

Schools Forum 17th October 2012

Consultation on De-delegated Funding and Pooling arrangements For 2013-14 For Maintained Schools– For Action

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Introduction:

This is the second of two reports to Schools Forum on the changes affecting Central Expenditure and Pooled Budgets following new regulations being introduced for 2013-14. This report examines the next stage and seeks Schools Forum approval on Central Expenditure and Pooling arrangements the LA requests to maintain into 2013-14.

The items listed below are eligible for de-delegation and Pooling.

De-Delegation Budgets

- Contingencies(including support for schools in financial difficulty, new/closing/amalgamating schools, closing school deficits)
- Occupational Health
- Trade Union staff costs

Pooled Budgets

- Pupil Referral Units
- Alternative provision
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Primary Area Coordinator
- 14-19 Area Board
- School Lunch Grant
- Education Psychology
- Practical Learning
- Strategic Framework Agreement
- Extended Schools

Maintained schools and/or academies can pool resources to purchase any other service from the LA. Schools Forum received a report on 19 September on the High Needs Block, which included sections on the Pupil Referral Units and Alternative Provision. The implications of those proposals will be considered below in the section on pooling. It is proposed to report on the consultation feedback at Schools Forum due to be held on 5 December 2012.

Central Expenditure in 2012/13

Table 1 below shows the budget for central items that are being proposed for de-delegation, as published under Section 251. The figures include apportioned overheads.

Table 1: Central Expenditure Budgets for functions proposed for De-Delegation in 2012-13

Function	Expenditure
	£(000)
Trade Unions	204
Occupational Health	111
Support for Schools in Financial Difficulty	250
LMS Contingency	1,350
Total	1,915

Table 2 below provides a further breakdown of budget for LMS contingency

Table 2: LMS Contingency Budgets for 2012-13

Function	Total
	£(000)
LMS contingency-General	600
LMS contingency-Early Years new reception classes	200
LMS contingency-Early Years	400
LMS contingency for rates	150
Total	1,350

Changes in numbers will be dealt with by the growth fund

Trade Unions: The NUT are presenting a separate paper on this meeting's agenda for consideration by the Schools Forum to support de-delegation

Occupational Health: The current contract expires in June 2014. It is made up of two elements: Medigold provide occupational health services and Workplace Options provide employee assistance services. The occupational health service assesses the fitness for work of staff referred by schools. They give advice on fitness and on adjustments that may need to be provided. They also assess workplaces and workstations for staff with specialist needs; they provide proactive health promotion events like blood pressure monitoring and other services such as flu clinics. Workplace options provide a 24 hour advice and counselling service for staff who may be experiencing difficulties at work or in their personal lives. They also provide debt counselling and advice on local services. Both these services assist schools in taking care of staff through ensuring their fitness for work and helping staff to either remain in work or return to work. The LA is tied into the contract until June 2014, when the provision can be reviewed. The LA will recommend that this budget is de-delegated until June 2014, thereafter the budget will be returned to schools or the contract renewed on behalf of schools, should that be the decision.

Support for Schools in Financial Difficulty and LMS Contingency: The working arrangements issued by the DfE allow contingencies to be retained centrally for maintained schools for a limited range of circumstances:

- Exceptional unforeseen cost which it would be unreasonable to expect governing bodies to meet
- Schools in financial difficulty
- Additional costs relating to new, reorganised or closing schools.

Re-organisation due to growth in size is covered by the Growth Fund of £2.85 million agreed by Schools Forum in September 2012. The Local Authority is asking Schools Forum whether or not any funding should be de-delegated from maintained schools to meet any of the above circumstances which may occur in a maintained school. If the Local Authority does not have permission from the Schools Block to retain funding for these purposes, then the Local Authority does not have the power to make any such payments to a maintained school.

Pooled Expenditure in 2012/13

Table 3 below shows pooling as at 1 April 2012, adjusted for the four academies that were in existence at the start of the financial year.

Table 3: Pooled Budgets for 2012-13

Function	Total
	£(000)
Alternative Provision	224
Contribution to Primary and Secondary PRUs	620
Speech and Language Therapy	301
Primary Area Coordinator	42
14-19 Area Board	398
School Lunch Grant-Nursery, Primary and Secondary	248
School Lunch Grant- Special Schools	27
Educational Psychology	214
Practical Learning	123
Strategic Framework Agreement	400
Extended Schools	424
Total	3,021

Alternative Provision: Excluding the secondary academy, the maintained secondary schools pooled £224,000. Placement in Alternative provision commissioned through the LA on behalf of schools is expected to remain free at the point of delivery to schools. If schools arrange their own Alternative provision with other providers they will have to pay the full commissioning fee charged by that organisation. There is financial advantage therefore for schools and academies to negotiate as a group with the LA to ensure contractors commissioned by the local authority cover all local needs. This service employs 2.89 FTEs.

Contribution to Primary and Secondary PRUs: Pooling from maintained schools is £620,000 and invoicing to academies is £60,000. As mentioned in the report to School Forum on 19 September 2012, Julian Lee will be discussing with primary and secondary schools the option of collectively de-delegating funding, and to do so by pooling rather than invoicing on a school by school basis and therefore managing collective risk. It is proposed that this arrangement will be for one year only with a review built in before April 2014. This will remove uncertainty of funding for the PRU in its first year as a school. Under the new arrangements schools and academies will need to contribute £1,274,000 to for the PRUs to break even, which is an increase of £594,000. This is the direct result of the School Funding Reform. It is proposed to transfer £594,000 from the High Needs block to schools and academies as an additional SEN payment. This will be added to existing pooling and fee income of £680,000, which will match the commissioning fee income of the PRU's of £1,274,000. The service currently employs 56.57 FTEs.

Speech and Language Therapy: 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. The team is made up of 6 speech and language therapists who work in all Waltham Forest maintained schools targeting children from Reception to Year 9. The delivery model includes:

- supporting schools to identify SLCN by classroom observations, screening assessments and teacher and learning support assistant drop-in sessions;
- training school-based support staff to run language stimulation groups providing ideas and resources and revisiting to observe groups and to offer further advice if needed;
- running workshops for staff on specific areas of SLCN; and
- working with parents to raise their awareness of how they can support their children's speech and language development.

There is a current pooling arrangement of £301k.

Primary Area Coordinator: 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. The job purpose of the post holder covers:

- To act on behalf of, and under the direction of, the Area Partnership Leads.
- To provide an effective co-ordinated service for each area partnership and to ensure cohesion across each of the groups, provide support and facilitation for key activities across the Area Partnerships.
- To co-ordinate key dates for events and ensure information dissemination as appropriate, guaranteeing contact leads and fundamental personnel are informed of important decisions and appropriate actions as necessary.
- To secure availability of significant personnel and provide key documentation at appropriate meetings as directed.

- To act as a single point of contact for external services and partnerships that impact on schools within the area partnership consortium.
- To identify and develop partnerships across area groups and schools, to enhance and encompass funding and development opportunities in line with value for money and best practice approach.
- Assist with cohesion between collaborative partnerships, federations and identified networks.
- To self-manage own targets and deadlines effectively, to be responsible for identifying own professional development and be involved in a target driven performance management process.
- To provide appropriate level of support to schools within each area partnership identified as necessary within the salary scale and skills of the post holder, as directed by the key stakeholders.

The purpose of the group includes:

- To effect best practice in all aspects of School Leadership, through strong collaborative processes, to provide effective and creative system-wide leadership across all Waltham Forest primary education bases.
- Establish and maintain links with appropriate primary education bases, early years settings, and secondary and all through school settings.
- Through inclusive principles and practice, to ensure that the diversity of schools, their governance arrangements and local characteristics, are honoured individually and developed strategically
- Through ensuring a collective voice in the local, and where appropriate, regional and national agenda, the strategic direction of children's services policies are challenged, shaped and promoted.

14-19 Area Board: 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. The first objective is to ensure that students are able to be developed according to their needs. Also that there is equity of provision so that students have the same opportunity for learning.

The funds may be used for:

- Meeting transport costs for students moving between colleges
- The costs of specialist teachers
- The additional cost of work based learning or alternative provision
- Meeting administrative and professional support costs

School Lunch Pooling for Nursery, Primary, Secondary and Special Schools: 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 2011, schools using Waltham Forest Catering (WFC) as their school meals provider made a decision to pool their allocation of this grant, which has been used by WFC to reduce service costs, helping to keep the cost of a school meal down. WFC has held its Unit Charge per meal over the last 2 years despite rising costs, from which all participating schools have benefited equally. School meal take-up in WFC catered schools has continued to increase steadily – 9% overall since 2008-09.

The current pooling amount for 2012-13 is £275,000. 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 charged to parents.

Educational Psychology: The Educational Psychology Service within Waltham Forest provides a comprehensive range of services to both Local Authority commissioners and settings, schools, academies and others. It employs 11.73 FTEs. A four sphere model can be used to conceptualise this deployment and funding / work streams.

Sphere 1 Core Statutory Duties (Local Authority Funded)

- (e.g., Appendix D's, Tribunal related work, commissions from SEN Team etc.) – a Business Case is currently being made to increase this core amount as commission has been exceeded over the last 2 years.

Sphere 2 DSG Traded and Other Traded Services

- DSG Traded Visits to schools – the DSG pooled funding has been used to provide set visits to all schools who are part of the DSG arrangement (using a simple formula – such as size of school and level of need). This has meant that the cost to individual schools has come in under the current 'market rate' for EPs in London and every school gets a package of visits which they use to support a range of individual group and systems issues with their respective schools in consultation with their link EP. The service is strengthening relationships with schools so each school has a named EP who is their main link.
- Also DSG money has been used to commission EP Early Years Support (the various outcomes of this will be presented at the December Meeting of Schools Forum). This is working well and quantitative data on impact of interventions is very positive.
- Additional Traded Visits to Schools, including DSG schools who want to buy more visits, Academies, Special and Secondary and other. Schools are encouraged to pool together and if they do we give a discount of the standard Service Level Contract.

Sphere 3 Specialist Services (Traded)

- Traded range of services – family input, counselling (CBT), research etc.

Sphere 4 Community Action (Free)

- Crisis Support provided 'free' to all schools in the borough.
- Parent Drop ins – provided free to all parents / carers in the borough in three community languages.

Practical Learning: 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 NEET. It aims to match provision with needs and demands across all schools and providers. It employs 2 FTEs.

Also provides a service to review performance of schools under the headings of:

- Careers Service
- Schools SLT
- Alternative Provision
- SEN

For Post 16, it offers assistance in selecting:

- WBL provider
- School 6th Forms
- Sixth Form colleges
- FE Colleges
- Apprenticeships
- Employment with training

For Post 18, there is assistance for:

- Entering University
- Entering Higher Apprenticeship
- Gaining Employment
- Securing Internships

For Post 19:

- Apprenticeships (more interviews)
- Work – Job Centre Plus (work ready)
- Monitoring and Evaluation

- Brokerage of placement internship

Strategic Framework Agreement: Schools Forum received a report on this on 8 February 2012. The pooled funding envelope for £400,000 supports the following services:

- financial advice, especially for schools in financial difficulties or who may have to plan for cutbacks arising from a National Funding Formula
- legal advice and support in court e.g. employment tribunals, contract dispute resolution
- human resources advice e.g. employee relations and compromise agreements
- advice for governing bodies on their corporate responsibilities
- procurement
- aspects of property management by schools.

The latest estimate on projected spending to date is £308,000 and is likely to fully utilise the budget. It is proposed to continue this pooling allocation in 2013-14.

Extended Schools: The Extended Schools Programme funds a small number of projects that support schools. 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; Specialist therapeutic interventions, both individual and group sessions to children as well as consultations, training and workshops to schools regarding children's mental health; and specialist child protection and advice services, supporting the interface between universal and specialist support services. Working in partnership with schools and early years settings the service provides evidenced based parenting programmes and various parent support groups. The extended schools provision also provide support to schools, children and families with extra curriculum activities including out of school programmes and support to disabled children accessing holiday provision. The service employs 2FTEs.

Action by Schools Forum:

- (a) To note the current level of funding held centrally by the Local Authority, that can be de-delegated and the amount of pooled funding in 2012-13.
- (b) To agree that schools and Academies are consulted on the functions to be de-delegated and pooled. Feedback will follow at Schools Forum to be held on 5 December 2012.