

Purpose of the Report

To inform the Schools Forum of the outcome of the canvassing of Local Authority Maintained Schools (LAMS) opinion in respect of the Department of Education's Risk Protection Arrangements Scheme (RPA).

Information and Advice

On the 1 April 2020 the Department for Education extended the Risk Protection Arrangement scheme for Academies to LAMS. As the Council and its LAMS are tied into a Long-Term Agreement (LTA) with Zurich Municipal until April 2022 the Council will not be able to permit LAMS to join the scheme until after the LTA has expired.

The Council recognises that there is some interest amongst schools in joining the RPA once the current LTA has expired and therefore to enable the decision process in how LAMS are to be indemnified post April 2022 the Council has canvassed the opinion of the schools.

The Schools Forum was informed in the report submitted on the 1 March 2021 of the Council's intention to gauge the current level of interest amongst LAMS in joining the RPA or whether LAMS would prefer to continue with the current insurance arrangements offered by the Council.

A copy of the report and supporting documentation that was to be provided to headteachers and the schools' governing bodies was included for comment and feedback. All comments and feedback received from the School Forum were responded to and noted.

For reference the documents provided to headteachers and the schools' governing bodies can be viewed in the following Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Canvassing opinion of Local Maintained Schools Report
- Appendix 2 - RPA membership rules for LAMS
- Appendix 3 - Nottinghamshire County Council - School Platinum Insurances

The engagement with LAMS ran from the 18 June 2021 to the 16 July 2021 and was undertaken through a non-public engagement through the Council's Citizen Hub. 171 schools were contacted and asked to take part in the engagement and of those, 84 schools responded, a response rate of 49%.

To ensure LAMS were effectively made aware of the engagement the Council issued an initial email to all schools on the 18 June 2021 with a link to the Citizen Hub site, followed by two subsequent email reminders. The engagement was promoted on the Schools Portal, within the Bulletin for Schools and at the Telekit online conference with schools. In some cases, schools were also contacted direct via telephone to chase responses as the engagement was nearing closure.

Within the Citizen Hub site schools were asked to firstly review the report and supporting documentation that provided further information about the Council's current insurance arrangements and how these compare to the cover provided by the RPA scheme. The information provided was to enable headteachers and the schools' governing bodies to make an informed view on how they would prefer insurance cover to be provided post April 2022, either through the existing Council's insurance arrangements or by joining the RPA.

Schools were then asked to submit their preference for either the RPA or the Council's existing insurance arrangements. Of the 84 responses received 24 schools (28.57%) stated their preference would be to join the RPA post April 2022. 60 schools (71.43%) stated their preference would be to remain with the Council's insurers post 2022. The output report from Citizen Hub is included in Appendix 4.

Schools were also asked to explain the reasons for their preference. Of the 84 schools who responded 62 provided comments. These comments have been anonymised and can be viewed in Appendix 5. In summary, those with a preference for the RPA were in general concerned with costs whilst those with a preference for the Council arrangements focused on the service, support and assurance provided by the Council.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Schools Forum:

- 1) Considers the results of the canvassing of LAMS in respect of the RPA and the Councils existing insurance arrangements and provides feedback and recommendations on how LAMS are to be indemnified post April 2022.

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