

**Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council**

**Schools Forum 6 February 2007**

**Report of the Director of Children's Services**

**Special Schools Formula Review**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To advise Schools Forum of responses received to the consultation regarding Special school budgets for 2007/08 (proposed new delegations and changes to the resource allocation formula for special schools) and to discuss the Director of Children's Services recommendation.

**Discussed at HTCF – BWG**

2. Yes – update provided on 10 January 2007.

**Actions for Schools Forum**

3. To note the proposals in paragraph 13 and advise the Director of Children's Services regarding the proposed new delegations and changes to the resource allocation formula.

**Attachments to Report**

4. Appendix A – Summary of responses received.

Karen Cocker  
Children's Services Finance Manager  
February 2007

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**Background**

2. Since July 2005, officers of the LA and the seven special school headteachers have been engaged in a detailed review of the formula currently used for the distribution of funds to Dudley's special schools.
3. A final meeting was held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2006 to agree the proposed matrix model for special schools.
4. At a meeting on 12 December 2006 the final draft consultation document was presented to Schools Forum for information; this document was issued formally on 21 November 2006.
5. The consultation period ended on 17 January 2007.
6. A total of 12 responses have been received and a brief summary is attached for information at Appendix A. A number of responses highlighted concerns over the weightings proposed; therefore the Director of Children's Services has given the special schools a further opportunity to discuss this issue before the 6 February 2007.
7. The outcome of the consultation is that the changes are generally supported, with agreement on the overall framework. Therefore it is proposed to adopt a matrix approach to funding the special schools in Dudley from April 2007. A verbal update of the outcomes of the additional special schools meeting regarding the weightings, reference paragraph 6, will be provided on 6 February.
8. The Assistant Director for Resources will revise the Planned Admission Numbers (PAN) for special schools for 2007/08 prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007. This is referred to in the consultation document.

**Finance**

9. The funding of schools is prescribed by the DfES through the School Finance (England) Regulations 2006.
10. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006, the Schools Budget is funded by a direct DfES grant: Dedicated School Grant (DSG).

### **Law**

11. Councils' LMS Schemes are made under Section 48 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Education Acts 1996 and 2002 also have provisions relating to school funding.

### **Equality Impact**

12. The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy is taken into account when considering the allocation of resources.

### **Recommendation**

13. Schools Forum note the intention of the Director of Children's Services to implement changes to the funding of special schools as detailed in the consultation document. This also incorporates a review of Planned Admission Numbers (PAN) with effect from April 2007.



**John Freeman**

**Director of Children's Services**

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