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London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: **SCHOOLS' FORUM**

Date: **Thursday 26 November 2015**

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: **ALTERNATIVE PROVISION FUNDING**

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Chief Officer:

Ward: (All Wards);

1. Reason for report

This report seeks the views of the Schools Forum regarding the funding arrangements with Bromley Trust Academy (BTA) for the provision of services at the Pupil Referral Unit.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

The Schools Forum is asked to comment on the proposed funding arrangements.

3. COMMENTARY

3.1 The LA is currently finalising the contract with BTA for the provision of the Pupil referral Service across the Hayes and Midfield campuses.

3.2 Funding for AP settings and special schools is paid on the place plus approach, ie settings are funded for an agreed number of places, which is negotiated annually, plus top up funding which is based round the actual number of pupils.

3.3 The DfE regulations state that “ Top-up funding rates should be determined fairly and both local authority maintained schools, academies, free schools and independent schools should be treated on a fair and equivalent basis”. The guidance then goes on to suggest that top up funding could be estimated at the start of the year, and then reconciled to actual on either a termly or year-end reconciliation.

3.4 At present the top up funding for all special schools and units is reconciled to actual pupil numbers on a termly basis. As part of the initial contract negotiations with BTA it was agreed that the AP places would not be adjusted in the first year (ie Sept 14 –Aug 15) but would be adjusted in subsequent years.

3.5 BTA has expressed some concern around the financial viability of managing it’s budget in this way and the LA has therefore proposed a compromise to this as follows :

- BTA funded for 135 places being 45 at Midfield Campus and 90 at Hayes Campus.
- Hayes Campus places are funded at £10k plus £8k top up
- Midfield Campus places are funded at £10k plus top up of £14k for statemented pupils and £17k for non statemented pupils (as transport costs are funded form RSG for statemented pupils)
- LA is proposing that top up funding will be reconciled annually based on May census date, being the point at which pupil numbers are likely to be at their highest.
- Funding will be adjusted only where pupil number fall below 80% of agreed place numbers, at which point funding will be adjusted by 50%.

3.6 The Schools Forum powers and responsibilities states that SFs should be consulted on the number of places commissioned by the LA and the arrangements for paying top up funding and therefore is invited to discuss these proposals and to give a view on them.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 At present this funding is contained within the High Needs funding element of the Dedicated Schools Grant.