

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON 17 MARCH 2016**Present****School Forum Members**

Bill Dowell (Chair)
Phil Adams – Academy Headteacher
Richard Bray – Secondary Governor
Colin Case – Primary Governor
David Chantrey – Primary Governor
Jean Evanson – Association of Secretaries
Sabrina Hobbs – Special/Academy Headteacher
Jo Humphreys – Primary Governor
Pete Johnstone – Secondary Headteacher
Martin Jones – Primary Governor
Alan Parkhurst – Primary Headteacher
Phil Poulton – Secondary Headteacher
Geoff Renwick – Secondary Academy
Mark Rogers – Primary Headteacher
Joy Tetsill – Secondary Governor

Members

Cllr David Minnery (left at 9.55 am)
Cllr Nick Bardsley

Officers

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

Observers/Visitors

Hannah Fraser

ACTION**1. Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Mark Blackstock, Christine Harding, John Hitchings, Sandra Holloway, Phillip Sell, Yvette McDaniel, Kay Redknap and Ruth Thomas

Late apologies were received from Austin Atkinson, Michael Barratt and Geoff Pettengell.

The Chair welcomed everyone (particularly the new professional association representative Jean Evanson) to the meeting and emphasised the key role for Schools Forum in these turbulent times for education.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising (Paper A)

Mr R Bray had been listed as a secondary academy governor when he is (for now) a secondary governor representing maintained schools.
Otherwise the minutes were agreed as a true record.

3. School National Funding Formula and High Needs Funding Reform Consultations

GE took Schools Forum members through the National Fair Funding Consultation questionnaire on a chapter by chapter basis.
CC pointed out that one of the seven principles was missing from the report and it

was clarified that the fourth principle (that funding should go straight to schools) had been omitted in error.

Chapter 1

Question 1 - Schools Forum quickly agreed to a straightforward yes.

Question 2 created much more debate with several members identifying the need for local influence. There was also concern around the EFA and where schools would turn if things went wrong. It was acknowledged that there may be less to get wrong if there is an NFFF. Schools Forum members were concerned that they were answering this question 'blind'. If the NFFF was effective, then there would be no need to intervene. The general view was yes but with some concerns re implementation and loss of local flexibility via Schools Forum.

Schools Forum hoped that the responses from consultation one would lead into consultation two.

Chapter 2

Schools Forum members were concerned over the use of IDACI and over the 'double funding' of pupil premium pupils through both a deprivation factor and the pupil premium grant. It was suggested that this should all go through pupil premium.

Question 3 - Yes

Question 4 – a) Yes, b) Pupil led (perhaps pupil premium could be added to funding to prevent double funding). Schools Forum members suggested advising on Shropshire's approach to this.

Question 5 – Yes but concern re what it is based on.

Question 6 – a) and b) both yes

Question 7 - Yes

Question 8 - Yes

Question 9 – Yes but suggest it goes straight to LA.

Question 10 – No – should be treated as an exception.

Question 11 – No - should be paid off or re-negotiated.

Question 12 – No – not formalised if it is exceptional it needs to be treated as an exception.

Question 13 - Yes

Question 14 – No – should be treated as an exception.

Question 15 - No

Question 16 – a) Yes but limit, b) Hybrid – recruitment issues in rural Shropshire.

Question 17 - Yes

Question 18 - Yes

Question 19 - Yes

Chapter 3

Question 20 - Yes

Question 21 - Yes

Chapter 4

Question 22 - Yes

Question 23 - Yes

Chapter 5

Question 24 - No

Question 25 - Yes

High Needs Consultation

The chair pointed out that there were a number of specialists who were not available for the meeting today.

It was agreed that SH would convene a sub-group and draft a response to share with Schools Forum. SH referenced the need to get fairness from health and social care perspectives.

A complexity of needs is impacting on funding. Difficult to fund and planning for the future is a challenge.

Challenges around provision and expertise available within the locality. School to school support in a county like Shropshire is different to an urban area where there would be many more special schools. There are challenges around the inclusion agenda. Can't lose this with academies. SEND code of conduct in place. Loss of middle tier is a concern.

EHCP doesn't pull the factors together comfortably.

GE – basis for allocating funding is very out of date and is based on an historic spending model. She provided a general overview of the proposals.

The Chair thanked GE and RC for their work in drafting the response to the consultation questions.

SH

4. Schools Forum Task & Finish Group

PW introduced the paper.

The chair referenced the establishment of the Task & Finish Group.

SH advised that Early Help is being reviewed – increasing engagement within schools, including possibility of joint commissioning arrangements.

KB advised that there needed to be a move towards co-designing and co-commissioning services.

The chair added that it was about making better use of funding.

PA highlighted urgency to move this forward and for the Task & Finish Group to be operational as soon as possible.

MR – understood from a previous meeting that Shropshire has too many statements/EHCPs relative to other authorities. Most headteachers don't understand the way provision is funded and so it feels uncomfortable to many of them.

KB advised that we are living with the historical legacy of limited funding and how the system responded to this.

Schools Forum endorsed and agreed the three recommendations in the paper.

5. Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Monitoring

SW took members through his report which highlighted a forecast underspend in 2015-16 of £709k.

The position regarding the underspend, and the current difficulties in accurately forecasting and monitoring spending, further highlighted the need for the establishment of a Task & Finish Group to undertake a detailed review of this important area of funding.

6. Communications

NB highlighted the release of the Education White Paper and the resultant flurry of media interest. It was noted that the Shropshire Star had indicated that they would like to cover the academy agenda in more detail next week.

7. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 9 June 2016.

The meeting closed at 10.30 am.

Future meetings (please diary):

15 September 2016	8.30 am	STDC, Monkmoor
20 October 2016	8.30 am	STDC, Monkmoor
24 November 2016	8.30 am	STDC, Monkmoor
19 January 2017	8.30 am	STDC, Monkmoor
23 March 2017	8.30 am	STDC, Monkmoor
8 June 2017	8.30 am	STDC, Monkmoor

DRAFT