



**Schools Forum**

**Date:** 2 February 2017

**Time:** 8.30 am

**Venue:** STDC, Monkmoor, Shrewsbury

Item/Paper

**A**

Public

**MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2017**

**Present**

**School Forum Members**

Bill Dowell (Chair)  
Phil Adams – Academy Headteacher  
Michael Barratt – Academy Headteacher  
John Eglin – Primary Headteacher  
John Hitchings – SSGC  
Sandra Holloway – Primary Governor  
Pete Johnstone – Secondary Headteacher  
Alan Parkhurst – Primary Headteacher  
Geoff Pettengell – Academy Headteacher  
Phil Poulton – Secondary Headteacher  
Michael Revell – Primary Governor  
Mark Rogers – Primary Headteacher  
Phillip Sell – Hereford Diocese

**Officers**

Karen Bradshaw  
Ros Bridges  
Gwyneth Evans  
Jo Jones  
Paul Jones  
Christine Kerry  
Chris Mathews  
Gareth Proffitt  
Neville Ward  
Stephen Waters  
Phil Wilson  
Helen Woodbridge (minutes)

**Members**

Cllr David Minnery  
Cllr Nick Bardsley

**Observers**

Roger Evans  
Maggie Furmanek

**ACTION**

**1. Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Jean Evanson, Meryl Green, Shelly Hurdley, Kay Redknap and Geoff Renwick. Later apologies were received from Sabrina Hobbs.

**2. Minutes and Matters Arising (Paper A)**

The chair welcomed a new member, Michael Revell. He introduced three LA officers Chris Mathews, Chris Kerry and Paul Jones who were attending re Paper B. It was confirmed that the actions from the previous minutes had been completed.

**3. School Revenue Funding 2017 to 2018 (Paper B)**

Phil Wilson went through the paper apologising for the lateness of the report which had been due to late receipt of information and the many officer inputs which were required.

The chair spoke of the aim for openness and transparency and hoped that the involvement of other schools through the planned Lord Hill event will help explain why these decisions are necessary.

Mark Rogers advised that the Apprenticeship Levy will effect maintained schools' budgets. It was confirmed that this will appear in schools accounts as a charge to maintained schools not an initial reduction from the budget.

It was also confirmed that the levy applies only to organisations with a pay bill of over

£3 million.

Phillip Sell did not think this would apply to VA schools

Phil Wilson advised that the School Improvement Grant is limited to two years.

He highlighted an error in paragraph 11 – change to: £1,844 per maintained school (not pupil).

The situation is unclear re continued ESG funding/protection for academies.

Phil Adams was not expecting ESG to continue for academies (which will create funding issues for MATs too).

The chair spoke of the need to provide a 'cushion' for schools in the transitional period. He added that officers have worked up the proposals based on the minimum that schools would need.

#### **Retained Duties - Recommendation 1**

Votes in favour 9

None against

No abstentions

#### **CERA Allocation - Recommendation 2**

Votes in favour 9

None against

No abstentions

#### **Top slice of ISB - Recommendation 3**

Votes in favour 5

None against

No abstentions

The chair added that it would be commendable if academies could consider paying this back.

Phil Adams asked if redundancy costs would be ongoing? It was confirmed that they are one offs.

Pete Johnstone asked if current lifetime costs are paid out of this. It was confirmed that it would only apply to new redundancy costs.

The chair advised that the task and finish group had established that rigour is applied to redundancy situations – finance and HR are involved.

Mark Rogers added that the use of redundancy needs to be reserved for tough situations and be closely monitored.

John Eglin suggested that the impact of NFFF may cause a redundancy spike (in larger schools).

Schools Forum members wondered what would happen if the funds were used up mid-year. Gwyneth Evans confirmed that an overspend could be carried forward into the following year.

Pete Johnstone thought that the dip in costs could have been because of the better funded year so maybe the higher figure would be necessary.

It was confirmed that the £512k CERA money is annual funding.

Pete Johnstone wondered if schools could part fund redundancy if necessary.

Chair suggested that the provision of good financial information should mean that usually schools will not need to make redundancies.

John Hitchings spoke of the need to trust schools.

Mark Rogers highlighted the major funding changes. Small schools' budgets will be tight for this and next year and will then be increased disproportionately. Medium size and large schools will be losing out financially and therefore there could be redundancy implications. He would be worried about making redundancy decisions when funding is not confirmed.

The chair reminded Schools forum colleagues that the proposed primary school

lump sum is £100k which will mean a lower AWPU.

Sandra Holloway spoke of the need for planning ahead and Gwyneth Evans agreed -  
- schools may need to plan redundancies when NFFF is released in late summer.  
PJ staffing protocol may help by enabling redeployment.

#### **Redundancy - Recommendation 4**

Option 1 – 1 vote

Option 2 – 3 votes

Option 3 – 3 votes

It was agreed to select the middle level.

Michael Revell asked about difference between ESG funded and SLA funded HR service. Paul Jones advised that it would be hard to disentangle the service so quickly but it will have to be disentangled during the transitional year. The traded element has supplemented in the past.

John Emlin assumed there would be a difference in the price for maintained schools and academies.

Paul Jones confirmed and advised that the prices also vary between academies. Some academies fulfil their statutory functions through LA.

Phil Adams confirmed that the LA HR prices are in line with the market.

Mark Rogers could see that transition to fully traded is the theme.

#### **Human Resources/Health & Safety - Recommendation 5**

Votes in favour 7

Against 0

Abstentions 0

Christine Kerry would be worried about a straight move to traded because of the lack of time to talk to all schools.

Mark Rogers suggested that more clarity is required and worried that schools could walk away when they are losing funding. There is a need to support now but with reservations.

John Emlin agreed to transitional support but spoke of links with Early Help etc which is not appropriate for trading.

#### **Education Welfare - Recommendation 6**

Votes in favour 7

Against 0

Abstentions 0

Alan Parkhurst suggested maintaining the service at 5.5 fte (which would cost an extra £58k). He thought that officers were overworking already and he would be happy to pay the extra.

Mark Rogers had been shocked by proposed figures as they had gone up since the task and finish group meeting. It was explained that this was because of change between primary and secondary phases and the need for separate votes.

Phil Wilson suggested that the £58k could be made up through trading.

Pete Johnstone thought that schools should be consulted as opportunities for trading may reduce.

Schools Forum members understood that schools can change from high to low risk and vice versa very quickly.

#### **Primary School Improvement - Recommendation 7a**

Votes in favour 5

Against 0

Abstentions 0

**Secondary School Improvement - Recommendation 7b**

Votes in favour 2

Against 0

Abstentions 0

Primary maintained - £30.80 per pupil  
Secondary maintained - £22.21 per pupil

The chair thanked the task and finish group members and officers for the work that had been put into this.

Sandra Holloway asked how schools would know about all these figures.

Gwyneth Evans advised that it will be made clear in the budget share.

**4. Early Years National Funding Formula Consultation 2017-18 (Paper C)**

Neville Ward presented the report.

Alan Parkhurst suggested the need for some of the funding to go to EAS.

Neville Ward advised that more early years provision is moving into schools (from what was previously private provision) so further discussion will be required.

**5. Lord Hill Event Wednesday 8 February 2017**

Schools Forum members were encouraged to attend the event by booking through the CPD team [cpd@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:cpd@shropshire.gov.uk) or 01743 254570

**6. Communications**

David Minnery thought it vital for all to pull in the same direction. He thanked Schools Forum members for their input as from an LA perspective the decisions made (which had been tough to make) will enable transition through a difficult period. Members are striving to get the best deal – a meeting with MPs is scheduled for next week.

**7. Next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 2 February 2017

**The meeting closed at 10.45 am.**

**Future meetings (please diary):**

23 March 2017	8.30 am	STDC, Monkmoor
8 June 2017	8.30 am	STDC, Monkmoor
14 September 2017	8.30 am	STDC, Monkmoor
2 November 2017	8.30 am	STDC, Monkmoor
7 December 2017	8.30 am	STDC, Monkmoor
18 January 2017	8.30 am	STDC, Monkmoor
1 February 2017 (provisional)	8.30 am	STDC, Monkmoor
22 March 2017	8.30 am	STDC, Monkmoor
7 June 2017	8.30 am	STDC, Monkmoor