

## DARLINGTON SCHOOLS FORUM

21<sup>st</sup> November 2019

ITEM NO 5

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### SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA PROPOSAL 2020/21

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#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To update Forum regarding the 2020/21 School Funding Formula

#### **Background**

2. Schools Forum were provided with an update regarding changes to the 2020/21 school funding formula at their October 2020 meeting.
3. All schools and Forum members were provided with the Local Authority's proposals for the funding formula 2020/21 via a consultation document that was published on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019. These papers can be found in the appendices to this paper.
4. The Local Authority provided further details regarding the consultation papers at a briefing session held on 6<sup>th</sup> November. Details from this briefing were distributed to all schools and Forum members.
5. The consultation ended on 13<sup>th</sup> November.

#### **Consultation Results**

6. Responses received were from individual schools and Academy Trusts on behalf of all their schools.
7. 22 Responses were received from the consultation, on behalf of 33 schools. Overall this meant that 82.5% of schools provided a response.
8. The following paragraphs break down the results received based upon the responses from 33 schools (where a trust sent in a single response, it was assumed this response was the same for all schools within that trust).
9. Comments received from schools are included within appendix 1 of this report.

#### Part A

##### Questions asked,

- Do you agree with the Local Authority preferred proposal to move 1% of the schools block into the high needs block in 2020/21 (option 1)?
- If you do not agree with the Local Authority preferred option do you agree to a movement of 0.75% or 0.5%?
- If you do not agree with any of the proposed transfers from the schools block to the high needs block listed in this paper (options 1, 2 & 3), do you wish to suggest a transfer amount and why this amount is proposed?

### Responses

- a. 19% of schools agreed to a transfer of 1.00% from the schools block to the high needs block
- b. 6% of schools agreed to a transfer of 0.75% from the schools block to the high needs block
- c. 69% of schools agreed to a transfer of 0.50% from the schools block to the high needs block
- d. 6% of schools agreed to a transfer of 0.00% from the schools block to the high needs block
- e. Overall 94% of schools agreed to a transfer of 0.5% or over from the schools block to the high needs block

### Part B

#### Questions asked

- Do you agree with the proposal that there are no changes to the formula factors used in Darlington' local formula for 2020/21 other than those required by NFF policy?
- Which of the options for distributing the additional funding do you think is most appropriate to fund all schools across Darlington and why?

#### Responses

10. 96% of schools agreed to continue to use the same funding factors within the 2020/21 formula as in 2019/20 (allowing for mandatory changes).
11. The results of the preferred method of distributing additional funding were as follows,
  - 6% of schools had no preference regarding the options in part B
  - 16% of schools favoured any of the options A to C
  - 0% of schools favoured option A
  - 3% of schools favoured option B
  - 25% of schools favoured option C
  - 50% of schools favoured option D

### **Proposals for 2020/21**

#### Part A

12. The Local Authority had proposed that a transfer of 1% be made from the schools block to the high needs block to help with the pressures upon the high needs budgets. It is clear from the responses received from schools that the vast majority of schools (81%) do not agree with this proposal.
13. The Local Authority has therefore considered the responses received and taken account of the issues highlighted by schools. The Local Authority is therefore proposing that a transfer of 0.5% is made from the schools block to the high needs block in 2020/21, as 94% of schools have supported this option.

## Part B

14. It is clear that the majority of schools are in agreement with keeping the funding formula factors the same in 2020/21 as in the current year (with mandatory changes), as 96% of responses agreed with this proposal. The final funding formula for 2020/21 will therefore be calculated using the current funding formula factors.
15. There is a spread of opinion with regard to how any additional funding is distributed amongst schools, with option C and option D receiving the most support.
16. The Local Authority had not made a recommendation regarding the option to use in the formula for 2020/21 as all options moved towards the National Funding Formula and the Local Authority wished to take account of schools views.
17. Overall option D received the most support with 50% of responses. Responses supporting this option came from both primary schools and academy trusts.
18. The Local Authority is therefore proposing to use option D as the starting point for calculating the final funding formula for 2020/21.
19. As noted within the consultation, the final formula will be calculated using the October 2019 census figures and final DSG schools block allocations. Therefore remodelling will be undertaken to ensure that the final formula is both affordable (within the resources available) and in line with any formula changes required by the DfE. Forum will be notified of any changes required following this modelling.

## **Recommendations**

20. That Forum note the responses received to the consultation upon the 2020/21 funding formula.
21. That Forum agree to a transfer of 0.5% from the schools block to the high needs block in 2020/21.
22. That Forum agree to use the same funding formula factors in 2020/21 as in 2019/20 (with mandatory changes).
23. That Forum agree the use of option D (i.e. no primary prior attainment weighting) as the starting point for the calculation of the final funding formula in 2020/21.

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