

Title of meeting: Schools Forum

Date of meeting: 08 July 2020

Subject: Scheme for Financing Schools

Report from: Alison Jeffery, Director of Children, Families and Education

Report by: Angela Mann, Finance Manager

Wards affected: All Wards

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report outlines the proposed changes to the Scheme for Financing Schools which reflect the revisions to the scheme as outlined in the guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that Schools Forum members representing maintained schools approve the revised Scheme for Financing Schools attached at Appendix 1, to come into force on 1 August 2020.**

3. Background

- 3.1. The latest statutory guidance for Local Authorities issued by the DfE in respect of the Scheme for Financing Schools reflects the recent changes to legislation as set out in The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations. The proposed Portsmouth City Council Scheme for Financing Schools attached at Appendix 1, incorporates the requirements of the statutory guidance issued by the DfE.
- 3.2. There were no directed revisions to the Scheme in the guidance issued by the DfE for 2020 to 2021. The guidance included a number of changes across the whole of the document and these have been reflected in the Scheme for Financing Schools issued by Portsmouth City Council where appropriate. The proposed scheme will become effective on 1st August 2020 once approved by Schools Forum.

3.3 Consultation on the changes to the Scheme with Head teachers, Governors and Finance Managers took place between the 9 June 2020 and 19 June 2020. There were no responses received. The final document is attached at Appendix 1.

4. Proposed Revisions

4.1. The proposed Scheme has been revised to ensure consistency of language, the correct use of titles for responsible officers together with updated hyperlinks to further information and any changes to relevant legislation. The main revisions to the scheme are listed below and reflect both the changes to the statutory guidance issued by the DfE, together with the general revisions for changes to Portsmouth City Council policies and procedures.

Paragraph	Update
1.1	This section has been updated in line with the guidance issued by the Department for Education.
1.3	Updated wording to reflect the latest Government guidelines
1.4	Updated to reflect that no directed revisions were required by DfE to the 2020-21 Scheme.
1.5	Extended the wording to make it clear the authority will consult with the governing bodies and the Head teachers of all maintained schools.
1.6	Paragraph includes revised date for upload of schools budget (extended due to Covid-19).
2.1.1	Links updated to the most up to date version of the Financial Rules
2.2	Updated the Basis of Accounting to include separation of duties and consistent financial reporting regulations.
2.3	Updated date for submission of budget plans
2.6	Updated content to distinguish between internal and external audit regime
2.10	Expanded the competence of contractors to include safeguarding practices.
2.14	Added paragraph re capital expenditure not affected by provisions.

Paragraph	Update
4.3	Added paragraph to clarify what happens to interest on surplus balances if base rate is less than 0.5%.
4.8	Amended with updated regulations used for determining balances of closing and replacement schools.
5.5	New paragraph added for administrative procedures for the collection of income.
8.4	Legislation relating to Teachers Pension Regulations updated.
10.1	Claims levels following advice from Council insurance section and added paragraph re Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA).
10.5 (a)	Amendment to personal accident cover, to delete final sentence re excess.
11.5	Updated Health and Safety wording as advised by PCC Corporate Health and Safety Advisor.
13.1	Removal of two bullet points relating to the governing body being obliged to consult with the LA and the Secretary of State issuing guidance to governing bodies.
Annex 1	Removal of school which closed September 19 and updated school names and DfE numbers and inclusion centre names where incorrect.
Annex 1	Special unit places numbers amended to reflect places agreed by Schools Forum and Cabinet member for 2020-21

- 4.3 The revised version of the Scheme for Financing Schools, once approved will be issued to schools (including Head teachers, Governors and Finance Managers) and made available on the intranet and the external website.

5. Reasons for recommendations

- 5.1 Part 4 of The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2020 sets out the responsibilities in respect of the scheme for Financing Schools, including the required content which the scheme must deal with (Regulation 30) and the requirement for members of Schools Forum who represent schools maintained by the authority to approve revisions to the Scheme (Regulation 31). The recommendations contained within this report, seek approval from the relevant Schools Forum members to the proposed changes to Portsmouth City Council's Scheme for Financing Schools in line with those Regulations.

6. Equality impact assessment (EIA)

6.1 An integrated impact assessment is not required as the recommendations do not have a positive or negative impact on communities and safety, regeneration and culture, environment and public space or equality and diversity.

7. Legal comments

7.1 Approval of the recommendations in this report will enable the Council to meet its statutory duties in respect of the maintenance and publication of a scheme for financing the schools which it maintains. (Section 48 and Schedule 14 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and Part 4 and Schedule 5 of the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2020).

8. Finance comments

8.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations contained within this report.

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Signed by: Alison Jeffery, Director of Children, Families and Education

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Scheme for Financing Schools 2020-21 (Proposed)

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Statutory Guidance - Schemes for Financing Schools	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schemes-for-financing-schools

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by: