



THE BUILDING MAINTENANCE PARTNERSHIP POOL

NEWSLETTER

No 3

February 2002



Remember - the NPS HELPLINE is open Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 12.30.

Please phone 0800 0858592

The Advisory Board met on 10 December and 14 January to discuss the progress of the Fund. The main issues arising are covered in this newsletter.

Contributions to School Capital Schemes

The Board considered a request from a member school undertaking a classroom extension project, for the BMPP to make a contribution to their capital scheme. This would be to reflect the fact that part of their BMPP allocation for redecorating would now not have to be spent, because of the project. Members felt that this was not in the spirit of the Fund, and agreed that BMPP money should not go towards Capital Building Projects.

NPS fee levels to BMPP to be reduced!

Laurence Cooper of NPS said that in the light of feedback he had received from the Somerset Scheme, he did not think that the NPS charges on the basis of time charge with a cap of 12% would work successfully. He felt it would be too easy for staff to book time to the BMPP, and therefore it was fairer to the Fund holders to specify a straight % figure of 10.5% with no time charge element. The Board were happy to accept this proposal, which means that approximately £70,000 will be released to be spent directly on schools.

Guidelines for constraints on Schools exceeding earmarked spend

The Board spent a long time discussing the problem of member schools who have already exceeded their guaranteed 60% spend. Members realised that many schools were in a 'catch up' situation. Paul Elsegood of NPS explained that out of the 50 schools identified as the largest over-spenders, some 45 of them had had external re-decorations carried out, thereby justifying their spend, 2 had dry rot problems, and 5 had had substantial plant replacement.

Clearly, a view needs to be taken over the entire 3 year period of the current BMPP, but members felt that definitive guidelines should be drawn up to constrain excessive overspend. It has emerged that secondary schools appear to be benefiting more from the scheme, relative to primary level schools, and members are anxious to address this. Suggestions were made for guidelines based on £ per head, whilst other members felt that this would disadvantage small schools.

The members therefore are seeking suggestions for proposed guidelines from member schools, and ask that you discuss this at your next cluster meetings.

Please give your reactions and suggestions to any of the teacher delegates on the Board, or to the sub-group which has been set up to deal with this specific issue: Cheryl Crawford, Carolyn Howard, Malcolm Clayton, or Paul Elsegood.

Revised Budget Plan- Day to Day works

Members looked at the budget, and saw that there had been considerable movement into the Day to Day works budget. The allocation for the Day to Day spend had been underestimated for the year, but this had been covered by virement of monies from the Insurance heading. It was agreed that the Day to Day spend must be revised upwards. Members also felt that the term, 'Insurance' is misleading – it is more correctly termed 'Contingency'. Any monies left in this heading at the end of the financial year will be rolled forward to the next year.

It was reported that quite a few schools had in fact postponed their external redecoration to next year due to programme clashes with OFSTED inspections.

NPS – what you really think of us

Two rounds of Customer satisfaction

questionnaires were sent out - one in November, and the other at the beginning of this term. We realise that heads and site managers have better things to do than fill out yet another form, but we do appreciate your responses, and make strenuous efforts to improve our service to you as a result of the feedback. The November round attracted a 67% return and of these some 80% expressed satisfaction with NPS service, and 76% satisfaction with contractors performance. A few responses raised specific problems which are being referred to senior building surveyors.

Analysis of specific comments from schools within BMPP

Contractors performance:

Most of the comments centred around contractors performance. The recurring comments centred around:

- Some contractors do not always represent value for money
- Contractor performance is variable
- Schools would prefer to use known and trusted contractors, and feel that the BMPP rules prevent them from using same.

Please note that, as mentioned in the previous newsletter, your local contractors can be added onto the BMPP approved list subject to conforming to NCC criteria. Please contact Paul Elsegood (01603 222606) or Nuncy Simpson (01603 222614) at NPS.

- Some contractors do not contact school prior to, and after, working on site, so school cannot check if work carried out.
- Some concerns re contractors awareness of health and safety.

NPS performance:

- Generally, schools were happy with the service provided by their building surveyor, and some schools praised their surveyors highly. However, there is a perception that surveyors are very busy at present, and this can affect response times on occasions.
- Some schools would prefer pre-arranged meetings with their building surveyors, rather than having them just drop in, so that the head can think of specific issues to discuss. Premises governors would like to be included in meetings.
- Some schools had concerns at not being kept informed by their surveyor of the

progress of issues which have been referred to NPS.

The second round of questionnaires was really a questionnaire about questionnaires! We asked 50% of our all NCC customers (schools, libraries, social services establishments, fire stations, museums) which areas of our service are the most important to them, to enable us to produce more focused questionnaires in future. These are still being returned, and will be analysed in due course.

Contact names

The next meeting of the BMPP Advisory Board will be held on 18 March 2002. If you have any comments or concerns which you would like taken forward to the next meeting, please contact one of the delegates:

SNAPP :

Mr Dominic Cragoe
Sheringham Primary 01263 823848

Mrs Carolyn Howard,
Tilney St Lawrence Primary 01945 880405

Mrs Catherine Whalen,
Mousehold First 01603 427012

Ms Mary Ann Massey,
Sprowston Middle 01603 425150

NASH delegates:

Mr Mike Dopson
Oriol High, Gorleston 01493 662966

Ms Cheryl Crawford
Alderman Peel, Wells 01328 710476

Special Schools delegate:

Mr Malcolm Clayton
Fred Nicholson School 01362 693915

Norfolk Governors Network:

Christine Oakes (High School governor)
01842 765913

Mr Peter Rout (Primary School governor)
01508 483830

Diocesan Board:

Mr Gerald Ward 01603 881352