

# DECISION PAPER

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**SUBJECT:** Schools Funding Reform

**DATE:** 17<sup>th</sup> October 2012

**RECIPIENT:** Schools Forum

## SUMMARY

Schools Forum recommended the new schools funding formula for consultation with all schools at the September meeting. Details of the proposed formula have been sent to all Head Teachers, Chair of Governors and Finance Officers and this report reports on feedback from the consultation and proposals for the final formula.

## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Forum:

- i. Makes the final recommendation on the new Southampton schools funding formula in the light of the consultation responses in particular proposals to:
  - include a split site factor
  - fund £450,000 through the PFI factor
  - allocate any “headroom” funding within the 2013-14 Schools Block to the PFI factor.

## REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Department for Education has set a deadline of the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2012 for Local Authorities to submit their new proposed schools funding formulas. The Forum is therefore asked to recommend the proposals for the new formula based upon feedback received from the consultation with schools. The final decision on the formula rests with the local authority.

## ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2. Four funding options were presented to the Forum at the September meeting. Discussion took place on each of the various factors contained within each option. Forum members then agreed which factors would form part of the final option that would then be sent out for consultation.

## BACKGROUND and BRIEFING DETAILS:

3. Consultation responses

The consultation paper included six questions centred around the proposed factors and the method adopted for funding the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) which is achieved by scaling back the gainers. The responses received are shown in Appendix A.



Summary of consultation responses

*Question 1 – Do you agree with the proposal to target deprivation at an IDACI level of 30% and above?*

Number of Responses: 8

Answers: 100% Yes

Further Comments: Range could be set at 27% and above as students with similar indices of poverty may miss out.

*Question 2 – Do you agree that there should be provision made for a Children Looked After factor?*

Number of Responses: 8

Answers: 100% Yes

Further Comments: None

*Question 3 – Do you agree that there should not be a split site factor within the new formula?*

Number of Responses: 8

Answers: 6 Yes. 2 No

Further Comments: Should not be an automatic right - but funding could target unavoidable costs – See Appendix B from Highfield Chair of Governors.

*Question 4 – Do you agree that there should be provision made for pupils who join a school not at the start of the academic year?*

Number of Responses: 8

Answers: 100% Yes

Further Comments: None

*Question 5 – Do you agree that schools should make a contribution to the PFI affordability gap?*

Number of Responses: 8

Answers: 100% No

Further Comments: No - This has been a City Council issue and should remain so.  
No - unfair to expect other schools to pick up the cost of poor decisions made in the past  
No - Grossly unfair to top slice money directly from students

*Question 6 – Do you agree with the proposal to scale back winners rather than limit all gains to a set percentage?*

Number of Responses: 8

Answers: 7 Yes. 1 No

Further Comments: No - seems unfair for schools to lose out on funding that they are due.