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**Meeting:** Schools Forum  
**Date:** 4 March 2013  
**Subject:** Briefing Note from Schools Asset Management Planning sub group  
**Report of:** Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services  
**Summary:** This Briefing Note provides an update, from the School Asset Management Planning sub group, regarding Schools Capital, School Premises Regulations and Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme.

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**Contact Officer:** Keith Armstead, Senior Education Officer (Planning)  
**Public/Exempt:** Public  
**Wards Affected:** All  
**Function of:** Council

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

**The Committee is asked to:**

- 1. Note the contents of the Briefing Note and**
- 2. approve the circulation of the Briefing Note via the Council's publication 'Central Essentials'**

**Schools Capital**

**1 Conditions Survey update**

As previously advised, the Education Funding Agency (EFA) has commissioned condition surveys of the schools estate (for Central Bedfordshire Council this is being undertaken by EC Harris) and many schools will have already had visits for this purpose. The EFA have advised that this will now be completed and validated by Oct 2013, so the data will be able to be used to influence the funding bid to treasury ready for the next comprehensive review period/parliament. In the meantime, existing data/methodologies will be used to allocate Strategic Capital Maintenance (SCM) funding to Local Authorities (reduced proportionately according to numbers of pupils in Academies), with a separate SCM funding process (via bids) to the EFA for all Academies.

- 2 It is also intended that the condition data sets will, once completed, be available to individual schools and Responsible Bodies for their information and use.**

### 3 James Review recommendation on single funding pot

Nothing further to report on this. No further consultation has/is being undertaken at present and there is no time-table for any potential changes. It is therefore unlikely that any changes would be brought about ahead of the next comprehensive spending review period.

### 4 Department for Education Capital Allocation

- a) Basic Need – The Schools Capacity data return (SCAP) for 2012 was amended to enable Local Authorities to break down their capacity data and forecasts into smaller planning areas which has been welcomed. For CBC, this has been broken down into the same 8 planning areas as used in the School Organisation Plan. EFA have held a number of consultation meetings with representative bodies to consider options for the allocations methodology for the future. Allocations for 2013/14 (and hopefully 2014/15) are set to be announced in early February and DfE/EFA have agreed to publish more detailed information for Authorities so that they can see more clearly how their individual allocation has been calculated.
- b) Strategic Maintenance – As set out above, allocations for the next 2 years will be expected to be based on a similar methodology as for 2012/13. Again, as for Basic Need, an announcement is expected in early February.
- c) LC VAP – To date, there is no indication of any proposed changes to LCVAP, other than the likely proportionate reduction in funding according to numbers of pupils in Academies. As with Basic Need, we are hopeful that the new allocations will be for more than 1 year, although the funding for the second year would have to be provisional.

### **School Premises Regulations**

- 5 As previously indicated the new School Premises Regulations (SPRs) are in force for maintained schools (as of 31/10/12) and for Independent schools and Academies from 1 January 2013. These do not apply to Alternative Provision free schools/academies.
- 6 Whilst there are some changes resulting from the removal of duplication, for example with matters covered elsewhere in Building Regulations and Health & Safety, the most significant changes relate to the removal of the Statutory Minimum requirements for numbers of WCs and playing pitches according to the numbers of pupils on roll. Instead all schools will now have to provide suitable toilet and washing facilities and suitable outdoor space.
- 7 Whilst there are guidelines in terms of WC provision, there are none for playing pitches. However, in conjunction with the new SPRs there is revised advice on the protection of playing fields which contains a new formula to calculate the level of protection that will be expected to be afforded to schools below which an application to dispose of playing field land is less likely to be approved. Similarly, the new advice provides clarity that such protection also extends to Academy land for a period of 10 years from the date of conversion.

- 8 The guidance regarding changes to the standards for school premises can be found via this [Link](#) and on the DfE website at <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/schoolscapital/a00212403/changing-standards-school-premises>

The advice on the protection of school playing fields can be found via this [Link](#) and on the DfE website at <http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00216527/advice-school-playing-field-protection>

## 9 Area Guidelines

Currently there is no indication as to when or whether a new set of area guidelines will be produced to replace the current Building Bulletins, in particular BB99 for Primary and BB98 for secondary schools. However, many schools will have seen the DfE's Standardised designs for Primary and Secondary schools in the Priority Schools Building Programme which effectively provide a 13% reduction in overall area for Secondary schools and a 6.5% reduction in primary schools. Currently, CBC is working to the existing BB99 and 98 but will consider whether any changes should be made to this when and if a new overall set of area guidelines is produced.

## **Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme**

- 10 It had been expected that the Council would have to participate in Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) when the second phase starts this year.
- 11 One of the main issues that had significant implications for the Council related to the treatment of schools and academies in CRC and who would be responsible for the carbon allowances to cover their emissions.
- 12 In December 2012 the Department for Energy & Climate Change (DECC) finally published their response to the consultation on simplifying the CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme and one of the main points, that we now have clarification on, is that -

- All schools are out of CRC, although they will be required to report annually on energy use and DECC/DfE will be putting in place "alternative robust measures that will incentivise and support schools to obtain both energy cost and emission saving". This will take away a combined potential financial burden of £216K per year from schools in Central Bedfordshire.