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|  Brent | Schools Forum 23rd October 2013 Report from the Director of Children & Families |
| For Information and consultation | |
| 2014/15 Schools Budgets – Consultation with Schools | |

1. Background

- 1.1 Following the last Schools Forum meeting held on 18th September it was agreed to consult all schools on the proposals for their provisional 2014/15 budget shares. At the September meeting, the Forum agreed to change the current primary and secondary ISB ratio from 1: 1.09 to 1: 1.27 for 2014/15 in order to move the council to the national average. This would also significantly reduce the value of the MFG from £28m to £1.5m ensuring that school budgets more closely reflected the operation of the formula factors.
- 1.2 The Acting Director of Children and Families wrote to schools with indicative budgets and accompanying explanations seeking responses by 14th October.
- 1.3 In accordance with the time table presented at the September meeting the council will submit the provisional ISB to the DfE by 31st October. The Education Funding Agency (EFA) will confirm DSG Schools Block allocations for 2014-15 (prior to Academy Recoupment) on 18th December that will reflect the October census data.

2 Consultation Responses

- 2.1 The Schools Funding Sub Group met on 17th October to review consultation responses to the 2014/15 proposals. Only one school has fed back in the consultation process and the sub group requested an extension to the consultation period aware that the council's proposals had to be submitted to the DfE by 31st October. Accordingly officers emailed all schools asking for a response by close of business on 22nd October. A verbal update will be provided at this meeting.

- 2.2 The point raised in the above response concerned the methodology for funding schools on split sites with a particular reference to all through schools. The issue is that the current formula does not address this category of school as a separate phase. Officers agreed to raise this through an exchange of e-mail to other LA's to establish if they have similar schools and if they are supported with any additional factor funding. If necessary this issue would be raised with the DfE at the November LA/LMS (school finance officers) meeting. An update on this issue will be presented to the December meeting. Forum will recall that the criteria for split site funding is agreed by them but attempts to get this factor exempt from MFG for 2013/14 was rejected by the DfE. A copy of the consultation documents are attached as Appendix 1 and 2A and 2B.

3 Delegations and De-Delegations

- 3.1 The September meeting asked for individual reports to be provided for each de-delegated service as was done last year. Service managers have updated last years reports and other than the information presented below on the Gordon Brown Centre these are presented as separate items to this meeting.

Gordon Brown Outdoor Education Centre

- 3.2 The Gordon Brown Outdoor Education Centre is an educational provision, mainly for primary school age children. A visit to the Gordon Brown Centre provides a unique experience for children from Brent, especially those who may not otherwise be able to access and experience the environment. The Centre provides outdoor activities and learning and an experience which children will remember into adulthood. The current DSG funding held centrally for this is £50,000 to subsidise the costs to schools.
- 3.3 The Centre's residential and day visits for children contribute to their learning about environmental issues and the outdoors. Activities are linked to the curriculum and schools are able to choose from a wide offer that includes shelter building, environmental art, pond dipping and mini beasts, a low ropes course and trim trail, a walk into history, learning about food chains, river study, conservation and survival days. Animals on the 25 acre site include donkeys, goats, pigs and chickens and there is also a small animal area.

4 Early Years Funding

- 4.1 The Early Years Funding Sub Group was unable to meet on 23rd of October due to apologies for absence rendering the meeting inchorate. A meeting will be reconvened in time to report to either the December or January 2014 schools forums to consult on proposals for the 2014/15 EYSFF including the restoration of the deferred 3% increase in the base rate.

5 Recommendations & Consultation Points

5.1 Schools Forum is asked to:

- a. Note the responses received to date
- b. Continue to fund Gordon Brown Centre at the current rate.

Background Papers

18th September Schools Forum report – Schools Funding Reforms – 2014/15 Update

2014-15 Revenue Funding Arrangements: Operational Information for Local Authorities

All found on DfE website link below.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/financialmanagement/schoolsrevenuefunding/a00221523/school-funding-and-high-needs-funding-arrangements-2014-15>

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