

## West Northants Schools Forum: 5 July 2022

### Agenda Item 7

## West Northamptonshire Council Schools Funding Consultation 2023-24

### 1 Purpose of Report

1.1 The report is inform the West Northamptonshire Schools Forum of the proposed process and timeline for the 2023-24 school funding consultation.

1.2 The Early Years DSG funding will have a separate consultation (see agenda item 8).

### 2 Background

2.1 The Secretary of State for Education is due to announce provisional funding allocations for 2023-24 through the schools, high needs and central school services national funding formulae (NFF) mid-July 2022. The provisional allocation for West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) will be available to view on the DFE website, and the council will present the position to the October 2022 Schools Forum. As in previous years, the final allocation is expected to be published in December 2022.

2.2 Table 1 shows the relevant responsibilities in relation to schools funding formula changes which is taken from the Education and Skills Funding Agency's Schools forum Powers and Responsibilities, published in September 2018.

Table 1

	<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Schools forum</b>	<b>ESFA</b>
Formula change (including redistributions)	Proposes and decides	Must be consulted. Voting is restricted to School Members.	Checks for compliance with regulations.
Movement of up to 0.5% from the schools block to other blocks	Proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree LA proposal
De-delegation for mainstream maintained schools	Proposes	Maintained primary and secondary school member representatives will decide for their phase.	Will adjudicate where schools forum does not agree LA proposal

2.3 Table 1 shows that for the optional parts of the formula, the setting of the schools funding formula continues to be a Local Authority decision in 2023-24 (a “soft” national funding formula).

2.4 The Government continue to move towards a “hard” national schools funding formula and have published the National Funding Formula for Local Authorities and Schools to give an indication of what the Government would fund schools under that “hard” formula. Where affordable with the dedicated schools grant (DSG) allocated, West Northamptonshire council (henceforth “the council”) aims to mirror that National Funding Formula.

2.5 As well as the consultation on changes to the schools funding formula, as in prior years schools forum must also be consulted on the items listed below. For these, the council proposes and the schools forum decides:

- changes to the schools funding formula being proposed as compared to prior year’s local formula
- transfers proposed from the Schools Block and High Needs Block
- de-delegations from the maintained individual schools budgets (ISBs)
- Growth fund budget and policy
- Changes to pupil numbers for new and growing schools (weighted numbers)
- Central expenditure from the schools central services block on a line by line basis.

### **3 Next stages**

3.1 WNC will prepare the proposed 2023-24 Schools Budget Consultation for the October 2022 Schools Forum meeting and ask Forum members to note the provisional funding settlement for 2023-24 and agree the school funding consultation document for 2023-24.

3.2 Following the October 2022 Schools Forum meeting, consultation with schools will be held for a period of approximately six weeks between 20 October-2 December 2022 (the final dates for the consultation will be confirmed in October).

3.3 The consultation feedback will be shared with Schools Forum at the December 2022 meeting where forum members will be asked to vote on proposals.

### **4 Legal implications**

4.1 There are no legal implications arising from the proposals.

### **5 Recommendations for schools forum**

5.1 That Schools Forum note the proposed process and timeline for the 2023-24 school funding consultation.

**Report Author:**

Officer name: Emily Taylor / Beth Baines

Officer title: Strategic Finance Business Partner / Senior Finance Business Partner

Email address: [emily.taylor@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:emily.taylor@westnorthants.gov.uk) /  
[beth.baines@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:beth.baines@westnorthants.gov.uk)