

Schools Forum

12 January 2016

Proposed Review of Schools funding formula for primary and secondary schools

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To propose a review of the current funding formula for primary and secondary schools.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the contents of the report and to recommend a review of the current main funding formula, incorporating consultation from the DfE regarding the move to a national fair funding formula, and agree the membership of the funding review working group.

3. Background

- 3.1 New funding arrangements introduced in April 2013 included a requirement for local authorities to simplify the funding formula used to allocate funds to their schools.
- 3.2 The choice of permitted funding factors was much reduced and the recommendations of the formula working group at the time, agreed by Forum, was that the quantum of funding allocated for a particular purpose in 2012-2013 would be largely maintained, although such funds would be required to be distributed via a different funding factor e.g. the total funding for premises costs, previously distributed using floor areas, was added to in part to the new lump sum and in part to the age weighted pupil unit (AWPU).
- 3.3 A review of the current funding formula was undertaken during 2015, which focussed on the level of funding allocated to deprivation. This review informed the debate around the funding formula to be utilised for 2016/17.

4. Proposal

- 4.1 Given the narrow focus of the review undertaken during 2015, and the government's recent announcement that it will begin consultation during early 2016 around the implementation of a national fair funding formula, it is now recommended that a new working group is compiled to begin a wider review.

5. Financial implications / Value for Money

- 5.1 The review should ensure that any proposed changes are affordable within the overall funding that is received within the Dedicated Schools grant to support primary and secondary schools.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 The review of the schools funding formula for primary and secondary schools should ensure that all requirements, as determined by The Schools and Early Years Funding regulations, and any changes that are required as part of a move to a national fair funding formula, are adhered to.

7. School Improvement

- 7.1 As part of reviewing the funding formula, Schools Forum, and members of the working group, should consider the potential impact on the desired outcomes of the Walsall school improvement programme.

8. Members eligible to vote

- 8.1 All elected members with voting rights are eligible to vote on this matter.