

Schools Forum 21st October 2014

Report of the Interim Director of Children's Services

Effective Schools Forums

Purpose of Report

1. To re-circulate to Schools Forum the Education Funding Agency's operational and good practice guide issued in October 2013.

Budget Working Group Discussed

2. No.

Schools Forum Role and Responsibilities

3. National regulations govern the composition, constitution and procedures of Schools Forums.
4. Schools Forums generally have a consultative role. However, there are situations in which they have decision-making powers.
5. From 1st April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct Department for Education (DfE) grant: the Dedicated School Grant (DSG).
6. Schools Forum is the 'guardian' of the local Schools Budget, and its distribution among schools and other bodies, and therefore must be closely involved throughout the development process.
7. The Education Funding Agency (EFA) best practice guide advises that Schools Forum have a role in the challenge and scrutiny function whereby the Forum may be asked to agree to proposals from their local authority that will have an effect on all schools and academies in the local area. The extent to which Schools Forums can scrutinise and challenge such proposals is an important aspect of their effectiveness.

Action for Schools Forum

8. The EFA reissued in October 2013 their publication Schools Forums: Operational and Good Practice Guide. A copy of the full guidance is provided on Dudley's Schools Forum website at <http://www.dudley.gov.uk/community/community-forums/dudley-schools-forum/>. This publication was discussed at the December 2013 meeting and is included in the Schools Forum member's induction information.
9. Dudley's member induction information is in the process of being updated and will be circulated during the Autumn term.

10. Whilst Section 1 relates to the procedural and constitutional arrangements which are documented in Dudley's Schools Forum Constitution, Section 2 relates to Effective Schools Forums and following recent questions regarding the remit of Schools Forum the guidance is attached at Appendix 2 as a reminder of the characteristics which contribute to an effective Schools Forum.

Attachments to Report

11. Appendix 1 – Education Funding Agency Operational and Good Practice Guide for Schools Forums – Section 2: Effective Schools Forums.

Karen Cocker
Children's Services Finance Manager
6th October 2014

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Purpose of Report

1. To re-circulate to Schools Forum the Education Funding Agency's operational and good practice guide issued in October 2013.

Background

2. Section 2 of the Education Funding Agency's operational and good practice guide issued in October 2013, titled Effective Forums, is attached at Appendix 1 for future reference.

Finance

3. The funding of schools is prescribed by the Department for Education (DfE) through the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2013.
4. Schools Forums are regulated by the regulated by the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012.
5. From 1st April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct grant; Dedicated School Grant (DSG).

Law

6. 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

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

Recommendation

8. Schools Forum to note the contents of Section 2 of the Education Funding Agency's operation and good practice guide: Effective Schools Forums.



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