

Schools Funding Update – November 2020

To: Cambridgeshire Schools Forum

Date: 6 November 2020

From: Jonathan Lewis – Service Director: Education
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Purpose: To provide Schools Forum with an update on the latest national funding announcements and local funding formula proposals for the 2021/22 Schools budget setting round.

Recommendations:

2021/22 School Funding Arrangements

- 1) Schools Forum are asked to note and comment on the national funding announcements.

Consultation Process and Responses

- 2) Schools Forum are asked to comment on the responses received to the consultation and the proposed Local Authority (LA) approach.
- 3) *Schools Forum are asked to vote on the approval of a block transfer between the Schools Block and High Needs Block.*
- 4) *If the transfer is approved, at what level should it be set:*
 - i) 0.5%
 - ii) 1.0% (would require Secretary of State approval).

De-Delegations

- 5) Maintained Primary representatives on Schools Forum are asked to approve the continuation of de-delegations in respect of:
 - i) Contingency
 - ii) Free School Meals Eligibility
 - iii) Maternity
 - iv) Trade Union Facilities Time

Central Schools Services Block

- 6) Schools Forum are asked to approve:
 - i) *the reduction in Contribution to Children's Services from £1.5m to £1m for 2021/22.*
 - ii) *the continuation of the £733k to support early intervention family workers.*
 - iii) *the transfer of £1,085k from the Central Schools Service Block (CSSB) to the High Needs Block.*
 - iv) *the continued use of the retained duties funding within the CSSB to support ongoing functions.*
 - v) *the continued retention of £10 per pupil from maintained schools for services specifically provided to maintained schools.*

7) Schools Forum are asked to comment on *the proposal for Schools to be charged for 40% of the current Broadband costs following the further reduction in funding.*

Growth Fund and New School Funding

8) Schools Forum are asked to approve:

- i) the continuation of the current growth fund criteria and funding rates for 2021/22*
- ii) the continuation of the centrally retained growth fund to £2m.*
- iii) the variation to pupil numbers for new schools.*
- iv) the underwriting of pupil numbers for new schools in the future – subject to changes in national policy*

1.0 Context

1.1 The presentation (appendix 1) accompanying this report provides information to support the 2021/22 Schools budget setting process and will cover the following areas:

- 21/22 School Funding Arrangements
- High Needs Block
- Illustrative Budget Modelling
- Consultation Process & Results
- Centrally Retained Funding
- Growth Funding / New Schools
- Next Steps

1.2 The presentation contains a summary of the results of the consultation which closed on 23rd October. A full transcript of the narrative responses to the consultation questions can be viewed at appendix 2.

1.3 During the presentation by Officers, Members of Schools Forum will have opportunity to comment on the content and where necessary will be asked to make decisions on a number of areas including:

- Proposed block transfers
- De-Delegations (maintained primary schools only)
- Centrally Retained Funding
- Growth Funding (full detail at appendix 3)

1.4 Further information will be presented at the December or January meeting of Schools Forum once updates have been received from the Department for Education (DfE).

1.5 The budget consultation paper has been shared with Cambridgeshire MPs and a briefing session was held on the 23rd October to outline the key changes and the pressures faced by Cambridgeshire schools as a result of this budget settlement. We have been requested to provide some further information to allow MPs to make representation on the budget pressures faced for small schools, in the high needs block and for the ongoing exceptional costs of making schools Covid-19 compliant.

Background documents: Appendices 1-3.

- 1.6 The table below shows the main decision making powers and responsibilities for items relevant at this meeting (other powers such as decisions in respect of deficits, contracts and changes to the Scheme of Financial Management do not apply to the items covered above.)

Function	Local education authority	Schools forum	DfE role
Formula change (including redistributions)	Proposes and decides	Must be consulted	Checks for compliance with regulations
Movement of up to 0.5% from the schools block to other blocks	Proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal
Minimum funding guarantee (MFG)	Proposes any exclusions from MFG for application to DfE	Gives a view	Approval to application for exclusions
De-delegation for mainstream maintained schools	Proposes	Maintained primary and secondary school member representatives	Will adjudicate where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal
General Duties for maintained schools - Contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for maintained schools	Proposes	Would be decided by the relevant maintained school members (primary, secondary, special and PRU).	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal
Central spend on and the criteria for allocating funding from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth - pre-16 pupils, including new schools set up to meet basic need, whether maintained or academy Falling rolls - funding for good or outstanding schools with where growth in pupil numbers is expected within three years 	Proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal
Central spend on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> high needs block provision central licences negotiated by the Secretary of State 	Decides	None, but good practice to inform forum	None

