

Schools Management Forum

Report of: Faye Revely & Andrew Humble

Subject: 2019/20 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) – Central Services Block

Date: 27th March 2019

Purpose of the report

1. To provide a breakdown of services potentially to be provided from the Central Services Block retained budget.

DSG Central Services Block

2. The total of the Central Services Block for 2019/20 as per the settlement is £1,136,253 (this is approximately the same as for 2018/19). The services that are proposed to be funded from the Central Services Block in 2019/20 are as follows:

- Copyright Licences for Schools £106,187
- Admissions £190,000
- IT Infrastructure and support £102,351
- Speech & Language Contract £218,251
- Contribution to Local Authority Designated Officer £15,000
- Schools Forum £5,200
- SEN Home to School Transport £40,000
- Statutory Services for all Schools (previously funded by ESG) £335,354
- Contribution to Central Services Overheads to support the above £160,000

3. If the services above are provided in the above amounts the total will be £36,090 above the allocated funding available, and therefore a decision is required on which services and the amount for each service to be funded from the Central Services Block.

Centrally Retained Budgets

4. The following paragraphs explain in a bit more detail the services being provided / paid for in each case.
5. The Copyright Licences budget pays for Copyright charges that the Council pay on behalf of all Middlesbrough Schools. These amounts are deducted at source from the Council's DSG allocation received from the DfE.
6. The Admissions service consists of 6 members of staff and also a budget for Admissions appeals which are ran by Hartlepool Council on our behalf. The Council also contributes

£24,720 towards the overall cost of the service. Please see Appendix A for a breakdown of these costs.

7. IT Infrastructure and support – Andy Evans (Head of ICT Services MBC) has asked to communicate the following update:

“Following the feedback from the schools I’m going to take a slightly different approach to resolving their queries and confirming the services schools take as part of the DSG funding allocation for ICT. I’m going to contact each school and undertake a mini-audit of services. They’ll each receive a simple matrix, highlighting the core chargeable services each of them take, I’ll give them a window of opportunity to come back with challenges or queries (a nil response will be taken as acceptance of the charge). That way I can resolve issues on an individual basis and confirm exactly what each of them pay for. This will take place from the beginning of April, and the results of this audit will be presented at July SMF.”

Andy has confirmed that the provision for IT services will not be provided and will be cut off if the funding is not set aside for this service.

8. The Speech & Language budget pays for the Speech & Language SLA ran by South Tees CCG (via South Tees NHS Foundation Trust) on behalf of all Middlesbrough Schools. This cost has been updated for 19/20 prices following guidance from the commissioning team within the council.
9. Contribution to Local Authority Designated Officer – This is a statutory post and provides safeguarding support and advice to all Middlesbrough Schools.
10. Schools forum – This budget pays for the room hire and administration costs of Schools forum meetings only. All other costs for officer support are included in other areas below.
11. SEN Home to School Transport – This is a contribution to the Home to School Transport service which is provided by the Council.
12. Statutory Services for all Schools – This budget covers the statutory services/posts that the LA have to administer on behalf Schools. These include the Education Welfare and Asset Management services. In addition to this the budget also includes a contribution towards the Executive Director and Management costs of the service.
13. The central overheads budget pays for the elements of support provided to schools such as Internal and External Audit, Accountancy Staff, Creditors/Debtors etc.

Recommendations

14. SMF members are asked to:
- Note the details of the services proposed to be funded in 2019/20 from the Central Services Block retained budget, and provide a view on which services and the amount for each service to be funded from the Central Services Block within the allocated funding provided by the Government for the Central Services Block.