



Department  
for Education

10 October 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

Blackpool Borough Council  
Derby City Council  
Norfolk County Council  
Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council  
North Yorkshire County Council  
Somerset County Council  
Bradford Metropolitan District Council  
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council  
Cambridgeshire County Council  
East Sussex County Council  
Suffolk County Council  
Stoke-on-Trent City Council

**Re: S31 Grant Determination Letter for the Opportunity Areas PS 1 Grant  
(2017-18 [DfE ref GR1000326] DCLG ref 31/3128)**

This Determination is made between:

- (1) **The Secretary of State for Education and**
- (2) **The local authorities listed at Annex A.**

I am pleased to be writing to you to confirm further details of the Government's offer to the Council following agreement that the Opportunity Areas (OAs) Grant would be devolved.

We will devolve this Grant under a Section 31 non-ring fenced transfer (Local Government Finance Act 2003). Our expectation is that the Council will use the funds to support the aims of the Opportunity Areas programme. The Senior Responsible Owner for this Grant, Sarah Lewis, will require your responsible officer to confirm at the end of each financial year that the funding has been properly expended.

The total funding available for the OA programme is £72m, over three years, 2017-18 to 2019-20. As set out in our recent letter, we expect a substantial proportion of that money to be channelled through the relevant top tier local authorities. For this year, we expect funds to be made available to local authorities in the form of two non-ring-fenced grants – one in October and a second one in January (details to be confirmed in due course, and subject to the progress made with each OA's delivery plan). We intend to make a larger payment at this stage to the first six OAs, reflecting their more developed delivery plans, but this will be balanced with larger payments to the second six OAs later in the programme. A total of £3.6 million will be paid in

October 2017 to the 12 local authorities concerned, to 'kick-start' activity in the Opportunity Area and pay for programme costs incurred to-date, including any new burdens where these have been identified. Details of the October payment can be found in Annex A.

### **Purpose of the Grant**

The Council can spend this grant to promote activity in the Opportunity Area that will improve the social mobility outcomes of children and young people. Whilst you may choose how to spend the money in order to best meet local need, we anticipate that all decisions will be informed by the local problem diagnosis based on the recommendations of the local OA delivery plan.

The Department's aspiration is that local authorities should use the funding provided to:

- implement the recommendations of the Opportunity Areas delivery plans to improve the social mobility outcomes of children and young people across all life stages;
- offer targeted support and fund activities that address social mobility barriers locally across all life stages;
- coordinate through the OA partnership board regional activities with the intention of improving system capacity in school leadership, teacher quality, curriculum programmes and school clubs;
- support activities that seek to improve personal development, raise aspirations, provide opportunities for career experience and skills development and participation in volunteering and social action projects;
- establish pilot interventions and programmes focussing on areas which might include (but would not be limited to) the home learning environment, teacher workload, international teacher recruitment, children and young people's mental health, training for SEND practitioners, pathways to employment for young people, and speech, language and communication needs in early years.

The local authority may also use the grant to cover its reasonable expenses in helping to administer the OA programme.

### **Payment arrangements**

Payment will be made in two instalments, the first on 12 October 2017 and the second in January 2018, the exact date to be confirmed in due course.

Arrangements for keeping in touch with the Department for Education and the Head of Delivery

Formal reporting to the Department for Education on progress is not a condition of this grant. The Department for Education will, however, ask the Council to provide a voluntary end of year return and report confirming activity that has taken place or been funded.

The Department for Education would also be happy to receive any information about effective practice and activity that substantively addresses social mobility across all life stages of children and young people.

This letter has been copied to the Chief Finance Officer of all participating local authorities, Directors of Children's Services, Opportunity Areas Heads of Delivery, Her Majesty's Treasury and the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Enquiries

This letter has been copied for information to LA Chief Finance Officers, Her Majesty's Treasury and the Department for Communities and Local Government.

For all enquiries about the contents of this letter, please contact [Opportunity.AREAS@education.gov.uk](mailto:Opportunity.AREAS@education.gov.uk)

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Education,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'S' and 'L' in a stylized, cursive font.

Sarah Lewis  
Deputy Director, Opportunity Areas, Department for Education

Annex A

## **REVENUE grant determination (non-ringfenced)**

### **Opportunity Areas PS 1 GRANT DETERMINATION 2017-18: [GR1000326] [31/3128]**

The Minister of State for Education (Justine Greening), in exercise of the powers conferred by section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003, makes the following determination:

#### **Citation**

1) This determination may be cited as the Opportunity Areas PS 1 Grant Determination (2017-18) [No. 31/3128].

#### **Purpose of the grant**

2) The purpose of the grant is to provide support to local authorities in England towards expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred by them.

#### **Determination**

3) The Minister of State determines as the authorities to which grant is to be paid and the amount of grant to be paid, the authorities and the amounts set out in Annex A.

#### **Treasury consent**

4) Before making this determination in relation to local authorities in England, the Minister of State obtained the consent of the Treasury.



Signed by authority of the Minister of State for Education

Sarah Lewis, Deputy Director, Opportunity Areas, Department for Education  
6 October 2017

<b>Authorities to which grant is to be paid</b>	<b>Opportunity Area</b>	<b>Amount of grant to be paid</b>
Blackpool Borough Council	Blackpool	£500,000
Derby City Council	Derby	£500,000
Norfolk County Council	Norwich	£500,000
Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council	Oldham	£500,000
North Yorkshire County Council	Scarborough	£500,000
Somerset County Council	W Somerset	£500,000
Bradford Metropolitan District Council	Bradford	£100,000
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council	Doncaster	£100,000
Cambridgeshire County Council	Fenland & E Cambs	£100,000
East Sussex County Council	Hastings	£100,000
Suffolk County Council	Ipswich	£100,000
Stoke-on-Trent City Council	Stoke-on-Trent	£100,000