



## Paper for meeting of Surrey Schools Forum 8 October 2024

### **Item 6**

### **Surrey Schools Forum**

**8 October 2024**

**Lead: Julia Katherine/David Green**

**For recommendation (part)/decision (part)**

### **Outcome of Surrey Schools Funding Consultation (proposals for 2025/26)**

#### **Summary**

The LA's annual consultation with schools on funding arrangements for the following year closed on 1 October and the results have been shared with Forum members. This paper summarises the questions to be discussed, whether each is for decision or recommendation by the Forum, and any voting restrictions imposed by legislation. The questions are set out below as in the consultation paper, with LA recommendations added.

LA recommendations are in line with the majority response with the exception of the transfer to high needs block (Proposal C1) and one de-delegation request.

**Where there are voting restrictions, that does not preclude any non-voting member contributing to discussions.**

**School funding proposals on which the Forum is being consulted (but Secretary of State decision, LA choice whether to apply to Secretary of State) and on which all members may vote (if a vote is required)**

#### **Proposal C1 Question 7**

Do you support the transfer of 1% of the schools block allocation to the high needs block in 2025/26, in order to support the continued implementation of the safety valve agreement which secures additional funding towards the historic high needs deficit? (Note: as the proposed transfer exceeds 0.5% of school budget, the decision is for the Secretary of State, but the Secretary of State will expect to be advised of the views of Schools Forum).

For additional background please refer to presentation at July meeting.

LA recommendation: support

**Schools formula funding issues on which the Forum is being consulted (LA decision) on which only school, academy and early years reps may vote (if a vote is required). Special school reps and PRU/AP academy reps may vote.**

**Proposal C2.1 Question 8**

Do you agree that the recommended proposal (funding rates mainly at 98.2% of NFF, and 0.5% minimum funding guarantee) best meets the needs of Surrey schools, assuming a transfer to high needs block is approved?

LA recommendation: support

**Proposal C2-1 Question 9**

Do you support increasing the current lump sums in line with the increase in other formula factor rates (as in previous years) in order to assist small schools?

LA recommendation: support

**Proposal C2-1 Question 10**

Do you support the proposed “reserve” proposals for MFG and formula factors, (described in the consultation paper), in the event that no block transfer is approved? (basically close to NFF, but with higher lump sums and lower basic entitlement rates)

LA recommendation: support if needed.

**Proposal C2-2 Question 11**

Which of the options (described in the paper) do you think best meets the needs of Surrey schools, if formula factors have to be adjusted because of increased levels of additional need in October 2024?

- a) Smaller increase in formula funding rates (subject to approx. 0.5% minimum funding guarantee and formula factor increase)
- b) A ceiling alone (which means that the ceiling on gains would need to be lower, ie allowable gains would be smaller)
- c) Somewhere between the two
- d) Other

LA recommendation: support option (a)

**Proposals for recommendation on which all members may vote:**

**Notional and additional SEND**

**Proposal C4**

Question 13

Do you agree that it is appropriate that the proportion of core funding in Surrey deemed notional SEN is brought into line with national averages in 2025/26?

LA recommendation: support

Question 14

Do you support additional funding from the high needs block to assist schools where the notional SEND budget does not cover the first £6,000 per EHCP?

LA recommendation: support

Question 15

If you support additional funding, which count basis do you prefer for the number of EHCPs to be considered when calculating the additional funding for 2025/26 (2024/25 financial year or 2024/25 academic year?)

LA recommendation: support 2024/25 academic year (supported by majority)

Question 16

Do you support the proposed variation in calculation of additional funding for infant schools, in order to provide additional support to infant schools?

LA recommendation: support

Question 17

Do you support allowing a minimum of 20% of the notional SEN budget for children on SEN support, when calculating whether additional funding is due to schools under this proposal?

LA recommendation: support

### **School funding proposals requiring a Schools Forum decision**

Proposal C3 and Question 12:

De-delegation (maintained primary and secondary schools only, and separately):

Do you approve the proposed de-delegation of funding (from budgets of maintained primary/secondary schools) for:

- a) Specialist Teachers (behaviour support) (primary schools only);
- b) Teaching Association and Trade Union facilities time;
- c) Other special staff costs (e.g. for public duties and suspensions);
- d) Free school meals eligibility checking;
- e) support to travellers (primary schools only)
- f) additional (non statutory) school improvement (primary schools only).

LA recommendation : support all

**Proposal C6: Falling rolls (all members may vote)**

**Question 18:**

Do you support the introduction of falling rolls funding for primary schools facing a short term fall in pupil numbers, where the vacancies are expected to be required due to pupil growth in the area within the next three years

LA recommendation: support

**Question 19**

Do you support the proposed 5% threshold for funding vacancies and the proposed basis of calculation of funding for individual schools?

LA recommendation: support

**Question 20**

Do you agree that the LA should aim to contain the cost of falling rolls allocation within the estimated DFE allocation?

LA recommendation: support

**Question 21**

Do you have any other comments/concerns about the proposals for falling rolls funding? No Forum action required.