

INFORMATION SHEET FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING SCHOOLS FORUM

1. About Schools Forum

The Schools Forum was established to meet the requirements of sections 47(1) and 47A of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2002.

Schools Forum aims to provide clear professional advice and strategic direction to the Council to aid decisions regarding education funding, and ensure that optimum value is obtained from the limited resources available for a positive impact on teaching and learning.

2. Functions of the Forum

To serve as the main mechanism for consultation on such matters concerning the funding of schools as the Council shall see fit and in particular in relation to the matters specifically detailed below.

To be consulted by the Council on any changes to its school funding formulae (Schools, Early Years and High Needs Blocks). This would include changes to factors and methodology and also in the choice of relative factors within the formulae. The Council shall consult with the Forum in sufficient time to allow the view expressed to be taken into account.

The Schools Forum must approve movement of up to 0.5% from the schools block to other blocks.

To be consulted annually on financial issues related to the Schools Budget, which will include:

- arrangements to be made for the education of pupils with special educational needs, in particular the places to be commissioned by the LA and schools and the arrangements for paying top-up funding;
- arrangements for use of pupil referral units and the education of children otherwise than at school, in particular the places to be commissioned by the LA and schools and the arrangements for paying top-up funding;
- arrangements for early years provision;
- administrative arrangements for the allocation of central government grants;
- other matters as the Council sees fit concerning funding.
- exclusions from MFG for application to DfE.

To be consulted at least one month prior to the issue of invitations to tender on the terms of any proposed contract for services or supplies to be funded from

the schools budget where the estimated value is in excess of the EU procurement thresholds.

The LA will decide on central spend on licenses negotiated centrally by the Secretary of State and children and young people with high needs, although Schools Forum will be consulted.

Schools Forum has specific powers, which are as follows:-

Decide on the de-delegation for mainstream schools for:-

- Contingencies;
- Administration of Free School Meals;
- Insurances;
- Licenses & Subscriptions;
- Staff Costs – Cover Supply;
- Support for minority ethnic;
- Pupils/Under achieving Groups;
- Behaviour Support Services;
- Library & Museum Services;
- School improvement

Approve central spend on:-

- Funding for significant pre-16 pupil growth, including new schools set up to meet basic need, whether maintained or academy
- Funding for good or outstanding schools with falling rolls where growth in pupil numbers is expected within three years
- Early Years block provision;
- Funding to enable all schools to meet the infant class size requirement;
- Back-pay for equal pay claims;
- Remission of boarding fees at maintained schools and academies
- Places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils;
- Admissions;
- Servicing of Schools Forum;
- Contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for all schools;
- Capital expenditure funded from revenue;
- Contribution to combined budgets;
- Existing termination of employment costs ;
- Prudential borrowing costs ;

The Schools Forum must also approve changes proposed by the Local Authority to The Scheme for Financing Schools, following consultation with all maintained schools.

The Schools Forum also decides whether to carry forward a deficit on central expenditure to the next financial year, to be funded from the schools budget and any brought forward deficit on de-delegated services which is to be met by the overall schools budget.

3. Rules about members of the public speaking at meetings

Meetings of the Schools Forum are open to the public. A member of the public can attend as an observer. Observers do not have an automatic right to speak at meetings, but the chair may allow contributions where appropriate.

The public and press may however be excluded from the meeting or part of the meeting if confidential information is likely to be discussed or considered.

Everyone in attendance at a Schools Forum meeting will be treated with courtesy and respect.