

SCHOOLS FORUM
3 MARCH 2011

SCHOOLS FORUMS: OPERATIONAL AND GOOD PRACTICE
GUIDANCE FROM THE DfE
(Director of Children, Young People and Learning)

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report is presented to the Forum to bring attention to the DfE publication *Schools Forums: Operational Guidance and Good Practice*. This document is designed to provide members of Schools Forums, local authority officers and elected members with advice, guidance and information on good practice in relation to the operation of Schools Forums.

2 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 2.1 The *Schools Forums: Operational Guidance and Good Practice*, as set out at Annex A, is designed to contribute to the ongoing development of Schools Forums. It has been subject to consultation with a variety of external partners of the DfE, such as Association of Directors of Children's Services and the Local Government Association. It is not prescriptive – other than in respect of describing requirements arising from Regulations – as what is good practice in one Schools Forum may not be appropriate in another.
- 2.2 The guidance document has been set out in four sections:
- Section 1 provides information on the constitutional and procedural requirements as set out in the Schools Forum Regulations.
 - Section 2 covers a number of key aspects of the operation of Schools Forums.
 - Section 3 provides information on induction, training materials and activities that local authorities should consider providing to members of their Schools Forum.
 - Section 4 contains information on sources of further information and Departmental contact details.

Annex A sets out the guidance document in full, with more information on Schools Forums available from the DfE website as follows:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/financialmanagement/schools/revenuefunding/schoolsforums>

Comments on BF procedures and practices

- 2.3 In most instances, BF procedures and practices are considered to be in accordance with the good practices identified by the DfE. However, there are a small number of areas where consideration will need to be given for change, in particular:

- Providing better communication of the business of the Forum to the wider education community. For example through a dedicated Schools Forum page on the council's website, or more formal, directed briefings to stakeholders.
- Whether a more formal training programme should be made available for Forum Members.

2.4 These issues will be considered and further proposals brought to the Forum in due course.

3 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

3.1 Not applicable.

4 STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

4.1 None.

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

David Watkins, Chief Officer PAR

(01344 354061)

David.Watkins@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Paul Clark, Head of Departmental Finance

(01344 354054)

<mailto:paul.clark@bracknell-forest.gov.uk>

Doc. Ref

Doc. Ref NewAlluse\Executive\Schools Forum\49) 030311\Good practice guidane.doc