

SLOUGH SCHOOLS FORUM
15th January 2020

Directorate of Children, Learning and Skills

CSSB Budget Setting for 2020.21

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Forum about the services funded from the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) in 2020-21 and the approvals required by the Forum.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Schools Forum **agree** a budget transfer of £250,173 from the High Needs Block into the CSSB, should the final allocation for the CSSB prove insufficient to meet the commitments.
- 2.2 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, Virtual School

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Schools Forum agreed to move £276,370 in 2018-19 and £255,000 in 2019-20 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. The ESFA has confirmed that they are unable to amend the base, providing this response, *'we will not be able to adjust your baseline at this point, you are able to manage changes by moving funding locally between blocks in accordance with the operational guidance. This position has not changed, as we cannot re-baseline without effectively affecting the NFF funding if we attempted to do so at this stage.'*
- 3.2 The Council sought Schools Forum approval on the 4th December 2018 to make the appropriate transfers in 2019-20 and beyond, should the settlement be insufficient to fund the CSSB as it was in 2018-19.

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 From 2020-21 the DfE will begin to reduce the element of funding received for historic commitments made prior to 2013-14. This is in line with their reforms to move to a fairer funding system. *"We do not believe it is fair to maintain significant difference in funding indefinitely between local authorities which reflect historic decisions". "In 2020-21, for those local authorities that receive it, historic commitments funding will be reduced by 20%, with a protection so that no authority loses an amount equivalent to more than 0.5% of its 2019-20 schools block allocation. We will continue to unwind this funding in future years, and will provide further detail in due course"* (National Funding Formula policy document 2020-21) page 15.
- 4.3 **The settlement of the CSSB for 2020-21 is £664,797** against commitments of £914,170, leaving a shortfall of £250,173.

5 CSSB BUDGET HEADS 2020-21

5.1 Admissions - £178,100

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 **Virtual School - £100,000**

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.

5.5 **Copyright Licences - £137,925**

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

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

5.6 **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.

5.7 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.

5.8 Statutory and Regulatory (ESG) - £258,400

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 20/21p61

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pre-16-schools-funding-local-authority-guidance-for-2020-to-2021>

TABLE 1

With 20% reduction of funding for historic costs.						
Area	Service	Commitment	DSG Allocation	Variance	Contribution to balance CSSB	
Contribution to combined Budgets	LA Safeguarding Childrens Board	30,000				
Sub Total - Historical Commitment		30,000	62,400	-32,400		
Servicing of Schools Forum		53,055				
Admissions		178,100				
Copyright Licences		137,925				137,925
Education Welfare (Former ESG)		144,672				
Asset Management (Former ESG)		12,818				
Statutory Regulatory (Former ESG) Includes 100k Virtual School		358,400				112,248
Sub Total - Ongoing Commitment		884,970	602,397	282,573		250,173
Grand Total		914,970	664,797	250,173		250,173

5.9 All commitments remain the same as in 2019-20 with the exception to the Copyright licenses which has increased by around £5k.

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

Domenico Barani

Group Accountant - Children and Schools

Domenico.barani@slough.gov.uk