

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM - 3 JULY 2012

REPORT OF THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

UPDATE ON WASP DELEGATED BUDGET

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As previously reported to the Schools' Forum, from April 2013 the Pupil Referral Unit (WASP) is due to receive a delegated budget. This report updates the Forum on the arrangements being made to prepare for that change.

1. Since the conception of WASP in September 2005 the following financial management systems have been in place:
 - The initial budget is identified by the LA for the financial year.
 - The budget is assigned to capitation plans relevant to the School Development Plan (SDP) by Head Teacher and the LMS representative.
 - Capitation plans are submitted to the Head Teacher by Heads of Department and monies are allocated according to level of priority in the SDP.
 - The resulting WASP Finance Plan is ratified by the WASP Management Committee.
 - Any developments/variations throughout the year are presented to Management Committee as recommendations by the Head Teacher within identified budget lines.
 - WASP operates within the financial requirements of the LA, in particular with regards to procurement procedures, and adheres to the following rules for the following expenditure limits:
 - 0 - £10,000: three verbal quotes
 - £10,000 - £50,000: three written quotes faxed or e-mailed evidencing a genuine attempt to collate quotes
 - £50,000+: WASP goes out to tender and follows LA tendering process
 - WASP also considers the LA list of preferred contractors through scheduled rates for contractors system.

2. Although the change to a delegated budget from April 2013 does not require WASP to set up a governing body, the expectation is that the current Management Committee will be reconfigured to act as a quasi-governing body. This has been now done following the recommendations of the Wirral Governors Support Service. The WASP Management Committee, as of July 2012, will consist of the following members:
 - A representative from the Local Community (this will be the Head Teacher of Calday Grammar School in the first instance).
 - A parent representative (a parent of school aged child - not yet identified).
 - Two LA representatives (Phil Sheridan and Rose Owen).
 - The Head Teacher of WASP (Wendy Fairman).

- Two staff representatives (one teaching and one non-teaching - already identified through staff vote).
 - Three council members representing each of the political parties (already identified).
3. A WASP Finance Committee will be established consisting of three members of the WASP Management Committee. The membership will be identified at the Management Committee meeting in July 2012. Jan Drury will continue to be the LMS representative and will feed back to the Management Committee at regular intervals.
 4. WASP has always had to follow the procedures similar to a governing body so has had a staffing committee, curriculum committee, safeguarding representative and disciplinary panel.
 5. WASP has all the statutory policies in place that a school has to have because it is viewed and inspected as a school by OFSTED. The school policies are reviewed annually and are signed off by members of the Management Committee. Annual presentations are done by key ASP staff to the Committee.
 6. The key difference for WASP once the budget is delegated is that decisions can be taken by the Committee in line with school and national policy, without having to be ratified by the LA or the LA over-riding the Committee's decisions.
 7. Some policies and procedures will remain the responsibility of the LA and these are listed under the new DfE guidance for PRUs 2012 (i.e. publication of equality information and objectives, which comes under public sector equality duty).
 8. At the next Management Committee meeting, the delegation of the budget from April 2013 will be explained and the Committee will be reminded of the interim arrangements for the financial year 2012-13.
 9. The interim arrangements include:
 - No need for WASP to complete HOB1 forms but the budget plan for the year needs to be approved first by the Management Committee and then the Acting Deputy Director.
 - Any significant variations to the budget plan to be discussed with LA representatives and the Acting Deputy Director if necessary.
 - Any expenditure over £5,000 needs to be discussed and approved by the Acting Deputy Director.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Schools' Forum notes and approves the arrangements made to implement a delegated budget at WASP.

David Armstrong
Acting Director of Children's Services