

Extract Scheme for Financing Schools (September 2009 – March 2011)

4. THE TREATMENT OF SURPLUSES AND DEFICIT BALANCES ARISING IN RELATION TO BUDGET SHARES

4.1. The Right to Carry Forward Surplus Balances

Schools may carry forward from one financial year to the next any surplus/deficit in net expenditure relative to the school's budget share for the year plus/minus any balance brought forward from the previous year.

4.2 Reporting On The Intended Use Of Surplus Balances

Surplus balances held by schools as permitted under this scheme are subject to the following restrictions with effect from 1 April 2008:

- a. the Authority shall calculate by 31 May each year the surplus balance, if any, held by each school as at the preceding 31 March. For this purpose the balance will be the recurrent balance as defined in the Consistent Financial Reporting Framework;
- b. the Authority shall deduct from the calculated balance any amounts for which the school has a prior year commitment to pay from the surplus balance and any unspent Standards Fund grant for the previous financial year;
- c. the Authority shall then deduct from the resulting sum any amounts which the governing body of the school has declared to be assigned for specific purposes permitted by the authority, and which the authority is satisfied are properly assigned. To count as properly assigned, amounts must not be retained beyond the period stipulated for the purpose in question, without the consent of the Authority. In considering whether any sums are properly assigned the Authority may also take into account any previously declared assignment of such sums but may not take any change in planned assignments to be the sole reason for considering that a sum is not properly assigned.
- d. if the result of steps a-c is a sum greater than 5% of the current year's budget share for secondary schools, 8% for primary and special schools, or £10,000 (where that is greater than either percentage threshold), then the Authority shall deduct from the current year's budget share an amount equal to the excess, subject to the review by the Sub Group of the Schools Forum, set out below.

Funds deriving from sources other than the Authority will be taken into account in this calculation if paid into the budget share account of the school, whether under provisions in this scheme or otherwise.

Funds held in relation to a school's exercise of powers under s.27 of the Education Act 2002 (community facilities) will not be taken into account unless added to the budget share surplus by the school as permitted by the Authority.

The total of any amounts deducted from schools' budget shares by the Authority under this provision are to be applied to the Schools Budget of the authority.

To assist the LA in carrying out its financial monitoring role, Governing bodies are required to report to the LA on the use which the school intends to make of surplus balances – after taking account of any earmarked funds, as per the annual CFR return - in cases where the total balance exceeds the threshold's set out in d. above.

Where schools have a surplus balance that exceeds the above thresholds of the School's Budget Share at the financial year end, the Governing Body are required to put in place a financial plan to reduce the surplus to below the threshold.

The plan will be reviewed and agreed by a Sub Group of the Schools Forum, each year and monitored to ensure such surpluses are used appropriately for the benefit of the school.

If the Sub Group of the Schools Forum is minded to believe that a school is not retaining the balance for appropriate reasons, then a process will be started to recycle the funds in excess of the threshold.

The calculation of the excess balance will be notified by a letter in the format of Appendix D1, Schools will also be required to complete the Declaration of Earmarked Funds and Surplus Balances(appendix D2), which must be submitted to the LA and supported by relevant evidence..

Relevant evidence must support B02 Uncommitted Revenue Balances and be in written form and may comprise of:-

- Finance Governors Minutes
- Three year plans
- Projected Pupil Numbers
- Correspondence with Contractors
- Any other relevant information