

Agenda Item:

Meeting: Schools Forum

Date: 8th March 2010

Subject: Schools Specific Contingency Budget

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children, Families and Learning

Summary: To update the Schools Forum on the use of the Schools Contingency Budget for 2009/10 and recommend the Budget for 2010/11.

Contact Officer: Dawn Hill, Borough Hall, Bedford

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Council

Reason for urgency
(if appropriate)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. To discuss and comment on the position statement as at Period 10.**
- 2. To propose the General Contingency Budget to be set at £500,000 for 2010/11 and the SEN Contingency £480,728.**

Background

- The Schools Specific Contingency Budget falls under Schedule 2 of The School Finance Regulations 2008. 'Classes or descriptions of planned expenditure prescribed for the purposes of the Schools budget of a Local Authority which may be deducted from it to determine the Individual Schools Budget' (top slice Direct Schools Grant – DSG).
- At the Central Bedfordshire School Forum on 2nd March 2009, the following budgets were agreed:
 - £500,000 General Contingency
 - £270,000 SEN Contingency plus £200,840 to finance the shift of funding between the two new authorities arising from the Special Schools Funding Formula review. This will apply to 2009/10 and 2010/11 only, thereafter the new national formula for DSG distribution will be in place. The recurrent budget of £270,000 is the balance of the former allocation to Rainbow School (now closed), where it was agreed that the funding would be retained for SEN provision.
- Total Budget agreed 2009/10 £970,840

The School Contingency carry forward from Bedfordshire County Council for Central Bedfordshire, as at 31st March 2009 is £671,100 which is to be split into General

(£283,260) and SEN Contingency (387,840 of which £218,767 earmarked for the Oakbank building project).

4. The General Contingency budget will be utilised to fund the following:

- Rent and Joint Use equalisation charges;
- Rates adjustments that have arisen from re-valuations or an adjustment to original formula;
- Lease/planning permission associated with curriculum classes;
- Attendance Manager Post;
- Adjustment to Formula i.e. floor area, teacher threshold, NQT, additional pupil numbers;
- DSG shortfall;
- Redundancy / Safeguarding costs;
- Funding of exceptional circumstances, with up to £10,000 delegated to the Director of Children's Services;

General Contingency Spend to 31st January 2010

5. The following table sets out spend against General contingency to date for 2009/10.

	BUDGET £	SPEND £	BALANCE £
Carry Forward from 2008/2009	283,260		
Budget Allocation 2009/10	500,000		
Attendance Manager Post		40,000	
Floor Area Adjustment		11,183	
Lump Sum Adjustment		20,000	
Rates Adjustments		11,941	
Pupil Headcount Adjustment		126,292	
Rent and Joint Use		20,340	
Lease Reviews		550	
DSG Adjustment		4,000	
NQT Adjustment		1,594	
Teacher Threshold Adjustment		-1,187	
LACSEG		444	
Redundancy/Safeguarding costs		-9,494	
Total General Contingency	783,260	225,663	557,597

6. The detail on the spend is as follows -

- As agreed by the School Forum, 2 March 2009, to fund through contingency a further years trial period (2009/10) for an Attendance Manager post to a total cost of £40,000 but to be self funded through the buy back arrangements for 2010/11.
- Floor Area adjustments to the initial allocation of SBS.
- Lump sum adjustment as agreed by School Forum 25th January 2010 for St Vincent School
- Rates adjustments have arisen from re-valuations or an adjustment to original formula.
- Adjustment to pupil funding where increase exceeds 4% of school population.
- Equalisation of costs relating to joint use facilities and leased buildings.
- DSG shortfall of £4,000. Final settlement less than budgeted (1 pupil).
- An adjustment to the initial allocation of funding for NQT.
- Refund on the funding of Teacher Threshold.
- Academy costs (LACSEG) £444. Revised estimate of DSG withheld for

Northfield's Academy.

- Funding of safeguarding and redundancy costs where budget led.

7. It is anticipated that the balance of £557,597 will be fully committed by year end due to the number of redundancy costs currently in progress. The policy for funding safeguarding and redundancy costs, where budget led through contingency, may become an issue in 2010/11 due to the increased number of schools restructuring as a result of falling pupil numbers and budget difficulties.

SEN Contingency Spend to 31st January 2010

8. The following table sets out spend against SEN contingency to date for 2009/10.

	BUDGET £	SPEND £	BALANCE £
Carry Forward from 2008/2009	387,840		
Budget Allocation 2009/10	470,840		
Special School Review Adjustment		200,840	
Outreach		195,450	
Consultation		4,420	
Total SEN Contingency	858,680	400,710	457,970

9. The detail on the spend is as follows –

- To finance the shift of funding between the two new unitary authorities arising from the Special Schools Funding Formula review.
- Funding Special School Outreach work.
- Consultancy on the future of special schooling.

10. It is anticipated that the balance of £457,970 will be fully committed by year end.

Recommendations:

11. It is recommended that the General Contingency budget should remain at £500,000 for the 2010/11 financial year and the SEN Contingency budget £480,728.

The SEN Contingency is made up of the former allocation to Rainbow School (now closed), where it was agreed that the funding would be retained for SEN provision of £275,670 and the second and final year's payment of £205,058 to finance the shift of funding between the two new authorities arising from the Special Schools Funding Formula review.

Appendices:

None