

**SLOUGH SCHOOLS' FORUM**  
**Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2014**

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**The Functioning of the Schools Forum**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform members of the Schools Forum about the functioning of the Forum, laying out its powers and responsibilities (see DfE table at **Appendix A**). The report explains the steps of the process to do with addressing strategic financial matters which relate to schools' and early years' funding. This takes it from the point of the Local Authority making proposals for consideration by the Forum, with the Forum being consulted or in some instances making decisions prior to endorsement by the Local Authority.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Schools Forum notes the process and makes any recommendations to improve on the process.

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To ensure that there is clarity about the functioning of the Schools Forum and that steps have been considered to ensure that it operates as effectively, efficiently, fairly and transparently as possible.

**4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 None.

**5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 5.1 The latest version of the School Forum Constitution refers to the powers and responsibilities of the Schools Forum as shown below.
- 5.2 Section 3 from the Constitution agreed in February 2013 shown below refers to both the DfE table of roles and responsibilities (**Appendices A and B to this report**) and to the local process for the consultation and decision making framework (**Appendix C to this report**).

<b>Powers and Responsibilities of the Schools Forum</b>
The Schools Forum is both a consultative and decision making body. Appendix X is a Department for Education table which provides an overview guide to the main powers and responsibilities of the Schools Forum.

The local process for the consultation and decision making framework is attached as Appendix X

The Schools Forum has a duty to report to school governing bodies on the consultation in which it has been involved.

- 5.3 **Appendices A and B** show respectively the powers and responsibilities for 2013-14 with which members of the Forum will be familiar and the powers and responsibilities for 2014-15 taking account of latest guidance.
- 5.4 **Appendix C** of this report provides details about the local process for consultation and decision making. It lays out the steps in a clear linear progression through to endorsement by the Local Authority and explains about the exceptional involvement of the Department for Education for adjudication in cases where the Forum is not in agreement with Local Authority proposals.
- 5.5 Circulated with this report is a brief DfE guide to the operation of Schools Forums and a full operational guide can be found at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-forums-operational-and-good-practice-guide-2013](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-forums-operational-and-good-practice-guide-2013)

## **6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

### Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The relevant legal provisions are contained within the main body of this report.

### Section 151 Officer – Strategic Director of Resources

- 6.2 The financial implications of the report are outlined in the supporting information.

### Access Implications

- 6.3 There are no access implications.

## **7 CONSULTATION**

### Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 None.

### Method of Consultation

- 7.2 Not applicable.

## Representations Received

7.3 Not applicable.

## Background Papers

**Appendix A:** Schools Forum: Powers and Responsibilities 2013-14

**Appendix B:** Schools Forum: Powers and Responsibilities taking into account most recent guidance

**Appendix C:** Flow Chart showing the steps related to finance matters being considered by Schools Forum. This includes the way proposals are brought to the attention of the Forum for consultation and decisions followed by Local Authority endorsement and implementation. Once confirmed, this Appendix will become an Appendix of the Schools Forum Constitution.

Circulated with this report is a brief DfE guide to the operation of Schools Forums and a full operational guide can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-forums-operational-and-good-practice-guide-2013](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-forums-operational-and-good-practice-guide-2013)

## **Contact for further information**

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