

West Northants Schools Forum: 5 July 2022

Agenda Item 8

West Northamptonshire Council Early Years Funding Consultation 2023-24

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report is to inform the West Northamptonshire Schools Forum of the proposed process and timeline for the 2023-24 Early Years funding consultation.
- 1.2 The Early Years DSG funding will have a separate consultation to the Schools Budgets (see agenda item 7).

2 Background

- 2.1 The Secretary of State for Education is due to announce the final early years block funding for the 2021-22 financial year and the provisional funding allocations for 2023-24 through the Early Years national funding formulae (EYNFF) 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, there will be updated allocations with the final 2023-24 EYSFF funding published in July 2023 after the close of the financial year on 31st of March. Estimate of the funding available will need to be made using the latest available January census data.
- 2.2 Table 1 shows the relevant responsibilities in relation to early years 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

	Local Authority	Schools forum	ESFA
Formula change (including redistributions)	Proposes and decides	Must be consulted. Voting is restricted to School Members.	Checks for compliance with regulations.
arrangements for early years provision	Consults annually	Gives a view and informs the governing bodies of all consultations	None
Central spend on: early years block provision	Propose	Decides	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree LA proposal

2.3 Table 1 shows that for the optional parts of the funding formula, the setting of the early years funding formula continues to be a Local Authority decision in 2023-24 and as in prior years, central expenditure % is a schools forum decision.

3 Next stages

3.1 WNC will prepare the proposed 2023-24 Early Years Budget Consultation for the Schools Forum members. The aim will be to send this to early years education providers in September with a view to returning the responses to Schools Forum in the December meeting. This will mean that the consultation questions will need to be shared outside of the regular meetings via email.

3.2 Following the October 2022 Schools Forum meeting, consultation with early years providers will be held for a period of approximately six weeks between 5 September - 2 December 2022 (the final dates for the consultation will be confirmed via email).

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 early years 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 /

beth.baines@westnorthants.gov.uk