

## **Area-wide Basic Need Assessment Guidance Notes**

### **Introduction**

This note explains how to assess any statements and/or evidence that LAs have included in their submissions with regard to area-wide basic need issues (issues specific to the schools in their claim are being dealt with separately, e.g. whether each school has sufficient capacity for existing or anticipated numbers).

*The starting point for your analysis should be the information the LA has provided in its submission, but please use appropriate data as a comparator, e.g. the PPP analysis undertaken when previous business cases were submitted by the LA, the School Capacity Collection data submitted annually, etc.*

The purpose of this exercise is to confirm whether any case the LA has made that it requires additional places across its estate, which are therefore material to its claim in respect of the schools in its stopped wave, is verifiable from the data the LA has provided and/or the other sources that are available to us. We are *not*, therefore, being asked to comment on whether any given solution is the 'best' model for meeting that need, only that the need is demonstrable from the available evidence.

If you have any queries regarding any aspect of this exercise, please contact [REDACTED]

### **Recording your comments**

On the form attached as Appendix 1, please note the following:

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- The scale of the Basic Need issue the LA describes across its estate, or part of it (ideally expressed in pupil numbers, over a clear timeframe, e.g. by 2016)
- What the LA believes to be the cause of this issue, if described
- The information the LA used to inform its analysis
- The implications the LA identifies flow from failing to respond to this issue
- Our analysis of the robustness of this case, based upon the information available to us – in other words, having described the LA's model, do we agree with that model? If the data we have contradicts the LA's case, please set this out (source of data, pertinent elements of data, and our analysis of why the situation is, therefore, different to the LA's analysis). If it is not possible definitively to agree with or refute the LA's model, please explain why this is the case.

## **DRAFT** Basic Need Assessment Guidance Notes

These notes explain how to complete the Basic Need Survey Form (attached as Appendix 1) for each school, and for the Local Authority from information provided by the Local Authority submission and the comments made to you during the visits that you recorded on the PfS Condition Assessment and the pupil data held by PfS.

Please ensure you only make reference to these sources of information, not your knowledge of the school in question.

Where there are discrepancies in information from the Local Authority submission, the PfS Condition Assessment form and the data held by PfS, please use the figure from the Local Authority Submission.

### **Completing the template**

Please enter the NOR current and proposed in the columns as indicated. For completion of the GFA (or GIA in some cases), please see the actions below:

- If the NOR current and proposed are the same provide the GFA using BB98-15%.
- If the current NOR differs from the proposed NOR, please provide the respective numbers for each.

For SEN schools, please ask [REDACTED] if the GFA provided is appropriate for the NOR current and proposed.

The next set of columns request a yes/no as

- Is the existing GFA appropriate for the current NOR
- Is the proposed GFA appropriate for the current NOR
- Is the proposed GFA appropriate for the proposed NOR

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### **Comments column**

Supporting comments from LA submissions or PfS condition assessments should be entered in this column.

## **DRAFT**

### **Contractual Commitments Guidance Notes**

#### **Introduction**

This note explains how to complete the assessment of each LA's comments on any contractual commitments it has included in their submissions.

***Please ensure you only make reference to the LA's submission, not your wider knowledge of the local authority/LEP in question.***

We need to determine whether any contractual commitment the LA has described represents a legally binding financial commitment, which is demonstrable by reference to the relevant contract's clauses, as opposed to payments that would only have been due should a cancelled project have continued, or which the LEP may believe it is due but which are not demonstrably supported by the contracts in place (e.g. design development fees that were, in fact, accrued at risk). Where this level of evidence is not provided, please make this clear in your comments.

If you have any queries regarding any aspect of this exercise, please contact Mike or Caroline.

#### **Recording comments**

The LA's evidence for any contractual commitment should be recorded on the attached form by the PD, with a summary of the financial implications the LA has stated flows from it.

The legal basis of any such claim should, however, be discussed with the relevant Commercial Manager, and specific reference made to the contractual instruments that either confirm or deny the case the LA is making, where it is possible to be so definitive.

As an example of the level of detail sought, if the LA claims that the LEP has incurred costs in relation to a scheme that was cancelled, we need to determine whether these costs were or are avoidable, were incurred before or after the Secretary of State's announcement on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2010, were accrued at risk, and whether any of the contractual instruments that govern the relationship between the LEP and the LA mean that any commitments must be met in law. If we are unable to clarify all or any of these issues, please note this in the column headed 'Is case supported by analysis of contracts/clauses?'

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## **DRAFT**

### **ICT Guidance Notes**

#### **Introduction**

These notes explain how to complete the assessment of each LAs' comments on ICT, as included in their submissions and/or as recorded when we carried out the site visits..

***Please ensure you only make reference to these sources of information, not your wider knowledge of the school and/or local authority in question.***

LAs *may* have submitted information in the following forms:

- School specific ICT issues which the LA has included in its submission because it believes these are a consequence of the decision to stop the projects in question.
- Area-wide ICT issues which the LA has included in its submission because it believes these are a consequence of the decision to stop the projects in question.
- Financial implications re. ICT at school and/or area-wide level (e.g. perceived contractual commitments, revenue vs. capital, etc.) which the LA has included in its submission because it believes these are a consequence of the decision to stop the projects in question.
- Educational implications which the LA has included in its submission because it believes these are a consequence of the decision to stop the projects in question.

We need to capture any references to ICT along these lines, and any other comments with regard to ICT that do not readily fit into the headings above, but which the LA has deemed important enough to refer to in their submission *because it believes it supports its overall case*. What we are not being asked to evaluate is the quality of the solutions currently in operation and/or originally proposed, as we have been charged with evaluating the comments included in the LA submissions and the PfS condition site reports.

If you have any queries regarding any aspect of this exercise, please contact Mike or Caroline.

#### **Recording your comments**

Where a reference has been made to ICT, please only provide a comment if it can be placed under any of the headings above, e.g. it refers to an issue created by the decision to stop the projects in question. If the reference appears only to mention ICT in passing, please do not feel it necessary to comment upon it.

If the LA makes a particular reference to financial commitments that it believes it must still meet, even after the decision to cancel the projects in question, please provide your analysis of the accuracy of the statements being made, e.g. if the LA states that it must meet commitments on the costs of the WAN, even though a number of schools will not receive funding to take these services from the LEP, please confirm whether you believe this is an accurate assessment of the facts by the LA. If you do not believe you have adequate information *from the submission* to confirm or deny any such statements, please say so.

Please use the form attached as Appendix 1 to record your comments.

## **DRAFT**

### **LA Project Development Guidance Notes**

#### **Introduction**

This note explains how to complete the assessment of each LA's comments on the project development costs they may have set out in their submissions.

***Please ensure you only make reference to this source of information, not your wider knowledge of the local authority in question.***

We need to evaluate whether the information the LA has set out in its submission is sufficiently detailed and demonstrably robust when analysed in the context of the overall costs of the schemes in question. For the template form (attached) you are asked to record the factual information available and make comments against it – these should be restricted to what is included in the LA's submission at this stage.

If you have any queries regarding any aspect of this exercise, please contact Mike or Caroline.

#### **Recording comments**

If the LA has *not* provided a breakdown of the LA project developments costs it has set out in its submission, please record the total value of what they are claiming on the attached form, and state in the comments column that no further information has been made available in support of the total provided.

Where the LA has provided a breakdown, please complete the form as fully as possible, detailing the scope of works (as described in its submission only), their overall value, broken down to the lowest level of detail the LA has provided.

Crucially, please ensure that you record the timescale during which these costs were incurred, if specified. If not, please make this clear in the comments column.

Your comments should be based solely upon the submission the LA has provided. In that context, please state whether you believe the level of information provided is sufficiently comprehensive and robustly evidenced to provide a clear overview of the costs that the LA has incurred.

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## **DRAFT Local Issues/Context Guidance Notes**

### **Introduction**

This note explains how to complete the assessment of each LA's comments on its local issues and wider context, as included in their submissions and/or as recorded when we carried out the site visits.

***Please ensure you only make reference to these sources of information, not your wider knowledge of the school and/or local authority in question.***

We need only comment on any statement the LA makes in its submission *by exception*, e.g. where we disagree with what is said, or do not feel able to verify a statement the LA is making in support of its case. If we agree with a statement, we need not comment further upon it, as it is included in the LA's submission already. By definition, local issues will be specific to each LA, and probably each school, so it is difficult to be prescriptive as to what should or should not be treated as a 'local issue'. If in doubt, and unable to confirm the veracity or impact of a statement the LA has made, please include it in the comments you return on the attached form.

If you have any queries regarding any aspect of this exercise, please contact Mike or Caroline.

### **Recording comments**

On the attached form, please give a headline description of the local issue, and a brief description of what the LA has said about it, and your reasons for commenting upon it, e.g. that you disagree with the factual basis of the statement, or do not believe there is sufficient evidence contained in the submission to verify the impact of the issue as described. For example, a statement may be made about the impact of not investing in a given school, with various scenarios set out in the text. If these are not supported by factual information, this should be stated in your comments.

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Headline description	Brief description of the issue	Comments

## **DRAFT Suitability Assessment Guidance Notes**

### **Introduction**

These notes explain how to complete the Suitability Survey Form (attached as Appendix 1) for each school, from information provided by the Local Authority (LA) in its submission *and* the comments made to you during the visits that you recorded on the PfS Condition Assessment.

***Please ensure you only make reference to these sources of information, not your wider knowledge of the school in question.***

Where the LA makes a general observation that is not specific to an identifiable block, these should be listed in the table headed 'Non-block specific comments'. In the absence of an AMP Suitability Survey this is likely to be the majority of suitability information submitted.

Can you please pay particular attention to any references to DDA compliance, and/or any other statutory requirements (e.g. health and safety). Where these are not supported by clear evidence, please state this in the comments column, e.g. the LA may state that a narrow staircase is a health and safety issue at a school, but may not say what its width is, or why it is such a risk.

**Note:** It is likely that the LA submission contains information that could be dated (especially if they have submitted the original AMP data), so the date of the survey (where known) should be entered into the comments column.

If you have any queries regarding any aspect of this exercise, please contact Mike or Caroline.

### **Direct Impacts on education columns**

If the LA has not submitted an AMP suitability survey, but has included references to suitability issues in the main text or an alternative form of survey, then issues in **specific identifiable spaces** (e.g. blocks that can be linked to those we walked round during the site visits) within the school should be recorded by ticking one or more of the boxes in the *Type* columns under the *Direct Impacts on Education* heading.

If the space is not clearly identifiable, please record it as closely as possible, either using the headings provided by subject, or enter the description of the area in one of the spare rows at the bottom of the first table.

The form attached as Appendix 1 lists curriculum areas and leaves room for you to enter a block reference next to it – originally, the suitability surveys were designed to work out if there was sufficient space per curriculum area, so we have retained that format in case the LA has used the original AMP methodology. But ideally we need to be able to identify which block an issue is located in.

The next four columns allow for problems to be categorised according to their impact on education. If the LA has *not* submitted an AMP Suitability Survey, please try to judge the cumulative impact of the problems for each space by placing a tick in just one of the four *Category* columns, even when more than one Category applies. The entry should be against the Category which is considered to represent the greatest impact on the school's ability to raise educational standards.

If the LA has submitted an AMP Suitability Survey, please check whether it is contradicted by any comments made on the site visit or in the text of the LA's submission, and enter this in the comments section by exception, e.g., only record where a contradiction occurs between the original AMP survey, the LA's submission, and/or your notes of the site visit.

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The Categories are as follows:

**Category A - Unable to teach curriculum**

This is most likely to be associated with numbers and types of teaching spaces available.

**Category B - Teaching methods inhibited**

Unsuitability of spaces may mean that schools' preferred teaching methods are inhibited.

**Category C - Management or organisation of school affected adversely**

Unsuitability of spaces and/or the way they relate to each other may affect the organisation or management of the school;

**Category D - Pupil or staff morale or pupil behaviour affected adversely**

Unsuitability of spaces may affect pupil or staff morale or pupil behaviour.

**Health and safety / accessibility / security columns**

Suitability assessments should identify health and safety/accessibility/security problems arising from inadequate or unsatisfactory aspects of building or site layouts. Such problems should be recorded with a tick in one of the three columns. The categories are as follows:

- **High.** Problems which present an immediate high risk to the health and safety of occupants and/or are serious breaches of legislation;
- **Medium.** Problems which present a medium risk to the health and safety of occupants and/or are less serious breaches of legislation;
- **Low.** Problems which present a low risk to the health and safety of occupants and/or are minor breaches of legislation.

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If it is not clear from the description the LA has provided that an issue does represent a significant health and safety, accessibility and/or security risk, please state this clearly in the comments column, e.g. the text may say that an area of the school was surveyed and deemed unsafe, but has not included that survey in its submission so this claim cannot be verified from the data provided.

**Comments column**

Supporting comments from LA submissions or PfS condition assessments should be entered in this column.

If you find a reference that appears to be linked to suitability, but it is not definitive, please include it on the form, but make this clear in the comments column.