

Education Estates Working Group

Terms of Reference – September 2019



General

These terms of reference set out the membership, remit responsibilities and reporting arrangements of the Education Estates Working Group.

Purpose

The group's purpose is to develop and provide a single voice for schools' estates issues and to provide a central hub for identifying and coordinating estates related training specifically for the school sector.

The group was coordinated by CIPFA and established in November 2018.

The group was established in response to the increasing awareness of the importance of schools' estates issues. The Department for Education published its Good Estate Management for Schools on Gov.UK in April 2018, and in doing so consulted with different support organisations individually. It was felt that as the organisations collectively represented a significant proportion of schools in England, it would be beneficial to work together to raise awareness, promote good practice and support schools to identify and source training needs/opportunities. The group would also be able to represent the views of the sector through an appropriate interface with the Department for Education.

Scope

The scope is limited to estate issues relevant to schools' estate management. This will include strategic and technical issues. Whilst the group will have a clear interest in government policy and the impact it has on schools' estates, the primary aim of the group is not to change policy.

Responsibilities

All the following responsibilities are focused on estates related issues only.

- To raise the profile and importance of estates related issues in schools.
- To identify areas of concern within the schools and identify ways these can be addressed through training, support or feeding back to policy makers.
- To enable the school sector perspective to be expressed and used to influence proposals and policy development as appropriate.
- To provide strategic and accurate feedback on school estate needs, concerns and interests.
- To develop and promote services that would benefit schools in undertaking their estates related responsibilities.
- To promote formal consultations and other engagement activities that will potentially have an impact on schools' estate issues as and when they arise.
- Members will share knowledge and assist in communicating information to schools in their support network.
- To ensure all interested parties are kept informed about the work of the group.

Membership and attendance

Membership of the group comprises organisations with a professional support role in schools' estate issues. The core membership is:

- Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) - Chair
- Catholic Education Service
- Church of England Education Office
- Educational Building and Development Officers Group (EBDOG)
- Institute of Schools Business Leadership (ISBL)
- Institute of Workplace and Facilities Management (IWFM)
- Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
- The Trust Network (TTN)
- Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)

If core representatives are unable to attend in person, then they will endeavour to nominate a suitable representative to attend in their place.

The group comprises nine core member organisations with a quorum of five members.

Other organisations may be invited to attend meetings by agreement of the core membership.

Frequency and format of meetings

The group will meet at least four times a year and meetings will usually be held at the CIPFA Education and Training Centre in Birmingham (or such other venue as agreed in advance of each meeting). The chair may call additional meetings as necessary.

The chair will coordinate and communicate all meeting dates in advance. This will include the circulation of an agenda. Topics for the agenda will be finalised by the chair – all members can suggest topics for discussion.

The Minutes of the meeting will normally be taken by a CIPFA representative. Minutes will be circulated within three weeks of the meeting.

The Agenda and any relevant papers will be circulated to all members five working days in advance of meetings taking place.

It is expected that all members will read circulated papers and other materials in advance of meetings.

Subgroups may be convened to focus on specific topics. Any subgroups will report their activities to the next full group meeting.

Members may be contacted via the chair in-between the formal meetings, if there are urgent matters to discuss.

Meetings will be interactive to encourage and enable all views to be shared.

Meetings will last no longer than three hours.

All communications will be by email.

Accountability

The group will engage with other organisations as appropriate. In particular there will be a formal interface with the Department for Education. The Chair will represent the group in interactions with other organisations with support from other members as agreed. The Chair will formally report any interactions to the group.

Review

The purpose and value of the group will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose and is delivering on its key purpose.

Membership and chairing arrangements will be reviewed annually.

The next review date will be February 2020.

Date: 4 September 2019