

CITY OF YORK COUNCIL

CONSULTATION RESPONSE SUMMARY –SINGLE FUNDING FORMULA

34 responses received: 14 Maintained, 18 PVI, 2 unknown

PROPOSAL 1: ANNUAL INDICATIVE BUDGET.

Do you agree with the proposal for the estimated number of hours to be based on the previous 3 terms actual data, with the opportunity for settings to amend the estimates prior to the start of the financial year?

Agree - 33 (97%)

Disagree - 1 (3%)

Comments:

- System must take account of significant changes and adjustments made to reflect these e.g. Increase or decrease in registered number at setting.
- Indicative budget should be given as early as possible to help providers when setting their budgets

PROPOSAL 2: PUPIL COUNTING ARRANGEMENTS.

a) Do you support termly counting arrangements being used for all settings?

Agree - 33 (97%)

Disagree - 1 (3%)

b) Do you support the proposal to fund on a half term basis for all settings?

Agree - 32 (94%)

Disagree – 0 (0%)

Unanswered – 2 (6%)

Comments:

- Would be good to have a system in place to be able to receive funding after the headcount, to encourage parents to start their children later in the term and not have to pay full fees.
- Do not want any additional forms to complete.

PROPOSAL 3: PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS.

Do you support the proposal to maintain the existing, but different, payment methods for the PVI and Maintained sectors?

Agree - 31 (91%)

Disagree – 3 (9%)

Comments:

- Subject to biannual/annual review
- Appropriate to use different methods for the different settings.
- With initial 85% payment reaching providers within the first week of term

PROPOSAL 4: ADJUSTMENTS TO ACTUAL NUMBER OF HOURS.

- a) Do you support the proposal to make the adjustment to PVI settings to reflect actual take up 3 times a year, i.e. in each of the 3 terms?

Agree – 30 (88%)

Disagree – 0

Unanswered - 4 (12%)

- b) Please indicate which is the preferred option for making adjustments to Maintained settings, to reflect actual take up:

- 1) Adjustments made during the year in the final monthly payment of each term 6 (43%) No preference 3 (21%)
2) The termly adjustments rolled up into one annual figure 5 (36%) (whether this is positive or negative) and carried forward into the Annual Resource Allocation Statement for the following financial year.

Comments:

- Large adjustments could result in difficulty in planning staffing or issuing contracts
- The last adjustment in March will be critical to the balancing/ setting of school budgets, must have before closedown and finalising the new start budget.

PROPOSAL 5: BASIC FUNDING RATE.

Do you agree with the following proposals for the basic funding rate?

- a) To allocate 95% of the total funding towards a basic hourly rate with 5% used to fund supplements for deprivation, SEN and transition arrangements?

Agree – 30 (88%)

Disagree – 1 (3%)

Unanswered – 3 (9%)

- b) To agree the principle of having one basic hourly rate covering both the PVI and Maintained sectors but move to this position over a period of time?

Agree – 21 (62%)

Disagree – 8 (23%)

Unanswered – 5 (15%)

- c) A lump sum arrangement to continue to apply for St Paul's Nursery school to recognise the unique nature of the only stand-alone maintained nursery?

Agree – 22 (64%)

Disagree – 6 (18%)

Unanswered – 6 (18%)

Comments:

- The move towards an equitable system is partial and significant differences remain; terms and conditions are different across providers, if we have equitable funding we should have an equitable system. High quality, expertly staffed, stable provision for young children in a community could be compromised with a partial approach; a quality measure in the formula could address this imbalance.
- EYFS makes a distinction between the levels of staffing for different types of provision so the funding should reflect this.
- The maintained sector is bound by teacher's pay and conditions and the CYC payment structure and the formula does not reflect this.
- If moving towards equitable funding there needs to be equitable expectations of staffing structures and quality and procedures in place to monitor quality in both maintained and PVI sector.
- Maintaining existing quality of staffing with reduced/ inequitable funding formula may lead to lowering of standards in KS1 and KS2, if main school budget is used to subsidise this. In some instances KS1 and KS2 are already subsidising Nursery Units.

Comments continued:

- It is difficult to work inclusively and in partnership when a setting may have a significant financial advantage, therefore able to offer 'a unique service' & meet a wide range of needs.
- Funding for nursery schools should not come from 'Early Years pot'. If seen as a setting which offers something different e.g. diagnostic nursery provision or SEN support, it should be funded differently, however, not just 'unique nature'. Settings are losing children to the nursery school, as they cannot attract the funding to meet their needs.

PROPOSAL 6: SUPPLEMENTS.

Do you agree with the proposal to use a maximum of 5% of the total available funding allocation to support the additional elements of the funding formula - deprivation, SEN and transitional arrangements?

Agree - 29 (85%)

Disagree - 1 (3%)

Unanswered - 4 (12%)

Comments:

- Would be better if they were 'extras', not top sliced off everyone's very small hourly rate.

PROPOSAL 7: DEPRIVATION.

Do you support the proposals that the distribution of the deprivation supplement should be:

a) based on the IDACI ratings?

Agree – 29 (85%)

Disagree - 3 (9%)

Unanswered – 2 (6%)

b) linked to the child, based on their postcode?

Agree - 28 (82%)

Disagree - 3 (9%)

Unanswered – 3 (9%)

c) allocated to all children whose postcode lies within the 30% most deprived areas of the country at a rate of £0.40 per hour?

Agree – 20 (59%)

Disagree – 5 (15%)

Unanswered – 9 (26%)

Comments:

- Some concern regarding how data used i.e. should be based on attendance of child across whole term not just on a census day.
- Consider it inappropriate that 'private' schools should be able to get this funding when children using these settings are not from 'deprived' backgrounds.
- Deprivation should not be a postcode lottery; consideration should be given to children from outside of limited postcodes.
- Based on postcode is not ideal, although perhaps the easiest to administer and hopefully the least costly.
- A broader measure of 30% to vulnerable groups e.g. travellers, single parent families, unemployed families, LAC and children with SEN would be fairer or based on benefits.

PROPOSAL 8: SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

Do you agree with the following proposals to support Special Educational Needs within all settings:

a) to retain a budget of £50,000 for SEN?

Agree – 31 (91%)

Disagree – 0

Unanswered – 3 (9%)

b) an SEN sub group to develop the criteria for accessing this support fund?

Agree – 28 (82%)

Disagree – 2 (6%)

Unanswered – 4 (12%)

Comments:

- Include ethnic minority children - growing number in York.
- Need much more info regarding the allocation of the funding –bidding process / clear criteria.
- Must include a quality assurance element to ensure funding has measurable impact.
- Should be used to fund all eligible children in all settings - schools should also have access to this money.
- Money must be released quickly.
- Need to work alongside existing on SEN arrangements.
- Sub group needs to have good representation from all parties - not just SEN department. They should review regularly, evaluate effectiveness, advise on future budget retention and deployment and help publicise to all sectors and make recommendations to Schools Forum.
- Need clarity on bidding process
- Historically additional funding has only been awarded if a pre-school child had a statement of special need. Early intervention and support should be at the heart of all we do.
- Should have criteria for individual severe SEN needs.

PROPOSAL 9: TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS.

Do you agree with the proposed transitional arrangements?

Agree – 33 (97%)

Disagree – 0

Unanswered – 1 (3%)

Comments:

- Transitional arrangements very important.

PROPOSAL 10: QUALITY.

Do you support the proposal not to include an element which directly incentivises quality within the new formula?

Agree – 29 (85%)

Disagree – 5 (15%)

Comments:

- Quality must be taken into account to improve overall quality
- Difficult element to moderate when maintained nurseries are Ofsted inspected differently to PVI/ private settings
- Keep under review. Should be national agreement on qualifications which covers maintained and PVI as the funding formula assumes there will be 'quality' in all settings.

11: SUSTAINABILITY.

Do you agree with the proposal to support sustainability issues via a contingency fund of £50,000 from the additional pathfinder grant?

Agree - 32 (94%)

Disagree – 1 (3%)

Unanswered – 1 (3%)

Comments:

- Needs to be more transparent.
- Clear, objective criteria need to be determined needs to be short - term allocation and responsive to immediate need, decisions scrutinised and quality assured.
- Need to monitor how this is allocated and how it is used.
- Used to address short term and in the main exceptional circumstances.
- What happens when the pathfinder grant ceases?

PROPOSAL 12: FLEXIBILITY.

Do you agree with the proposal to support flexibility from the Pathfinder grant and not via the new funding formula?

Agree - 32 (94%)

Disagree – 1 (3%)

Unanswered – 1 (3%)

Comments:

- Needs to be reviewed at a later date, especially when Pathfinder grant ceases.
- Vulnerable families captured under the pathfinder remain vulnerable and new ones arrive the problem does not go away.

PROPOSAL 13: ON GOING REVIEW.

Do you agree with the following review timescales:

a) Interim review in Autumn 2010?

Agree - 31 (91%)

Disagree - 0

Unanswered – 3 (9%)

b) Full review in Summer 2011?

Agree – 32 (94%)

Disagree – 0

Unanswered – 2 (6%)

Comments:

- Will changes (if any) be implemented straight away or will they be kept on hold till following April 2011 / 2012?
- Details on outcomes / actions from review need to be made available.

Additional Comments:

Comments:

- The costs of providing the service must at sometimes be taken into account to make for long-term sustainability for providers.
- Found form difficult to understand
- Remaining flexible will result in a substantial loss of funding leading to redundancies, less qualified staff or reduced spending on KS1/KS2 leading to loss of quality in these areas.
- Concerns surrounding any changes to admissions either locally or nationally - i.e. the impact on maintained nurseries. If all pupils start full time school in the year in which they are five funding/ staffing issues will be exacerbated as we can only admit pupils to a maintained nursery in the term following their third birthday NOTE this is not a plea to start them earlier.
- Further concerns regarding flexibility as York's current and proposed model relies heavily in funding through the Pathfinder grant. Should there be any difference to funding when this grant ceases there would be an additional impact.
- All criteria must be based on information from funding forms NOT single day census.
- Some additional costs, which will affect all settings, are increase in NI contributions from April 2011 and the obligation on employers who are not already doing so to contribute to pension schemes for their employees WEF 2012.
- Currently able to provide high quality early learning and care for families in our local community. The stability and quality of our provision supports community cohesion and provides a base for other support services to focus their work with local families. Because of our fixed costs and the quality of provision, the new formula brings into question our ability to maintain our current provision and offer flexibility to families with young children.
- These changes will compromise - parental choice, flexibility to meet needs of individual children, quality of provision across maintained settings through the need to reduce staff costs, reallocate from school budgets with a knock on effect
- Serious concerns about whether parents will understand the differences in terms of quality vs. ease and marketing.