the Trade Union Facility Time Costs.

Please note that academy representatives are excluded from voting on this matter.

5. EXPENDITURE TO BE POOLED

The LA introduced pooling arrangements for a number of essential support services to schools where by schools would receive a service free at the point of use. The arrangements reduced the bureaucracy between schools and the LA in particular the need for schools to raise Purchase orders and the LA to invoice schools. Any underspends on pooled services are repaid to schools.

Under the new school funding arrangements individual schools consent is required to continue with pooling arrangements. Primary schools area boards and secondary heads were invited to collectively decide on pooling arrangements. This feed back is is shown in Appendix A.

Function	Phases	Recommendation
Contribution to Primary and Secondary PRUs	ALL SCHOOLS	Pooling from maintained schools is £620,000 and invoicing to academies is £60,000. It is proposed to continue with the existing pooling arrangements however the sum will be £980,000. Schools will not need to pool at all for their Alternative Provision Services and saving in this service will partly offset the increase from £620,000 to £980,000.
Speech and Language Therapy	ALL SCHOOLS	The speech and language education project targets children with transient SLCN to help them catch up, and for children with persistent SLCN it liaises closely with the community SLT team responsible for the caseload. It is proposed to continue with the existing pooling arrangements.
Strategic Framework Agreement	ALL SCHOOLS	Pooled funding supports the following services: financial advice, legal advice and human resources advice, advice for governing bodies on their corporate responsibilities, procurement, aspects of property management by schools.
School Lunch Grant	ALL Schools participating in the WFC SLA	In 2008, the Government introduced the School Lunch Grant to support increasing school lunch take-up by helping to keep the direct cost of a school lunch down. In 2013-14, this funding is already delegated to schools as required by the DFE. Schools can use this funding as they want in order to reduce the price of a school meal. It is proposed to continue with the existing pooling arrangements for schools participating in the Waltham Forest Catering (WFC) SLA
Primary Area Coordinator	PRIMARY	The funding supports one FTE and the terms of reference were agreed by the Waltham Forest Primary Leaders Association on 5 October 2012 for 2012-13. It is proposed to continue with the existing pooling arrangements.
Educational Psychology	PRIMARY	The Educational Psychology Service within Waltham Forest provides a comprehensive range of services to both Local Authority commissioners and settings, schools, academies and others. Primary ONLY
Extended Schools	PRIMARY & SECONDARY	This includes; direct support to children with additional needs and their families via the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), support to educational and other services across the borough working within the CAF multi agency framework.

Practical Learning	SECONDARY	This aims to make sure every young person has a robust and rigorous education offer that will enable them to reach full potential. It covers young people from 16 to 25, SEN up to 25, vulnerable – CIC offender, TP, mainstream, gifted and talented and NEET.
14-19 Area Board	SECONDARY	This is also known as the 14-16 collaboration fund and was set up in 2008. The aim of fund is to assist the development of enhanced provision of education, training and work based learning for students aged 14-16 in Waltham Forest. It is proposed to continue with the existing pooling arrangements.

Table 4: Summary of responses received from individual schools for Pooled Functions

<i>Function</i>	<i>Phases</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>No Comment</i>
Strategic Framework Agreement	All	13	62%	0	8
Contribution to PRUs	All schools	18	86%	0	3
Speech and Language Therapy	All schools	18	86%	0	3
School Lunch Grant	School with WFC SLA	12	57%	2	7
Primary Area Coordinator	Primary	14	82%	1	2
Educational Psychology	Primary	16	94%	0	1
Extended School	Primary	10	59%	4	3
14-19 Area Board	Secondary	4	67%	0	2
Practical Learning	Secondary	1	17%	0	5

Recommendations:

1. Schools Forum is asked to note that these services will centrally retained.

2. Primary and Secondary representatives are required to vote and approve the following:

Contingency budget of £300,000 held for all schools

Occupational Health budget approved up to June 2014.

Primary and Secondary representatives are required to vote on the Trade Union Facility Time Costs.

Please note that academy representatives are excluded from voting on this matter.

3. To note the recommendations by primary and secondary schools on pooled functions.