

## Call In Speech

A decision has been made to implement the National Funding Formula from April 2018.0

There are advantages to moving to the National Funding Formula now:

- All schools will benefit from an increase in their budget with a minimum of at least 0.5% extra spending per pupil.
- We have to adopt this National Funding Formula in 2020, so why not do it now?

However, although the National Funding Formula has its merits in that schools will get funding for a greater number of disadvantaged children, because the money is now spread more thinly, children living in areas of high deprivation will attract less funding than before.

We have been reassured that schools serving wards with the highest number of children from disadvantaged backgrounds would continue to be the highest funded schools in the area. However, this is only because until now, they have received more funding per pupil and so are at a higher level to start with. Also they will receive more pupil premium money, which is not connected with the funding formula.

The dilemma, continue with the current funding formula, where schools with our most disadvantaged pupils get more funding or adopt the new formula which will give all schools more money, but those schools in some of the most disadvantaged areas of B&NES will face a loss of up to £155,000, such as Twerton Infant and Junior Schools.

There is in fact a middle way, which is why I am supporting the "Call In". The B&NES Labour Group has suggested the following: The new National Funding Formula would be implemented immediately, but through drawing down a modest amount from Council Reserves, there would be a buffer to lessen the impact on those schools which would lose out most. No schools would lose out in cash terms, but those schools who may have expected a larger income than would be forthcoming, would be helped to adjust. This would mean in Year one, the cost would be £467,000 and in year 2, £233,500, a total of £700,500. This would mean in Year all schools get a best possible scenario financial settlement and this is then tapered in year 2 to help schools adjust from the real impact of the National Funding Formula 2020.

In a cash strapped Council you are probably thinking this is too much money to spend. However, consider in 2017, that our Council has bought property in excess of £28 million, borrowing in excess of the purchase price 100%. Taking into account the cost of borrowing and servicing this debt, the net income from this investment is £770,000.

Bearing this in mind, don't you think that with a modest amount from Council Revenues, we could be investing our money in our disadvantaged young people, in enabling schools in our most disadvantaged areas to adjust to the new formula. I hope you members of the Panel, you will send this decision back to the Cabinet Member to be reconsidered.