

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Roger Gough,
Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and
Education

DECISION NO:

18/00060

For publication

Key decision: Yes

Reason Key: Affects 2 or more electoral divisions

Subject: School Funding Arrangements for 2019-20

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education, I agree to:

- a) introduce a split site factor, and
- b) repeat the 0.5% transfer of funds from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block in 2018-19 and to transfer a further 0.5% for 2019-20. Both transfers would be from 1 April 2019.

Reason(s) for decision:

The split site factor would be to recognise the genuinely unavoidable costs associated with schools with a single Department for Education (DfE) number but who operate on more than one site. The consultation focused on the principal if this was a factor that schools would like to see within their Local Funding Formula. Details of eligibility and funding rates are still to be developed (if there is support to introduce such a factor).

The reasons behind the proposal to transfer funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block to support the growing demand is set out in detail within our Consultation document.

Financial Implications:

The costs associated with both proposals would be fully met from the Dedicated Schools Grant and will not be a cost to Council funding.

Equality Implications

An EqIA assessment has been undertaken.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

This matter was initially considered by the Schools' Funding Forum on 28 September (this discussion focused on principals) before being considered by the Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 29 November and their views will be added following the meeting. The Schools' Funding Forum will also consider the consultation responses at their meeting on 30 November.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Almost half of those schools who responded to the consultation are not in favour of the introduction of a split site factor into the Kent Local Funding Formula, with only 35% in support of its introduction.

With regards to the High Needs transfer, if it proceeds, the LA is confident that it would be able to afford the LFF funding rates it has already published for 2019-20. Stability in school funding is paramount and that is why the Authority is confident that turbulence in school budgets will be avoided if this transfer is supported.

We consulted with schools about our High Needs Funding challenge – the upward pressure on provision and resources, and our proposal to transfer 1% of the SB to the HNB for 2019-20. Two thirds of those who responded to the consultation support our proposal to transfer 1% to the HNB. Over the medium term this transfer, along with management action, will place us in a stronger position so that we are more able to bridge the anticipated future High Needs funding demand within the anticipated funding levels.

Working with Special School headteachers, we have identified a further series of actions that are encapsulated in a SEND Action Plan which will be the vehicle for delivering sustained improvements over the next 18 months.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None

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signed

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date