

Schools Forum – 20th May 2008

Report of the Director of Children's Services

The Revision of Schools Standing Orders

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Schools Forum of the proposed changes to Schools Standing Orders.

Discussed at HTCF – BWG

2. A report has been distributed to members for comment and to note.

Actions for Schools Forum

3. To comment upon and note the proposed changes to Standing Orders for Schools.

Attachments to Report

4. None

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Purpose of Report

1. To inform Schools Forum of the proposed changes to Schools Standing Orders.

Background

2. The funding framework for schools is based on the legislative provisions in sections 45 – 53 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SSaFA). Subject to the provisions of the Dudley Scheme for Financing Schools, governing bodies may spend budget shares “for the purposes of their school”. They may also spend budget shares on any additional purposes prescribed by the Secretary of State in regulations made under section 50(3) of the Act.
3. In accordance with the Scheme, when managing their delegated budgets, schools are required to abide by the authority's requirements on financial controls and monitoring. These are contained in Financial Regulations for Schools and Standing Orders relating to school governors contracts, in purchasing, tendering and contracting matters, supported by the Local Government Act 1972.
4. It is proposed to revise Schools Standing Orders, the current version of which was published in January 2004, to bring them into line with the Council's (non-school) Standing Orders, published July 2006, for continuity purposes and to provide a more flexible procurement framework.
5. The changes, detailed overleaf, are to the monetary bands that determine which procurement route should be taken i.e. quotation, tender or negotiation, notwithstanding European Procurement Legislation.

Procurement Process	Current Monetary Band	Proposed/Revised Band
Quotation, Tender or Negotiation	Up to £20,000	Up to £40,000
Tender or Negotiation	Between £20,000 - £75,000	Between £40,000 - £140,000
Detailed project appraisal then Tender or Negotiation	Over £75,000	Over £140,000 *

**EC (European Community) Procurement Directives apply if the estimated contract value is above the EC thresholds that currently are (excluding VAT) £139,893.00 for service and supply contracts and £3,497,313.00 for works contracts.*

6. The Revision of Schools Standing Orders is an Agenda item for summer term Governing Body meetings, and Governors are being asked to note the proposed changes.
7. To further assist schools with procurement, the revised version will include links to a range of guidance documents including Risk Management in procurement, Financial Appraisals in Procurement and Option Appraisals.

Finance

8. The funding of schools is prescribed by the DCSF through the School Finance (Amendment)(England) Regulations 2008.

Law

9. Councils' LMS Schemes are made under Section 48 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Education Acts 1996 and 2002 also have provisions relating to school funding.

Equality Impact

10. The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy is taken into account when considering the allocation of resources.

Recommendation

11. That Schools Forum note the proposed changes to Schools Standing Orders.



John Freeman
Director of Children's Services

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