

APPENDIX 1

9 April 2010

**Schools Forum Sub Working Group
Discussion Paper
20 April 2010**

It is a recognised feature of Schools Forum operation that specific working sub groups are established to carry out research and activity on behalf of Schools Forum business.

Such groups provide more in-depth consideration and analysis to the complex funding scenarios that arise. Their feedback and support to the work of Schools Forum is critical and enables informed discussion and debate which eventually shapes any recommendations made.

These groups can be transient in nature, i.e. to support activity around one key area for consideration or more long term; the Budget Working Group being an example of the latter.

Membership of these groups will need to bring in the expertise required related to the activity undertaken and is not restricted to the members of the Schools Forum. Indeed, a broader representation is often required in order to ensure full engagement and undertaking of the topics to be tackled. Such opportunities also offer wider engagement of school and local authority staff which will enable a broader understanding of the business and function of Schools Forum.

Terms of Reference for all such groups should be devised with the activity, commitment and timescale outlined so that any members joining the group are clear about the expectations, time commitment and outcomes required. It is expected that members of such groups will undertake activities in preparation for the formal meetings in order that the required information is available and recommendations can be devised and considered prior to submission back to Schools Forum.

Throughout this the Schools Forum remains the statutory body responsible for any recommendations put forward to Cabinet and all such sub working groups report into Schools Forum on completion of their research and activity.

Key Questions for Consideration:

- Membership
 - How should the groups be constituted.
 - Structure- Nomination of a chair
 - Structure- Administrative support

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 - Schools Forum to consider and outline
 - Framework/template
 - Management of meetings- minutes etc.
 - Timeframes

- Outcomes and expectations
- Communication
 - Reporting lines
 - Feedback at Schools Forum meetings
 - Publications/website
 - Minutes of meetings
- Published forward plan
 - To link with Schools Forum work plan
 - Identify topics for consideration
 - Establish calendar

Budget Working Group:

This sub working group is by necessity a long term sub group which focuses on key budget activities.

Membership:

Questions were asked at the last Schools Forum meeting about how do you become a member. The current membership reflects many Schools Forum members. The current Chair is also Chair of Schools Forum.

TOR:

These need to be clearly stated, detailed and agreed by Schools Forum.

Communication:

Minutes of meetings need to be available to all Schools Forum members in support and evidence of the work undertaken by the group. Reports for Schools Forum need to be in appropriate format and follow standard procedures. Presentation at Schools Forum should be undertaken by any member of the group or a nominated representative elected by the group.

Forward Plan:

The topics for consideration and timeline needs to be published as part of the Schools Forum Working Plan. The dates of meetings need to be plotted throughout an agreed period, i.e. financial/calendar/academic year.

Next Steps?

Kathy Roberts
Assistant Director: Improvement & Inclusion

