



Department
for Education

Department for Education
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

17 March 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

Blackpool Borough Council
Derby City Council
North Yorkshire County Council
Norfolk County Council
Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Somerset County Council
City of 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 Year 4 Grant,
March 2021 (2020-21 [DfE PR_4485] MHCLG 31/5400)**

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 confirm details of the Government's offer to the council following agreement that the Opportunity Areas (OAs) grant would be devolved.

We are devolving this grant under a Section 31, non-ring-fenced transfer (Local Government 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, Elizabeth Franey, 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 for the period 2020-21 is £18.6m. The vast majority of that money is being channelled through the relevant top tier local authorities. The payments to all 12 OAs take account of expenditure already made or committed, and the remaining year 4 activity agreed by the local OA partnership boards. We have discussed and agreed the specific amounts with the

DfE Head of Delivery in each OA, who works closely with local partners. A total of £9,465,671 was paid on 11 March 2021 to the local authorities listed in Annex A. This was the second payment for this financial year.

Purpose of the Grant

The Council can spend this grant to promote activity in the OA 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 actions and commitments made in the local OA delivery plan.

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

- implement the actions in the OA 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 and early years leadership, the quality of the education and early years workforce, 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;
- embed successes and effective approaches supporting OAs to be self-sustaining after the fourth year; and
- in the case of Bradford, extend the existing scheme around the early identification of autism.

We also anticipate that this additional year 4 funding will be used to mitigate the negative impact of COVID-19; to bring together other parts of government to effectively tackle multi-faceted problems; and extend the reach and impact of the programme through 'twinning' (whereby each OA will share effective educational practice with at least one other area facing similar social mobility challenges and levels of disadvantage).

Where agreed with the DfE, the local authority may also use the grant to pay salary costs where local OA programme staff are employed through the local authority, and to fund any "new burdens" and cover reasonable expenses associated with administering this grant.

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 Directors of Children's Services in all participating local authorities, OA Heads of Delivery, Her Majesty's Treasury and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Enquiries

For all enquiries about the OAs, please contact
Opportunity.AREAS@education.gov.uk

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Education

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Franey', with a long horizontal stroke extending from the bottom of the signature.

Elizabeth Franey
Deputy Director, Opportunity Areas, Department for Education

Annex A

REVENUE grant determination (non-ringfenced)

Opportunity Areas Year 4 GRANT DETERMINATION 2020-21: No 31/5400

The Secretary of State for Education (Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP), 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 Grant Determination (2020-21) [**31/5400**].

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 Secretary 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 are set out in Annex A.

Treasury consent

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

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Education

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E Franey', with a horizontal line drawn underneath the signature.

Elizabeth Franey, Deputy Director, Opportunity Areas, Department for Education

March 2021

Authorities to which grant is to be paid	Opportunity Area	Amount of grant to be paid
Blackpool Borough Council	Blackpool	£ 767,529.00
Derby City Council	Derby	£ 858,000.00
North Yorkshire County Council	North Yorkshire Coast	£ 629,223.00
Norfolk County Council	Norwich	£ 730,000.00
Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council	Oldham	£ 458,701.00
Somerset County Council	W Somerset	£ 588,000.00
City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council	Bradford	£ 1,257,000.00
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council	Doncaster	£ 940,218.00
Cambridgeshire County Council	Fenland & E Cambs	£ 885,000.00
East Sussex County Council	Hastings	£ 625,000.00
Suffolk County Council	Ipswich	£ 725,000.00
Stoke-on-Trent City Council	Stoke-on-Trent	£ 1,002,000.00