# AGENDA ITEM 5

Title of report: School’s Maternity Pooling Arrangements

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**Officer to present the paper to Schools Forum:** Nikki Parsons

**Details on who has been consulted with on this paper to date:**

Maintained Schools – School Business Managers and Headteachers

**Executive Summary:** The report sets out the proposal to withdraw the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Schools’ Maternity Pooling Arrangements

**Details of recommendations and timescales for decisions:**

Schools Forum is asked to:

1. Agree the proposed intention to withdraw the Schools Maternity Pooling Arrangements from the 2023-24 financial year

## 1. Background

## It was previously reported to School Forum at the March 2022 meeting, of the Local Authority’s intention to withdraw the Schools Maternity Pooling Arrangements from the 2023-24 financial year.

## The rational behind this proposal was the downwards trend of schools opting-in to the scheme, coupled with a rise in the number of claims over recent years which has led to a shortfall the scheme is paying out in claims more than it is collecting in contributions. There is a risk to all schools participating in the scheme as this shortfall would have to be met.

## In the 2021-22 financial year, this amounted to a shortfall of £45k.

## In March, School Forum agreed to a four-week consultation with schools on the proposed withdrawal of the LBTH Schools’ Maternity Pooling Arrangements from the 2023/24 financial

## Outcome of Consultation

## Schools Finance sought the views of headteachers, school business managers (SBM) and other interested parties on the intention to withdraw the Maternity Pooling Scheme from the 2023-24 financial year. This was communicated via the e-Headteachers Bulletin (29 April 2022) and the SBM Comms (28 April 2022).

## Representations were requested to be made via a survey link up until 27 May 2022.

## Only one response was received during the consultation period and that was against the proposed withdrawal of the scheme but without a sufficient supporting argument.

## The Local Authority was approached by a not-for-profit organisation during the consultation, that offers a similar scheme for schools. Their details have been passed to the Chair of the SBM Forum with the possibility of them presenting at the autumn SBM Forum.

## Recommendations

## Schools Forum is asked to approve the withdrawal of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Schools’ Maternity Pooling Arrangements from the 2023-24 financial year.