

CABINET

9 March 2016

This report is submitted under Agenda Item 14. The Chair will be asked to decide if it can be considered at the meeting under the provisions of Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 as a matter of urgency in order for the Cabinet to be advised on the Government consultation launched on 7 March 2016.

Title: Schools National Funding Formula Consultation	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Education and Schools	
Open Report	For Decision
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: No
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Summary	
<p>On 7 March 2016 the Department for Education (DfE) launched two separate consultations, one on the schools national funding formula and the second on the high needs funding formula (for special educational needs). Both have potentially significant implications for Barking and Dagenham children and schools - it is possible that the funding reduction to the Borough's schools could be in excess of 8%.</p> <p>Last week London MPs gathered at the All Party Parliamentary Group for London to discuss the potential challenges for London's young people amid concerns that the Government's plans would not fully recognise the needs of more than one million children and young people across the capital. The Borough was represented at the event by the Cabinet Member for Education and Schools, the MP for Dagenham & Rainham and the Corporate Director of Children's Services who was one of the speakers. London Councils' Executive Member for Children, Skills and Education, Councillor Peter John, also issued the following statement to coincide with the consultation launch:</p> <p>"It is essential that we get this right - no child should be disadvantaged by school funding reforms. Therefore we will be responding to the government's consultation on the basis that there should be a levelling up of schools funding across the country."</p> <p>For the schools national funding formula, the main aspects that the DfE is seeking views on are the principles that underpin the formula and the pupil characteristics and school factors to be included in the formula. However, the DfE has given no indication of how they will be weighted and applied and what impact they will have. The DfE is also seeking views on its plans to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• introduce a school-level national funding formula where the funding each pupil attracts to their school is determined nationally;• implement the formula from 2017-18, allocating funding to local authorities to	

- distribute for the first 2 years, and then to schools directly from 2019-20;
- create a central schools block for local authorities' ongoing duties;
- ensure stability for schools through the minimum funding guarantee and by providing practical help, including a restructuring fund.

With regard to the high needs funding reforms, the DfE is consulting on the high level principles, key proposals and options to improve the way that high needs funding is allocated to local authorities, on the basis of a formula consisting of a number of factors. The DfE is also seeking views on proposals that it believes will:

- help local authorities and institutions understand their responsibilities for meeting the needs of children and young people with SEN and disabilities, including those with high needs, and to discharge those responsibilities effectively;
- encourage better partnership between local authorities and institutions in discharging their respective responsibilities under the Children and Families Act 2014.

Unfortunately, the DfE has only allocated six weeks for the consultation, which ends on Sunday 17 April. As the Cabinet's next meeting is not scheduled to take place until after the consultation period closes, it is proposed that delegated authority be given to officers, in consultation with relevant Members, to respond to the DfE on behalf of the Council.

There are no financial or legal implications associated with responding to the DfE consultation.

Recommendation(s)

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Schools, the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive, to respond to the consultation by the deadline of 17 April 2016; and
- (ii) Agree that details of the Council's response to the consultation be sent to all Members of the Council.

Reason(s)

To assist the Council in achieving its priorities of "Encouraging civic pride" and "Enabling social responsibility".

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

- Department for Education's Schools National Funding Formula Consultation (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/schools-national-funding-formula>)
- London Councils press releases (http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/node/28609?dm_i=192K,42ZE2,71LALI,ESPCN,1)
- (http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/node/28787?dm_i=192K,42ZE2,71LALI,ESPCN,1)
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List of appendices: None