

News Bulletin



LIGHTHOUSE
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

Issue 20: 7 February 2023



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Introduction

You will have seen that we issued a consultation last week to propose a modest increase in our Core Services Charge. We had delayed the decision and paper to allow us to consider the feedback from schools on our services as expressed in the recent Challenge Partners Trust Review (more of that below). Our Trustees have over time been committed to keeping the central spend as low as possible and thereby to maximise the allocation of funds to school budgets. A number of recent factors have caused us to question the wisdom of that axiom, not least the feedback from many of you that you experience some frustration in delivering functions in school that you would rather receive as a service. We are listening and will engage further with you on that as the Resourcing our Partnership conversation continues. For now, we are taking a couple of steps to address educational leadership capacity.

The first of these is an appointment that will be going live on Eteach later this week. I intend to appoint a Director of Secondary Education who will also lead on whole-Trust data systems and management information. This new role will allow us to match the level of support and co-ordination in secondary that our Education Team provide to primary. It will also tackle the 'amateurism' of our patched together data systems and allow us to move towards sharper management data for governance, line management and decision-making. I have a further appointment to make to the Education Team relating to Sharon Robert's succession and I hope to have that published shortly after the half-term, subject to the consultation outcome. I am incredibly grateful to the Heads on the Reference Groups for the challenge and counsel that they have given - growing to a 30-school partnership necessitates some change and we are implementing that.

Last week's strike was managed exceptionally well by our schools. It remains the case that only one grumble reached the central team office and that person acknowledged that the Head was managing a situation not of their making. Unfortunately, my optimism that a resolution might be found before the next strike dates has evaporated. We will be considering how we might need to adjust our position in the context of multiple strike days and if you have any thoughts or questions, let me know.

With best wishes,

Gary

Challenge Partners Trust Review

We had a very beneficial review back in January and I need to express my thanks once again to all the Heads, Leaders, SBMs and Governors who engaged with the focus groups. The principal challenges were heard around line management - we need to be more data rich and considered in what format that accountability sits - I'm thinking about that. We also heard the view expressed that we need to expand our services, possible by being a notch more centralised. We will test how representative that view is through our own consultation. The report is [here](#). The report format is not brilliant (I've given CP some feedback).

Core Services Charge consultation for 2023-24

A polite reminder that the consultation on the Core Services Charge for 2023-24 closes on 17th February. The results of the consultation will be considered by the Board of Trustees and a decision made on the Core Services Charge for 2023-24 on 1st March.

[Core Services Charge Consultation document 2023-24.docx](#)

[Appendix i Draft Core Services Charge Policy 2023-24.docx](#) (please download the document to view)

<https://forms.office.com/e/NF4cMqNBjK>

Finance Policy for 2022-23

The Finance Policy for the 2022-23 financial year has now been approved and will be on the LSP website in the next few days.

Board of Trustees Applications

The Board of Trustees will shortly be running another round of interviews to join the Board. If any LGB members would like to put themselves forward for consideration please contact Christopher Hills, LSP Governance Officer chills@lsp.org.uk.

Carbon reduction funding

To provide clarity to schools that are looking at the recently announced DfE funding for energy efficiency measures, the normal terms of devolved formula capital apply. This means that you must spend this grant within 3 financial years, so this funding will need to have been spent by March 2025. We are working at the trust level to provide central projects for LED, PV and possibly others, which will prioritise this spending on your behalf and support your school action plan, together with the trust wide strategy. If you have any questions about projects you'd like to allocate this to, then please get in touch.

It's great to hear that schools are already working on small improvements to reduce consumption levels. This week is a great opportunity to check that school boilers and heating are set to 'holiday timings' or 'off' where possible to ensure areas aren't being heated unnecessarily.

Signing up to Energy Sparks is a way to support monitoring of your usage <https://energysparks.uk/>

Scomis Newsletter

Schools have received a Scomis newsletter this week asking them to sign in to the ESS portal and confirm or update their account details by 28th February. Please feel free to disregard the request as the renewals will be actioned centrally.

Bursary Opportunity

Are you finding it difficult to secure funding for your school trips? [The Great British School Trip](#), funded by Hyundai, is helping to send 25,000 young people on free or partially funded school trips.

[Register now](#) to create your account and apply for a bursary to help towards your costs.

Sims New Starter Course

There is an opportunity for a 45 minute new starter session:

New SIMS Users - administrators

Objectives:

- To raise awareness of the effective use of SIMS
- Impact of Student Attendance on your role - how SIMS can help
- SIMS Hints and Tips to save you time

Date: Thursday 9th February 10.30am-11.15am

If you are interested then please email me and I will forward you the necessary link. bwatts@lsp.org.uk

Scomis - Save 10% on Training courses

In line with their terms & conditions, Scomis are raising their training prices on 1st April 2023. To soften the blow they are guaranteeing to hold the current pricing for any course booked before 6pm on 31st March 2023. This guarantee covers every training course available, no matter when it takes place. If it's on their website, you can book it, and you can have the pricing guarantee.

For example, book now onto "School Census Primary - Tutor led training" which runs on 9th May 2023 and you will be charged £115 if you're a customer, and £170 for non-customers. Book the same course on or after 1st April 2023, and you will be charged £126.50 and non-customers £187 per trainee.

Book any [Scomis Training](#) before 6pm on Friday 31st March 2023, and they will hold the current price for you - whenever the course takes place.

Internal Vacancy - School Administrator

An exciting opportunity has arisen for a School Administrator at Whitchurch Primary School. They are looking for an individual who is well organised, flexible, calm, friendly, and motivated to provide an excellent support service for our children, staff and visitors.

Working in their busy school office, the successful candidate will be the first point of contact for the school whether that is in person, over the telephone or via email. It is, therefore, important they have excellent organisational and communication skills and the ability to build a great relationship with our school community.

Should you wish to discuss the post further please contact Louise Husband or Carl Hornsby on 01275 833593

Click [here](#) to see the full advert.

Local Government Pension Scheme revaluation April 2023

The Avon Pension Fund has now issued the results of the revaluation of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for most of our schools with effect from April 2023.

When we set budgets ahead of the start of the 2022-23 financial year we assumed that the employers superannuation contribution for LGPS and the deficit payments would increase by 2% in April 2023. The outcome of the revaluation is different for each school but, in most cases, the increase is less than we budgeted. Information on the impact for each school is available in [Foldr](#). Employers superannuation rates will be changed in Orovia on 13th February and you will need to reflect the updated pension deficit figures in your future budget monitors.

We are yet to receive the revaluation results for the following Primary schools:

St Andrew's, Wrington, Burrington, Churchill and Golden Valley.

Analysis of variation between projected and actual outturn

Thank you to the schools that completed the detailed analysis of the variation between your projected and actual outturn for the 2021-22 financial year. We hope that the analysis was useful for your own purposes. It was also presented to the Trustees Finance Committee and they found it useful to understand the reasons for the variances. At the request of a school, the committee have also reviewed the criteria which determines which schools need to complete this analysis and made a change that will be applied at the end of this current financial year.

The current and new criteria is detailed below:

Current criteria (applied to the 2021-22 financial year)	New criteria (to be applied to the 2022-23 financial year and beyond)
The revenue outturn position (excluding earmarked funds) varied to that submitted in by the school in the summer projection by more than £20,000 or 3% of their annual funding, whichever is the lower	The revenue outturn position (excluding earmarked funds) varied to that submitted in by the school in the summer projection by more than £20,000 or 1% of their annual funding, whichever is the higher .

Amazon Accounts

Each school within the Trust should now be part of the corporate Amazon account. Please close any account that is set up outside of the corporate account. The Central Team have now built Amazon Prime into the corporate account meaning that schools can now benefit from free delivery on all orders through the corporate amazon account.

Last year the Trust incurred delivery costs of almost £2000 across school purchases through Amazon. There will be no recharge to the schools for the Prime function however in order for the school to benefit all orders must be placed through the Lighthouse corporate account.

IMP training for Business Managers

We already have two dates pencilled in the diary for IMP training. As we have become familiar with the system and the various webinars available for all users, we are now proposing that we run shorter online bookable sessions on Teams for an overview of the system and some guidance on first steps (only one session required!). IMP have webinars to cover every aspect of the system, so we will signpost you to the webinars with a suggested order and you can watch them at your leisure. We are proposing to run voluntary drop-in sessions so you can come and work with us on your draft budgets and get some guidance on setting your 2023/24 budgets on IMP. Support will also be available to all users directly from IMP via a Chat function as a first port of call. The system also has a great help function where it will direct you to the appropriate guidance depending on where you are working in the system.

Please book the Teams introduction to IMP session by emailing Toni Corp on lspfinance@lsp.org.uk by Friday, 13th February. We will ensure that you have access to the system before your training session below.

Date	AM	PM
Tuesday, 21 st Feb	10.00 am - 12.00 pm	
Monday, 27 th Feb		2.00pm-4.00pm

The drop-in budget planning sessions will be on the following days and locations. You will need to bring your own laptops for these drop-in sessions. Please email Toni Corp on lspfinance@lsp.org.uk before attending a session so that we can manage the number of SBMs attending any one session to maximise support.

Date	9.30am - 12.30am	1.30pm - 4.30pm	Location
Tuesday, 7 th March			LSP
Monday, 13 th March			Chew Valley School
Tuesday, 21 st March			LSP
Monday, 27 th March			LSP
Friday, 21 st April			Backwell School
Tuesday, 25 th April			Churchill Academy & Sixth Form
Tuesday, 2 nd May			LSP

More sessions can be added if required and, of course, we are available to contact for support at any time.

School Meals Calculator

Following the recent tendering exercise, we have updated the School Meals calculator to help you estimate the cost of the Aspens subsidy and meal charges for 2022-23 for future budget monitors. The subsidies have been updated for April to August 2023 (but please note that these are still subject to change). The meal costs were projecting correctly already for this period in the previous calculator. The calculator is available in Foldr ([LINK TO BE ADDED](#))

