

**Schools Forum**

**Date:** 2 November 2017

**Time:** 8.30 am

**Venue:** STDC, Monkmoor,  
Shrewsbury

Item/Paper

**A**

Public

**MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2017**

**Present**

**School Forum Members**

Bill Dowell (Chair)  
 Phil Adams – Academy Headteacher  
 John Eglin – Primary Headteacher  
 Meryl Green – Post 16 Representative  
 John Hitchings – SSGC  
 Sandra Holloway – Primary Governor  
 Marilyn Hunt – Primary Headteacher  
 Shelly Hurdley – Early Years Representative  
 Pete Johnstone – Secondary Headteacher  
 Alan Parkhurst – Primary Headteacher  
 Geoff Pettengell – Academy Headteacher  
 Michael Revell – Primary Governor  
 Mark Rogers – Primary Headteacher  
 Philip Sell – Hereford Diocese

**Members**

Cllr Clare Aspinall  
 Cllr Nick Bardsley

**Officers**

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

**Observers**

Roger Evans  
 Laura Perkins

**1. Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Michael Barratt, Karen Bradshaw, Jean Evanson, Sabrina Hobbs and Colin Hopkins.

**2. Election of Chair**

Bill Dowell was unanimously re-elected as Chair.  
 John Hitchings was unanimously re-elected as Vice Chair.

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

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

Julia Dean was asked about the SEN Guide. This has not yet been produced but is being worked on and information will be circulated with Forum papers.

Gwyneth Evans confirmed that all 2016-17 Schools Financial Value Standard returns for maintained schools had been received by the LA.

**4. National Funding Formula**

Gwyneth Evans went through her paper advising that further detail is expected any time now.

**ACTION**

**JD**

It was agreed that Schools Forum (rather than a working group) will consider this issue prior to the Lord Hill briefing on 11 October 2017. An extraordinary Schools Forum meeting was therefore arranged for 28 September. Mark Rogers suggested that it may be more straightforward for Schools Forum this time if there could be a straight move to the interim NFF. Phil Wilson cautioned that there will be a need for an MFG type top-up applied in the two interim years. He would be pleased if the extra £1.3 billion went into AWPU. Peter Johnstone warned of the extra financial burden with the removal of the public sector pay cap. John Eglin spoke of the danger of confusing the situation if the Shropshire formula was used. Phil Adams and the chair both highlighted the underlying issue of sustainability.

**5. Dedicated Schools Grant 2017-18 Update and Final 2016-17 Early Years Block Adjustment**

Gwyneth Evans went through the paper which was provided for information.

**6. High Needs Funding Audit**

Phil Wilson went through the paper. Schools Forum noted the appointment of an independent specialist to progress this issue. It was agreed that an update will be provided at the November meeting. An increase in high needs funding the specialist schools would have a knock-on effect to the remaining high needs block. Schools Forum were keen to ensure that the person completing the review is aware of the wider consequences.

PW

**7. Secondary School Deficit (Confidential)**

Phil Wilson went through the paper. The chair advised that this is a very different situation to the previous deficit issue. The school is well managed, is a good school and is on top of its finances. Chris Mathews added that if school was to close there would be a substantial increase in transport costs (which is funded from revenue grant). The chair suggested that this issue had been known about but parked – resolution is needed. Phil Adams agreed as if nothing is done it may start a spiral of decline. Mark Rogers was concerned that the extra cost would be to a limited number of LA maintained schools. Gwyneth Evans advised that this need not be the case – it could be dealt with from the centrally retained DSG with the permission of the Secretary of State. John Hitchings spoke of the need for the full picture to be set out. Several members of Schools Forum volunteered to form a working group with Phil Wilson to consider the issue: Clare Aspinall, Phil Adams, Alan Parkhurst and Sandra Holloway. Roger Evans agreed to identify a local councillor to contribute to this work.

PW

RE

**8. Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring**

Stephen Waters presented the paper which was for information only. Nick Bardsley commented on the positive moves (both financial and logistical) to reduce transportation of young children re SEN. John Eglin asked about reduction in EHCPs. Julia Dean advised that Shropshire has a higher number of EHCPs and lower number of pupils receiving SEN support. There is some blurring between specialist and targeted support. A redistribution of funding is the aim with earlier interventions preventing greater cost at a later stage.

**9. Communications**

Schools Forum were reminded of the Lord Hill event planned for 11 October 2017. Nick Bardsley confirmed that the MPs' briefing events continue. The chair advised that Radio Shropshire will want information once the NFF detail becomes available. Nick Bardsley and Gareth Proffitt are prepared for this. Phil Wilson advised that a local MP had raised a question about school funding. It was agreed that when NFF information comes through it will be sent out to Schools Forum members.

**NB/GP**

**PW**

**The meeting closed at 10.05 am.**

**Future meetings (please diary):**

28 September 2017 (extra)	08.30	STDC, Monkmoor
2 November 2017	08.30	STDC, Monkmoor
7 December 2017	08.30	STDC, Monkmoor
18 January 2018	08.30	STDC, Monkmoor
1 February 2018 (provisional)	08.30	STDC, Monkmoor
22 March 2018	08.30	STDC, Monkmoor
7 June 2018	08.30	STDC, Monkmoor