

NOTE OF DECISIONS AND ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE GOBOWEN, SELATTYN, ST MARTINS & WESTON RHYN LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4TH JULY 2016 AT 7.00 PM AT ST JOHNS CHURCH WESTON RHYN

7.00 p.m. – 9.00 p.m.

Responsible Officer: Corrie Davies

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Present:

Members of the Committee: Cllr Steve Davenport Cllr Robert Macey, Cllr David G Lloyd, Cllr John Stevens, Cllr Huw Ellis and Cllr Angela Bright

Officers: Corrie Davies and Kate Garner

ACTION

1. Election of Chairman

Corrie requested nominations from the committee. Cllr David Lloyd nomination Cllr Steve Davenport. The Committee were unanimous.

2. Appointment of Vice Chair

Cllr Steve Davenport asked for nominations for Vice Chair. Cllr David Lloyd suggested a parish representative and put forward Huw Ellis. The Committee were unanimous.

3. Welcome and Introduction from the Chairman

Cllr Steve Davenport welcomed those in attendance and highlighted that they had moved items around on the agenda due to attendance.

4.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All representatives of the committee were in attendance.

5. Disclosure Pecuniary Interests

Members are reminded that they must not participate in the discussion or voting on any matter in which they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and should leave the room prior to the commencement of the debate.

6. Notes of the Previous Meeting

AGREED: That the notes of the meeting held on 23rd February 2016 were approved, following amendment to list of attendance and apologies.

7. Planning for the future

School Place Planning

Cllr Steve Davenport welcomed Phil Wilson, Service Delivery Manager for Learning and Skills.

Phil Wilson, Service Delivery Manager for Learning and Skills at Shropshire Council introduced himself. He would be updating on funding and place planning and would touch on school academisation. Phil explained that Shropshire is bucking the trend nationally. Shropshire has a demographic challenge which would mean that sustainability and school places could be an issue in the near future. Phil noted that the predicted numbers for children were so low that the schools cannot fund the same number of teachers and financial sustainability would be compromised. Phil explained that they could predict numbers for school census in October and from this the funding formulae. Over Shropshire, Phil highlighted, that the forecast in pupil numbers is in decline. There would be a 30% reduction. There are plenty that are growing but many areas falling. Map of the area with information and charts was provided.

Five areas with forecast growth included Oswestry. They did not predict that type of pressure in St Martins. We have had meetings with all catchment areas. With the information coming through Phil indicated that in some areas there is not the need to extend classrooms. Period for unfilled numbers - there is sufficient places in the catchment areas.

The URL for the Shropshire Learning Gateway is <https://www.shropshirelg.net/services/school-place-planning/>. The School Place Planning document link is accessible from this page, as are the links to the appendices for the individual place planning areas appendices.

Phil explained that between now and 2022 schools have to become an academy based on national government white paper. Phil noted some schools may opt to enter an academy trust but this has to include at least 2500 pupils and often this meant a large catchment area of schools coming together.

Shropshire had not been funded fairly for quite some time and in 2015/16 received a windfall of ten million. Shropshire get an allocation and then this is distributed on pupil numbers.

Phil noted it would be increasingly important for the schools to talk to each other and share resources. The white paper might be delayed. Challenge - all schools will indicate and process by 2020 and complete by 2022. Phil explained it was better for local schools to avoid waiting and be in control of their own destinies locally and carry on with what they are doing. Shropshire needs to take a proactive approach and response. Phil noted it was important to talk to your fellow schools and MATS. They are quoting 2500 for MATS

and across this area the make- up came to roughly 1100 pupils.

Phil explained that he would send relevant document and link would be included in the notes for consideration by parish councils and local schools.

Cllr Bright asked how safe would the rural schools be with falling numbers – or would there be a push for larger schools. Angela noted it was really important that teachers know their children and large schools were not the answer. Phil noted we are talking about federations and school keeping their own units but sharing their resources and back office support. Cllr John Stevens requested whether the number took into consideration the cross border inputs which was particularly relevant in this area with a third of children coming from Chirk. Phil explained that we do get as close to the figure we can from refreshed data and aggregates.

Update on Academy School Status

Cllr Steve Davenport as Chair introduced this item, explaining five years ago we had a local situation where the local primary may have closed but with collaboration we found a way to bolster and now have the first Through School in Shropshire. We need to be proactive. The Chair welcome Sue Lovecy, Head at St Martins and Michael Barrett Head of the Priory.

Sue Lovecy introduced herself and the journey St Martins has been on over the past few years. She explained they had 540 pupils and as such had grown by nearly 10%. However they realised that they were a small secondary school to be a stand- alone school. Sue noted they have had to take a proactive approach and look outside of the area. They went shopping and they quickly discovered that they had found a school with similar values to them. The Priory is at the top of the chart in the county and we are very pleased with the partnership that is commencing.

Michael, introduced himself and his role locally as the Head of the Priory and previously Adams School. Michael, thanked the committee for inviting and noted that communities that value its sense of community are really important. Michael noted Phil had given a fair landscape and we were seeing the most significant turmoil and change in education, by statute. Michael explained his first 18 months at the Priory have been interesting. Phil explained the Multi Academy Trust with a company and a board of governors but most importantly controlling their own destiny. Governors were very anxious about the financial and not being allowed to pick up any deficit. Michael talked about stretch and challenge and continuing to improve. He realised that the partnership between St Martins and the Priory could be a strong recognising that St Martins already had a strong head. He wanted to pair with a school that already had this capacity and strength.

Local resident asked specifically about SEN. Michael noted that all academies must still obey the law and SEN obligations are right at the top. We are mainstream and choice is up to the parent.

Representative from Selattyn asked for clarification on timing and at what point in the academy process do you talk to staff and residents. Michael talked about the consultation process and noted talking to

teachers and governors initially. Staff are most worried about terms and conditions. Once you moved into formal consultation phase you have formal staff consultation and formal parental staff consultation if you wish and community.

Cllr David Lloyd asked if the Priory would be heavily involved locally or arm's length. The relationship is dependent on heads. Michael noted that they both wanted collaboration and Sue has huge listening ability and empathy. Sue noted that student's first questions is whether they would be transported to the Priory. That would not be the case. Staff may come from the Priory but students would not be moving around.

Head of Weston Rhyn, Richard Hines noted had observed presentation from Chris and a big concern from them was striking the right balance of not too small and not too big. He noted they could approach a MAT but they do not have to accept them. Richard was concerned about poaching of pupils to ensure no deficits and a school quickly becoming smaller and in deficit themselves. Richard asked Michael what his views were on this pupil pressure.

Michael explained that primaries need to be aware and can approach MATS. Michael noted academies cannot take on deficits so there is a drive around pupil numbers. 2500 pupils could mean 50 schools. The area need to work for both schools. Michael explained he had carried out some work around the size of selattyn, St Martins, Gobowen and Weston Rhyn. Michael noted the first thing we will get a back officer for HR, support and accountability. Michael explained that he wants to build a MAT with primaries with cautious growth. He is also mindful there will be people knocking on our doors. Michael noted it helps the community to keep a forward approach.

Cllr John Stevens asked what was in it for you, why did you want to join with St Martins. Michael explained he learnt a lot from talking to Abraham school. He also noted when Ofsted come he wants to ensure that he and the Priory are giving something back to the community. From business model, lesson observation he felt there is synergy and opportunity to share. They will carry out periodic observation and dependent on outcomes and results at St Martins there is a genuine opportunity to support based on analysis.

Cllr Bright noted student should also be at the top of the list, then the parents and then the teachers. She was worried the schools would get too big. Michael explained his ethos has always been to know your boys and girls. You cannot do that when your school becomes too big. We have got to make the tension with money work and then be mindful of numbers. Mutual respect and being a part of a family ethos is extremely important.

The Chair thanked Michael for attending and for updating on what was an exciting time locally for partnership working between schools.

8. Update on Gobowen Central

Councillor Robert Macey updated on Gobowen library now officially Gobowen Central following the official launch held last week the 30th of June. A variety of providers had attended including: Derwent

College, Wrekin Housing, Fair share, RRC, Home Start, Wheels to Work for example. Information and new timetable for operating was provided. Shropshire Town and Rural Housing will be there every Friday offering financial advice, debt advice and housing advice. They are offering this as a place to meet for appointments for all St Martins, Weston Rhys and Gobowen STAR residents, saving travel to Oswestry for this service. We are developing local term plan and looking to develop a friends of gobowen central with volunteering opportunities. Already providers are talking about linked opportunities to develop the front of the area of Gobowen Central and linking the school moving forward. Cllr Robert Macey thanked funders and the list of providers that was growing.

9. Three Parishes Big Local

Nick Heard updated on progress of the Three Parishes Big Local including the Big Celebration held at the end of May which saw 23 exhibitors, performances by school choirs, and audience for 2 hours. Cake is always helpful! 14 grants have been given out in the last few months including Gobowen Rainbows, Men in Sheds, St Martins School. They were also working with BITC (business in the community) developing a project with local business, also in conjunction with Qube running a volunteering project, ran a loan sharks campaign and scam awareness. Reports have been provided to all three parish councils. Savings club in Gobowen is going really well. Paula Pugh has been taken on as the new Communications and Community Officer-part of her role would be in developing a bulletin- electronic and paper that would enable events and activities to be provided more immediately. This would be experimental initially. The committee are attending training events and in the process of writing the three year plan. Sue updated on links to youth work and had paid for local TNS flier specifically for the St Martins, Gobowen, Weston Rhyn patch as opposed to the linked flier for the two rural LJC areas on a joined up. They recognised that the under 10 request was a problem and would be looking to put a programme together during the holiday period. Resident requested if Chirk Rainbows could apply if support had been given to Oswestry Men in Sheds. It is up to the partnership and Big Local as the overarching funder if they could look at projects over the border. The legality would need to be checked.

10. Locality commissioning

Cllr Robert Macey updated that an Oswestry Cluster meeting was arranged for the Wednesday the 20th of July to SALC Oswestry area committee parishes to attend. This would enable wider discussions on wider service delivery and any joint working. North Shropshire SALC area would also be holding their meeting on the 18th of July. Cllr Robert Macey noted as well as Parish council representation and clerks being invited a representative from the LJC was also welcome. The door is open and with challenges around us it was important to work together. The Chair noted the importance of the LJC and working together to find solutions for the locality and a better price together.

Cllr John Stevens highlighted there is a role for the LJCs and an opportunity for us to work together. John questioned the inclusion of

Section 106 moneys in information received on Green Spaces. He noted that this was diverting funding that had been locally negotiated.

11. PACT

Representation had been promised by the new Sergeant Keith Steele.

Two enquiries were raised – firstly parking at St Martins School and escalation of this issue with verbal abuse being received and illegal parking.

St Johns also raised question of youth support in Weston Rhyn. The children were hanging around the church and causing damage. Corrie noted that Fusion Arts Oswestry had been commissioned to deliver a youth club in Weston Rhyn. They had problems with the venue and they were now looking to work with Richard Hines at the Primary School. Cllr Bright noted that the village need to make facilities youth friendly.

12. Public Questions

Cllr Angela Bright noted a letter received from the health authority that shouldn't have gone out. The Chair asked for a copy of the letter.

13. Date of Next Meeting

To be confirmed in the Autumn with an early planning meeting for the committee to be put in the diary.

Chairman:.....

Date:.....