

SCRUTINY COMMENTS

National Funding Formula for Mainstream Schools

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee met on 01 December 2017 and considered a report concerning the National Funding Formula for Mainstream Schools. The Committee indicated its broad support for the recommendations included in the report, and agreed to pass on the following comments to the Executive Councillor as part of her consideration of this item.

- The Committee stressed the need to continue to lobby central government for a fairer funding formula for schools as Lincolnshire was still poorly funded area under the National Funding Formula.
- The Committee highlighted concern that due to the Governments tight timescales the consultation with schools had been conducted in a relatively short period of time, in addition the Committee highlighted the low response rate of 11%. Officers confirmed that the Local Authority had forewarned schools of the consultation and provided information to schools at Headteacher briefings.
- The Committee highlighted the need for funding to continue to adequately consider the sparsity factor and rural nature of Lincolnshire, in order to provide small and remote schools with additional funding and a degree of financial stability.
- The Committee highlighted concern in relation to Looked After Children (LAC) funding arrangements. Officers confirmed that the Local Authority had previously funded £600 per LAC within its local funding formula and to ensure schools are not financially disadvantaged would only adjust the schools baseline by £400 for each eligible LAC pupil to correspond with the pupil premium plus increase, therefore providing some protection within the schools baseline.
- The Committee queried the current arrangements with mobility funding in relation to areas within Lincolnshire where pupils may move to the County mid-way through the academic year which would be significant financial challenge to small rural schools. Officers confirmed that the Local Authority does not have a mobility factor currently within the local funding formula but would keep a close eye on the mobility fund as this was an area of risk.
- The Committee highlighted the reported need to review the targeted notional SEN funding mechanism in light of the schools national funding formula changes. Officers confirmed that all steps would be taken to not disadvantage schools as part of these changes.