



## Schools Forum

Date: 20 October 2016

Time: 8.30 am

Venue: STDC, Monkmoor,  
Shrewsbury

Item/Paper

# A

Public

### MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON 15 SEPTEMBER 2016

#### Present

##### School Forum Members

Bill Dowell (Chair)  
 Phil Adams – Academy Headteacher  
 Michael Barratt – Academy Headteacher  
 John Eglin – Primary Headteacher  
 Meryl Green – 16-19 Representative  
 John Hitchings – SSGC  
 Sabrina Hobbs – Special/Academy Headteacher  
 Sandra Holloway – Primary Governor  
 Pete Johnstone – Secondary Headteacher  
 Alan Parkhurst – Primary Headteacher  
 Geoff Pettengell – Academy Headteacher  
 Kay Redknap – TMBSS  
 Mark Rogers – Primary Headteacher  
 Phillip Sell – Diocese of Hereford  
 Joy Tetsill – Secondary Governor  
 Ruth Thomas – 16 -19 Representative

##### Members

Cllr David Minnery  
 Cllr Nick Bardsley

##### Officers

Karen Bradshaw  
 Phil Wilson  
 Julia Dean  
 Gwyneth Evans  
 Neville Ward  
 Stephen Waters  
 Jo Jones  
 Tina Russell  
 Helen Woodbridge (minutes)  
 Rob Carlyle (brief appearance)

#### 1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Jean Evanson, Phil Poulton, Gareth Proffitt and Geoff Renwick.

#### 2. Election of Chair

Karen Bradshaw advised that there had been one nomination for chair.  
 Schools Forum unanimously appointed Bill Dowell as Chair for a further year.  
 It was agreed that John Hitchings would continue as Vice Chair.

The chair welcomed Meryl Green and Jo Jones to School Forum.

The chair thanked Rob Carlyle for the work he had carried out to support schools and Schools Forum.

#### 3. Minutes and Matters Arising (Paper A)

The minutes were agreed as a true record.  
 Gwyneth Evans confirmed that signed SFVS returns for 2015-16 had now been received from all schools and this has been reported to the DfE.

#### ACTION

**4. School Funding 2017-18 (Paper B)**

Gwyneth Evans went through the report.

At point 8 she clarified that Shropshire do not currently use the Post 16 factor so this will not make any difference, and, that as only around £200k is allocated on IDACI this change will be minimal.

She advised that a briefing will be sent to schools shortly after this meeting.

GE

Schools Forum noted the revised timescale.

Schools Forum agreed that the proposed new budget layout was acceptable.

**5. Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2016-17 Update and Final 2015-16 Early Years Block Adjustment (Paper C)**

Gwyneth Evans went through the report which was for information only.

**6. Early Year National Funding Formula Consultation (Paper D)**

Neville Ward went through the report and advised that there had been growing concerns from providers about inadequate levels of funding.

He was generally positive about the proposals but expressed some concerns around the sustainability of rural providers.

Mark Rogers suggested that Early Years funding is more confused than funding for schools.

Neville Ward agreed and confirmed that providers are not given an annual budget – their funding is based on termly take up. Hopefully the new formula will iron out some of the funding differences.

Schools Forum members recognised the need for local decision making but Neville Ward did not think that this would be an option under the new formula.

Nick Bardsley asked for clarification around why the rate differed more for 3/4 year old funding whereas there is a much narrower gap for 2 year old funding.

Neville Ward advised that this is because the 3/4 year old funding has been in place for longer and rates have grown apart over time.

Neville Ward was pleased that there would be an increase in funding but cautioned that Shropshire would remain as one of the lowest funded LAs.

John Eglin asked about the professional qualification requirement.

Neville Ward advised that there had been lobbying re this as there had been an increase in qualifications and a raising of the profile but no more funding. Therefore some leaders are moving from the private to the maintained sector.

This formula is the DfE's attempt to address the issues.

Phil Adams was concerned that one size will not fit all and there will need to be considerations re rurality.

PW advised of a stakeholder/officer group to consider the implications of the new formula (once the outcomes of the consultation are published) and Schools Forum members agreed to contact Neville Ward if they were interested in participating.

Progress will be reported at the next Schools Forum meeting.

All  
NW

**7. High Needs and Early Help Task and Finish Groups (Paper E)**

Phil Wilson presented this item. The complexity of the issues was acknowledged. It was clarified that the funding to support Young Carers and Enhance projects would be from the £592k identified at budget line 1.4.1 (as has been the case in recent years).

John Eglin confirmed that both these services are appreciated by schools.

John Hitchings reminded Schools Forum of the need for transparency.

Mark Rogers asked how this would be treated within the new funding formula.

Gwyneth Evans suggested that it would be from within a Central Schools Block within the DSG.

Mark Rogers wondered if there would be a national list of traded services.  
Phil Wilson advised that there will be a list of retained/statutory duties for which the LA receives £15 per pupil.  
Mark Rogers suggested sub-bullet points within the budget to clarify areas that are being funded.

Schools Forum noted the minutes from the Task and Finish Groups.

Schools Forum agreed that the Young Carers and Enhance projects should receive the contributions to their costs as per the report.

Continued work of the groups includes:

- Stephen Waters is working on a pupil tracking system so the budget can respond to changes in numbers.
- The commissioning of a review of bandings (which is underway).
- Gaining a clearer understanding and whole picture of the contributions of schools and the contributions of health and social care.
- Ensuring efficiencies are made.

Tina Russell spoke of the importance of the link between the two groups when considering Early Help and children with additional needs/disabilities.

John Eglin suspected that some schools don't use Enhance and suggested that fewer child protection referrals would be needed if Early Help was used more. An Early Help form is required within the EHCP process so processes are entwined. He thought that secondary schools may benefit from Early Help work that is carried out in the primary phase. He reminded colleagues of the duty for Early Help within KCSIE.

Karen Bradshaw clarified that although not statutory there is a requirement to deliver. She added that there is a requirement for savings of £12 million to be found from Children's Services. School Forum recognised that there is a need for joint ownership of Early Help.

Schools Forum will receive a further update in November.

The Chair warned that there may be increased demand and Schools Forum will have some difficult decisions to face.

PW

## 8. Proposed Recoupment of Academy Conversion Costs (Paper F)

Phil Wilson went through the paper.

Phillip Sell declared a personal interest as being involved in an Education Trust but contributed his experience and cautions. Currently the diocese is not paying (on the advice of the RSC) an LA that has submitted a £6.5k bill, until the bill is itemised. He generally supported the need to charge but felt a need for differing levels.

John Hitchings suggested a business case is required but thought £5k to be fair.

Phil Adams recognised the need to pay but thought the government ought to be paying.

Michael Barratt thought the charge reasonable but warned that in some cases conversion could cost more than £25k. The total cost of solicitors is usually £8-9k.

Pete Johnstone could not help but feel that loyal schools would be penalised.

Joy Tetsill agreed and spoke of the need for transparency around academisation costs.

Geoff Pettengell added that there are a range of costs eg licencing, IT etc and agreed to provide these for Phil Wilson.

John Eglin was worried about any additional burden for small schools.

Schools Forum members were generally in support of this measure. However, there was some discussion about the level of charge and if it needed to be differentiated.

GP

**9. Dedicated School Grant Monitoring (Paper G)**

Steven Waters went through the paper.

He confirmed that the historic underspend on High Needs is not expected to continue.

Sabrina Hobbs identified the need to factor in free hours for nursery children in 2017-18.

The Chair thanked him for his comprehensive and detailed report.

**10 Communications**

It was confirmed that David Minnery will be meeting with the local MPs in the near future and would be happy to receive any feedback for them.

The Chair, David Minnery, Nick Bardsley and Karen Bradshaw will be meeting to further discuss some of the issues covered today including funding for Early Help and the proposed recouplement from academies.

John Hitchings reported difficulties in getting governors to participate and patchy communications. He asked for any support schools could give with this.

**BD, DM,  
KB, NB**

**11. Next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 20 October 2016.

**The meeting closed at 10.45 am.**

**Future meetings (please diary):**

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