

FoI 202000096707

DOCUMENTS WITHIN SCOPE – REDACTIONS APPLIED

1. 6 September 2019 press release - £15m to recruit frontline staff

Available on the Scottish Government website:

<https://news.gov.scot/news/additional-support-for-learning>

2. Extract from 17 October 2020 briefing to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills on Education and Skills Committee pre-budget scrutiny letter of 30 September 2019, enclosing a draft reply.

[...]

Issues Raised in the letter

5. Within the letter the Committee is seeking further information on:-

Additional Support needs – particularly in relation to accuracy of data, the identification of specialised school staff and details on the PFG announcement of funding (£15m).

...]

[17 October 2020 briefing to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills – enclosed separately]

3. CONTRIBUTION TO BUDGET SCRUTINY – Letter to Education and Skills Committee - 25 October 2019

Available on the Scottish Parliament website:

https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Education/Inquiries/20191025IN_ltr_from_DFM_re_Pre_Budget_Scrutiny.pdf

4. 9 October 2019 email exchange with COSLA

From: [redacted]@gov.scot>

Sent: 09 October 2019 09:43

To: [redacted]@cosla.gov.uk

Cc: [redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted]@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Feedback from COSLA Children and Young People Board on the ASL principles - I need a response to complete COSLA Leaders Paper

Hi [redacted]

Concerns were also raised about a funding package for one year, halfway through the financial year and well into the academic year, it was felt that local authorities

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Commented [ER(2): 38(1)(b) - Third party personal data redactions applied

would be recruiting staff, pupils would get to know them, build relationships then the funding will stop and the staff will all be removed.

It appears that there has been a misunderstanding in that there has been an assumption that the funding is for one year only. We are going through spending review currently, but it is the intention that the funding will be baselined – we have drafted that into the SDG paper as it is relevant to their consideration.

If the funding is recurrent then the issue above would be removed:

On the issue of:

Finally concerns were raised about the finance just being for PSA's, the press release about 1,000 staff also raised discussions about them being poorly paid and term time staff and whether this was best use of this funding or whether higher skilled staff might make a greater impact.

You will recall from our initial discussions and the follow up discussion with [redacted] and [redacted] that the ask from DFM was for frontline staff and for there to be traction in support for pupils with additional support needs. You will recall that we discussed who frontline staff would be, and ruled out teaching staff and educational psychology because of the availability of teaching staff and the support already in place for educational psychology. Therefore, the rationale is that support staff will be able to make the difference sought more quickly. There is a joint recognition of the need to support further improvement of outcomes for children and young people with additional support needs. The aims and principles seek to provide the framework for that.

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The model that was used to estimate how many PSA's could be made available, was based on a Full Time week of 25 hours, term time, and at national living wage, and oncosts of 25%. Where the salaries used from adverts were below national living wage we upped it to align with national living wage.

I hope that this is helpful

Thanks

[redacted]

[redacted]

Support and Wellbeing Unit : The Scottish Government : Area 2-C North : Victoria Quay : Edinburgh : EH6 6QQ

Phone [redacted]: Blackberry [redacted]

Email: [redacted]@gov.scot

From: [redacted]@gov.scot>

Sent: 09 October 2019 09:03

To: [redacted]@gov.scot>

Subject: FW: Feedback from COSLA Children and Young People Board on the ASL principles - I need a response to complete COSLA Leaders Paper

[redacted]

Policy Officer | Support and Wellbeing Unit | Improvement, Attainment and Wellbeing Division | Learning Directorate | Scottish Government | 2C North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ | Tel: [redacted]/ [redacted] | [redacted]@gov.scot

From: [redacted]@cosla.gov.uk>

Sent: 09 October 2019 09:00

To: [redacted]@gov.scot>; Nicola Dickie <nicola@cosla.gov.uk>; [redacted]@gov.scot>

Cc: [redacted]@cosla.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Feedback from COSLA Children and Young People Board on the ASL principles - I need a response to complete COSLA Leaders Paper

[redacted]

I am looking to finalise the Leaders Paper for Nicola to read and ok it and the deadline to submit to our Senior Management Team is Friday, however, it is our COSLA Annual Conference on Thursday and Friday this week so in reality today is our deadline as there will not be an opportunity for Nicola to read after today and I'm at VQ today for a meeting from 1.30 till 5pm.

Can you please indicate when you can get back to me on the points outlined below in relation to issues raised by our Board on the principles, I am going to speak to [redacted] about the funding as my reading of the paper you have produced for SDG seems to indicate that the funding will now be recurring, is that so?

Regards, [redacted]

From: [redacted]@gov.scot>

Sent: 04 October 2019 17:03

To: [redacted]@cosla.gov.uk>; Nicola Dickie <nicola@cosla.gov.uk>; [redacted]@gov.scot

Cc: [redacted]@cosla.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Feedback from DFM on the ASL principles

Thanks [redacted].

We'll reflect on the feedback and come back to you.

Sent with BlackBerry Work (www.blackberry.com)

From: [redacted]@cosla.gov.uk>

Sent: 4 Oct 2019 14:54

To: [redacted]@gov.scot>; Nicola Dickie <nicola@cosla.gov.uk>; [redacted]@gov.scot>

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Commented [ER(5)]: 38(1)(b) - Third party personal data redactions applied

Commented [ER(6)]: 38(1)(b) - Third party personal data redactions applied

Cc: [redacted]@cosla.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Feedback from DFM on the ASL principles

[redacted]

Our board discussed the £15m additional funding, to feed views to COSLA Leaders who will consider when they meet on 25 October.

Principle 2 was highlighted as challenging ; “The resource should be used for support staff which are additional to that which is already provided by the authority.”

We were asked to question of how much flexibility there is in spending this funding, the following points were raised:

[redacted].

Some members said that they have already decided that existing provision is going to be reduced.

the concern is that the wording in principle 2 seeks to commit local authorities to maintain existing numbers – thereby ringfencing funding they already have out with this £15m package, thereby reducing their ability to set their own budgets based on the entirety of demand for all local authority services, not just ASL.

Concerns were also raised about a funding package for one year, halfway through the financial year and well into the academic year, it was felt that local authorities would be recruiting staff, pupils would get to know them, build relationships then the funding will stop and the staff will all be removed.

Finally concerns were raised about the finance just being for PSA’s, the press release about 1,000 staff also raised discussions about them being poorly paid and term time staff and whether this was best use of this funding or whether higher skilled staff might make a greater impact.

We will feed all these comments to Leaders when they discuss the funding package on 25th October. Any clarification you can give on the ask on flexibility, and continuity of funding in future years, will be shared in our paper to Leaders.

Regards,
[redacted]
Policy Officer
COSLA
Children and Young People
Verity House
19 Haymarket Yards
EDINBURGH
EH12 5BH
Tel [redacted]

[19 September 2019 emails in this exchange are considered out of scope]

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[9 to 16 August 2019 emails in this exchange fall outwith the timeframes of the request]

5. 22 July 2020 email exchange on measuring £15m commitment

From: [redacted]@gov.scot>
Sent: 22 July 2020 13:41
To: [redacted]@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Support staff

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We went with 1,000 for £15M (which was at the low end of estimated based on the job adverts [redacted] found) but relied on jobs being 25 hours and term time.

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[redacted]

Commented [ER(12): Out of scope

From: [redacted]@gov.scot>
Sent: 22 July 2020 12:57
To: [redacted]@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Support staff

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[redacted]

Commented [ER(14): Out of scope

What did we agree £15 equated to – 850 (notional) FTE?

From: [redacted]@gov.scot>
Sent: 22 July 2020 12:50
To: [redacted]@gov.scot>
Cc: [redacted]@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Support staff

Hi [redacted]

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It was agreed that working in partnership with local government, the funding will be used to secure additional frontline staff in this academic year 2019/20 (this is also being baselined £15m going forward).

One of the key principles that was agreed was:
• The resource should be used for support staff which are additional to that which is already provided by the authority.

[redacted]

From: [redacted]@gov.scot>
Sent: 22 July 2020 12:25
To: [redacted]@gov.scot>

Cc: [redacted]@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Support staff

Hi [redacted],

I just spoke to [redacted] about this – and there was one thing we wanted to check which will determine how much our stats can help to monitor this commitment (apologies if we have already asked this).

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What have LAs agreed to in terms of this funding?

Is it to provide £15M worth of additional Pupil support Assistants compared to their previous provision in 2019-20?

Or is it to provide £15M worth of Pupil Support Assistants above their previously planned for provision for 2020-21?

Thanks,
[redacted]

[redacted] Senior Assistant Statistician
Learning Analysis | Education Analytical Services
[redacted]@gov.scot
WFH – if urgent contact on [redacted]

Commented [ER(17): 38(1)(b) - Third party personal data redactions applied

[13-14 July 2020 emails in this exchange are out of scope]