

<p><b>Report to Hartlepool Schools' Forum 18<sup>th</sup> September 2014</b> <b>From Chris Little (Chief Finance Officer)</b></p>
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**Agenda Item 9 – Banking Contract Update**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 A report outlining issues arising with the Council's banking contract was brought to Schools' Forum on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2014. This report provides an update on the Council's banking arrangements.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 Since April 2003 the Co-operative Bank (the Co-op Bank) has provided banking services to Hartlepool Borough Council including schools. The previous report explained that owing to the Co-op Bank withdrawing banking services from local authorities, the Council needed to undertake a banking tender and put in place new banking arrangements.
- 2.2 The tender exercise has now been completed and Lloyds Bank have been appointed as the Council's new bankers.

**3. Implementation**

- 3.1 Although the Council's contract with the Co-op does not expire until 31 March 2015, it is currently planned that schools will transfer to the new banking arrangements on 1 November 2014. This will allow a period of dual running of bank accounts to ensure a smooth transition.
- 3.2 Schools should be aware that cheque signatories at schools will be required to sign a new Bank Mandate. This will be done well in advance of the transfer date and be will be arranged by the Schools' Finance Team. Consideration needs to be given as to who the school requires to sign cheques and whether two or a maximum of four signatures will be required.
- 3.3 Closer to the date of transfer the Schools' Finance Team will arrange to collect old bank stationary. This will include;
- cheque books,
  - cheque listing books,
  - paying in books, and,
  - coin bags.

3.4 The Schools' Finance Team will deliver new stationary. It should be noted that there may be a change in the Collection Centre address and schools will be advised accordingly.

3.5 The new bank details will be updated on SIMS by the Schools' Finance Team.

#### **4. Conclusion**

4.1 An implementation plan is being put in place to ensure a smooth transition to the new bank. The Schools' Finance Team will work closely with schools and support schools through the transition process

#### **5. Recommendation**

5.1 The Forum is asked to note the report and feed back to schools that members represent.