



To: Headteachers of all Hillingdon Schools
cc: School Finance Staff

11th January 2021

Dear Colleague

Budget Planning

The new financial year is looming and once again it's time to turn your attention to producing your school budget for 2021-2022 and beyond. I write at this time to set out the arrangements for using the School Business Services (SBS) Budgets planning software. The SBS budgeting software will enable you to calculate your 2021-2022 school budget and will also calculate up to four years budget projections.

Schools are expected to maintain longer-term financial plans to alert the Governing Body and the LA of the future consequences of school policies and anticipated changes in important factors such as pupil numbers. Financial planning is fundamental in order to make spending decisions in a timely manner and avoid deficit or excess surplus positions. In line with the Scheme for Financing Schools and the Schools Financial Value Standard, schools are expected to produce a longer-term financial plan (covering three or more years). The LA will require schools to submit a Governing Body approved budget plan for 2021-2022 and the two subsequent years by 31st May 2021. Please schedule your Governing Body meetings to ensure you meet this deadline. The SBS Budgets software will help produce this budget plan for you.

The budget planning software includes:

- ❑ Funding calculators (the software will incorporate the Hillingdon funding distribution formulas), enabling schools to model the funding impact of pupil number changes.
- ❑ Advanced salary calculators (teaching and support staff).
- ❑ Last year's school budget data (cost centre structure and section 251 funding).
- ❑ Numeric and graphical reporting options. Reports include budget plans suitable for submission to both Governors and the LA.
- ❑ Ability to produce numerous scenarios.
- ❑ Web based giving online access.

SBS Budgets software is available immediately to schools by setting up a 2021-2022 financial year scenario without the requirement to wait for an update. The indicative school funding allocations will be available in late February 2021.

Given the current pandemic uncertainty, the budget workshops will be held virtually this year and delivered by your school's finance link officer.

Virtual Budget Training for new finance staff

The virtual budget training sessions for new finance staff will be split into three two hourly sessions to allow the new staff additional time to go over the areas covered in the sessions:

1. Thursday 4th February (9.30am - 11.30am)
2. Thursday 11th February (9.30am - 11.30am)
3. Thursday 4th March (9.30am - 11.30am)

Virtual Budget Workshops for the existing finance staff

The virtual budget workshop sessions for existing finance staff will take place after February half term on the following dates:

Morning sessions		Afternoon sessions	
Davinder: Tuesday 2 nd March 9.30am to 11.30am		Tuesday 2 nd March 1.30pm to 3.30pm Thursday 4 th March 1.30pm to 3.30pm	
Greg: Friday 26 th February 9.30am to 11.30am Wednesday 3 rd March 9.30am to 11.30am		Friday 26 th February 1.30pm to 3.30pm Wednesday 3 rd March 1.30pm to 3.30pm	
Rubina: Thursday 25 th February 9.30am to 11.30am Monday 1 st March 9.30am to 11.30am		Thursday 25 th February 1.30pm to 3.30pm Monday 1 st March 1.30pm to 3.30pm	

Bookings for the virtual budget workshops should be emailed to schoolfinancereturns@hillingdon.gov.uk by **Friday 29th January 2021**, please give your preferred training date and select morning or afternoon session for your school's finance link officer. Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis and are limited to 5 schools per session. Once your booking has been registered, you will receive an email confirmation followed by details of how to prepare the Teams meeting and what to have on the day.

Please note: Attendees to the virtual sessions will need access to a laptop or desktop computer that is equipped with an internet connection, a microphone and a camera (optional), along with Microsoft Teams software. If this creates any difficulties, please contact the Schools Finance Team at your earliest convenience.

The cost of the software together with the training and our ongoing support is covered within the Schools Finance SLA.

If you have any queries regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



Graham Young
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