

SLOUGH SCHOOLS' FORUM
9th December 2020

Directorate of Children, Learning and Skills

CSSB Budget Setting for 2021-22

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Forum about the services funded from the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) in 2021-22 and the approvals required by the Forum.
- 1.2 To advise Forum of the DfE published indicative figures for the authority's CSSB allocation.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Schools' Forum **agree** a provisional budget transfer of £273,721 from the High Needs Block into the CSSB, should the final allocation for the CSSB prove insufficient to meet the commitments.
- 2.2 That Schools' Forum **agree** a provisional transfer of £100,000 from the schools block for the Admissions service, dependant on the decision following the schools consultation on the 2021-22 funding formula.
- 2.3 That Forum **agree** the following budget allocations within the CSSB as outlined below: (more detail can be found further down the report)
 - Admissions
 - Servicing of Schools Forum
 - Education Welfare (Former ESG)
 - Asset management (Former ESG)
 - Statutory & Regulatory (Former ESG)
 - Contribution to combined budgets: LA Safeguarding Children's Board
 - Copyright Licence fee (this is a compulsory element)

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Schools' Forum agreed to move £276,370 in 2018-19, £255,000 in 2019-20 and £250,173 in 2020-21 from the High Needs Block (HNB) to the CSSB to reallocate funds incorrectly baselined from 2017-18. The agreement by Schools' Forum last year was for one year only and therefore the CSSB will start the new financial year with the same imbalance to the base budget.

4 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In 2018-19 the CSSB was introduced as the fourth block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The CSSB provides funding for Local Authorities to carry out central functions on behalf of pupils in state-funded maintained schools and academies. The block is comprised of two elements; historical commitments which are allocated based on the baselining exercise performed by the DfE in 2017-18 and ongoing responsibilities which are based on pupil-led formula linked to the baselining exercise.
- 4.2 In 2020-21 the DfE began the annual process of reducing the historical items within the CSSB by 20%. The authority has therefore seen a reduction of 20% from the allocation in 2020-21 for the historical items within the CSSB. As Slough has already reduced its historical items by more than 20% by moving the budget for the Virtual school within the Statutory and Regulatory element of ongoing items, the allocation for historical items will not show a direct reduction until the budget and allocation align. There is however, an ongoing imbalance in the overall CSSB budget due to the baselining exercise mentioned earlier in the report.
- 4.3 The provisional settlement of the CSSB for 2021-22 is £691,169 against commitments of £914,970, (or £1,014,970 depending on the agreement of additional funding for Admissions), leaving a shortfall of £223,801 (or 323,801 with the additionality of the admissions budget should it be agreed).

5 CSSB BUDGETS 2021-22

- 5.1 **Admissions - £178,100 (or £278,100 dependent on a transfer from the SB)**
The school admissions budget funds the School Admissions Team. The team is responsible for the Local Authority's school admission processes. This includes co-ordination of the reception and secondary transfer admissions processes. This involves providing all residents who wish to apply with information about the process and an application form, processing all applications received and ensuring all applicants have one offer of a school place on national offer day. The team also co-ordinate in year primary and secondary admissions. Parents moving into Slough are provided with an application form and are offered a school place as soon as possible, usually within 4 weeks. The team deals with around 6000 applications annually.
- 5.2 **Servicing of Schools Forum - £53,055**
The budget for servicing the Schools Forum represents the costs incurred in providing this statutory duty. The LA is required to co-ordinate at least four Schools' Forum meetings per year. This budget contributes to the running costs of Schools' Forums including any agreed and reasonable expenses for members attending meetings, the costs of producing and distributing papers, costs of room hire and refreshments and for clerking of meetings.

5.3 LA Children's Safeguarding Board - £30,000

Contributions to the Safeguarding function adds value to the work of the Slough Children's Safeguarding Board (SCSB) and support all schools and academies in their vital work to keep children and young people safe and achieve compliance with Ofsted requirements.

5.4 Copyright Licences - £137,925 (2021-22 charge not yet known)

This is negotiated centrally for all authorities; schools cannot opt out for these licences;

- Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA)
- Schools Printed Music Licence (SPML)
- Newspaper Licensing Authority (NLA)
- Education Recording Authority (ERA)
- Public Video Streaming Licence (PVSL)
- Motion Picture Licensing Company (MPLC)
- Phonographic Performance Limited (PPL)
- Performing Rights Society (PRS)
- Mechanical Copyright Protection Society (MCPS)
- Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI)

5.5 Education Welfare (ESG) - £144,672

The statutory Education Welfare functions include the promotion of good attendance for all children and young people, enforcement duties on behalf of schools and Academies for non- attendance and the licensing processes for the employment and engagement in entertainment activities by children and young people. In Slough the Attendance Team are responsible for these activities except licensing which is the responsibility of the Admissions & Transport Team. It also includes monitoring of attendance and the early intervention in cases of absence giving cause for concern in schools and academies. The Attendance Team also has an essential role in safeguarding and family support. The team are also involved in work linked to the Multiagency safeguarding Hub.

5.6 Asset Management (ESG) - £12,818

Contribution to the services related to school buildings including those leased to academies. Examples include the schools building condition survey, PFI negotiations and the asset management plan.

5.7 Statutory and Regulatory (ESG) - £358,400 of which £100,000 is for the Virtual School

Contributions to the statutory posts of DCS and the Head of the Virtual School for children in care, audit, revenue budget preparation, SACRE and the provision of information to Ofsted, DfE and other government bodies as required. Business support for education functions and systems for strategic information returns such as the school census are funded from this contribution. Please see the link below for further details of what this service and others may cover. Schools Funding Operational Guide 2021-22 page 67

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pre-16-schools-funding-local-authority-guidance-for-2021-to-2022>

Virtual School

Contributions to the operation of the Virtual School have developed the range of the service to create better outcomes for children looked after by Slough.

To build the system we have funded training through a large conference, training our new designated teachers and running the Designated Teacher meetings. The knowledge of attachment needs through early life trauma for example is now much better understood in the Slough education system. If you get it right for children looked after it has a positive impact from other vulnerable groups. This may even support children not to come into care. It will also improve the OFSTED judgements on Slough schools in respect to vulnerable children. The funding is also used to widen and deepen the range of services offered by the Virtual School, where support is available for under 5s, post 16, those in FE and HE. We also have capacity to support schools and carers with SGOs and adopters. We are forging links with Heathrow and developing apprenticeships.

- 5.8 The details of the provisional settlement of the CSSB can be found in **Appendix 1** of this report. The appendix has two tables showing the scenarios with and without the transfer of funding from the schools block to the CSSB.
- 5.9 The majority of the commitments remain the same as in 2020-21. The commitment for the Copyright licenses is based on 2020-21 but will change depending on what the DfE set for the charge for 2021-22 and the commitment for Admissions may change depending on the outcome of the request for an increase to the budget which will be considered as a separate agenda item.

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 N/A

7 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 7.1 Not applicable

8 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

8.1 Monitoring Officer

The relevant legal provisions are contained within the main body of this report.

8.2 Section 151 Officer – Strategic Director of Finance and Resources

The financial implications of the report are outlined in the supporting information.

8.3 Access Implications

There are no access implications.

9 CONSULTATION

9.1 N/A

Contact for further information

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