

SUBJECT:	PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS FORMULA.
MEETING:	CABINET
DATE:	2nd March 2022
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To seek cabinet approval to amend the funding formula for delegating funds to schools to support pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That cabinet approves an amendment to the Additional Learning Needs formula to delegate funding to schools. This funding will be delegated based on proposal 1, 70% pupil numbers and 30% on the current band D and E (additional learning needs).
- 2.2 The changes to the funding are implemented for the 2022-23 budget from 1st April 2022.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 The funding for pupils with additional learning needs was last reviewed in 2009 and the current funding model agreed and put into place. Under the current model funding is delegated as a lump sum to all schools using an indicator of free school meals with additional funding delegated for individual pupils via a panel and depending on their needs agree a funding level.
- 3.2 To access funding pupils are assessed and provided with either a statement of educational needs or a school action plus resourced agreement, both may attract a level of funding depending on the needs of the pupil, however a statement of educational needs is a statutory document whereas school action plus is a resourced agreement unique to Monmouthshire.
- 3.3 Typically the funding provided will be Band D funding (£9,730) or Band E funding (£14,595). These values have not been increased for several years and all schools are required to use some of their school budget to meet need. It is a requirement that a minimum of 5% of the school budget is used to support pupils will additional learning needs.
- 3.4 This process is very bureaucratic requiring many forms and assessments to be completed and it is often criticised by Headteachers for being very time consuming and rigid. The funding follows the pupil and if the pupil leaves the funding will be removed which could result in a member of staff who is supporting that pupil being put at risk of losing their job.
- 3.5 During the summer term the school budget forum requested that a working group be set up to look at how the funding is delegated and to make proposals for any changes.

3.6 The principles agreed by the working group were:

- The funding should follow the pupil
- The funding should allow for current and future needs
- The formula should create sustainability in funding so schools can plan
- The funding should be able to be used flexible to meet needs
- There should be a contingency which will have strict criteria to support learners that move into Monmouthshire and are not previously known about
- No school will be identified as it is the principles that are to be agreed and not the effect on the individual school.

3.7 Following recommendation from the working group the school budget forum agreed to consult on two proposals:

Proposal 1

70% of the funding distributed on pupil numbers and 30% on current funding for band D & E within the school. For the purposes of this consultation the pupil numbers are taken as the September 2020 count which is in line with the existing formula and the band funding is from the October 2021 forecasting model.

Proposal 2

80% of the funding distributed on pupil numbers and 20% on current funding for band D & E within the school. For the purposes of this consultation the pupil numbers are taken as the September 2020 count which is in line with the existing formula and the band funding is from the October 2021 forecasting model.

3.8 The consultation paper is attached in appendix 1.

3.9 The proposal will delegate funding to the school for the school to use flexibly to meet the needs of the pupils with additional learning needs.

3.10 The funding initially will be for one year but after a review it is anticipated that the funding will be in place for 3 years which will allow schools to plan.

3.11 Where there is a large increase or decrease in funding schools will be protected for up to 3 years to manage the move to the new funding arrangements.

3.12 All schools have been fully consulted on the proposal and the working group comprised of Heads and Additional Learning Needs co-ordinators.

3.13 A contingency budget will be held centrally to support pupils that move into Monmouthshire and require additional resource. There will be clear criteria for schools to access this funding.

- 3.14 Under the new Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and Educational Tribunal Act, schools will have increased responsibility to identify and meet the needs of learners who have additional learning needs. The Code states that 'Maintained schools have a key role to play in identifying additional learning needs and in delivering Additional Learning Provision (ALP) to support learners with additional learning needs. They are directly responsible for identifying and meeting the needs of the majority of their pupils who have additional learning needs (1.83).
- 3.15 This consultation only covers funding for pupils with additional learning needs that attend a mainstream Monmouthshire school and does not include the delegated funding to the special resource bases, small class provision at King Henry VIII or placements in out of county or independent schools.

4. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

There were three options considered:

- 4.1 Status quo to make no changes to the formula, this was disregarded as it was felt that the current method is very bureaucratic and does not give schools the flexibility they require.
- 4.2 To consult on delegating funding using 70% on pupil numbers and 30% on current funding of band D's & E's in school. Band funding is for an individual pupil and is funded at £9,730 for Band D and Band E is funded at £14,595.
- 4.3 To consult on delegating funding using 80% on pupil numbers and 20% on current funding of band D's & E's in school. Band funding is for an individual pupil and is funded at £9,730 for Band D and Band E is funded at £14,595.

5 EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 5.1 A total of 17 responses were received and these are detailed in appendix 2.
- 5.2 15 responses were from schools, 1 was from a governor and 1 from the CYP select committee.
- 5.3 Proposal 1 (70% pupil numbers 30% band D's and E's) – 8 were for this proposal and 5 were against. This is the preferred option.
- 5.4 Proposal 2 (80% pupil numbers and 20% band D's and E's) – 5 were for this proposal and 8 were against.
- 5.5 4 responses chose no proposal but added comments which are detailed in the appendix 2.
- 5.6 Given the consultation responses the School Budget Forum recommends that Cabinet approves to amend the delegated funding model as detailed in proposal 1 (70% pupil numbers and 30% using existing band D and E funding).
- 5.7 There will be a full review of the proposal after 12 months.

6 REASONS:

- 6.1 To provide members with the details of the proposal to changes to the formula to delegate funding for Additional Learning Needs to schools.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 The current budget is split between schools and local authority budget; the proposal is to delegate all the funding to schools but to maintain a small contingency within the local authority to support new pupils that move into Monmouthshire.

- 7.2 Current Budget (band and lump sum):

• Delegated to schools	£3,471,508
• Central budget	£ 100,000
Total	£3,571,508

2022-23 Budget

• Delegated to schools	£3,627,011
• Central budget	£ 242,499
Total	£3,869,510

The central budget will act as a contingency budget to support any pupils moving into Monmouthshire.

The increase in budget of £298,002 is the pressure currently in the budget proposals for the 2022-23 budget.

- 7.3 The new proposal will allow schools better flexibility to support the needs of pupils and will reduce the need for schools to be applying for additional funding. Any in year pressures will need to be managed at a school level unless the pupil meets the criteria to apply to the contingency budget. A central database of all pupils and support required is updated at every monitoring meeting and this will be used to inform any future year pressures.

8 EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

- 8.1 This is detailed in appendix 3.

9 CONSULTEES:

All Headteachers
Chairs of Governing Bodies
Members of the School Budget Forum
Senior Leadership Team
Departmental Management Team
Diocesan Directors
All Elected Members.

10 BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Appendix 1 – Consultation paper

Appendix 2 – Consultation responses

Appendix 3 – Equality and future generations evaluation (including social justice, safeguarding and corporate parenting).

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