

Meeting: Schools Forum

Date: 24 March 2014

Subject: DfE capital allocations 2014/15 to 2016/17

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services

Summary: To advise the Forum of the total Department for Education capital allocations to schools and the Council for 2014/15 and for 2014/15 – 2016/17 for Basic Need and to invite the Forum to note the Council level allocations

Contact Officer: Rob Parsons

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Council

Reason for urgency
(if appropriate)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Forum is invited to :

- (i) note the overall Department for Education allocations for 2014/15 and for 2014/15 to 2016/17 for Basic Need.**

Background

1. In December 2013, the Department for Education set out its capital allocation to Local Authorities for the next financial year 2014/15 to support the delivery of the Universal Infant Free School Meal entitlement which will commence in September 2014. This announcement also provided funding for VA schools. The December announcement of the Department for Education also set out its capital allocation to Local Authorities for Basic Need for 2014/15 to 2016/17.
2. The Council has since announced the allocations of Universal Infant Free School Meals capital that it will make to each eligible LA maintained school utilising the same DfE methodology used to calculate the Local Authority level allocation. This approach has also been adopted by both RC and CofE dioceses for VA schools.
3. The DfE announcement of the Basic Need allocation for the next three years, previously only single year allocations, has been made in response to concerns from Local Authorities and will provide the Council with greater certainty in its planning of the New School Places Programme to meet the demand for statutory school places.
4. As a result of changing DfE methodology for determining basic need allocations there is a decrease on the 2014/15 allocation, for 15/16 and 16/17. The changing methodology has impacted Local Authorities in different ways with the biggest reduction for one Local Authority equating to 80% reduction over previous years.

5. In January 2014, the Department for Education set out its capital allocations to Local Authorities for the next financial year 2014/15 for Strategic Capital Maintenance, Devolved Formula Capital and for the Locally Co-Ordinated Voluntary Aided Programme (LCVAP).
6. A breakdown of the allocations to Central Bedfordshire, including schools DFC is set out at **Appendix A**.
7. In terms of the grant allocation for Strategic Capital Maintenance in 14/15, this reflects a further reduction on the 13/14 allocation, adjusted to reflect the anticipated numbers of pupils within the area who will, as at 31st March 2015, be expected to be accommodated in Academies. This also applies to LCVAP. The grant funding therefore relates only to LA maintained schools. Academies will have access to separate centrally held funding through the EFA.
8. For 2014/15, based upon the highest priority maintenance needs of schools from previous and updated condition surveys, a draft Strategic Maintenance programme has now been drawn up set against the category D1, D2, C1 and C2 works which can be afforded within the available grant allocation and uncommitted budget from 13/14, with a focus on essential health and safety elements, the external fabric of the buildings and on heating systems i.e. the need to keep the property watertight and warm.
9. Council maintained schools identified with potential works have been contacted and further inspections and surveys will now be undertaken to confirm the scope and fine tune the potential cost of identified works to be delivered in 14/15. The allocation of LCVAP to specific projects at VA schools has also been agreed with the RC and CofE dioceses.
10. The LA strategic capital maintenance programme will continue also to focus on carbon reduction and energy efficiency projects in Community, Voluntary Controlled, Foundation and Trust schools.

Recommendations

The Forum is invited to:

- (i) note the overall Department for Education allocations

Appendices:

Appendix A – Schools Capital Allocations