

EE40. Implementing the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan in Falkirk's Schools

The Education Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which set out the current estimated financial savings target that Children's Services are expected to achieve in terms of the Council's current Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the proposed approach to achieving school level savings within the context of the Council's MTFP.

The MTFP was presented to the Executive on 25 September 2018 (ref EX58). This highlighted the need to address the estimated budget gap of £60m over the next 5 years.

A joint agreement between the Scottish Government and COSLA had been reached to progress aspects of the draft Education Bill, without the need for legislation. This included empowering schools and an expectation that Headteachers make decisions on their spending within the delegated budget received from the local authority. Until now, the local authority has been responsible for directing the school sector on the savings required.

The proposed approach to achieving school level savings was to adopt a "funding envelope approach", based on existing devolved school management (DSM) allocation, and that schools be tasked with identifying targeted savings from their envelope.

Service Managers and Headteachers would require to consult with their individual stakeholders on possible budget savings options. A proposed 4 week consultation timescale was outlined to allow feedback to be assessed and reviewed.

Appendix 1 to the report, outlined potential areas that schools are likely to consider for budget savings options.

Decision

The Education Executive agreed:-

- (1) the principle of requiring schools to identify targeted savings from their Devolved School Management (DSM) "funding envelope" as proposed at paragraph 4.1 in the report;**
- (2) that the Director of Children's Services direct Headteachers to consult locally with parents, staff, pupils and other stakeholders on the savings options likely to be considered in order to achieve their (school level) proportionate share of the savings that have been attributed to Children's Services in the MTFP, and**
- (3) that the Director of Children's Services report back on the development of schools' budget savings plans to the January meeting of the Education Executive.**