

BARKING AND DAGENHAM SCHOOLS FORUM

SCHOOL FORUM SUB GROUP – SCHOOLS FACING FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.0 MEMBERSHIP

1.1 As agreed by Schools Forum:

Elizabeth Chaplin (Co Chair of Schools Forum)
Roger Leighton (Co Chair of Schools Forum)
Jane Hargreaves (Divisional Director of Education – LBBD)
Dominic Byrne (Union Representative)
Dawn Calvert (Group Finance Manager – LBBD)

2.0 PROCESS / BUSINESS

2.1 The Sub Group will meet four times a year in advance of the full Schools Forum meeting. Additional meetings can be arranged if required. The findings of the Sub Group will be reported to the Schools Forum along with any recommendations which must be agreed by the full Forum prior to implementation.

2.2 The Sub Group will assess the representations made by the schools. In doing so it may seek advice from independent experts and headteachers in the sector in addition to those who are members of the sub group.

3.0 KEY IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The Schools and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2012 provide that in determining the individual schools budget a local authority may, with the approval of the Schools Forum, deduct from their schools budget expenditure on the schools. The definition of contingencies which can be de-delegated for maintained primary and secondary schools is restricted to expenditure which it would be unreasonable to expect governing bodies to meet from their budget share. This may include schools in financial difficulty or facing other unforeseen expenditure where a licensed deficit is not appropriate.

3.2 The purpose of the funding is not to 'bail out' schools on a permanent basis, but to provide breathing space for a school to make the changes that may be required to put it back on a firm financial footing.

3.0 CRITERIA

3.1 The general principle is that a school's governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school is managed well and where a school experiences difficulties the first call on a schools budget is to resolve its own problems without the need for other maintained schools to de-delegate funding to support schools in financial difficulty.

3.2 The proposed criteria for consideration of extra funding are:

- A licensed deficit has been considered but is inappropriate due to the schools being unable to meet the repayment terms
- Where the before criterion is satisfied, the school needs to fall into one or more of the following categories for support to be considered:
 - A school in an OFSTED category or requires improvement
 - The school has experienced a significant reduction in pupil numbers and the capacity is likely to be required within the next 3 to 5 years
 - Other exceptional cases made by the school