

North Northamptonshire Schools Forum

16 December 2021

School Forum Consultation Overview Report

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OVERVIEW

- 1) Following the conclusion of the school forum consultation running until the 3rd of December 2021 it is now necessary for the schools' forum to take a vote on a number of items.
- 2) The full details of the consultation responses can be found in Appendix A. The original papers presented to the schools' forum can be found [Agenda for Schools Forum on Thursday 4th November, 2021, 2.00 pm - North Northamptonshire Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

A. Issues to be voted upon

- i. The preferred funding formula option
- ii. The methodology to be used to bring into balance the overall cost
- iii. The options for the continuation of the local authority commissioned outreach services
- iv. The split site policy and the rate of funding of this split site policy
- v. The growth fund policy and the rate of funding this growth fund policy
- vi. The proposed changes to the permanent exclusion claw back policy
- vii. The continuation of the central services partly funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant
- viii. The de-delegation for trade union facility time
- ix. The de-delegation for school effectiveness
- x. The de-delegation for redundancy costs

THE FUNDING FORMULA

- 3) Most respondents to the consultation supported option A, a transfer of 0.5% from the schools' block to the high needs block.
- 4) Given the minimal support to the transfer of 1.3% there is no proposal from the LA to take a vote on the transfer of 1.3%.
- 5) Comments received related to a breakdown of the spend of high needs funding including allocations in different areas. A full review of SEN and associated spend on high needs block is underway and is scheduled for a forthcoming schools forum meeting. A financial breakdown will be presented in detail for discussion at that time.

Bringing the funding formula into balance

- 6) None of the respondents to the consultation supported a reduction of the floor. The majority of respondents opted for 'another' option (i.e. other than those presented.)
- 7) Each of the options previously presented ensured that all schools received the minimum funding guarantee. There were no proposed changes to the AWPU.
- 8) Some comments related to moving closer to the national funding formula this would allow equality of funding across all schools.

- 9) Based upon the outcome of the consultation schools' forum will be asked to vote upon two options.
- 10) The **first option** would be the running of the national funding formula with the minimum funding guarantee or
- 11) The **second option** would be a cap on per pupil increase with the minimum funding guarantee.

Local Authority commissioned outreach services

- 12) Most respondents wished to move to a traded model of outreach services from the local authority. Comments included North Northamptonshire Council fully funding these services, or schools being able to go to the open market to secure the services that they required.
- 13) The cost of fully funding the services would be £970,000 for the sensory impairment service and £778,000 for the specialist support service. Work on the viability of service delivery through a traded model will need to be progressed early in 2022. The risk is that services may not maintain their current offer and/or operation.
- 14) Based upon the consultation schools' forum members will be asked to vote upon the options as originally presented in the paper to schools forum on 4 November 2021.

Split site policy

- 15) Most respondents to the consultation supported a continuation of the split site policy transferring from Northamptonshire County Council. They also agreed to the level of proposed funding for the split site rates.
- 16) Therefore, the schools forum will be asked to vote on acceptance of the formula.
- 17) They will also be asked to vote on acceptance of the rate.

Growth fund policy

- 18) Most respondents to the consultation opted to support the growth fund policy they also agreed to support the level of the proposed policy.
- 19) Therefore, the schools forum will be asked to vote on acceptance of the policy they will also be asked to vote on the acceptance of the rate.

Permanent permanent exclusion claw back policy

- 20) All respondents to the consultation agreed with the changes to the new claw-back policy for North Northamptonshire Council.
- 21) As a result, the schools forum will be asked to vote on the acceptance of the claw back policy.

The continuation of central support services

- 22) There were no respondents in opposition to the continuation of the central services as funded by the dedicated school's grant.
- 23) In the commentary schools wanted to understand the historic commitments that were attached to the central services grant. Historical commitments are linked to pre 2013 pensions which constitute ongoing historical commitments and are permissible in line with the dedicated schools grant guidance as published by the Department for Education.

- 24) The combined services to be delivered through this funding stream for 2022-2023 are school effectiveness, moderation, the safeguarding Children Board, the education contribution to the multi agency safeguarding hub and the education entitlement service (see paper from previous Schools Forum).
- 25) There are a few services that are currently (2021 – 2022) funded from the central support block that will no longer be funded as a result of the 20% reduction of budget allocation to this block year on year. These services were not included in the consultation for the 2022-2023 provision.
- 26) As a result of the consultation the schools forum members will be asked to vote in support of or against the continuation of the services funded from the central support block.
- 27) It is useful to note that this block of funding is not available to be transferred to schools. The funds will remain with the LA.

The following options apply only to the maintained schools

Trade Union facility time

- 28) All respondents to the consultation were in favour of the proposed continuation of this de-delegation and the rate proposed.
- 29) Therefore, schools forum will be asked to vote on the acceptance of the de-delegation at the proposed rate.

School effectiveness

- 30) There was a split vote relating to school effectiveness. There was agreement for the de-delegation but there is a question regarding the rate per pupil.
- 31) A review was requested of the effectiveness of the service should the service increase it's funding level. Benchmarking data from a number of LA's was carried out. The range of spend per pupil ranges from £2 through to £38. This places NNC at a mid-range value.
- 32) Schools forum will be asked to vote on the rate of the school effectiveness contribution as previously advised.

The de-delegation of redundancy costs

- 33) Respondents to the consultation were split on the continuation of this de-delegation at the proposed rate.
- 34) Having considered comments made regarding the rate schools forum will be asked to vote on the acceptance of redundancy cost at the proposed rate.

Next Steps

- 35) Once decisions have been confirmed during the Schools Forum on 16 December North Northamptonshire Finance Officers will model all of the decisions when the final finance award is confirmed for NNC. These allocations will then be shared at the January School Forum meeting.
- 36) In line with the views expressed through the consultation Officers in NNC will write to the Department of Education and confirm that NNC will not be seeking authority from the secretary of state to transfer 1.3% of funds from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.

- 37) A school funding sub-group is to be established lead by Strategic finance business partner. This sub-group will review and scrutinise the models of funding that will be brought forward to the January Schools Forum. Volunteers as part of this group do not need to be members of the Schools Forum. The meeting will take place in early January. Volunteers should contact Yoke.o'Brien@northnorthants.gov.uk
- 38) It has already been requested by Schools Forum and scheduled for January to review SEN. The detailed breakdown of spend from High Needs Block will be shared as part of this presentation.
- 39) An options appraisal will be completed during the early part of 2022 that seeks to explore options for the continuation of the outreach services currently provided by NNC.
- 40) An overview of School Effectiveness will be scheduled to be brought back to School Forum later in 2022.