

Schools Forum

November 27th 2014

De-delegation of Central Budgets in 2015/16

This report relates to maintained schools only

Voting – Maintained Head Teachers and Governor only and voting on a sector basis.

Recommendation

1. That School Forum members, representing the Maintained Primary School Sector, consider the consultation responses and agree, on a service by service basis, whether funding should be de-delegated back to the Local Authority.
2. That School Forum members, representing the Maintained Secondary School Sector, consider the consultation responses and agree, on a service by service basis, whether funding should be de-delegated back to the Local Authority.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Schools Forum will recall that as part of the school funding reforms, implemented in April 2013, there are certain budget headings that had historically been retained centrally by the Local Authority that schools should have delegated to them in the first instance and, where agreed by the Forum, they can be de-delegated.

1.2 This decision is not relevant to academy schools as Academies cannot de-delegate the funding back to the Local Authority. However, where the Local Authority retains funding and services to maintained schools, the Schools Funding Regulations encourage the trading of such services with academies.

2.0 Consultation

2.1 Consultation has been undertaken with both primary and secondary maintained schools.

2.2 The results of the consultation are as follows:

2.3 PRIMARY SCHOOLS

There were 77 responses in total from 161 maintained primary schools (48%).

Table one	De-delegate	Delegate
School Improvement	53	24
Free School Meal Eligibility	77	0
Gypsy and Romany Travellers	54	23
English as an Additional Language	51	26
Behaviour Support Services	66	11
Trade Union Facility Time	47	30
Medical Referral of Employees	67	10

2.4 As was the case last year, most of the schools who responded want the Local Authority to retain the funding and provide services to which they can access as and when required.

2.5 SECONDARY SCHOOLS

There were 4 responses from 9 maintained secondary schools (44%).

Table Two	De-delegate	Delegate
Free School Meal Eligibility	4	0
English as an Additional Language	3	1
Trade Union Facility Time	1	3
Medical Referral of Employees	4	0

2.6 As with the primary sector, most of the respondents want the Local Authority to retain this funding with the exception of the Trade Union Facility Time. However, the Local Authority is concerned that the full implications of delegating this funding have been understood in terms of the potential impact on employee relations, which may become more protracted and involved on a school by school basis. For example, regional officials will need to be consulted on every single policy at each and every school rather than centrally. Also, it was noted that regional officials could be required to pick up casework that County trades union caseworkers could no longer carry out as they would not be supported by the pooled funding arrangements. Local Authority officers contacted the 3 schools voting to delegate the funding and, when the consequences were explained, they noted that they would actually prefer for it to be de-delegated. On this basis, officers recommend the Forum to agree to also retain the de-delegation of this funding again in 2015/16.

2.7 More details of the services provided by this funding and the implications of delegation are attached in Appendix A.

3.0 Budgets De-delegated

3.1 In terms of the funding that the Local Authority is likely to retain next year in relation to these services, the table below indicates the expected position. This is based on an estimate for the number of schools that will be an academy in April 2015. Due to the additional information obtained from maintained secondary head teachers, the table includes the de-delegated funding for secondary Trade Union Facility time.

Table 3

	Column A	Column B	
	Primary-estimated 2015/16 budget	Secondary - estimated budget 2015/16	TOTAL estimated budget 2015/16
School Improvement	232,868		232,868
Free School Meals Admin	21,845	4,776	26,621
Gypsy Romany Travellers	106,304		106,304
English as an additional language	168,398	36,815	205,213

Trade Union Facilities	88,354	19,316	107,670
Medical Referral	16,595	3,628	20,223
Behavioural Support Services	37,047		37,047
TOTAL	671,411	64,535	735,946

3.2 These retained budgets are £211,000 lower than last year.

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