**SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING – 10th December 2013**

**School Forums: Operational and Good Practice Guide**

**Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Schools Forum with summary information on a recent paper produced by the EFA on operational and best practice in the running of school forums.

**Background**

Over the last 2 years there have been a number of changes in the School Forum regulations to keep pace with the changing landscape both in terms of the management of schools and the changing funding mechanisms. The EFA are keen to see effective and well managed forums discussing key issues and being representative of the schools they serve. Within North East Lincolnshire an extensive exercise took place less than 6 months ago to bring the constitution and the membership of the schools forum up to date so its membership reflected the make up of its schools within the area. The report itself contains a very useful executive summary (pages 3 – 8) covering structures of the schools forum together with powers and responsibilities for 2014-15 of the schools forum and the Local Authority.

**Matters arising from the EFA report**

Reviewing the executive summary then this is neatly defined into two sections, the first is in respect of the Schools Forum Structures (Table 1), whilst the second looks at Schools Forums: Powers and Responsibilities 2014-15 (Table 2).

In respect of the Schools Forum Structures (Table 1) then it is clear that the recent work on the constitution has been successful as our forum complies with the requirements of this table. It is recommended however that this report is reviewed and retained as a reference document to ensure that compliance in terms of the necessary decisions on the Council’s proposal on the the funding formula and any necessary annual consultations.

Looking at the content of Table 2 Schools Forums: Powers and Responsibilities 2014-15 then overall there is compliance with these requirements. However drilling down into the detail of the report itself then there are a number of matters referred to which will require further consideration. Briefly, these are:

* New member induction
* An annual cycle of meetings drawn up in advance.
* Standardisation of reporting formats
* Meeting name plates and voting cards
* Communication including feedback of elected members to colleagues of the groups they represent and an annual Schools Forum report.

**Recommendation**

* That the report be noted
* Members and officers familiarise themselves with their respective roles and responsibilities.
* Any actions arising after further consideration of the report be brought back to the Schools Forum at a later meeting.

Contact Officer: David Kirven, Service Finance Manager – Business Partnering.