

27th May 2009

To Headteachers & Chairs of Governors of Harrow High Schools

Dear Colleagues,

Building Schools for the Future in Harrow

As you know we are in the process of meeting with the Governing Bodies of the BSF Wave 1 Schools. To follow up these meetings we will be arranging to meet with you after half term to outline in more detail our proposed approach to BSF. This will include the proposed learning focussed workshop with an outline programme and who you think might be involved from your schools, BSF requirements in relation to ICT and schools contributions to the delivery of the BSF programme. This will also give us the opportunity to hear your ideas and suggestions.

As you know at its meeting in April 2009, Cabinet gave its 'in principle' agreement for Harrow to enter the Building Schools for the Future programme subject to further work on the financial implications to the Council. Cabinet need to be satisfied that this is affordable to the Council and hence their request for a further report. This report is being presented in June and includes references to contributions from schools.

The resource requirements were covered in the presentation by the 4ps and reference was made to an indicative minimum figure of £3.5m over 3 years. In their assessment of local authority submissions Partnerships for Schools (PFS) will expect local authorities to commit to this level of funding to support their entry into BSF.

We are working to identify the cost of entry and potential funding sources. Local authorities already in BSF have included contributions from schools and we are working along these lines. We expect that there will be revenue and capital contributions as well as an 'in kind' contribution. The revenue contributions have been either directly from individual schools or a top slice from the Direct Schools Grant (DSG) agreed by the Schools Forum. Given the impact of the change in the age of transfer and the small number of high schools in Wave 1, we do not consider that a top-slice from DSG is appropriate. We will therefore be seeking contributions from the schools. These will be required initially from the Wave 1 Schools but there will also be an expectation that Wave 2 schools will contribute on entry.

Our funding proposals presented to Cabinet will include existing Council resources and indicative amounts that will need to be secured from schools. There is a shortfall in these amounts and we will be requesting that the Council meets this. As we have no confirmation on the timescale for entry to BSF, we are making the assumption that at the earliest it will be November 2009, but could be April 2010. The contributions will need to align with our entry and therefore, an early entry could require an in year contribution.

I appreciate that at this time I am unable to provide any indicative figures however, I would hope that we could reach an acceptable position. I know you are aware that the financial position of the Council is not strong and therefore identifying funding for the shortfall will be challenging for members against competing council wide priorities.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Heather Clements".

Heather Clements

Director - Schools and Children's Development