

Agenda Item: 10

Meeting: Schools Forum
Date: 28th June 2010
Subject: 14 - 16 Practical Learning Opportunities
Report of: Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children Services
Summary: To brief the Schools Forum on the devolved funding of the DSG Practical Learning Options.

Contact Officer: David Bray
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the forum notes the recommendations that will be made to the 14-19 partnership strategy group on June 15th.
 - (a) This information has already been shared with schools through a note to all head teachers explaining that the way funding is allocated will change for this financial year.
 - (b) The information has been planned by the Central Bedfordshire 14 – 19 finance sub-group (school and FE College representatives) and discussed by the Central Bedfordshire 14 – 19 Operational Group (May 2010)

Central Bedfordshire Practical Learning DSG 2010/11

Context

1 The practical learning grant is given by central government to support the learning of students who made need additional input in order to access practical and vocational courses.

2 Most recent guidance from Central government:

We expect LAs and schools to continue to draw on the £110m within the DSG baseline, which was earmarked to support practical and applied learning provision. In local authorities where consortia are delivering Diplomas in 2008-09 they will be receiving Diploma specific grant, the existing funding within DSG could also be drawn on to support any exceptional local costs attaching to Diploma delivery which cannot be met from the Diploma grant allocation, allocations of which will be announced later in December.

- 3 The grant for 2009/10 was managed through the 14 – 19 shared service and the 14 – 19 strategy group for Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire.
- 4 The amount allocated for 2010/11 is £555,818 (this takes account of a top slice by the Department for Education for All Saints Academy). £71,784 has been allocated to commitments for the students currently in year 10 for their continued diploma delivery in 2010/11 (this is a commitment to the previous shared arrangements with Bedford and Central Bedfordshire). This uses the previous method of allocating funding.
- 5 This leaves £473 000 to:
 - support students starting diplomas in September 2010
 - all other vocational options (either as a commitment to those in Y10 and needing provision in Y11, or those students starting courses in September)

Foundation Learning

- 6 Additionally the Central Bedfordshire Consortium will receive £115,613 for Foundation Learning. This was previously known as School Engagement Programme 'SEP'. The funding will be aligned with the 14 – 19 Practical Learning grant and used to purchase appropriate practical learning and engaging activities for the identified young people. The management and reporting arrangements will be through the 14 – 19 Strategy and Operational groups for Central Bedfordshire. Up to £12,000 will be used to manage and evaluate the programme.

Diploma Support grant

- 7 For 2010/11 Central Bedfordshire will also receive a diploma support grant. The grant is designed to provide funding for delivery in the 2010/11 academic year

Post-16 funding rates

- 8 The LSC/YPLA funding of post-16 Diplomas will not be based on this whole Diploma rate, but on the National Funding formula for all 16-18 learners and will be routed through the YPLA.

Allocation of funding 2010/11

- 9 In February 2010 schools were notified that there was an intention to move towards a student-led model for allocating the DSG practical learning funding. The allocation of funding in Central Bedfordshire is based on some key principles:
- Supporting students already on courses so that they can achieve
 - Supporting those courses that the Central Bedfordshire 14 – 19 partnership have agreed in their roll out plan for 2013 and which fit within the four suites of learning set out in current legislation.
 - Supporting other vocational courses that have been agreed for September 2010 and where students have been recruited. If legislation does not change these courses will not be supported for delivery in September 2011 unless they sit clearly within the four suites of learning.
- 10 These principles will need to be revised and adjusted in the light of the most recent government legislation.

This arrangement means that:

- The LA, on behalf of the partnership, will invoice each school that sends a student on a practical learning course for the equivalent part of the AWPU – for example one day delivery per week for a course is one fifth of the AWPU for that student. Any shortfall in costs of purchasing provision, transport etc. will be funded through the DSG.
- The cost of delivery will be calculated using the agreed Central Bedfordshire practical learning calculator and the costs will be distributed to the provider on behalf of the 14 – 19 Consortium using the AWPU element and DSG funding. Any re-distribution of funding (for example where delivery is shared will be managed through internal transfers between providers).
- The costs of transport will be managed through this process on behalf of the providers and paid by the LA on behalf of the consortium. Only transport arrangements made through the LA client transport team on behalf of the consortium will be funded. Providers making their own arrangements will be responsible for the costs.
- Any surplus will be managed through the Central Bedfordshire 14 – 19 Strategy Group and Operational Group.

Conclusion and Next Steps

- 11 The planned funding model will have some benefits compared to the present arrangements:
- transport can be planned strategically and more economically
 - the partnership will be able to evaluate the effectiveness of current provision more effectively
 - additional grant funding from central government is used to support learner needs more directly and there is greater transparency over how this funding is allocated.

Appendices: none