



Schools Forum

Date: 26 March 2015

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Venue: Shrewsbury
Training and Development
Centre

Paper

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Public

SUSTAINABILITY TASK & FINISH GROUP

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Summary

Schools Forum approved the terms of reference and membership of a Task & Finish Group on School Sustainability in November 2013. Reports from meetings of the group have been presented at previous Forum meetings.

This report provides an update from the latest meeting of the group held on 10 March 2015.

Recommendation

To note the key points raised at the meeting on 10 March 2015 of the Task & Finish Group on School Sustainability.

REPORT

1. Reports following meetings of the Task & Finish Group on School Sustainability have been presented to Forum previously. A further meeting of the group took place on 10 March 2015 and notes of the key points raised at the meeting are attached to this report.
2. The group considered the impact on individual schools of projected pupil number reductions across the county and the subsequent projected reduction to individual school budget shares over the next 5 years to 2019-20.
3. The group reviewed the development of budget planning tools aimed at supporting Shropshire schools. A budget modelling tool, designed to enable schools to estimate future year budget shares based on the current 2015-16 funding formula and school data on pupil numbers, has been developed. The group confirmed this should be provided to schools as soon as possible with guidance notes providing appropriate caveats to highlight the potential risks of using current funding levels, formula data and criteria into the future. The group

also considered a Shropshire benchmarking tool which it was agreed should be available to Shropshire maintained schools in September each year based on the previous financial year's data.

4. The group recommended that budget planning training and guidance should be made available to schools predicted to be facing a significant pupil number decline and subsequent reduction in funding over the next 5 years.
5. The group also reviewed budget modelling tools for early years and post-16 providers which are being developed. The significant pressure on post-16 funding was raised and discussed within the group.
6. The group was presented with a briefing note entitled *A Shropshire Strategy for Pupil Place Planning* which summarises the position regarding pupil growth in some parts of Shropshire over the next plan period (copy attached). They were advised that the full strategy is being drawn up and will be going out for consultation in the summer. The group felt strongly that the strategy should include the overall Shropshire picture with regard to falling pupil numbers and surplus places.
7. Details of future meetings will be presented to future Schools Forum meetings.