

# Lancashire Schools Forum

## eNewsletter

• Issue 118 • November 2021

# Fair Exchange?

Welcome to Issue 110 of 'Fair Exchange?' a pre-Forum Edition of the eNewsletter of the Lancashire Schools' Forum.

## FORUM UPDATE

### Schools Budget for 2022/23

The Schools Forum working groups will be considering a number of issues during meetings in November and December 2021, However, the main focus of this cycle of Forum meetings are the matters relating to setting the Schools Budget for 2022/23.

Final Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations for 2022/23 and final pupil data from the DfE are not expected until later in December, with final budget proposals being presented to the full Schools Forum meeting, scheduled for 13 January 2022 and the Lancashire County Council Cabinet meeting on 20 January 2022.

Once Lancashire plans are agreed, a submission will need to be sent to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) so that our Schools Block proposals can be compliance checked before Individual School Budgets (ISBs) are issued.

Schools will receive their ISBs in the final week of February 2022.

Colleagues will be aware from Fair Exchange 117, that following a consultation with schools earlier in the autumn term, the Forum have already taken some decisions that impact on the Schools Budget relating to de-delegations and the level of Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG).

In recent years, consultation has also been undertaken in the autumn term with schools and academies about a possible transfer over available headroom from the Schools Block to the to help mitigate the costs pressures facing the sector. IN the last 2 years a £2m transfer has been agreed to support pressures in the Early Years Block. Initially Schools Block modelling for 2022/23 indicates that there is unlikely to be any available headroom from April 2022, so no consultation is planned this year.

If final Schools Block allocations, which are expected in mid-December 2021, reveal any available headroom, then any urgent consultation may be issued at the very end of the autumn term 2021 or early spring 2022.

It is also possible that an urgent additional de-delegation consultation may be issued to maintained schools, depending on the outcome of a consultation taking place with the DfE about school improvement activities.

## Other Forum Matters

Other matters to be considered by the Forum Working Groups in this round of meetings includes:

- To offer advice on the School Teaching and Support Staff Supply Reimbursement Scheme arrangements for 2022/23;
- An outcomes report from the Healthy Relationships Training Programme.
- School Feedback on DfE Covid Catch Up Funding ;
- Information on the DfE Reforming how local authorities' school improvement functions are funded Government consultation;
- An update on school issues associated with the Apprenticeship Levy
- Information on the Alternative Provision Strategy Group;
- Consideration of the High Needs Block places to be commissioned in 2022/23;
- Information on the Lancashire position against the DfE High Needs Block template

## What Else is Happening?

### Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

As mentioned in Fair Exchange 117, there is a statutory requirement on all maintained schools to complete the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) each year and to provide a copy of the completed return to the authority, by 31 March each year.

A formal core agenda item is included on the autumn term governors meetings and governing bodies must formally discuss the SFVS annually with the head teacher and senior staff and ensure that the standard is completed in full. The approved SFVS spreadsheet should be uploaded on the 'Forms' section of the Schools Portal. This can be accessed via the schools portal home page under Forms > Finance > Schools Financial Value Standard.

The DfE have recently updated the template they provide for recording related party transactions. The original template was a word document, but the updated version is now in excel and includes formulae to assist with calculating totals.

The new template is available from the DfE website [here](#).

Please could you use the updated DfE template to inform the LA of any related party transactions and ensure that all SFVS documentation is approved by governors and submitted to the LA by the statutory deadline of 31 March 2022.

## What's Happening Nationally

### Claim form for mass testing exceptional premises costs now open

Schools and academies with secondary age pupils along with colleges and other eligible establishments can now submit claims for exceptional premises costs incurred during the mass testing of pupils and students on their return at the start of the academic year 2021 to 2022.

The DfE have published guidance on how to claim, which is available [here](#).

Please note that the window for claims to be submitted is only open until **Sunday, 5 December 2021**.

## Who's Who? - Forum Membership



### Special School Governor Elections

3 nominations for the special school governor vacancy on the Forum were received and an election process in which all maintained special school governing bodies are entitled to vote, is underway to determine who should be appointed to the Forum.

Information about the election process was issued on the portal on 15 November 2021 and voting has been extended to 10 December 2021.

### Questions?

Remember, if you have any questions about the Schools Forum, please contact Paul Bonser, Forum Clerk, 01772 531815, or email [schoolsforum@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:schoolsforum@lancashire.gov.uk)