

MINUTES OF THE MEETING Cabinet Member Signing HELD ON Tuesday, 21st January, 2025, 6pm – 6.10pm.

Councillor - Zena Brabazon – Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Schools.

ALSO ATTENDING: Ayshe Simsek, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager, Jane Edwards AD for Schools and Learning online and Muhammad Ali -Finance Manager (online)

27. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Cabinet Member referred to the filming at meetings notice and attendees noted this information.

28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

29. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

31. HARINGEY COUNCIL'S LOCAL SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA FOR 2025-26

The Cabinet Member for Children , Families and Schools considered the report which sought approval for changes to the Council's local schools funding formula for the 2025-26 financial year in line with the Schools National Funding Formula set out by the Department for Education (DfE).

This was following consultation by the Council with all maintained and academy schools in the borough. The local school funding formula is aligned with the National Funding Formula (NFF).

The Schools' Forum had met on the 16th of January 2025 to determine the funding formula for the financial year 2025-26 and Cabinet Member approval was now required following this meeting and the need for the Council to agree grant allocations.

It was noted that the funding allocation for the year 2025-26 must then be submitted to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) via the Authority Proforma Tool (APT) by 22nd January 2025.

In considering the report and recommendations, the Cabinet Member noted that the final de-delegations / block transfers and financial allocations to each school were set out at paragraph 5.9, table three, and had been agreed at the Schools Forum. It was confirmed that these figures took account of the de-delegation of £150,000 that would support the increased capacity in the Councils Schools Finance team, to better support schools experiencing financial difficulties.

It was further noted that there would be continued discussions with schools that were facing financial difficulties at a meeting in February.

RESOLVED

1. To note that Schools' forum convened on 16th January 2025 had approved the funding formula for the 2025-26 financial year for schools in Haringey, taking into account the following parameters:

- a) To adopt NFF Model as outlined in the consultation with schools to set Minimum Funding Guarantee of 0% for all schools;
- b) To note the transfer of 0.50% from the Schools Block allocation to the High Needs Block as agreed by the Schools' forum under the safety valve agreement with the DfE in December 2024;
- c) To agree the Growth fund be set at £300,000;
- d) To agree the de-delegation of £210,000 for Trade Union Representation (for maintained schools only).
- e) To agree the Block transfer of £122,000 from the Schools Block to the Central Block for Education Welfare Services, dependent on any necessary consent from the DfE;

2. To note that the schools' forum agreed on the funding parameters outlined in the recommendations "a" to "e" above on 5th December 2024.

3. To note that a further and more worked up proposal was presented to NLCs chairs on 9th January 2025, prior to the schools' forum meeting on 16th January 2025 to secure agreement for the de-delegate £150,000 from schools' budgets in 2025-26 to fund the increased capacity in the Councils Schools Finance team, to better support schools experiencing financial difficulties. Haringey provides finance support to 64 maintained schools and nurseries and as at Quarter 2 this year there are 37 Schools with forecast deficit balances compared to 32 at 31 March 2024, an increase of 5 schools. There is an overall Quarter 2 Schools forecast deficit of £5.6m, compared to £110,000 in March 2024, an increase of £5.5m since last year. There are currently 21 schools with Licensed Deficit Recovery Plans. This worsening position adds additional financial risk to the Council's General Fund and a more structured approach is required to manage schools in deficit.

4. To note that there are resource implications to the council associated with the support, interventions and improved governance needed to ensure there are sustainable solutions achieved over the longer term of which additional financial capacity is one. The proposal to agree the de-delegation of £150,000 has been retracted following a meeting with the NLC's lead on 9th January 2025.
5. Taking the above information and actions into account, to agree the local schools funding formula for the 2025-26 financial year.

Reasons for decision

The Council is legally required to set the local schools funding formula and must submit this to the ESFA by 22nd January 2025. These changes require approval by the Council to complete the Authority Proforma Tool, as required by the ESFA. Such approval can be given on behalf of the Council by the Lead Member of Children, Schools and Families.

Options Considered through consultation

All schools in Haringey were consulted on the proposed changes for 2025-26 to the Council's Schools Funding Formula via e-survey. The consultation started on 25th November 2024, with a deadline of 5th December 2024 for responses from Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors.

Table A shows options available and total responses received for all options.

Table A

Haringey Council					
Schools Block Funding Consultation 2025-26					
Response (Yes / No)	To support High Needs Block Transfer of 0.5% from Schools Block (as part of Safety Valve Program)	To set Growth Funding budget to £300,000	Block Transfer to CSSB of £122,000 for Education Welfare	ONLY For Maintained Sector Schools: Total amount de-delegated from maintained sector for Trade Union Facilities time of £210,000.	ONLY For Maintained Sector Schools: To support de-delegated budget from maintained schools for targeted support for Schools in Financial Difficulty of £150,000.
Yes	26	27	25	23	10
No	1	0	2	1	15
Total	27	27	27	24	25

Please review Appendix 2 for the consultation regarding the Schools Block Funding Formula for the 2025-26 period.

As a result of the delay in allocations for the 2025-26 financial year, consultation with schools was centered on identifying the proposed options presented in Table 1, and the Council opted to apply the 100% National Funding Formula

(NFF) values for the Schools Block funding formula, consistent with the agreement made in the prior financial year, 2024-25.

While it remained the Government's intention that a school's budget should be set on the basis of a single national formula, or NFF in 2025-26, local authorities are still allowed to use either the NFF formula values or locally agreed values within the allowable NFF range to determine funding allocations for schools. Through the consultation, Haringey adopts 100% of the National Funding Formula (NFF) factor values (with Area Cost Adjustments) and the proposed amounts/percentages for block transfers and de-delegation shown in table 2 below.

Table 2

Allocation type	Schools Affected	Description	Proposed Amount
Block Transfer	All Schools	HNB transfer at 0.5%	*£1,167,130
Top Slice	All Schools	Growth Fund/Falling Rolls Fund	£300,000
De-Delegation	Maintained only	Trade Union Facility	£210,147
Block Transfer	All Schools	CSSB for Education Welfare	*£122,000
Block Transfer	All Schools	EY for Nursery split site funding	**0
De-Delegation	Maintained only	Schools in Financial Difficulty Fund	£150,000

*Block transfers subject to disapplication request and Secretary of State approval

** The nursery school is currently operating on a single site, therefore no split site funding allocated

Haringey School Funding Formula 2025-26

The final settlement has been announced at £235.644m and the NFF funding requirements applied to the APT.

The allowable range for setting the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) for 2025-26 is between -0.5% to 0%. With the final settlement figures the MFG for Haringey schools is therefore set at 0%.

The highest permissible local block transfer is set at 0.5%. However, the schools' forum has agreed to authorise a total block transfer of 0.55%, which surpasses the established maximum. This 0.55% allocation consists of a block transfer of 0.5% directed to the High Needs Block (HNB) and an additional 0.05% allocated to the Central Schools Service Block (CSSB). A request for disapplication was submitted to the ESFA in December 2024. Given that the block transfer is agreed as part of the safety valve programme, approval is highly likely. This report has been prepared on the assumption that the request will be agreed upon.

Schools were consulted on a single model that corresponds with the 100% National Funding Formula (NFF) values for the financial year 2025-26. Since a Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) above 0% cannot be established, the allocations presented in Table 2 of Section 5.3 will necessitate setting the MFG at 0.01%. This adjustment will require a disapplication, which is unlikely to receive ministerial approval. To enable

an MFG at 0% will require an increase in Top Slice for the Growth Fund/Falling Rolls Fund of £328,254, compared to the £300,000 consulted upon and agreed at Schools Forum on December 2024. The final de-delegations/block transfers and financial allocations to each school to set MFG at 0%, to be agreed at Schools Forum on 16 January 2025, are detailed in Table 3 and Appendix 1.

Table 3

Allocation type	Schools Affected	Description	Proposed Amount
Block Transfer	All Schools	HNB transfer at 0.5%	*£1,167,130
Top Slice	All Schools	Growth Fund/Falling Rolls Fund	£328,254
De-Delegation	Maintained only	Trade Union Facility	£210,147
Block Transfer	All Schools	CSSB for Education Welfare	*£122,000

Appendix 1 outlines the financial allocations for each school for the financial year 2025-26.

Final allocations are subject to financial and data validation by the ESFA formula validation checks.

This decision would ensure that the Council would meet its legal obligations and would allow the authority to detail its schools block funding (SBF) formulae to model and confirm how it planned to fund for the funding year. Accordingly, the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee had agreed that the decision was both reasonable in all circumstances, and that it should be treated as a matter of urgency. This is in accordance with Part 4, Section H, and Paragraph 18 (a) and (b) of the Council Constitution.

CHAIR:

Signed by Chair

Date