

Report to: East Sussex Schools Forum

Date of meeting: 17 Sept 2021

Report By: Director of Children's Services

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

Purpose: To advise Forum which budgets were de-delegated by schools in 2021/22 and seek approval on de-delegated budgets for 2022/23.

Recommendation:

The Primary and Secondary maintained Schools Forum Representatives are asked to decide which services should be provided centrally by the Authority for 2022/23.

1. Background

1.1 Since 2013/14 the Department for Education (DfE) has required that Schools Forum 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 2022/23.

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 2022/23 are shown below and Schools Forum can agree to de-delegate a service in 2022/23 where it chose not to in 2021/22.

- contingencies
- behaviour support services (please see appendix B)
- Support for minority ethnic pupils
- administration of free school meals
- jury service and union business

1.4 For 2021/22, the following decisions were agreed at schools forum on de-delegated services.

| | PRIMARY | SECONDARY |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| | De-delegated in 2021/22 | De-delegated in 2021/22 |
| Contingency | Yes | Yes |
| Behaviour support services | Yes | No |
| <i>Support for minority ethnic pupils*</i> | Yes | No |
| Free meal eligibility | Yes | Yes |
| Jury service and union business | Yes | Yes |

- subject to a 2-year commitment in 2020/21

1.5 Only members of the Schools Forum representing maintained primary and secondary

schools are entitled to vote on the 2022/23 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 and B.

2.2 The De-delegated funding for 2021/22 to schools and academies for these services is summarised in Appendix C.

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 2021/22 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 22% Free School Meal Ever6 22% IDACI 25% Prior Attainment |
| Free meal eligibility | Free School Meal Numbers |
| Support for Ethnic Minority Pupils | 50% Per Pupil 50% Per EAL Pupil |
| Jury service and union duties | Per Pupil Amount |

3 Recommendations

3.1 The Maintained Primary and Secondary representatives on the Schools Forum are recommended to agree the services to be de-delegated in 2022/23.

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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 maintained schools to have certainty of access to support at the point of need from services that continue to operate and provide support in a well managed and 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 plan for
- 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 additional 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 additional costs which are out of the schools control and which could present a significant budget pressure.

For primary schools, this budget also includes the costs of administering the County Funded Supply internal insurance schemes.

EALS and Behavioural Support – For discussions around these areas of de-delegation please see appendix B.