
Meeting: Schools Forum
Date: 21 January 2013
Subject: Revision to the Scheme for Financing Schools
Report of: Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services
Summary: To update and make recommendations following the recent consultation on a proposed revision to Section 4.10 of the Scheme for Financing Schools – Asset Loan Scheme

Contact Officer: Dawn Hill, Technology House, Bedford
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. That the proposed change to the Scheme for Financing Schools is approved**

Background

1. Central Bedfordshire Council's Scheme for Financing Schools sets out the financial relationship between the authority and the maintained schools which it funds. It is based on the legislative provision in Section 45-53 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the School Finance Regulations.
2. All proposals to revise the scheme must be approved by the Schools Forum, though the authority may apply to the Secretary of State for approval in the event of the forum rejecting a proposal or approving it subject to modifications that are not acceptable to the authority.
3. Subject to the provisions of the scheme, governing bodies of schools are empowered to spend budget shares for the purposes of their schools. They may also spend budget shares on any additional purposes prescribed by the Secretary of State in regulations made under Section 50 of the Act.
4. The LA may suspend a school's right to a delegated budget if the provisions of the authority's financial scheme (or rules applied by the scheme) have been substantially or persistently breached, or if the budget share has not been managed satisfactorily.
5. The LA will publish their scheme and any revisions to it on a website accessible to the general public, by the date the revisions come into force, together with a statement that the revised scheme comes into force on the date.

6. The existing Scheme for Financing Schools section 4.10 Asset Loan Scheme had not been updated since adopting the Bedfordshire County Council Scheme for Financing Schools in 2009. The School Forum agreed at their meeting in November 2012 to consult with all maintained schools to update this section.

Update

7. On the 27th November 2012 all Maintained schools were emailed a letter detailing the proposed change. An article was also placed in Central Essentials and the School Finance website updated to alert schools to the consultation. The consultation closed on the 21st December 2012.
8. Three responses were received with no issues raised. Queries regarding eligibility have been responded to.
9. The proposed revision to section 4.10 of the existing Scheme for Financing Schools is shown in Appendix A, and the details of the Loan Scheme criteria and application form in Appendix B.

Recommendation

10. To approve the proposed change to the Scheme for Financing Schools, Section 4.10 – Asset Loan Scheme.

Appendices:

- A – Extract of the Scheme for Financing Schools section 4.10 Asset Loan Scheme
- B – Proposed Asset Purchase Loan Scheme