

## Message to schools from Sue Harrison, Strategic Director Children and Families

15 November 2024

Dear Headteachers,

I know there is a large amount of change ongoing within BCC which is impacting on schools, and I appreciate your continued support and engagement. As you know, the Council recently discussed the future of our HR, Payroll and Pensions provision to schools and academies at Cabinet and took the decision that BCC will cease to offer HR, Payroll and Pensions as a traded service from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025.

To prepare for the transition period, we have been revisiting the SLAs for the 1 April to 31 August 2025 period. BCC's recommendation is to apply a 10% fee increase to all traded services and this will be reflected in the charging structure for the 2025 SLAs. The fee increase for the HR, Payroll and Pensions service will be applied at the same rate.

To accommodate the upcoming end to the service, these SLAs will be more flexible, allowing us to work with you to move you to a new provider when you become ready to do so. We have also reviewed the Pay-As-You-Go HR services on offer and streamlined the services available during this transition period. We have taken the difficult decision that we will not be able to offer HR, Payroll or Pensions to academies and have notified them of this separately. **Please confirm by Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025 if you will be continuing with your existing HR and Payroll and Pensions SLAs for the period April – August 2025 by emailing [BSU@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:BSU@birmingham.gov.uk). Whether you are intending to leave us before April or after, it is very important that you let us know your preferred leaving date and where you are moving to as early as possible so that we can work with you to plan your move to your new supplier.**

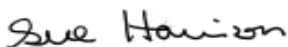
Furthermore, it was decided that we would review and adjust services and charges for Schools Financial Services to ensure that it is able to reach a break-even position each year. We have heard how much you value Schools Financial Services and want to work with you to make sure that we can continue to provide this service in years to come. We know that our service offer will have to adapt to all schools converting to chequebook status so we have developed a new set of packages which are simpler and better aligned to the challenges you face in schools. These are:

- Transactions only
- Bursary
- Budget Monitoring
- Consultancy

You can find more information about each of these packages in the attached brochure. The SLAs for Schools Financial Services will be offered for the full 2025/26 financial year.

The Council is clear that we cannot continue to subsidise the delivery of these services, so if too few schools choose to adopt the Schools Financial Services, BCC will not be able to provide the service. With this in mind, we are asking schools **to confirm which SFS package you would like to adopt by Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025 by emailing [linda.a.brighton@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:linda.a.brighton@birmingham.gov.uk)**. We will then be able to confirm that we are able to continue delivering Schools Financial Services by the end of the month.

Best wishes



Dr Sue Harrison  
**Strategic Director of Children and Families**  
**Birmingham City Council**