

SLOUGH SCHOOLS' FORUM

Wednesday 17th September 2014

PFI FUNDING OPTIONS Update on progress

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To update the Forum on progress since the meeting on 2nd July 2014.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Council asks that:

- The forum notes the commencement of DfE pilot aimed at delivering efficiencies and reducing costs
- The forum notes the update in this report relating to the requirement to reduce the General Fund 's contribution to the Schools PFI

3. Introduction

3.1 At the last meeting the Forum were updated on the progress since the last meeting in May 2014. The purpose of the current discussions relate to the requirement to agree a way forward on the redistribution of the PFI funding gap to achieve significant reduction to the figure £810k per annum on a phased basis. In addition there is the additional £180k from the benchmarking exercise that also needs to be addressed.

3.2 At this meeting the recommendations were;

- The Forum noted the progress made since the last meeting
- The Forum noted that, once any savings have been realised, the remaining affordability funding gap will need to be found on a phased basis from 2015/16. This was noted but with no assumptions about the sources of that funding at this stage e.g. no assumptions about implications for the DSG.
- The Forum confirmed support for SBC participating as one of DfE pilots if successful in being selected.
- Agreed that further updates are provided to the Forum as progress is made with the next updates scheduled for the autumn term: September and October meetings. To be noted on the forward plan

4. **Current Position**

- 4.1 Following the Forum meeting in July a meeting was held with the three PFI Heads on 14th July 2014. The purpose of this meeting was to have an initial discussion and it was suggested that a follow up meeting would be held in early September 2014 and the Chair and Vice Chairs of the three PFI schools would be invited to attend. This has now been scheduled for 12th September at Beechwood School and Val Knight from DfE will also be attending the meeting .
- 4.2 In respect of PFI Operational Savings Programme, the start date for DfE pilot was delayed and the initial planning meeting has now been scheduled for 9th September 2014 to finalise the projects remit and targets.
- 4.3 The Project Lead from DfE is to be Steve Hazelton supported by Val Knight and their proposal is to have their final report available in late October /early November 2014.
- 4.4 It is proposed that the Project Lead and Project Manager meet with the three PFI Heads at the earliest opportunity following this meeting.
- 4.5 In addition to the above, a further meeting was held with QED Board/Pario on 18th August 2014 to further review and confirm any savings that can be delivered outside the remit of PFI pilot.

5. **Advice received from Statutory and other Officers**

5.1 Borough Solicitor

Advice on the principle of the report has been sought and the Council's Legal Service is party to the contract review.

5.2 Section 151 Officer – Assistant Director- Finance and Audit

The financial implications of the report were outlined in the report to Slough Schools Forum on 7th May 2014.

5.3 Access Implications

There are no access implications.

5.4 Consultation

Principal Groups Consulted – none

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