



THE BUILDING MAINTENANCE PARTNERSHIP POOL NEWSLETTER

No 12

January 2004



This Newsletter follows the last meeting of the BMPP Management Board on 15 December 2003.

Remember the Helpdesk – open from 8.00am to 4.30pm Mondays to Fridays. Ring Di or Cara free on 0800 0858592 – they will be pleased to assist you.

Will your school achieve its guaranteed

60% spend - Budget planning for next year

Paul Elsegood, the Fund Manager, predicts that after taking account of servicing contracts and fees at the end of the current scheme there will only be approximately 40 schools underachieving their guaranteed spend. Because some contractors do not submit their invoices for several months after the year end, it will not be possible to give these schools an accurate indication of how much will be returned to them immediately the new financial year starts – the end of May is more likely. It is important for school members to be aware of this, and not to include the estimated 'surplus' within your budgets for the following financial year until it is clear exactly how much money will be returned to your school.

Financial Reporting Format

One of the problems which schools have experienced with the current BMPP is the lack of financial reports available to them. Some schools require a detailed breakdown of costs, whilst others prefer a more high level overview of spend. Officers in the LEA have been working on the new Financial Information Management System (FIMS for short) which is being adopted by the County Council as from 1 April 2004. The Board's aim is for monthly financial reports to be sent to schools by email, summarising each category of spend, with the idea that if individual schools required more detailed information they could obtain it upon request. The FIMS system needs further development as it currently does not show details of unpaid commitments, nor does it allow the inclusion

of descriptive data such as 'repairs to windows', which would help schools identify individual items of work, should they so wish. The possibility of schools being able to access more detailed information through the Esinet is also being looked at. Termly reports, which will include a rolling aggregated spend from the scheme start, will also be produced for schools.

Details of how schools will access this financial information will be given in the Prospectus for the Successor Scheme.

Withdrawal of hard copy order books

As from 1 April 2004, the successor BMPP scheme will work on the basis that an order must be on the FIMS system for payment to be made, so all orders raised directly by schools must go through the Helpdesk. This is to enable accurate financial reports to be produced for schools. At the moment schools have the option of ordering works on their own hard copy order book. This means that although a commitment to pay has been made, it is not entered on the financial system until the invoice is actually paid, thus leading to inaccurate reporting. The books will therefore be withdrawn from use by the end of March, and all member schools must use the Helpdesk to raise orders for works.

So what happens in an emergency, for example if the school pipes burst at the weekend or out of office hours?

The Helpdesk hours are to be extended – more details of the exact opening hours will be given in the Prospectus for the Successor Scheme. In the event of emergencies occurring which require

immediate ordering of works, the school will ring an approved contractor and verbally order the necessary work, so that the problem can be remedied as a matter of urgency. The school will then phone the Helpdesk on the next working day to enable the Helpdesk to place a confirmatory written order on the contractor, or place a message on the answerphone.

We recognise that initially not all schools will welcome this change, but the intention is to ensure the provision of regular and accurate financial data for schools, and hope that members will assist us in achieving this.

Consultation Briefings

At the time of writing, the evaluation of the Consultation Exercise is not yet complete, but it is proposed that the Successor Scheme runs on the following terms:

- a 5 year term
- guaranteed 70% spend over the 5 year period for members of the existing scheme
- guaranteed 65% spend for new members
- NPS fee discount of 20% for all schools for the first year

Some adverse comments have been received from the Schools Forum regarding the issue of a 5 year Scheme. It is thought that the LEA will require all schools in financial difficulties to join up to the new scheme for the first 3 years, with the proposal that they could then withdraw from the scheme if they wished after the 3 year period. However, Board members did not think it was feasible to have members with differing lengths of membership.

If a 3 year scheme is introduced all the above figures will need amending

Contact names

The next meeting of the BMPP Board will be held on Monday 26 January 2004. If you have any comments or concerns which you would like taken to the next meeting, please contact one of the delegates, as listed below:

NASH delegates

Paul Mitchell – Head
Aylsham High School
01263 733270

Brian Pearce - Chair of Govs
Archbishop Sancroft High
01986 788657

SNAPP delegates

Mr Dominic Cragoe - Head
Sheringham Primary
01263 823848

Mrs Carolyn Howard - Head
Tilney St Lawrence Primary
01945 880405

Mrs Catherine Whalen - Head
Mousehold First
01603 427012

Ms Mary Ann Massey - Head
Sprowston Middle
01603 425150

Special Schools delegate:

Mr Malcolm Clayton - Head
Fred Nicholson School
01362 693915

Norfolk Governors Network:

Mr Christopher Gillett -High Schools
01485 525358

Mr Peter Rout -Primary Schools
01508 483830

Diocesan Board:

Mr Gerald Ward
01603 881352