

Schools Forum 7 July 2009

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Targeted Capital Funding – Kitchens and Dining Rooms

Purpose of Report

1. To seek the approval of Schools Forum in respect of the revised allocation of grant funds in respect of the Department for Children, School and Families (DCSF) targeted capital funding for kitchens and dining rooms.

Discussed at Head Teacher Consultative Forum – Budget Working Group

2. Yes – 19 June 2009. Budget Working Group agreed to the revised plans attached at Appendix 1.

Actions for Schools Forum

3. It is a condition of the grant that the authority should consult and agree any plans with its Schools Forum.
4. To approve the revised allocation of grant funding, as advised on 2 June by the DCSF.

Attachments to Report

5. Appendix 1 – DCSF letter dated 2 June 2009
6. Appendix 2 – Revised grant allocations for Dudley schools

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Background

2. A report was presented to Schools Forum in December 2008 and February 2009 outlining the authority's intention to submit an expression of interest in respect of the DCSF targeted capital funding grant for 2009/10 and 2010/11.
3. The DCSF grant was to be allocated on a 50% matched funding basis for those authorities who submit plans to increase school lunch take-up by building or refurbishing school kitchens or improving dining areas and facilities.
4. Submissions by local authorities were to be assessed against one or more of the following goals:
 - a. Improving the quality of the food
 - b. Increasing the seating capacity of dining areas
 - c. Improving the dining environment
 - d. Decreasing queuing time
5. It is a condition of the grant that the authority should consult and agree any plans with its Schools Forum.
6. The formal bid totalling £866,640 was submitted to the DCSF at the end of February 2009, in line with the information agreed at Schools Forum at the February meeting.
7. All schools included in the bid had confirmed that they were able to provide match funding for their project

8. On 2 June 2009, the DCSF wrote to local authorities to advise of the allocations. This is attached at Appendix 1. For Dudley this was £437,477 compared with an initial submission of £866,640.
9. The reduction in the DCSF grant allocation requires the authority to revise the programme of works for schools in accordance with the grant available.
10. Given the reduced allocation at half the original requested amount discussions have been held between Catering and the Building and Estates Officers to agree on an equitable revision to the original plans. The DCSF have asked the authority to consider very carefully how to revise the bid and suggested that it may be better to support a larger number of smaller projects to widen the spread of schools benefiting and thus achieve greater value for money and greater impact overall. Due to this request it was decided to reduce the amount for the larger projects included in the bid and request an increased contribution from the schools affected. The smaller projects will remain as the original bid to allow the maximum number of projects to go ahead and to receive the grant. The data attached at Appendix 2 indicates the result of these discussions. Schools Forum is asked to approve this programme of works, as agreed by HTCF Budget Working Group on 17 June 2009.
11. Where schools have requested dining room equipment the purchase and delivery of items will be arranged in liaison with Catering and Client Services. Larger projects will be delivered through a phased programme of works, co-ordinated by Buildings and Estates if required by the School. Several secondary schools have already made contact with consultants to help deliver their requirements should their request be successful.

Finance

12. The DCSF has allocated Dudley MBC a targeted capital funding grant of £437,477 to be ring-fenced and spent on the provision of kitchens and dining rooms. The grant will be phased over the two financial years 2009/10 and 2010/11.
13. The funding of schools is prescribed by the DCSF through the School Finance (Amendment)(England) Regulations 2008.
14. Schools Forums are regulated by the School Forums Regulations 2002 as already amended by the Schools Forums (Amendment) Regulations 2004 the Schools Forums (Amendment) 2005 Regulations and the Schools Forums (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008.

15. From 1st April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct DCSF grant: Dedicated School Grant (DSG).

Law

16. Councils' LMS Schemes are made under Section 48 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Education Acts 1996 and 2002 also have provisions relating to school funding.

Equality Impact

17. The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy is taken into account when considering the allocation of resources.

Recommendation

18. That Schools Forum approve the revised allocation of the DCSF targeted capital funding grant of £437,477, in accordance with the school details listed at Appendix 2.



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