



## Agenda Item 5

Report to: Schools' Forum

Date: 12 July 2019

Title of Report: De-delegating budgets for Primary and Secondary maintained schools

By: Sarah Rice, Finance Manager

Purpose of Report: To aid discussion in advance of September when approval on de-delegated budgets for 2020/21 will be sought.

### Recommendation:

**The Primary and Secondary maintained Schools Forum Representatives are asked to consider and discuss the services that are proposed to be provided centrally by the Authority for 2020/21. To ensure an informed decision can be taken in September.**

## 1. Background

- 1.1 Since 2013/14 the Department for Education (DfE) has allowed the Schools Forum to agree to de-delegate budgets for certain services provided centrally by the Local Authority (LA). The DfE have confirmed that this arrangement will continue for financial year 2020/21.
- 1.2 The funding is automatically delegated to Academies who can choose to access some of the services by purchasing from East Sussex Services to Schools or source services from other providers.
- 1.3 The services to be considered for de-delegation in 2020/21 are shown below and Schools Forum can agree to de-delegate a service in 2020/21 where it chose not to in 2019/20.
- contingencies
  - behaviour support services
  - support for minority ethnic pupils (please see separate paper)
  - administration of free school meals
  - jury service and union business
- 1.4 In 2019/20, the following decisions were agreed at schools forum on de-delegated services.

	PRIMARY	SECONDARY
	De-delegated in 2019/20	De-delegated in 2019/20
Contingency	Yes	Yes
Behaviour support services	Yes	No
Support for minority ethnic pupils	Yes	Yes*
Free meal eligibility	Yes	Yes
Jury service and union business	Yes	Yes

\*This decision was originally 'NO' but was reversed at the request of representatives following assessment of the impact on the service as a whole as confirmed in the Schools Forum EALs briefing circulated March 2019.

- 1.5 Only members of the Schools Forum representing maintained primary and secondary schools will be entitled to vote on the 2020/21 proposals. In accordance with regulations, representatives of each phase will vote separately, however it is possible that a decision not to de-delegate in one phase may affect the viability of provision overall and the withdrawal of the service for all phases.

## 2. The Services

- 2.1 Descriptions of the services which can be provided centrally to maintained schools are set out below in Appendix A.
- 2.3 The calculation of amounts to be de-delegated from each school must be linked to factors within the funding formula. The calculations applied in 2019/20 were calculated using the following basis:

De-delegated Heading	Formula Factor*
Contingency	Per Pupil Amount
Behaviour Support Services	20% Per Pupil Amount 11% Free School Meals (18/19 -55%) 22% Free School Meal Ever6 (18/19 – 0%) 22% IDACI (18/19 -0%) 25% Prior Attainment
Support for minority ethnic pupils	50% Per Pupil (18/19 - 90%) 50% Per EAL Pupil (18/19 - 10%)
Free meal eligibility	Free School Meal Numbers
Jury service and union duties	Per Pupil Amount

\* Annotations in brackets highlight where and how calculations changed from 18/19 calculations.

- 2.4 The basis of calculating the de-delegated amounts applied to each school for some elements were amended for 2019/20 as shown in the table above. This was agreed in conjunction with the Funding Formula Working Group to ensure the impact of changes in the funding formula and how funding is allocated is taken into account in the way funds are de-delegated.

## 3 Recommendations

- 3.1 The Maintained Primary and Secondary representatives on the Schools Forum are requested to take the opportunity discuss the de-delegation items in advance of the next meeting with the schools they represent, to ensure they have canvassed opinion and vote on behalf of the schools they represent at the Schools Forum meeting in September.

## **Description of De-delegated services**

## **Appendix A**

The framework for de-delegated budgets is set within the principles of shared responsibility between schools for all children and mutual support across all schools. The model allows for all schools who de-delegate funding to have certainty of access to support at the point of need from services that continue to operate and provide support in the most cost effective way.

## **Contingencies**

Contingencies can be held for a limited range of circumstances

- Exceptional unforeseen costs which it would be unreasonable to expect governing bodies to meet
- Schools in financial difficulties
- Additional costs relating to new, re-organised and closing schools
- Managing extra ordinary personnel matters

It is recommended that maintained schools continue to fund a contingency which will be administered by the Local Authority for the approved purposes.

If schools decide not to have a central contingency, they will need to ensure that all schools are able to make any extraordinary payments this can put significant undue strain on individual school budget shares.

## **Administration of Free School Meals**

The County Council's free school meals service enables schools to meet legal requirements relating to the provision of free school meals without the administrative burden.

The free school meals service is located within the Admissions and Transport Team and as a Local Authority, we have direct links with Government Departments (DfE and DWP). This enables us to determine eligibility for free school meals with one short telephone call from schools with the vast majority of individual applications only taking 30 seconds to process. Individual schools do not have access to the checking service meaning eligibility would need to be carried out at school level as a paper exercise.

We are able to give guidance on all aspects of eligibility and provide accurate data to support schools. Weekly changes are reported to schools securely and full entitlement reports are sent to individual schools. We will ensure that free schools meals data is accurate for the census returns.

NB Academies can buy into this service through Services to Schools.

## **Jury service and union business**

This central budget currently pays for supply cover when members of a school's staff undertake Trade Union Duties or Jury Service. The amount each school may have to pay can vary significantly from year to year, whereas across the County the amount is more likely to be relatively stable. The benefit to maintained schools of pooling these budgets is that schools know exactly how much they will pay each year instead of facing the prospect of unknown additional costs which they cannot control.

For primary schools, this budget also includes the costs of administering the County Funded Supply internal insurance schemes. If primary schools choose not to pool this budget there will be an increase in the cost they pay for membership of the schemes.

## **Behavioural Support**

Schools continue to express concerns at their own lack of capacity to support children who present with problematic behaviour and exclusion rates across the county are high. ESBAS provides support to all maintained primary schools delivering a range of interventions to support children with social, emotional and mental health needs, including those who are at risk of permanent exclusion. Support is bespoke to the needs of the school and child and, as well as 1:1 support, includes training and expert advice for schools. As children who are at risk of exclusion often present with attendance difficulties, the BSS offer is integrated with our attendance support offer.

### **Implications of cessation of De-delegated Primary Behaviour Support Services**

#### **Service Offer**

- ESBAS would be significantly reduced and would only focus on statutory work. This provision could not be reinstated at a later stage.
- No early intervention service would be provided; this would include the attendance offer as well as the behaviour offer. The Local Authority would raise the threshold for core attendance support and this would increase further over time.
- Attendance intervention would be on a traded basis - it would need to be sourced privately which would be highly problematic in some parts of the county if external services do not operate there.

#### **Outcomes**

- A likely impact includes a significant rise in the numbers of children requiring support in the secondary phase as their barriers to learning support will not have been addressed in a timely and robust manner. This is likely to result in the number of children requiring special school provision as they reach the end of primary school, or the early stages of secondary school.
- An increase in permanent exclusions and breakdown of placements of children with EHCPs and a related increase in the number of children who schools have to reintegrate mid-year from other schools.
- A deterioration of attendance, where early intervention will not be provided.
- Further pressure on High Needs Block funding and in turn funding available for schools.

**Support for Minority Ethnic Pupils** – The discussions around this area of de-delegation is subject to a separate paper.