



## Combined High Needs and Early Help Task and Finish Group

**Date:** 6 January 2017

**Time:** 9.30 am

**Venue:** STDC, Monkmoor, Shrewsbury

### MINUTES

#### Present

Phil Wilson, Business Support, Learning & Skills (Chair)

Julia Dean, SEN, Learning & Skills

John Eglin, Morda CE Primary School - Headteacher

John Hitchings – SSGC

Sabrina Hobbs, Severndale Academy – Headteacher

Kerry Lynch, Wilfred Owen School - Headteacher

Ian Nurser, St Peters CE Primary School, Wem - Headteacher

Kay Redknap, TMBSS Headteacher

Sarah Sweeney, SEN, Learning & Skills

Stephen Waters, Finance, Shropshire Council

Neville Ward, Early Years Manager

Helen Woodbridge, Business Support, Learning & Skills (notes)

#### 1. Welcome

PW welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that this is the fourth and final meeting of the task and finish groups created to report to Schools Forum.

#### 2. Apologies

Gwyneth Evans, Marion Versluijs

#### 3. Notes from the meetings 6 October 2016

The notes of the meetings were received.

#### 4. Report to Schools Forum on 24 November 2016

PW feedback on the report that was presented to Schools Forum on 24 November. A further and final report from these groups will be presented to Schools Forum on 2 February 2017.

#### 5. Assessment of the outcomes of the Groups' work against the objectives set on their terms of reference

PW took members through the list of objectives for both groups and it was agreed that these had been met.

#### 6. Final report to Schools Forum on 2 February 2017 to close down the current work of the two task and finish groups

##### High Needs Task and Finish Group

It was confirmed that the independent review is outstanding.

JD confirmed that NDTI had been commissioned to carry out the review. They have

### ACTION

met with Severndale and Woodlands and will revisit Severndale shortly. Feedback is awaited and the process is on target for a 2016-17 (financial year) start.

There may be a need for a further meeting to respond to consultation (March deadline) and this was agreed. Members suggested that the outcomes from the independent review could also be received by this group.

PW suggested a meeting of the group in late February/early March with a report back to Schools Forum.

(It was established that the CCG are also working on funding.)

### **Early Help Task and Finish Group**

It was confirmed that the work of this group has concluded. However, there is a need for future partnership working which Colleen Male/Franceen Doyle will be asked to take forward.

JD reassured colleagues that work is ongoing eg, education and Early Help are working together on graduated pathways. This work should make funding more explicit.

It was suggested that there may be a point where a larger group is required to advise/decide on funding issues.

PW suggested a need to revisit DSG/Early Help for 2018-19 as there are other growing funding pressures. He stressed the need to work collectively and advised of a schools funding event scheduled for 8 February at Lord Hill because of the significant changes to school funding.

KR stressed that partnership working is particularly important to enable effective budget decision making. She felt that Early Help is not a large cost for the benefits that it brings. However, she was concerned about some miscommunication issues. Members understood to need to find a way for Early Help to continue.

JE suggested a 'buying in' model.

PW cautioned against this due the need for a critical mass – he considered that a mix and match solution may be better.

KL highlighted corporate responsibility for all children in Shropshire – without which there will be later implications.

IN was concerned that budget cuts will have implications. He suspected that governors can have an isolationist approach.

SH considered that Early Help is currently not working for schools. Work needs to be carried out with schools so it becomes more enmeshed, with more co-operation.

PW thought that Children's Services would need to drive this agenda and include schools.

KL added that this is the direction that SSCB have confirmed.

SH wondered about using academisation as an approach – Health and Social Care need to understand the academy process.

JE felt that branding is required for Early Help.

JD advised that work is ongoing with COMPASS/FPOC to improve understanding.

IN suggested that he would prefer the LA to support schools through the academisation process, not to set up a MAT.

JE was worried because Early Help was not an SLA or something that could be bought from elsewhere. Currently there are barriers eg the bureaucratic nature of the process. He felt that COMPASS should be more helpful in order to encourage buy in.

IN confirmed that it does not feel like help, but a barrier. He felt that Early Help needs to be more customer focused.

SH reported that COMPASS advised her that they are not overseeing all school information.

JD advised that ECINS will help on this.

PW identified further work needed by Karen Bradshaw, Colleen Male and Franceen Doyle.

PW/JD

PW/JD

JH added that more understanding/clarity is needed.  
KL agreed to raise this at SSCB where the groups are represented.  
SH was concerned that health is disparate – services are not at all joined up.  
KR concluded - teaching is the front line service which needs support.

PW agreed to write the report to Schools Forum.

**7. Further working/consultative groups**

It was agreed that the work on other strands would continue differently.  
PW thanked everyone for their work in these groups.

**8. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 10.45.

DRAFT