

BUDGET WORKING GROUP

MINUTES FROM MEETING 23RD APRIL 2007

REPORT BY FINANCE MANAGER, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

HEREFORDSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM

6 JUNE, 2007

Schools Affected

All Primary Schools

Purpose

To receive and comment on the minutes of the Budget Working Group.

Financial Implications

The Budget Working Group will develop the budget strategy for the 2008/09 Schools Budget for consultation with schools followed by approval by Schools Forum in February 2008. It is important that Schools Forum is content with the approach being developed as the decisions will effect the all schools budgets.

Report

1. The Budget Working Group met on 23rd April 2007 and the minutes of the working group are attached as an Appendix.
2. The working group considered the following themes;

Social Deprivation funding – advice from Mr Clive Wilkinson GOWM.

GOWM had not received any further information from DfES but wanted authorities to target funds at schools with the most challenges. SEN factors could be counted towards the social deprivation target. A preliminary analysis of use of ACORN data appears to spread the deprivation funding more widely across schools than the current free meals on roll percentage factor, resulting in the most severely deprived schools losing funding. This is contrary to DfES expectations.

Strategic Financial Planning

Further consideration was given to the “protection” factors within the formula. It was generally accepted that the curriculum protection should not be reduced as this ensured a fair entitlement to education for all pupils. The management time flat rate for primary schools should not be reduced in order to avoid increasing stress and workload of heads of small primary schools. It was accepted that surplus premises protect (floor area above basic entitlement) could be reduced as it was funding empty premises and it this applies in all schools. The budget quantum for high schools and primary schools would remain as now and that there was no intention to transfer savings from primary schools to high schools or vice versa. It was noted that the need to maintain curriculum protection during a period of reducing resources would lead to questions of affordability which could only be answered by some form

of rationalisation.

School Review Process

It was accepted that the school review process should be speeded up.

3. The Budget working Party meets next on 16th July 2007 (pm) .

Recommendation

That the minutes of the Budget Working Group be noted.