Dear Colleague

In the current economic climate and with the expectation on schools to achieve efficiency savings in future years the need for good medium term planning has become paramount to ensure that school can continue to deliver excellent education standards whilst balancing these against obtaining best value from the available financial resources.

For over 20 years, since the introduction of local financial management, we have successfully provided schools with a wide range of financial support to meet these goals. We believe that this current package of services offers even more comprehensive and relevant support to heads and governors.

We are pleased to offer schools and governors our service packages for 2019-20. As part of our continued improvement and development, our standard package now includes support, advice and training in connection with the new Orovia Financial Software introduced by the Local Authority.

The standard and enhanced packages within the brochure are designed to meet the needs of primary, nursery and special schools.

With regard to primary schools which have or are considering academy status we are able to offer tailored financial support packages in respect of financial monitoring and budgeting.

We help schools to make a success of forward planning and financial management. We pride ourselves on working on behalf of our schools and ensure that we work effectively with our LGSS colleagues, other parts of the Local Authority and external organisations.

Our team is professional, experienced, and approachable and has considerable expertise working with and supporting schools. We very much look forward to working with you over the coming year.

This brochure details the strategic, operational and financial support services that we offer.

Ray Byford
Group Accountant (Schools)
Our Promise to You

As well as following the LGSS customer service charter and its commitment to providing a high-quality service to all customers, we promise to:

- Act in a professional manner at all times
- Respect the confidential nature of our work
- Be open and accountable
- Listen and act upon your comments and concerns
- Constantly monitor our performance and continuously improve the service delivered
- Ensure that our staff are competent and have the skills required to deliver appropriate financial advice
- Deliver timely, clear and relevant advice
- Reply to straightforward queries quickly and advise you when to expect a response for more complex ones
- Respond to your written communications within five working days of receipt
- Complete all requests for financial modelling within two weeks of receiving the request
Standard Service
We have developed this service to be appropriate for the needs of the majority of primary, nursery and special schools. It combines regular strategic support from your school financial adviser with the operational backup provided by our helpline and budgeting support service.

Service includes:

- A termly school visit from your school financial adviser
- An additional visit to assist with the annual budget build
- Advice on the financial implications of your school development plan
- Advice and support with all aspects of Financial Management within schools
- Policy advice for Governors and for Ofsted preparation
- Telephone and email access to the Schools Finance team
- Resolution of financial queries
- Advice on accounting systems and procedures including coding structure in respect of FMS6
- Financial modelling
- Salary calculations
- Salary Profiling
- Budget Building

Enhanced Service
This is designed for schools who like to have frequent contact with their school financial adviser and provides a high level of strategic advice for the Head and Governors. It offers the security of effective operational backup, which may be extended to include a full range of school-based administrative support.

Service includes:

- An agreed number of school visits from your school financial adviser
- Advice on the financial implications of your school development plan
- Support, advice and discussion of the issues arising from your annual budget
- Advice and support with regard to Financial Management in schools
- Policy advice for Governors and for Ofsted preparation
- Telephone and email access to the Schools Finance team
- Resolution of financial queries
- Advice on accounting systems and procedures including coding structure in respect of FMS6
- Financial modelling
- Salary calculations
- Salary Profiling
- Budget Building
Light Touch

Designed for the more experienced schools wishing to avail themselves of operational backup, but needing less strategic advice. Please note with the Light Touch package the visit will be to assist with the building of the annual budget and schools will have to ensure that they have the relevant information available in advance of the scheduled visit.

Service includes:

- An annual visit from your school financial adviser to discuss the issues raised by your budget plan and its financial implications in the longer term
- Telephone and email access to the Schools Finance team
- Resolution of financial queries

Finance Staff Support

This service is designed to support schools through the processes needed to successfully handle financial administration in schools. It supports both new and existing finance staff within schools. Each individual package will be tailored to the needs of the school.

The types of service covered include:

- Production of reports and returns
- Ordering goods receipting and payment of invoices
- Cash handling, recording and banking
- Financial regulations and financial control standards
- Purchase cards
- Dinner money processes

Finance Forums

These are forums held each term at various different geographical locations which enable finance staff to receive

- information on the latest financial issues impacting on schools
- provide updates on best practice
- hints & tips on school financial issues
- presentations and guest speakers on financial issues
- networking opportunities with finance staff from other schools
Your Schools Finance Support Team

Group Accountant:
Ray Byford Tel 01223 699753
Email ray.byford@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

School Financial Advisers:

Rob Cottle Tel 01223 699753
Email rob.cottle@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Jane Green Tel 01223 699753
Email jane.green@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Janet Jallow Tel 01223 699753
Email janet.jallow@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Address for the team:

Schools Finance
Box OCT1114
1st Floor Octagon
Shire Hall
Cambridge
CB3 0AP

Fax 01223 729183
Our Service Fees 2019-2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Support Packages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced Service</td>
<td>Dependant on level of service required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Service</td>
<td>£2400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Touch</td>
<td>£1500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recruitment Service</td>
<td>£550</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operational Support</th>
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<tr>
<td>Additional Financial Adviser visits*</td>
<td>£270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFSO visits</td>
<td>£70 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote Helpline</td>
<td>£550</td>
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* cost applies to extra visits for schools who have bought in to a Standard or Enhanced package as a minimum, for light touch schools additional visits are £350 per visit

Service Level Agreement with Schools Finance

1. **Duration** – This agreement is for the 2019-20 financial year.

2. **Services to be provided** – the services to be provided by Schools Finance are as outlined in this brochure.

3. **Charge for the service** – The charge for the service packages will be processed at mid-year (September) for those schools buying a package. Ad-hoc services will be charged termly in September, January and closedown.

4. **Price increases** – The prices shown in this brochure may be subject to an annual increase. Schools will receive detailed information on price changes before budget building each year.

5. **Variation of service at the request of the school** – Additional services may be requested at any point in the year by contacting either your Financial Adviser or the Group Accountant.
6. **Notice of withdrawal from the service by the school** – The school may withdraw from this agreement by giving one month’s notice in writing to the Group Accountant.

7. **Financial Adviser visits** – Financial adviser visits will be expected to take place during normal office hours. A standard visit is expected to last no longer than two hours.

8. **Attendance at Governor Meetings** – We will be happy to attend Governor Meetings at your request which can be as part of the agreed package of visits or charged as additional visits. Where these are held in the evening our attendance should normally last no longer than one hour.

9. **Cancelled visits** – No charge will be made for visits cancelled by the school provided an unnecessary journey has not been made. Where an unnecessary journey is made Schools Finance may charge the school for the costs incurred. We will endeavour to rearrange any visits cancelled by the school, but where this is not possible the cancelled visit may have to be forfeited.

10. **Responsibilities of Schools Finance** – Schools Finance aims to provide you with professional advice on financial planning, decision-making and management. In delivering this we see our main responsibilities as being:
   - To promote sound financial management
   - To keep up to date on relevant financial issues
   - To interpret financial information to assist you with your financial responsibilities
   - To ensure technical accuracy of all financial modelling
   - To provide constructive challenge to schools financial decisions

11. **Responsibilities of the school** – In order for Schools Finance to provide an effective service certain responsibilities are placed on the school:
   - To provide all necessary financial information
   - To check all financial modelling for completeness and factual accuracy
   - To request financial modelling at least two weeks before it is needed
   - To take appropriate financial decisions
   - To provide an agenda and details of the finance issues to be discussed where a financial adviser attends a governors meeting
   - To provide appropriate working conditions to allow the financial adviser to carry out their tasks

12. **Performance standards** – Schools Finance aims to provide a quality service to its customers;
To reply to all straightforward queries quickly and advise you when to expect a response for more complex queries
To complete requests for financial modelling within two weeks of receiving the request
To endeavour to meet all requests for attendance at a governors meeting where one months’ notice is given of the date.

13. **Complaints procedure** – Should you have any comments, suggestions or wish to make a complaint about any aspect of the service you receive from us, you may do so by contacting:
Ray Byford Group Accountant Tel no 01223 699753
E-mail ray.byford@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

All complaints will be investigated thoroughly and we will inform you of the outcome, or give you a progress report, within ten working days.

If you are not satisfied with our initial response you make take your comments further by following the escalation procedure as detailed in the following link: