

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM – 6th JULY 2011

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA 2012-13

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the likely changes to the school funding formula for the 2012-13 financial year.

NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA

In the White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, the Government set out its view that the current funding system is opaque, full of anomalies and unfair and therefore in need of reform.

The DfE published 2 consultation documents in April 2011, one relating to school funding and the second to academy funding. These documents were the first stage in the consultation process and invited views on the aims and objectives of the school funding system and the high level principles for any potential reforms. The Schools Forum submitted responses to both consultations (see attached).

The DfE expect to publish the outcome of these consultations and more detailed proposals for consultation in the summer.

LOCAL FUNDING FORMULA

Given the timescales involved, it seems unlikely that a national funding formula will be implemented by April 2012. Decisions need to be taken on the local funding formula for the 2012-13 financial year in the following areas:

1. Mainstreamed grants

In 2011-12, the specific grants that were mainstreamed from April 2011, totalling £32million, were allocated using the same methodology as in previous years, to provide some stability in school budgets. As this was agreed for 1 year only, a decision is needed on whether to extend this arrangement for a further 12 months.

2. Formula Factors

In 2011-12, factors that were previously fixed, such as free school meals, IMD score and prior attainment, were recalculated using the most recent data. As this was agreed for 1 year only, a decision is needed on whether to recalculate these factors again for the 2012-13 budgets.

3. PRU Funding

As detailed in a separate paper, the PRU will receive a delegated budget for the first time in April 2012. Arrangements for this will need to be incorporated into the funding formula for 2012-13.

4. Wirral Hospitals School

There is a requirement for Wirral Hospitals' School to make full time provision for education from September 2011 and to consider provision for primary age children in National Curriculum Years 5 and 6. The formula will need to be amended to fund these changes.

5. Special School Surplus Places

The trigger mechanism to accommodate a reduction in Special school places is likely to impact from September 2012 (see separate paper).

6. City Learning Centres

The current funding and use of City Learning Centres will be reviewed.

Schools will be consulted on any proposed changes in the autumn term.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That:

(1) the Forum notes the areas for consultation within the funding formula for 2012-13.

David Armstrong
Interim Director of Children's Services