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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: **OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION - BULGE CLASS/EXPANSION FUNDING**

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Chief Officer: Director: Education (ECHS)

Ward: (All Wards);

1. Reason for report

This report provides detailed feedback on the consultation with schools regarding bulge class/expansion funding

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

The Schools Forum is asked to discuss and agree the funding methodology for 2016/17.

3. COMMENTARY

3.1 At their meeting on the 24th September, the Schools Forum considered the finding of the Sub Group and agreed to a full consultation with Schools.

3.2 Prior to the release of the consultation, Mandy Russell Head of Schools Finance Team was invited to attend the Primary Head Teachers Group to provide a detailed outline of the proposals and to invite questions and comments from the audience. This meeting was held on the 1st October, and discussions were led by Mandy Russell and Primary HT Schools Forum reps. There was no overall consensus of opinion from the Head Teachers present.

3.3 A circular outlining the proposals in detail was sent out to all schools however only ten responses were received. A detailed analysis of the responses and comments is attached at appendix 1.

3.4 From the consultation results, there is a very small split in favour of the current funding process. The Schools Forum regulations state the central spend level and the method for allocating growth funding is proposed by the LA and decided by the Schools Forum. In view of the lack of clear guidance from the consultation responses, it is very difficult for the LA to recommend either of the options before there has been an opportunity for full discussions with the Schools Forum.

3.5 The Schools Forum is invited to discuss this issue, but is reminded that if the preferred option is no change ie to continue to fully fund classes at 30 pupils then this could put significant pressure on the Schools Block Budget in future years and discussion should explore how this might be addressed.

3.6 However, it should be noted that even if the LA moves towards banded funding, if the additional classes continue to fill as expected ie to achieve more than 21 pupils then the pressure on this budget moving forwards will be inevitable.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The current budget agreed by the Schools Forum is £1.5m, which includes an additional £0.5m for 2015/16 and 2016/17, funded from general DSG underspend carried forward from previous years.

4.2 Current projections show that costs are likely to increase to around £1.8m in 2019/20, therefore leaving a shortfall of up to £0.8m that will need to be found in future years.