

Details of any consultation carried out – internal and external

There are three separate consultation exercises associated with the DSG 2019/20 budget process:

1. **Schools Block Funding:** Consultation with schools on schools block funding arrangements for 2019/20 ran from 19th October 2018 to 7th November 2018. This was reported to Schools Forum at their meeting on 27th November 2018 and the details can be found there. The key points to emerge were:

Transfers between blocks

- All maintained schools and academies were asked to indicated whether they supported a proposal to **transfer £2m from Schools Block** to High Needs Block for 2019/20. **Three-quarters** of respondents **strongly agreed, agreed or neither agreed nor disagreed** with this proposal.
- All maintained schools and academies were asked to indicated whether they supported a proposal to **transfer £3.4m from Schools Block** to High Needs Block for 2019/20. **Three-quarters** of respondents **strongly disagreed, disagreed or neither agreed nor disagreed** with this proposal.

Schools Forum decided at the meeting in November 2018 agreed that a transfer of £2m from Schools Block to High Needs Block could be made.

Mainstream Funding Formula

- All mainstream schools and academies were asked about how any funding beyond a standstill budget per pupil should be distributed in 2019/20, should there be any. **76%** indicated that they would want any such additional funding (compared to 2018/19, with October 2018 pupil numbers) should be distributed by proportionately increasing formula values for deprivation, English as an Additional Language and prior attainment to get closer to the values in the **National Funding Formula**. **24%** indicated that they would prefer any such funding to be distributed by proportionately increasing all pupil-led factors in the existing **local mainstream funding formula**.
- All mainstream schools and academies were asked to provide comments on the Schools Forum's view that the **Minimum Funding Guarantee** for 2019/20 should be greater than 0% (up to 0.5%), subject to availability of funding. The comments received on this were generally **supportive**.

The funding beyond a standstill budget is 0.23% of the total and Schools Forum on 16th January 2019 are being asked to consider that this be distributed by moving deprivation, EAL and prior attainment formula values closer to those used in the National Funding Formula. Given the very small amount of funding beyond a standstill, the Minimum Funding Guarantee is proposed to be 0%.

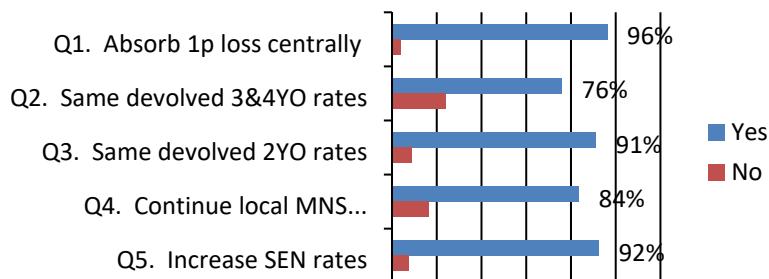
De-delegation for maintained mainstream schools.

- Maintained primary and secondary schools were consulted on whether funding for a small range of services should be pooled (de-delegated) or included in individual schools' budget shares.

This is a matter that is for Schools Forum to decide: Cabinet and Council have no role. Relevant primary and secondary representatives made decisions about the appropriate treatment of the individual services.

2. **Early Years funding 2019/20.** Appendix A.5 sets out the report to Schools Forum on Early Years funding for 2019/20, which includes the outcomes of a consultation with all early years settings between 7th December 2018 and 6th January 2019. There were five main questions, each of which dealt with proposals on the main funding formula or two priorities for using unspent Early Years DSG. There were 79 responses and the table below indicates that there was strong support for each of the proposals.

Table 4. Responses to Early Years consultation questions



The report to Schools Forum (and this Cabinet report) recommends that the first four proposals are implemented. The fifth proposal about SEN hourly rates for early years settings is recommended to be deferred to be year-end, when there can be more certainty about the availability of funding. Also, the matter should be considered as part of the High Needs Transformation Programme (as part of the review of SEN top-ups).

3. **Public consultation on 2019/20 Council budget.** The Council's annual budget consultation took place between 5th November 2018 and 17th December 2018. It was not explicitly consulting about priorities within the DSG, but it did ask respondents if they wished to increase the Council Tax to benefit services, including the DSG. The details of the outcomes from this consultation are included in the main budget report elsewhere on this agenda.

There are no proposals to increase the Council Tax either to spend more on DSG services, or to cover existing forecast shortfalls in the funding for the DSG.