

Schools Forum

Date: 18 January 2017

Time: 8.30 am

Venue: STDC, Monkmoor,
Shrewsbury

Item/Paper

A

Public

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON 7 DECEMBER 2017

Present

School Forum Members

Bill Dowell (Chair)
Phil Adams – Academy Headteacher
Michael Barratt – Academy Headteacher
John Hitchings – SSGC
Sabrina Hobbs – Academy Headteacher
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 Nick Bardsley

Officers

Karen Bradshaw
Gwyneth Evans
Chris Mathews
Jo Jones
Neville Ward
Stephen Waters
Gareth Proffitt
Phil Wilson
Paul Jones
Helen Woodbridge (Minutes)

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Clare Aspinall, Julia Dean, Jean Evanson, Colin Hopkins, Sam John and Guy Verling.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising (Paper A)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

2. Phil Wilson highlighted the response around high needs funding which was circulated in Paper D (since deferred).

4. Phil Wilson confirmed that he had communicated the decisions taken at the last meeting to schools.

3. School Funding 2018-19 Arrangements

Gwyneth Evans went through the paper.

Para 8

Mark Rogers reminded colleagues that the costs for schools on two sites is an extra

ACTION

burden to Shropshire schools which would have been avoided if the two schools had continued rather than merging.

Schools Forum members discussed the allocation of the sum of £33,300 which is received from the DfE to support split sites and unanimously agreed that this is the amount that should be passed on to the school.

Para 10/12

Regarding amalgamated schools, Schools Forum unanimously agreed the proposal to apply the 85% lump sum protection on the lower lump sum values of £59,500. Philip Sell highlighted the requirement for extra funding for the school and advised that some of the capital receipts from the sale of buildings may not be available for several years.

Schools Forum agreed the approach outlined in Point 11 if necessary.

Para 13-19

Regarding additional targeted high needs contingency funding - Schools Forum unanimously agreed this approach for a transition period of one year only. Schools Forum members requested some modelling of this with a view to reviewing for 2019-20.

GE

4. Consultation on Central Retention of Dedicated Schools Grant for April 2018

Gwyneth Evans went through the paper, which relates to maintained schools only.

Para 10 – Pupil Growth Contingency

John Hitchings pointed out that those schools that responded will almost certainly have voted according to their own circumstances.

Mark Rogers had concerns that the small response rate did not give a true picture. He suggested increasing the percentage to 15%.

Marilyn Hunt agreed and added that the additional information from the school detailing actual extra costs is also important.

Neville Ward suggested moving to an actual NOR increase but following discussion it was agreed that this would not work fairly.

Phil Wilson reminded members that academies do not get this funding and have to meet the costs of pupil growth from their budgets.

Primary Schools Forum members unanimously agreed to de-delegate the pupil growth contingency with an increased percentage of 15%.

Para 15 – Maternity Cover

Primary Schools Forum members agreed de-delegation.

Secondary Schools Forum member agreed de-delegation.

Para 20 – Fidelity Guarantee Insurance

Primary Schools Forum members agreed de-delegation.

Secondary Schools Forum member agreed de-delegation.

Para 25 – Trade Union Duties

Primary Schools Forum members agreed de-delegation

Secondary Schools Forum member agreed de-delegation

Para 29 – School Improvement

Michael Barratt spoke of the need to ensure that there is a School Improvement Service.

Primary Schools Forum members agreed de-delegation using the 50% fixed and

50% variable model.

Secondary Schools Forum member agreed de-delegation using the per capita model.

Para 38 – Redundancy Fund

Paul Jones advised that following some relatively quiet years, the last academic year had seen the most redundancies in recent times.

Primary Schools Forum members agreed de-delegation.

Secondary Schools Forum member agreed de-delegation.

Para 43 – Statutory School Finance

Primary Schools Forum members agreed de-delegation.

Secondary Schools Forum member agreed de-delegation.

Para 47 – Statutory Human Resources and Health & Safety

Primary Schools Forum members agreed de-delegation.

Secondary Schools Forum member agreed de-delegation.

Para 52 – Education Access Service

Primary Schools Forum members agreed de-delegation.

Secondary Schools Forum member agreed de-delegation.

Mark Rogers suggested that this area may need further consideration next year.

Para 55 – Multicultural Development Team

Schools Forum agreed that this should be taken back to schools for further consultation as there is doubt that the full picture is understood.

PW

5. High Needs Funding Benchmarking

This item was deferred.

6. Central Schools Services Block

Stephen Waters went through the paper.

Mark Rogers asked for more explanation and this was provided by Gwyneth Evans. Schools Forum were made aware that this funding would not become available to schools if it was not used in the way outlined. It is given to the LA on the basis of historical expenditure, baselined to 2013, and will reduce over time if the commitments end.

Pete Johnstone highlighted the small residual amount of funding provided to the Shropshire Schools Sport and Athletic Association.

Karen Bradshaw pointed out the benefits that schools/families/pupils get from this funding.

Michael Barratt asked if there is flexibility and it was confirmed that it cannot be changed and indeed will reduce over time.

Recommendation 1

Schools Forum unanimously agreed to continue to contribute £852,110 to combined budgets.

Recommendation 2

Schools Forum unanimously agreed to contribute £980,930 to part fund ongoing pension commitments for ex-Shropshire Council school staff.

Recommendation 3

Schools Forum unanimously agreed to continue to contribute £295,350 to fund ongoing revenue costs of prudential borrowing for the Monkmoor Campus Project.

Recommendation 4

Schools Forum unanimously agreed to the increased charge of £219,420 for the provision of a School Admissions Team.

Recommendation 5

Schools Forum unanimously agreed to the budget of £10,000 for the servicing of Schools Forum.

Recommendation 6

Schools Forum unanimously agreed to the increased charge of £206,150 for the annual copyright licensing fees

Recommendation 7

Schools Forum unanimously agreed to continue to contribute £570,000 to ongoing responsibilities that the local authority provides for maintained schools through the retained duties Education Services Grant.

7. Communications

Nick Bardsley advised that there will be a Cabinet meeting on 10 January 2018 to approve the funding formula for 2018-19.

Michael Barratt was concerned at the low rate of response to the consultation and wondered if schools did not appreciate the importance. He suggested a need to highlight this to headteachers. Phil Wilson undertook to include this in his advice note to schools which will detail the decisions taken at this meeting.

The chair suspected workload pressure on headteachers is the issue. However, Schools Forum can be pleased with attendance/engagement at the Lord Hill event and in other forums eg CPG/SSGC.

Mark Rogers reminded colleagues that the funding area is complicated and not easily understood - there was a 60% response to the formula consultation. He suggested that some issues eg redundancy might have been raised at the Lord Hill event.

The chair was keen that schools should know how well they are represented by their Schools Forum colleagues. He thanked Schools Forum members for the work they continue to undertake. Michael Revell thanked officers, on behalf of Schools Forum, for their work.

PW

The meeting closed at 10.50 am.

Future meetings (please diary):

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