



**Schools Forum**

**Date:** 23 March 2017

**Time:** 8.30 am

**Venue:** STDC, Monkmoor, Shrewsbury

Item/Paper

**A**

Public

**MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON 2 FEBRUARY 2017**

**Present**

**School Forum Members**

Bill Dowell (Chair)  
Phil Adams – Academy Headteacher  
Christine Hargest – Association of Secretaries  
Sandra Holloway – Primary Governor  
Shelly Hurdley – Early Years Representative  
Pete Johnstone – Secondary headteacher  
Alan Parkhurst – Primary Headteacher  
Kay Redknap - TMBSS  
Michael Revell – Primary Governor  
Mark Rogers – Primary Headteacher

**Officers**

Karen Bradshaw  
Phil Wilson  
Gwyneth Evans  
Neville Ward  
Chris Mathews  
Stephen Waters  
Jo Jones  
Gareth Proffitt  
Helen Woodbridge (Minutes)

**Members**

Cllr Nick Bardsley

**Observers**

Maggie Furmanek  
Roger Evans  
Hannah Fraser

**1. Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Michael Barratt, John Eglin, Meryl Green, Sabrina Hobbs, Colin Hopkins, David Minnery, Phil Poulton and Philip Sell. Late apologies were received from Geoff Pettengell.

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

The minutes were accepted as a true record. There were no matters arising that were not on the agenda.

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

Gwyneth Evans presented her report. She confirmed that the APT had been submitted on time and confirmation had been received that it complies with regulations.

Maintained schools had received their budget share information from the LA and academies had received budget information re high needs and EYSFF.

An overview of main per pupil changes to budgets as a consequence of Schools Forum decisions was circulated. It was confirmed that MFG will continue to affect some schools. The paper is to be shared at the Lord Hill event.

Mark Rogers was concerned because it will be hard for people to understand. He added that different approaches had been taken in other LAs.

KB advised that every LA is in a different position. This is a transitional year with

**ACTION**

**PW**

further debate to take place.

The chair gave special thanks to Gwyneth Evans for the work she and her team have undertaken.

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

Gwyneth Evans went through the report. This is the second stage of consultation which closes on 22 March. It will be covered at the Lord Hill event to encourage individual school responses. The Schools Forum response was formulated:

GE

##### **Question 2**

**Schools Forum members generally agreed.**

##### **Question 3**

Phil Adams asked about Year 7 Catch Up funding – Gwyneth Evans confirmed that this is separate.

Mark Rogers was generally in favour of NFFF but there is a second level of fairness – what is a child worth? Similar children with same characteristics could attract different levels of funding from schools not far from each other.

Phil Adams had concern about double/treble funding of some aspects. Some poor families in Shropshire don't qualify for help eg FSM. There is a need to put more into the standard AWPU factor.

**Schools Forum members generally agreed.**

##### **Question 4**

Mark Rogers suspected this is an attempt not to reduce urban schools' budgets too much.

Phil Wilson advised that F40 have suggested revision.

**Schools Forum members generally agreed.**

##### **Question 5**

**No response from Schools Forum members**

##### **Question 6**

PW had received a query from a headteacher as to why this had not been provided. He had commended her to respond to the consultation.

**No response from Schools Forum members**

##### **Question 7**

Phil Adams had concerns that using a larger lump sum will undo the work of Schools Forum.

Mark Rogers agreed but saw the need to support the extra funding coming onto Shropshire and fight other issues eg London weighting. He suspected that politically it is not the time to express concerns re small schools.

Chris Mathews agreed politically but had concerns as there would be less funding through AWPU.

Gwyneth Evans cautioned that there may be a risk of reducing the lump sum and increasing spending on, for example, EAL.

Alan Parkhurst suggested that Schools Forum obligation is to ensure no pupils are disadvantaged. This move would mean the largest group of primary pupils (urban) will be impacted upon.

Mark Rogers was concerned that Shropshire could be losing out because the proportion of small schools is well above average.

Karen Bradshaw suggested if the lump sum was reduced, potentially every primary school could lose £50k.

Nick Bardsley spoke of the time and effort that had been spent by Schools Forum

ensuring a reasonable balance and wondered why £110k is acceptable. This will give a very mixed message to small primary schools and will be hard to explain to larger primaries.

Chris Mathews questioned the efficiency of the use of funding. 36% of Shropshire schools have less than 100 pupils and 11% of Shropshire schools have less than 50 pupils. The highest gainers are very small schools who are educationally more vulnerable.

Neville Ward understood the compelling arguments but as an LA that understands small rural schools Shropshire LA decided to set the lump sum figure the lowest of all – it is difficult to argue for now.

Phil Adams thought this Whitehall decision will not work at local level – there needs to be more local control.

Neville Ward was interested to compare to EYFF where there has been a generous increase of 30% in the hourly rate.

The chair summarised re unintended consequences of actions. If we say no, less funding will come into Shropshire. He suggested a response cautioning that the lump sum figure does not work – there is a need for local discretion to limit unintended consequences.

Mark Rogers, as larger school, didn't feel being disadvantaged. He thinks of this a new money not old.

Pete Johnstone had hoped for a higher level of funding but it seems that less money is being shared out. He suggested the need to protect the lump sum figure as it brings more money into the county adding that we should ask for more funding.

Phil Adams thought that some southern counties will be favoured.

**It was agreed that Gwyneth Evans should produce a broad answer from above with focus on pupils.**

#### **Question 8**

The need to restate Schools Forum's policy and reasons was identified as it was felt that the new proposal will not work in Shropshire

Gwyneth Evans cautioned that it would be hard to argue that we want fewer schools to benefit.

Need additional amounts as £25k and £65k are too low.

Phil Adams suggested that the 2 miles factor is the issue – this should be more realistic.

Mark Rogers felt that this was not problematic from a primary point of view but will be for the single secondary school which would suffer.

**It was agreed that Gwyneth Evans should produce a broad contextualised answer from above.**

#### **Question 9**

**Schools Forum members suggested a response to take account of dedelegated funding.**

#### **Question 10**

There were worries that this will take funding from Shropshire and give to other areas. It builds in inequalities and is a big issue for F40.

**Schools Forum members did not agree.**

#### **Question 11**

**Schools Forum members did not support the proposal.**

#### **Question 12**

**Schools Forum members did not agree.**

**Question 13**

**Schools Forum members supported the proposal.**

**Question 14**

Shropshire could have expected another £5 million through a national fair funding formula but the proposal is only for £1.4 million.

There are still wild differences between funding for children.

**Question 15**

£5 million issue again

**Question 16**

It was suggested that there will be some flexibility in allocating budgets for schools for Schools Forum in 2018/19.

**Question 17**

**Schools Forum members supported the proposal.**

**Question 18**

The need to recognise sparsity was raised.

**Question 1**

Phil Adams thought that low prior attainment needs to be better funded and was concerned that any extra funding to Shropshire will disappear into pension costs. Neville Ward suggested adding pupil numbers to the table at 53.

The chair had an ongoing concern re sustainability – some schools are becoming less sustainable. There was also concern re quality of education.

Chris Mathews highlighted that 35% of primary schools and 43% of secondary schools will lose funding.

**5. High Needs and Early Help Task & Finish Groups**

Phil Wilson presented the paper. He confirmed that further work is needed.

High Needs Group will meet re High Needs consultation which has a deadline of 22 March. Schools Forum delegated responsibility to the group.

It was agreed that this group will also consider the outcome of the independent review re bandings.

Early Help – new head of service, Francean Doyle, to lead the ongoing elements of work re partnership working to maximise use of funding.

**PW**

**6. Shropshire Schools Forum Constitution**

Phil Wilson went through the report and highlighted the need to fill vacancies that are left. It was agreed that Phil Adams would mention this at the headteacher meeting today and that it would also be raised at the Lord Hill event.

**PA/Chair**

**7. Apprenticeship Levy**

Lorraine Edwards presented her report and circulated an extra paper indicating levy contributions by school. She confirmed that monthly deductions would be taken from schools.

Lorraine Edwards highlighted the need for a secondary head representative on the board. Also, more input from schools in relation to the process re accessing training would be desirable.

**8. Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring**

Stephen Waters went through his report.

**9. Communications**

The response to consultation will be formulated by Gwyneth Evans.

A Lord Hill presentation is scheduled for 8 February.

The chair, David Minnery, Nick Bardsley and Karen Bradshaw have been in discussion regarding ways forward.

The recent meeting with MPs had gone well and three key changes had been discussed. MPs listened to points/position and were surprised by the negative impact. MPs have requested further information.

Karen Bradshaw and Nick Gibb met within a forum – he has extended invitation to meet with him – this is being pursued so the unintended consequences can be raised.

**GE**

**KB**

**10. Next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 23 March 2017

**The meeting closed at 10.55 am.**

**Future meetings (please diary):**

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