

Coalition Changes – update report (August 2010)

Introduction

1. A range of policy and funding announcements have been made. These include:
 - 'In principle' abolition of Government Offices (GOs)
 - End Year Flexibility
 - Youth Capital Programme (YCF)
 - Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) Communications
 - Decommissioning of ContactPoint
 - Pupil Premium and school funding
 - Diplomas
 - 16-19 funding
 - Early Years Single Funding formula
 - Special Educational Needs (SEN) and disabilities
 - Early Years Foundation Stage
 - Targetted Mental Health in Schools (TAMHS)
 - Building Schools for the Future (BSF)
 - Academies legislation

Next steps likely to include

2. Further funding and policy announcements over the summer and autumn period leading up to the Comprehensive Spending Review announcement on 20 October 2010.
3. The Department for Education (DfE) published its draft structural reform plan on 13 July. The Structural Reform Plan (SRP) outlines dates for cutting bureaucracy in schools, setting up free schools and academies, introducing the new pupil premium and creating new technical colleges for vocational and technical education. DfE will be outlining priorities for children and families policy in the near future.
4. Further details of when GO field force contracts will end will begin to emerge.
5. Agreement of transition activity between DfE and Children and Learners Teams

Implications

'In principle' abolition of Government Offices (GOs)

6. On 22 July, Eric Pickles announced "the Government's intention 'in principle' to close the remaining 8 GOs "subject to the satisfactory resolution of consequential issues through the Spending Review." So, in short, the GOs will be closed but no detailed timescales.
7. Also, the following DfE funded GO based field forces are to end earlier than planned; timescales are being worked through locally. Operationally most work will come to an end on 30 September:
 - Children and Learner Strategic Advisors (CLSAs)
 - Safeguarding Advisers
 - Child Poverty Delivery Support Advisers
 - Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinators
 - Sustainable Schools Network
 - Childcare Delivery Regional Adviser
 - Healthy Schools – a longer timeframe will be in place for this area of work – details to follow)

End Year Flexibility

8. DfE is reducing its End Year Flexibility (EYF) requirements by £1 billion by the end of the year. The following budgets are affected:
 - Co-location budgets – project sponsors will be contacted directly by DfE. Need to consider how to support and sustain co-location of services in the light of greater localism and more partnerships involving academies.
 - School swimming – no announcement of funding allocations had been made following an application process.
 - Eco-towns contribution – the Government is no longer funding pilot project work on energy efficient schools in eco-towns. Free 'smart meters' to support carbon reduction in schools may be offered in the future.
 - Harnessing technology grant – this was funding for schools to use to improve their computer and broadband facilities. Quarter 2 payments will be made with no further payments expected
 - Support for LAs not included in early BSF waves – 76 LAs not included in early BSF waves were allocated funding – 2010-11 allocations will be reduced by c. £660,000.
 - Social Work IT support – the formulaic allocation to LAs to enhance social work IT provision will not go ahead. These issues will be looked at as part of the Munro review. Interim report expected mid autumn. The Social Work Improvement Fund, available via Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC), has been protected.

Youth Capital Programme (YCF)

9. The £169.5M savings from capital budgets includes a reduction of YCF by £13m (around half) in 2010-11.
10. This will be managed by paying Quarter 1 and 2 allocations to all local authorities in England as usual. It will be vital to use Quarter 2 allocations to ensure commitments made in the current financial year are fulfilled as no further payments will be made. This funding is still ring-fenced and will need to be accounted for by 31 March 2011 and is subject to the conditions of grant given in the current Local Authority Circular (LAC: 2901100006). Consideration will need to be given to implications for any current building programmes or projects.

Overall budget reductions, including those set out above

11. Many children's service's departments are tackling these issues through a combination of:
 - Re-sizing – (immediate - often referred to as “salami slicing” but necessary as part of the adjustment to significantly less resource)
 - Re-alignment (short to medium term – refocusing services based on evidence based approaches that identify what really works as opposed to what we would like to do)
 - Re-design (longer-term and can involve upfront costs – but necessary as part of wider review of cost reduction)
12. Wiltshire's response to the mid-year reductions in Area Based Grant is:

Summary of ABG savings identified 2010/11

Service Area	Saving £	Impact
School Support Services and Special Educational Needs (SEN)	337,105	Staffing reductions in teams supporting schools, reduction in funding allocated to SEN development projects and reduced flexibility to allocate funding to schools for 14-19 Partnerships. Staffing reductions to be achieved through vacancies however impact will be on capacity to support improvement in schools.
Extended Schools Start-Up Funding	400,000	Reduction in funding allocated to clusters of schools for the development of extended services. No start up funding will now be paid to schools this year. Extended Schools Sustainability Funding will continue to be available through standards funds in 2010/11.
Targeted Services	395,000	Savings identified across Targeted Services. Savings achieved against vacancies in the current year, therefore some reduced capacity.

Social Care & Safeguarding	111,346	Savings initially to be found through vacancies. No front-line impact.
Commissioning Strategy for parenting & family support	150,000	More effective commissioning of services for parenting & family support. Savings on contracts and review of provision to achieve efficiencies.
	1,393,451	

Safeguarding Policy

13. Professor Eileen Munro wrote to Directors of Children's Services and Chief Executives on 1 July with a call for evidence of local innovations and new approaches to child protection as well as improved front-line social work practice. She particularly wanted to hear about examples of: Identifying and helping children and young people in need; improved social work practice in assessing and helping children, young people and their families; strategies for assisting social workers; strategies for shared learning; approaches to case discussions; and improvements in transparency. The closing date for supplying evidence was 30 July 2010.
14. Safeguarding inspections continue. Just two unannounced inspections are now awaited across the South West.

Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) Communications

15. Prior to the General Election, as part of the Staying Safe programme, DfE had signalled an intention to support LSCB Communications through the creation of a communications toolkit and an allocation of approximately £12.5k per LSCB. The toolkit, designed to support all aspects of communications from objective setting to the implementation and measurement of a communications strategy, was launched on 31 March. However, the funding has been withdrawn. LSCB Chairs, Heads of Service and Safeguarding Managers were notified of the decision on 20 July.

Decommissioning of ContactPoint

16. In a 22 July email, DfE informed LAs that ContactPoint would be shut down on 6 August and that the Government is continuing to consider the feasibility of a more proportionate approach to supporting frontline professionals to help protect vulnerable children from harm.

School funding and the Pupil Premium

17. On 27 July, Education Secretary Michael Gove and Children's Minister Sarah Teather launched a consultation on '*how best to operate the pupil premium from September 2011*', including what deprivation indicator to use. The Government wants the premium to include looked-after children. The level of funding available will not be revealed until after this autumn's comprehensive spending review.

18. The Government also set out its proposals for distributing overall school funding from April 2011. School funding will in the short term continue to be allocated using the current method to allow the pupil premium to be introduced smoothly. However, the Government has signalled its intention to review school funding for all schools including academies beyond 2011-12 and details will be announced in due course.

More details can be found at:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/news/press-notice-new/pupil-premium>

Diplomas

19. There will be no further Gateway rounds and no requirement for schools or colleges to obtain approval from DfE before delivering new Diploma subjects. The remaining stages of Gateway 3 and 4 will run through to completion, however, the requirement to offer the Diploma collaboratively through consortia has been relaxed to allow schools and colleges to offer an increased range of qualifications most suitable to their student needs.
20. The collaborative arrangements that have already been established through consortia have offered a number of benefits to learners, however, in the light of these changes and recent funding reductions the role and responsibilities of consortia coordinators may need to be reviewed.

16-19 Funding

21. On 19 July, the Secretary of State announced changes to the funding of 16-19 education and training. The DfE confirmed that these changes do not affect the statutory duties placed on councils and the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) which were set out in the Apprenticeship, Children and Learning Act 2009 (ACSL) and the local authority strategic commissioning role remains.
22. The main changes relate to funding arrangements:
 - From the new academic year, the YPLA will have responsibility for making payments directly to FE Colleges, Sixth Form Colleges and other training providers. School sixth forms will continue to be paid by Local Authorities.
 - From 2011/12 funding will be based on lagged learner numbers i.e. based on learner numbers from the previous year.
23. Local authorities will not be required to be part of a sub-regional or regional planning group and the National Commissioning Framework has been withdrawn. However, the statutory duty for councils to cooperate with each other in relation to 16-19 education and training remains.
24. More information is likely to follow; however, the areas for consideration seem to be:
 - Understanding the strategic role for Local Authorities in ensuring the needs of local learners, including learners with learning difficulties and/or

disabilities, and employers are met and future engagement with the Local Economic Partnerships in the production of commissioning plans.

- Ensuring cross border arrangements continue to meet the needs of 'travel to learn' learners and effective partnership arrangements are in place to manage these arrangements.
- Ensuring staff transferred from LSC to councils continue to have a role in commissioning and in developing local commissioning plans.

Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF)

25. In addition, the Government announced that all local authorities will be required to introduce the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) from April 2011.

Early Years Foundation Stage

26. On 6 July, Children's Minister Sarah Teather asked Dame Clare Tickell to carry out a review of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) so that it is less bureaucratic and more focused on young children's learning and development.

27. The review will cover four main areas:

- Scope of regulation – whether there should be one single framework for all Early Years providers.
- Learning and development – looking at the latest evidence about children's development and what is needed to give them the best start at school.
- Assessment – whether young children's development should be formally assessed at a certain age, and what this should cover.
- Welfare – the minimum standards to keep children safe and support their healthy development.

28. Dame Clare will provide a final report in spring 2011. The Government will then consult on any proposed changes before they take effect from September 2012.

Special educational needs and disabilities

29. A Green Paper in the autumn will look at a wide range of issues for children with SEN and disabilities. It will include looking at giving parents more choice and involving them more in the decision-making process, and how to manage the transition beyond school and respite care.

Targeted Mental Health in Schools (TAMHS)

30. Following recent confirmation of 2010/11 funding for TAMHS, there is a need to consider lessons learnt from local evaluations of effectiveness, and potential (including resources) for sustainability in 2011/12.

Building Schools for the Future (BSF)

31. On 5 July, Education Secretary Michael Gove set out a complete overhaul of capital investment in England's schools and a wider ranging review of capital now known as The James Review. BSF projects which had reached financial close will continue, alongside sample projects close to this stage. All other BSF projects will be cancelled with immediate effect. All academy projects in development which have not reached financial close will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
32. 51 school projects across the SW form part of this announcement. 14 projects are unaffected, 12 Academies will be reviewed, 21 projects have been stopped and 4 are sample projects.
33. In Wiltshire, funds to complete Wellington Academy new build are secure. Capital funding for the new Sarum Academy is not yet decided.

Academies legislation

34. Received royal assent on 27 July.

Summary of the Bill

35. The Bill enables more schools in England to become academies. The Government expects a significant number of academies to open in September 2010, and for the number to grow each year. They had anticipated c. 5,000 over 3 years - this figure may be readjusted in the light of the low take up so far.....Academies will be funded at a comparable level to maintained schools but would also get their share of central funding that local authorities used to spend on their behalf. Schools that apply to become academies will be allowed to keep any surplus balances that they hold. There will be no expansion of selection but grammar schools and other schools which select or partially select pupils will be able to continue to do so.

Key areas

- enables all maintained schools to apply to become academies, with schools rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted being pre-approved
- allows maintained primary and special schools to apply to become academies in their own right
- gives the Secretary of State the power to issue an academy order requiring the local authority to cease to maintain the school
- removes the requirement to consult the local authority before opening an academy
- requires the consent of any existing foundation (mainly churches) before a school applies to become an academy (and prohibits the religious character changing during the conversion to academy)
- deems academy trusts to be exempt charities
- One School in Wiltshire has requested academy status – Hardenhuish, Chippenham.

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