BRIEFING PAPER

SUBJECT: Off site activities and educational visits

DATE: 24th April 2013

RECIPIENT: SCHOOLS' FORUM

THIS IS NOT A DECISION PAPER

SUMMARY:

1. Since 1997 when Southampton City Council became a Unitary Authority, the function of providing an operational system to support all schools in the County with offsite activities and educational visits has been managed by Hampshire County Council on behalf of Southampton. It is a shared service covering Hampshire, Southampton and Portsmouth. A Service Level Agreement between Hampshire and Southampton has covered this arrangement. The £30,000 cost of this agreement has been fully paid for until now by the City Council. This cost now needs to pass proportionally to Southampton Schools.

BACKGROUND and BRIEFING DETAILS:

- 2. NAHT guidance issued in 2011 outlined the role and responsibility of the Head Teacher regarding educational vists:
 - "An employer (the Local authority for maintained schools) has a legal responsibility for the health and safety of pupils, employees and volunteers involved in an educational visit. The day to day management of the visit and the discharging of this responsibility can be delegated, often to the head teacher, who is then responsible for ensuring that employer and establishment policies are implemented and that all visits and activities are properly planned and supervised by a competent person, or persons, with an appropriate staff/pupil ratio. It is important for there to be an establishment visits policy on which a school's Outdoor Education Adviser can provide guidance'.
- 3. Southampton City Council has discharged this duty by maintaining the Service Level Agreement with Hampshire County Council for this service.

- 4. The core service Hampshire County Council provides is as follows:
 - regulatory, legal and employer support and advice on current and best practice, insurance and indemnification
 - the provision of documents and web-based advice and guidance
 - the provision of agreed approval systems for educational visits and ventures, sporting activity, and outdoor, PE and sport providers
 - good practice guides related to high quality practice, teaching and learning
 - the clarification of such matters and advice or issue resolution by phone or e-mail
 - access to advice on matters to do with insurance and the indemnification of staff
 - the monitoring and inspection of the safety management systems of providers, activity centres and instructors
 - the operation of any required licences, eg Adventure Activities Licence
 - immediate support for incidents and emergencies, and access to emergency provision
 - the direct support of key personnel: Heads of Establishments, Heads of Department/Curriculum Leaders, Educational Visit Coordinators, Trailblazer Managers...
 - access to a comprehensive outdoor education/outdoor learning training programme,
 DofE e-training, and PE safety management courses, as well as those via Local Sports Partnerships
 - access to good practice initiatives, e.g. Trailblazer (outdoor learning)
 - access to services that are recognised nationally for their range, quality and expertise.
- 5. Should any Southampton school choose not to be part of the arrangement Southampton City Council has put in place, the City Council would need to be given evidence that robust and effective alternative arrangements are in place.
- 6. The Forum are asked to:
 - Support the City Council to continue to bulk purchase Hampshire County Councils
 offsite activities and educational visits service on behalf of city schools.
 - Note that Southampton City Council will make an annual charge of £1.25 per pupil to all Southampton maintained schools from 1st September 2013, (pro rata £0.73 per pupil for the rest of the financial year 2013/14). Then rising to £1.35 per pupil from 1st April 2014. Schools will have the freedom to opt out of this provision and develop or purchase their own arrangements to support off site activities and educational visits, providing they have effective alternative arrangements in place.

Appendices/Supporting Information:

None

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