

## SCHOOLS FORUM AGENDA ITEM

For Action



For Information



### **Brief Description of Item** (including the purpose / reason for presenting this for consideration by the Forum)

To provide Members with an update on National Funding Formula news and to ask the Schools Forum to consider its response to the DfE's 2nd stage of consultation, which closes on 22 March 2017. A response drafted by the Business Advisor (Schools) is presented with this report (Appendix 3).

### **Date (s) of any Previous Discussion at the Forum**

The Schools Forum discussed in detail the DfE's 2<sup>nd</sup> stage consultation proposals, and impact analysis, in its deliberations on the allocation of the 2017/18 DSG across the 11 and 18 January 2017 meetings.

### **Background / Context**

The DfE published its 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of consultation on National Funding Formula – for the Schools and High Needs Blocks – on 14 December 2017. The Executive Summary of the DfE's proposals, which was presented to the Forum on 11 January is presented again at Appendix 1 for reference. The Authority's briefing note, which was also presented to the Forum, is also included reference at Appendix 2.

### **Details of the Item for Consideration**

A response to the DfE's consultation has been drafted by the Business Advisor (Schools) and is presented at Appendix 3 as a 'starter for 10'. Forum Members are asked for their views on this response; the general tone, areas of consensus and whether this presents effectively our main concerns on the proposals as these currently stand.

The response has been written in particular to highlight our concerns on:

- The reduction in the spending power of school budgets that comes from the lack of response to the growth in costs in schools, especially in staffing costs.
- The impact on smaller schools with the proposal for a low value of lump sum.
- The excessive damping of the High Needs Block national formula result when this is viewed over a medium term period.

There are 2 separate but similar consultations running. As a result the responses are similar and there is some repetition.

There haven't been any further formal announcements from the DfE on Schools or High Needs Block funding proposals since the 14 December. However, there has been a significant level of coverage in national and local Press across the country as authorities, schools and other groups (such as the F40 Group) react to what is being proposed. An update will be provided verbally on the gist of this coverage.

Following the January 2017 Schools Forum meeting, the Authority has met with the business manager forums and has also published a ready reckoner, which enables schools and academies in Bradford to analyse the impact of the national funding formula compared against 2017/18 formula funding (whereas the DfE's modelling shows the impact vs. 2016/17). School Funding Team has also presented to schools and governors in some local areas that have requested briefings. Comprehensive guidance, on national funding formula and the financial landscape, has been published and is available for schools to access through Bradford Schools Online.

We expect that DfE's Nursery School spending validation, and the 2017/18 DSG 're-baselining' exercises, will be published later in March 2017. We also still expect the final details of the national funding formula to be published by the DfE later in the summer term.

**Implications for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)** (if any)

The National Funding Formula has direct and significant implications for the DSG going forward.

**Recommendations**

**The Schools Forum is asked to consider and agree its response to the DfE's 2nd stage of consultation on National Funding Formula (to be submitted by 22 March).**

**List of Supporting Appendices / Papers** (where applicable)

Appendix 1 – Executive Summary (repeat of Document GZ Appendix 1 11 January 2017)  
Appendix 2 – Local Authority Initial Impact Assessment (repeat of Document GZ 11 January 2017)  
Appendix 3 – Draft Consultation Response

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