

Schools Forum 7 October 2008

Report of the Director of Children's Services

White Paper 'Raising Expectations: Enabling the System to Deliver'

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Schools Forum about the proposals set out in the White Paper 'Raising Expectations: Enabling the System to Deliver' and the implications for the Council.

Budget Working Group Discussed

2. No.

Action for Schools Forum

3. To note the contents of the report.

Attachments to Report

4. None.

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Background

2. In June 2007 the new Prime Minister made a written statement to the House of Commons in which he set out a number of changes to the machinery of government, notably the creation of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS).
3. Alongside these changes the written statement announced that funding and the responsibility for commissioning for 16-18 education would transfer to local authorities from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). *"This gives local authorities clear responsibility for 14-19 provision, in line with their responsibility for commissioning children and young people's services, and enables them to take decisions locally about how services can best be delivered for young people."*
4. The total revenue funding concerned amounts to £7 billion; for Dudley this equates to about £50 million. It is likely that the role of Schools Forum will extend to include 16-18 education after 2010.
5. Colleges will remain independent corporations, as they have been since 1993. General further education colleges will be sponsored by DIUS, though their pre-19 provision which will be commissioned by local authorities. Sixth form colleges and sixth forms in schools will have a closer relationship with local authorities. In each case, the local authority will not manage the provision but instead will commission it to meet the needs of the local populations and economy. Finally, work-based learning providers will remain entirely independent and will be commissioned to provide, for example, apprenticeships.

6. The White Paper 'Raising Expectations' published in July 2008 sets out the government's intentions in more detail. A detailed report recently presented to Select Committee on Children's Services is attached at Appendix A for further information.
7. There is no doubt that this presents a huge challenge; local authorities will have major new functions and duties, and will need to work with the existing LSC and colleges to secure a smooth changeover in August 2010. While this sounds some way off, the planning cycle for August 2010 starts in April 2009; so over the next six months or so there will need to be some extensive preparations.

Finance

8. The funding of schools is prescribed by the DCSF through the School Finance (England) Regulations 2008.
9. Schools Forums are regulated by the School Forums Regulations 2002 as already amended by the Schools Forums (Amendment) Regulations 2004 the Schools Forums (Amendment) 2005 Regulations and the Schools Forums (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008.
10. From 1st April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct DCSF 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 to note the report and the proposed funding transfer of 16-18 education in 2010.



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