

Schools Forum

Date: 21 January 2016

Time: 8.30 am

Venue: STDC, Monkmoor,
Shrewsbury

Item/Paper

A

Public

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON 26 NOVEMBER 2015

Present

School Forum Members

Bill Dowell (Chair)
Phil Adams – Academy Headteacher
Colin Case – Primary Governor
Christine Harding – Early Years and Childcare
Christine Hargest – Association of Secretaries
Sandra Holloway – Primary Governor
Jo Humphreys – Primary Governor
Peter Ingham – Secondary Governor
Martin Jones – Primary Governor
Yvette McDaniel – Primary Headteacher
Alan Parkhurst – Primary Headteacher
Geoff Pettengell – Academy Headteacher
Phil Poulton – Secondary Headteacher (left at 9.45)
Kay Redknap – TMBSS
Geoff Renwick – Academy Headteacher
Mark Rogers – Primary Headteacher
Philip Sell - Diocese

Members

Officers

Rob Carlyle
Gwyneth Evans
Gareth Proffitt
Neville Ward
Stephen Waters
Phil Wilson
Helen Woodbridge (Minutes)

Observers/Visitors

Hannah Fraser

		ACTION
1.	Apologies Apologies had been received from Austin Atkinson, Nick Bardsley, Michael Barratt, Mark Blackstock, Karen Bradshaw, Richard Bray, David Chantrey, John Hitchings, Pete Johnstone, Sally Lill, Ann Hartley and Joy Tetsill. Subsequent apologies were received from Ruth Thomas.	
2.	Minutes and Matters Arising It was confirmed that Alan Parkhurst had been in attendance. Phil Wilson advised of the need for a replacement for Sally Lill.	PW
3.	De-delegation 2016-17 Gwyneth Evans took Schools Forum members through appendix A and advised that this item was relevant only to maintained schools so voting was restricted to maintained primary and secondary schools (in separate sectors). Contingency Gwyneth Evans advised that contingency is currently on target as there seems to be a fair amount of mobility. Vote on Contingency The seven primary maintained representatives voted that this should be de-delegated in 2016/17.	

Maternity and Insurance

Mark Rogers pointed out that other LAs don't seem to do this. However he and other members of Schools Forum agreed that Shropshire's system works well. Phillip Sell added that some LAs buy insurance.

Vote on Maternity and Insurance

The seven primary maintained and the two secondary maintained school representatives voted that this should be de-delegated in 2016/17.

Trades Union Duties

There was significant discussion about how Trades Union/area representative duties are funded and whether maintained schools are subsidising academies.

The chair clarified that facility time is for representatives to work with schools/governing bodies.

Phil Adams added that these funds cover release time for representatives from schools.

Mark Rogers stated that the corporate work eg on pay policy saves time for schools.

Phil Wilson reminded colleagues of HR/Unions negotiations.

It was agreed that Phil Wilson/Christine Hargest should meet with Lorraine Edwards from HR to discuss.

They will need to clarify what the budget is covering and how the funding has been used in the past.

Peter Ingham suggested that he would be happy to vote if this investigation is going to be carried out.

It was agreed that detailed analysis of the use of this budget would be undertaken and reported back to Schools Forum.

Vote on Trades Union Duties

Six primary maintained representatives voted for de-delegation, one primary representative abstained.

Two secondary maintained representatives voted for de-delegation.

Vote on Administration of Free School Meal Eligibility

Seven primary maintained representatives and two secondary maintained representatives voted that this should not be de-delegated.

Vote on Public Duties

Six primary maintained representatives and two secondary maintained representatives voted that this should not be de-delegated. (One primary maintained representative voted for de-delegation.)

Vote on Library and Museum Services

Seven primary maintained representatives voted that this should not be de-delegated.

PW

4. School Funding – Local Funding Formula

Gwyneth Evans went through the paper.

Geoff Pettengell was concerned that the difference between the academic year and financial year would mean a loss of funding.

Gwyneth Evans was able to clarify that the funding would follow the academy year.

Colin Case suggested that as the first year would be covered by the new legislation and the protection of the lump sums, could Schools Forum vote next year for 2017-18 onwards?

Geoff Pettengell spoke of the need for financial forecasting to be informed.

Geoff Renwick asked if there could be a tapering measure?

Gwyneth Evans advised that the proposal had been discussed with the accountant

at the Shrewsbury Academies Trust.

Martin Jones spoke of the need for flexibility as it will depend on the site.

Geoff Pettengell suggested that it is likely that there will be more cases and therefore a need for a robust system.

Phil Adams supported the use of split site funding as it complies with the thrust of Schools Forum re sustainability.

Vote on use of a split site factor

Schools Forum voted in favour of using the split site factor to fund additional costs of operating on two sites up to a maximum value of the loss in lump sum funding of two schools amalgamating. There was one abstention.

Vote on MFG disapplication

Schools Forum unanimously voted in favour of applying to disapply the MFG for 2016-17 for one small school with a significant increase in number on roll.

5. Provision of Free Early Years Entitlement

Neville Ward went through his paper.

There is a strong push to pay PVI providers a higher rate as they employ teachers. However this is causing financial strain.

Christine Harding added that the majority of quality providers have already put qualified teachers in place and this is not proving financially sustainable.

The Local Authority has less information on the quality of individual EY settings as they are providing less support and guidance than previously. There is concern re this as some settings have not been inspected for five years.

When schools adopt pre-schools, they get the support of the school although funded separately.

DfE are relaxing the requirement for schools who have adopted to have a qualified teacher leading provision.

Maintained nurseries have to have a qualified teacher.

Neville Ward agreed to check the regulations as there is confusion.

A flexible sort of MFG formula is used to support unsustainable settings.

Christine Harding suspects that high number of providers are facing sustainability issues and some won't be able to offer 30 hours.

There is a capacity issue if already full and if the funding doesn't increase there will be issues.

There will be a positive impact if funding increases and is ring fenced.

Comprehensive spending review outcome - some capital funding to support creation of new places.

It is proposed to introduce a National Early Years Funding Formula in 2017/18.

Revised funding rates - 8 hours changed to 16 hours and n/a to earners £100,000+

It is hard to establish requirement for places.

Yvette McDaniel asked if there are many places not filled? Her current setting has lowest numbers for some time.

Neville Ward confirmed that there is capacity but some are providing for 0-11.

Martin Jones spoke of the need to get more 2 year olds in.

It was confirmed that Early Years funding is part of DSG but not ring-fenced. EY block is now based on participation. Neville Ward stressed that it is more difficult to set the EY budget because take up is not known. He added that there is some other funding available to support interventions.

Phil Wilson advised that from 2017/18 there will be a National Funding Formula for schools, high needs and early years.

The chair asked if there is a forum meeting for early years?

Neville Ward confirmed that they will be meeting next week for an information exchange.

NW

The chair asked Neville Ward to report the interest of Schools Forum. It was agreed that an Early Years Funding Task and Finish Group is to be set up later next year. Volunteers included Christine Harding, Yvette McDaniel and Jo Humphreys. Additional PVI representatives will be sought.

NW

6. Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring

Stephen Waters went through the paper and it was clarified that it applies to maintained and academy schools.

Alan Parkhurst spoke of need for high needs specialists and asked if any underspend could be used for this.

The chair suggested the need for a task and finish group to consider this.

Phil Wilson agreed as there are also considerations to be made following yesterday's comprehensive spending review.

It was agreed that a task and finish group should meet sooner rather than later – possibly in early January to consider high needs issue and to confirm the timetable for work. Membership would include Jo Humphreys, John Hitchings, Mark Rogers, Phil Poulton, Pete Johnstone, Kay Redknap, Alan Parkhurst with the possible addition of a school business manager?

PW

Vote on Central Provision within the Schools Budgets for 2016-17

Schools Forum unanimously approved the central provision within schools budgets 2016-17 as set out in the appendix.

7. Communications

The Comprehensive Spending Review themes and a DfE press release were circulated. Some clarification will be needed.

The consultation process re the move to a National Fair Funding Formula (NFFF) will need to be responded to by Schools Forum when it comes through in the New Year.

The intention is to make LAs running schools a thing of the past. Sixth form colleges will be able to become academies. FE colleges will be protected.

It was suggested that the NFFF should work to Shropshire's advantage but its effect may be tapered.

The chair advised that the F40 group work continue to work tirelessly. The task and finish group can support them by responding.

8. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 21 January 2015

The meeting closed at 10.28 am

Future meetings: 17 March 2016, 9 June 2016