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Introduction

Firstly, I am delighted to welcome Debbie Coker to the Trust. Debbie was until earlier this month Headteacher at Fishponds Academy in Bristol. She comes to us fresh from an Ofsted Inspection with a track record in school improvement and a special interest in inclusion. Her new post as Deputy Director of Education (SEND and Inclusion) will certainly provide great challenge for her and we look forward to her leadership and impact across the Trust.



Last night, the first of our termly Chairs Development Groups directly raised the issue of the lack of SEN service and support in our LA regions. I recognise the challenge to us in reorganising to be a commissioner and direct-provider of SEN service. Our Trustees strategic morning next month will look at this and we will be moving to deliver the Strategic Plan's ambitions ahead of the published schedule. There is a great deal to do here, but as a large Trust we also have the agency and could have the capacity to deliver it.

You will see later in the Bulletin that Hannah Woodhouse (DfE Regional Director) will be attending our AGM. We really want to raise our profile as a trust with our local communities. Those of you who have been with us since the beginning may recognise a change in thinking here (I used to say that the Trust should be behind the scenes). As time has gone on, I have become more aware of the Trust's responsibility to be visible and accountable to the towns and villages that we serve. Please share the invitation to the public meeting at Backwell School on 17th May with your governors, parish councillors, local clergy and anyone who you think ought to know what we are doing!

Annual review of Scheme of Delegation

We are at the start of our annual review of the scheme of delegation. Trustees have not yet discussed this and before we do I wanted to do the usual call for any suggestions of sections that could be improved or are noticeably missing. In the [draft](#) that I have issued there are only two significant changes.

- Greater clarity of LGB's responsibility for setting school vision (and expectation for LGB to have a 3 year strategic plan)
- Reserves Policy - actions for Trustees **but** new requirement that - *The LGB should refer any spending decision outside the budget that will result in a reduction in reserves of £20,000 or 1% of the school's annual revenue funding (whichever is greater) to the monthly Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees for ratification.*

The second of these is the start of a complex piece of thinking to ensure that we can continue to allow schools to set budgets and retain reserves while protecting the Trust from a sudden collapse in our solvency. At present if all our schools spent large parts of their reserves, the overall position of the trust would be compromised and we would be unable to support deficits in schools facing difficult circumstances. The current controls exist very opaquely in our Finance Policy but it will be better to spell this out in the SoD and in a new Reserves Policy. I am sure that schools will have lots to say about this. To protect us from a 'run on the bank', I have asked Louise to be cautious in approving any significant spending decisions over the next few months.

Ukraine Update

We are very grateful to all our LSP colleagues for the offers of support for the Ukrainian children and families, who will be welcomed into LSP schools in the very near future. Everyone's time, skills and talents are much appreciated. The next step will be to get everyone together via TEAMS, so that we can discuss ideas and establish action plans. This meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 3rd May 3.30pm - 4.30pm. If you would like to participate in this meeting, please email dlogan@LSP.org.uk for the link to the meeting.

North Somerset Local Plan

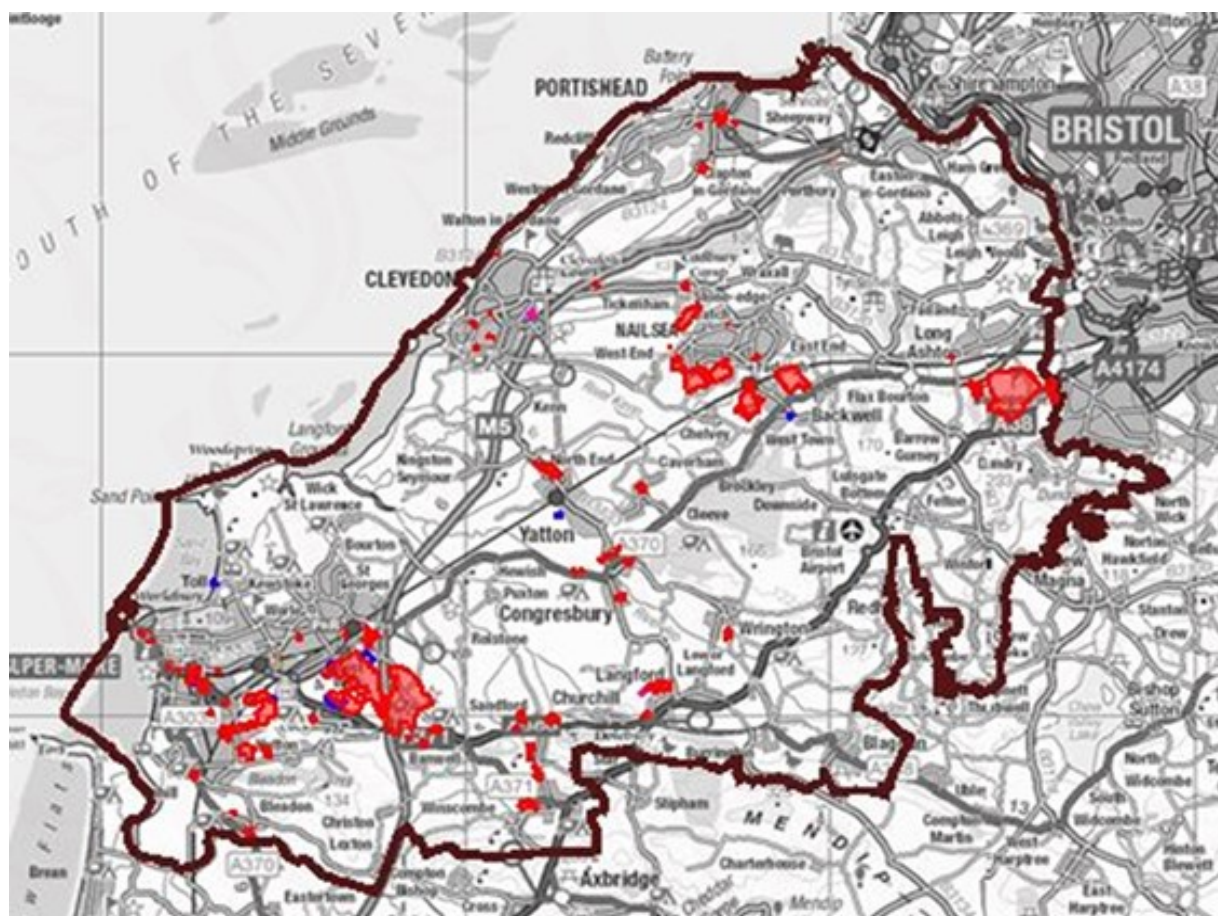
[Preferred Options Consultation - March 2022 | North Somerset Council \(n-somerset.gov.uk\)](#)

The Local Plan is out for consultation and envisages significant housing growth (marked in red on the map below). It also envisages new secondary schools near Long Ashton and in Yatton and three new primary schools in the Yanley Lane development (between Long Ashton and Dundry).

The consultation closes this week. I have responded to ask the council to consider its duty in places commissioning to ensure that the efficiency and quality of provision by existing providers is not compromised by new school places.

Please have a look at the plans.

Gary



Policy consultations

We are today launching a number of policy consultations, as detailed below.

HR Policies	Operational Policies
Apprentice	Scheme of Delegation
	Risk Management
	Letting of school facilities

A consultation summary is [available](#) and all of the proposed policies are available [here](#). The consultation period will run from 25th April to 13th May. Where possible, the proposed changes have been tracked for your information.

We had also planned to consult on updates to the Equality and Diversity Policy to reflect our whole community, rather than just staff. This consultation has, however, been delayed until a later date.

We would like to encourage Headteachers and School Business Managers to participate in this consultation. We would also like Chairs of Local Governing Bodies to ensure that the consultation is reported to their LGB and any response from the LGB is noted in their minutes. Chairs may wish to identify a member(s) of the LGB to lead on making a response to share the workload and benefit from governor skills. The Headteacher and Chair of the LGB may also want to consider sharing the consultation with other stakeholders.

Please submit your comments on the consultation to Diane Logan at dlogan@lsp.org.uk.

If you would like to submit changes to any of the policies, please highlight your changes or make them using tracked changes and also send them to Diane.



HR system and payroll

As you know, we have been working really hard with Civica to try and achieve all of the benefits that we had anticipated that their HR system would bring us. Thank you to all of you for reporting issues that you have been having with Civica - this has been really helpful. Despite all of our work, the system has not passed our user acceptance testing and we no longer have confidence that it can deliver the functions that we need. We have reached an agreement with Civica to terminate our contract with immediate effect.

Whilst we have been trying to resolve the issues with Civica, we have also been looking at the potential to utilise the HR function available in iTrent (the system that Neo People use for our payroll). We are pleased to be able to inform you that we have confirmed commercial arrangements with Neo People to move to iTrent for our HR system. We are really confident that we can move to iTrent quickly and efficiently and that this is the best way to achieve a functioning HR system. There will be no additional work to migrate data, so none of your work on this will have been wasted, although there may be some further pieces of data that need to be added, such as reporting managers, etc, to ensure workflows are directed to the right person. However, we do recognise that this change will mean that you will need to undertake some further training and we apologise for the inconvenience that this will cause. We will share further information in next week's bulletin about the range of functionality that we have secured from iTrent and will provide a project implementation plan in due course.

As a result of this change we would like you take the following immediate steps:

- Do not enter any further information into Civica
- If you have already entered some payroll change for May into Civica, please send the fully completed forms to Neo People who will input these changes into iTrent for you
- Please enter any payroll changes directly into iTrent

As detailed below, there are a number of training sessions planned this week to help you to enter into iTrent as detailed below. Please could you email dlogan@lsp.org.uk with the session that you would like to book into. We suggest that anyone that has access to iTrent or the associated SharePoint site attends this training. We appreciate that this is short notice, and the training sessions will be recorded for you to watch at a convenient time, if you are unable to attend any of the sessions:

Wednesday 27th April

9.30 - 10.30

11.00 - 12.00

Thursday 28th April

12.00 - 1.00

3.00 - 4.00

This also provides me with the opportunity to say thank you for your work on checking the April payroll. We recognise that where Easter fell made the timescales very difficult and appreciate all of your efforts. We can confirm that the cost of the payroll service through Neo People is £3.65 per payslip which is a reduction when compared to the previous cost of £4.04 per payslip with FS4S.

We look forward to discussing this with you further at our forthcoming hub meetings but wanted to communicate immediately to make you aware of these changes.

Louise Malik

Chew Valley School receives prestigious Artsmark Gold Award

Congratulations to Chew Valley School for receiving the prestigious Artsmark Gold Award. The Artsmark Award is the only creative quality standard for schools, accredited by the Arts Council England. It supports schools to develop and celebrate arts and cultural education, putting creativity and wellbeing at the heart of the curriculum.

To achieve their Artsmark Gold Award, Chew Valley School had to develop their arts and culture provision to embed a broad and ambitious curriculum.



Bids for additional SCA funded projects

A gentle reminder that the deadline for submitting applications from the SCA bid funding pot is 29th April. Details of the fund and application process were provided in the news bulletin

EIF Inspections in Primary Schools

Ofsted recently held a session on Inspection in Primary Schools. Lots of the information will not be new to school leaders but this might be a good resource to share with other leaders/teachers - it is particularly reassuring for subject leaders and covers leading in both large and small primaries. I think it may put staff more at ease - particularly if many of your staff have not been through an inspection before. You can find the film [here](#) and the repurposed slides for the SlideShare channel [here](#).

Ofsted webinars

Click [here](#) to read the updated blog post with details of webinars. (Note that the new session contains other information from the questions and comments from the first session).

The blog will be updated with two webinars, one on safeguarding and one on governance once dates and times have been finalised.

*Elizabeth Boulton
Head of Content, Ofsted*

School reports on pupil performance: guide for headteachers

Click [here](#) for guidance for schools on writing statutory end of year reports for parents. Updated for the 2021 to 2022 academic year to remove references to temporary arrangements introduced for the pandemic and to reflect the publication of the Schools White Paper.

Reporting to parents at the end of key stages 1 and 2

Click [here](#) for guidance for schools on writing statutory end of year reports for parents. Updated to confirm reporting requirements following the return to a full programme of assessments in 2021 to 2022.

New risk assessment arrangements

In line with advice from Delegated Services, we are ‘decommissioning’ our covid 19 risk assessments and replacing them with ongoing Respiratory and Other Infectious Diseases Risk Assessments. Whilst there has been a welcome reduction in the number of infections in recent weeks, we recognise that covid-19 infections still pose a risk to both the wellbeing of our staff and pupils, and to our capacity to deliver. The move to the new Respiratory and Other Infectious Diseases Risk Assessment is not intended to diminish our focus on this issue but to normalise and sustain our control measures into the long term. Please find the [new template risk assessment here](#). The new Respiratory and Other Infectious Diseases Risk Assessment is part of the updated suite of risk assessments contained within our Health and Safety Policy.

Please could you complete the following steps by the end of the week:

- remove your covid19 risk assessments from your website and inform your community that it has been removed and replaced with LSP Respiratory and Infectious Diseases, in line with Government guidance.
- update the new risk assessment template to reflect the specifics for you school(s) (items highlighted in yellow in the template and any other specific circumstances that you wish to reflect)
- undertake the risk ratings on the new risk assessment template
- consult with your staff on your new risk assessment
- communicate with your community as you feel appropriate about your new risk assessment (although the new risk assessment does not have to be published on your website)

Please get in touch if you have any comments or questions on the new risk assessment or the process detailed above.



Alternative budget setting and monitoring software

Thank you all for attending the recent demonstrations of the Integrated MAT Platform (IMP) system and for your subsequent feedback. We have now analysed your feedback and undertaken a full assessment of the three potential systems that we have investigated. The outcome of this work is that we will be moving to the IMP system for the start of the budgeting process for the 2023-24 financial year. We will continue to budget and monitor the 2022-23 financial year using Orovia and will produce a more detailed project plan to discuss with you in due course.

We are delighted with the improved functionality that the IMP systems offers us and the opportunity it provides to increase the effectiveness of our financial management arrangements.

School Financial Benchmarking Comparisons for 2022-23 Budget Planning

There are tools available to help you see how your school spends its money and the outcomes it achieves against other schools. As part of your 2022-23 budget planning, we would recommend that you review the Self-assessment Dashboard for your school(s) and use the benchmarking comparisons to investigate those areas where your school's data on your dashboard suggests your school is significantly out of line with schools with similar characteristics.

The DfE has changed the format for these reports since last year, so we are unable to provide a spreadsheet with your dashboard alongside those for other schools in the Trust. However, we have downloaded both your dashboard for your 2020-21 budget and have prepared data for you to input to enable you to produce a second dashboard based on your 2021-22 submitted budget. This is more straightforward than it sounds and will enable you to save a report with the dashboards side by side for direct comparison and ease of sharing with your governors responsible for finance.

We have also downloaded two sets of benchmarking charts for your school - one with the benchmark set of schools suggested by the tool based on academies with similar characteristics, and another with schools of a similar size within the Trust.

The guidance and charts (along with links to the charts) are available for you in [Foldr](#) for you to review, use for reporting and share with your governors. The dashboards for 2020-21 will be shared with Finance Trustees.

Development Role within the Central Finance Team - Please share with appropriate staff in your school

To support the Central Team in delivering high level finance Service Level Agreements to some of our schools as part of the work on the Small Schools Strategy, we are looking to recruit a School Finance Officer for 3 hours a week at JG7 on a Fixed Term Contract until 31st October 2022 in the first instance. The role is required as soon as possible and would suit someone already working in one of our schools at a transactional finance level who is looking for a development opportunity. Training and support will be given.

Please contact Sue Warneford-Thomson by Thursday, 5th May at swarnefordthomson@lsp.org.uk if you would like further information.

Governance Update

Reminder for General Meeting

A date for your diary - LSP General Meeting on Tuesday 17th May @ 6.00pm (in real life, not Teams) - Venue: Backwell School Library

Hannah Woodhouse from the South West Regional Schools Commission ([RSC](#)) has kindly agreed to open the meeting with an update on RSC priorities (and expectations of LSP for those priorities).

Governor Training in Term 5

3rd May @ 6.00pm - Risk Management (Teams)

9th May @ 1.00pm - Clerk's Network (Teams)

12th May @ 6.00on - Safeguarding Training (Link Governors) (Teams)

Please contact fforrest@lsp.org.uk for more details.

