

## SCHOOLS FORUM AGENDA ITEM

For Action



For Information

**Brief Description of Item** (including the purpose / reason for presenting this for consideration by the Forum)

Schools Forum members representing maintained schools are asked to agree to conduct a consultation with maintained schools on proposed amendments to the Scheme for Financing Schools. These amendments have been triggered by the DfE's refreshed guidance for local authorities, which was published on 5 February 2019.

**Date (s) of any Previous Discussion at the Forum**

The Schools Forum agreed the current Scheme on 17 October 2018 and this came into force on 1 January 2019.

**Background / Context**

The Schools Finance Regulations permit the Local Authority to amend the provisions within the Scheme, subject to the approval of the Schools Forum. Provision 1.4 within the current Scheme states that, "Any proposed revisions to the Scheme will be the subject of consultation with schools maintained by the Local Authority, before the proposed revisions are submitted to the Schools Forum for their approval." Where the Schools Forum does not approve the Local Authority's proposals for amendment, the Local Authority has the right of appeal to the Secretary of State, who will make a final judgement.

The Schools Forum approved the current Scheme, which updated the Scheme alongside the Financial Regulations for Maintained Schools and Schools Contract Standard Orders, following consultation with schools, on 17 October 2018.

The DfE refreshes annually its guidance for local authorities on Schemes to take account changes in legislation and policy. The DfE sometimes directs local authorities to amend their schemes to incorporate specific changes or wordings. These are known as 'directed revisions' and are not required to be consulted on locally before insertion into Schemes.

**Details of the Item for Consideration**

The DfE published amended guidance for local authorities on Schemes on 5 February 2019. Following review of this, we propose to make minor amendments to our current Scheme. These amendments are highlighted in red and yellow in Appendix 1.

The vast majority of the proposed amendments are non-material changes to wording and references to legislation or are insertions for clarity on existing provisions suggested by the DfE. There is a material change within section 12 "Community Facilities", where the Children's and Families Act 2014 has removed the requirement on schools to consult with the Local Authority when offering this type of provision. The wording in our Scheme has been softened in response.

We propose to conduct a consultation on these amendments, with the outcomes of this consultation to be presented to the Schools Forum on 22 May 2019 for final decision.

**Implications for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) (if any)**

None

**Recommendations**

Schools Forum members representing maintained schools are asked to agree to conduct a consultation with maintained schools on amendments to the Scheme for Financing Schools as proposed in Document KH Appendix 1.

**List of Supporting Appendices / Papers** (where applicable)

Appendix 1 – Proposed Scheme for Financing Schools with highlighted amendments

**Contact Officer** (name, telephone number and email address)

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