



SCHOOLS' FORUM

Universal Free School Meals Capital Funding

4th December 2014

Content Applicable to;		School Phase;	
Maintained Primary and Secondary Schools	X	Pre School	
Academies	X	Foundation Stage	X
PVI Settings		Primary	X
Special Schools / Academies	X	Secondary	
Local Authority	X	Post 16	
		High Needs	X

Purpose of Report

Content Requires;		By;	
Noting	X	Maintained Primary School Members	X
Decision		Maintained Secondary School Members	
		Maintained Special School Members	X
		Academy Members	X
		All Schools Forum	

This report provides an update on the allocation of the Universal Free School Meals Capital funding and the current position on the implementation of the initiative.

Recommendations

That Schools Forum notes the allocation to date of the school meals capital funding.

Introduction

To support the introduction of the Universal Infant Free School Meals the Government announced that £150 million capital funding would be available to improve kitchen and dining facilities. Leicestershire has received £886,000 for all maintained schools.

Background

The new legislation required all state funded schools to provide free school meals to infant children from September 2014. School Food currently supplies meals to 218 schools in the County on a daily basis. The service produces in excess of 19,000 meals per day. The introduction of the new free meals has resulted in the service providing 30,686 meals, which is 12,454 additional meals a day. The uptake of universal free school meals is running at 79%.

Criteria for Funding Allocation

The service carried out an initial assessment at all schools that have their service provided by School Food, to assess the impact the additional meals would have at individual school level. As a result of this assessment schools were prioritised taking into account other schools that they also produce meals for.

The main objective of the grant was for as many schools as possible to be in a position to cook meals on site. The allocation of the funding for Leicestershire took into account the schools that could convert their existing kitchen area into a space able to produce meals on site without the need to extend the building. This has maximised the allocation of the funding. Consideration was also given to the pressure on existing production kitchens that transport to more than one school and the need to reduce the volume of meals produced at one site.

The assessment took into account the cooking and service equipment in existing kitchens required to enable the production of the additional meals. (Breakdown of allocation below).

It was clear that there was insufficient funding to convert all schools without a production kitchen and in many circumstances there was not enough space to extend the school. Fortunately many schools were already in a good position to meet the challenge going forward.

The equipment allocation also took into account the schools that provide their own catering, discussions took place with individual schools and agreement was based on an assessment of additional meals.

Kitchen Refurbishments and Equipment Allocation

While Leicestershire kitchens are in a reasonable position to provide the additional meals the capital funding has enabled the conversion of six dining centres into full production kitchens to date. The remaining two will be completed in the new year. The conversions have enabled the schools to be in a position to produce meals on site. This has released pressure on the kitchens that currently produce their meals.

The success of the conversions has been dependant on increasing the electrical supply, detailed electrical surveys have been carried out and unfortunately Oxley Primary had to be put on hold due to the excessive cost of upgrading the electric meter. A bid has now been submitted for Oxley Primary for the next round of Government capital for UIFSM. Announcements regarding the allocation of funding will be made by 20th January 2015.

The conversions are;

- Hugglescote Primary - complete - final costs - £47,234.48
- Castle Donington St Edwards - complete - final costs - £63,534.08
- Thurnby St Lukes - planned for completion before the end of March 2015 - budget costs - £53,277.32
- Ashby Woodcote - complete - final costs - £32,735.56
- Melton Sherard - complete - final costs - £62,985.66
- Broughton Astley Hallbrook - complete - final costs - £30,6076.92
- Witherley Primary - complete - final costs - £27,577.92
- Moira Primary - planned for completion before the end of March 2015 - budget costs - £45,769.06

It was always the intention to complete the conversions to production kitchens on a rolling programme if all of the schemes had been planned for the summer holidays it could have left schools in difficulty and unable to serve food at all should the conversions not have been complete.

A contribution of £50,000 has also been included for the provision of equipment for a full production kitchen at Melton Brownlow as a part of the rebuild of their kitchen/dining room. While Brownlow has recently converted to an Academy the criteria allows for schools to still receive funding. An element of the cost for the new build has been provided by the LA capital funding, this had originally been agreed to provide a servery area utilising the school gym for dining. The remainder needed for the build has come from a successful bid from the academies maintenance fund enabling the school to have a full rebuild of the kitchen/dining room. The existing Brownlow kitchen and dining room is an old Horsa building which is at the end of its life.

Melton area has very few production kitchens and this scheme has allowed for the production of meals to become more sustainable moving forward. For example Swallowdale Primary currently provides for a total of six schools, one of which is Brownlow. With the additional universal free meals Swallowdale would not have the capacity to produce for all of the schools. The new build for Brownlow will be complete before the end of March 2015. Four of the six schools meals have been split and transferred to other schools in the area to reduce the pressure leaving only Brownlow being produced at Swallowdale.

The equipment assessment highlighted the need for additional cooking equipment that takes minimal space but allows for faster cooking of food. The most effective way of speeding up production has been to install one or more combination ovens (combi's) that are able to bake and steam food at high speeds. Combi ovens also require an electric supply and water connections. The combi ovens have been installed on a rolling programme which started during the summer holiday. It is expected that the programme will be complete before Christmas.

A number of schools also required further hot holding counters and fridge and freezer space. The attached spreadsheet details the schools full requirements. To date all additional equipment has been delivered to kitchens.

Allocation of Remaining Funding

- Production/service equipment - £330,511
- Building/drainage works for combi ovens - £39,068.60
- Electrical/plumbing/installations for combi ovens - £103,348.30
- Melton Brownlow contribution - £50,000

Resource Implications

The capital programme is scheduled to be fully completed by the end of the year and has been based upon the capital allocation given to the local authority by the Department of Education.

Contract and Procurement Implications

All of the equipment has been purchased through the recommended framework agreements ie ESPO or the Government Buying Solutions. All building works etc has been carried out through the Properties framework agreements and their list of approved contractors.

Equal Opportunity Issues

There are no equality issues arising directly from this report.

Background Papers

- *Children and Families DMT 14th May 2014 – Universal Infant Free School Meals Capital Funding*
- *Children and Families DMT 19th November 2014 – Universal Infant Free School Meals Capital Funding Update*

Officers to Contact

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