

Headteacher Partnership Contribution

1.1 A school improvement monitoring and brokering grant was allocated to local authorities from September 2017 to support local authorities in fulfilling their school improvement duties, including monitoring the performance of maintained schools, brokering school improvement provision, and intervening as appropriate. The Department for Education removed the grant in full from the financial year 2023/24 and confirmed that in future these functions should be funded from maintained school budgets through de-delegation.

1.2 Schools Forum were updated at their meeting in March 2023 on how the removal of the grant would be managed in East Sussex. The local authority is managing the reduction of the grant through efficiencies in the resource allocated to the Primary and Secondary Boards, savings made as part of the re-structure of the Education Division and reduced spend on project activity. Schools Forum agreed a proposal for 2023/24 which would cover a small proportion of the loss of the grant for school partnership activities.

1.3 The Education Division leads for the local authority on our school improvement functions. The service has a range of responsibilities and is supported by funding from different sources, including government grants and local authority funding.

1.4 The local authority has worked with schools to develop a school-led system for improvement which sits alongside the delivery of the local authority's statutory school improvement duties. The EIPs and Area Groups, supported by the Boards, are the key mechanisms for schools to work together on improving practice and raising standards. We continue to work in a school system that is characterised by overlapping responsibilities and increasing pressure on resources. In this landscape, our partnership structures play an important role in holding the system together, avoiding further fragmentation and navigating future developments. Bringing school leaders together, by phase, across the academic year provides an important forum for shaping and delivering our shared ambitions for children's education.

1.5 There are a range of costs associated with facilitating the school-led system and providing opportunities for school leaders to collaborate with each other and hear from expert speakers. The costs for this activity have been modelled so that the following functions can be delivered for approximately £43,500 per annum:

- Chairing the Primary and Secondary Boards
- Chairing the 11-19 Headteacher meetings and Primary Headteacher meetings
- Venue and speaker costs for Primary Leadership conferences
- Venue and speaker costs for 11-19 Headteacher meetings

1.6 Schools Forum are asked to agree the same proposals as last financial year for the financial year 2024/25, where schools are asked to contribute to cover these partnership costs through a 'headteacher partnership contribution' of a flat fee of £250 per primary, secondary and all-through school.

1.7 This model continues to represent good value for money for school leaders and mirrors arrangements in other local authority areas for headteacher associations. It is proposed that, as last year, the agreed amount is de-delegated from local authority maintained schools and that academy schools are asked to contribute through purchasing a 'headteacher partnership contribution' as a traded service through Services to Schools. As

academies buy into Services for Schools from the 1st September details were not available at the time of writing this report of how many brought in for September 2023. A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

1.8 Discussion is ongoing with the Special School headteachers about how the local authority supports their partnership arrangements, we have therefore not included special schools in this proposal.