



**Schools Forum**  
**Date: 12 September 2019**  
**Time: 8.30 am**  
**Venue: UCS, Shrewsbury**

Item/Paper  
**A**  
Public

**MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON 6 JUNE 2019**

**Present**

**School Forum Members**

Bill Dowell (Chair)  
Phil Adams – Academy Headteacher  
Mark Cooper – Secondary Headteacher  
Sabrina Hobbs – Special Academy Headteacher  
Sandra Holloway – Primary Governor  
Marylin Hunt – Primary Headteacher  
Sian Lines – Diocese of Hereford  
Kerry Lynch – Academy Headteacher  
Stephen Matthews – Primary Governor (and headteacher)  
David O’Toole – Academy Headteacher  
Alan Parkhurst – Primary Headteacher  
John Parr – Academy Headteacher  
Michael Revell – Primary Governor  
Mark Rogers – Primary Headteacher  
Andrew Smith – 16 -19 Representative  
Charles Thomas – Professional Association Rep

**Members**

Cllr Nick Bardsley  
Cllr Ed Potter

**Officers**

Phil Wilson  
Julia Dean  
Connor Robinson  
Gwyneth Evans  
Stephen Waters  
Neville Ward  
Helen Woodbridge (Minutes)

**Observers**

Roger Evans – Shropshire Council

	<b>ACTION</b>
<p>1. <b>Apologies</b> Apologies had been received from Karen Bradshaw, Alan Doust, Shelly Hurdley, Sam John and Jo Jones.</p>	
<p>2. <b>Minutes and Matters Arising (Paper A)</b> The minutes were agreed as a true record. Mark Cooper had been unable to find a governor representative. Phil Wilson is to contact Kate Aspinall, MAT regarding identifying representatives for Schools Forum.</p>	PW
<p>3. <b>Allocation of Early Years Block 2019-20</b> Neville Ward presented Paper B which was for information only. He advised that the hourly rate paid has remained the same for three years and this is causing pressure. David O’Toole asked for clarification on the use of retained funds for repairs/buildings. Neville Ward confirmed that this is just for council owned property and it is largely for historic arrangements which are being reduced. Mark Rogers asked how settings are coping financially. Neville Ward talked about the difficulties in having no control over the market. Only a few providers have closed but more are becoming more flexible in their charging approach (and some are having to be challenged around this). John Hitchings commented on the heavy reliance on private providers which has both challenges and benefits.</p>	

Mark Rogers asked what happens to the rental income and was advised that it goes direct to the Corporate Landlord.

#### 4. High Needs Funding Task and Finish Group

John Hitchings as Chair of the Task and Finish Group introduced this item. He stated that the work of the group has been wide and varied.

Julia Dean presented paper C and advised that consultation will take place with CPG too. The group's work had largely been brought about due to the increasing overspending of the high needs funding.

Early consideration was felt to be key, starting with Alternative Provision. Following analysis, it was identified that TMBSS is being largely used for behavior intervention which is not a statutory responsibility of the LA. It is being funded at £17,500 per place. Only 47 of 120 primary schools are using TMBSS. So, a significant proportion of schools are not using TMBSS and may be subsidising more heavy users of TMBSS. It is recognised that TMBSS provide a good service with many children remaining in mainstream following their support. Work is being done on analysing the future of those children.

Julia Dean explained that she had been working with Greg Portman on a variety of possible models, capping the length of placement at one year, and providing more places at no extra cost. Models would also provide a different timetable allowing TMBSS staff to do more preventative work in schools. There would be a change from half day attendance (which causes transport and attendance issues). It is also proposed that there is a contribution from schools to the cost of top up. The LA will continue with £10,000 placement funding but will ask schools to contribute to top up. She added that a High Needs protocol is being produced.

John Hitchings recognised the difficulties around management of behavior and spoke of the need to keep children in contact with their schools but properly supported.

The chair confirmed that the focus of the group has been, and will continue to be, on children and the use of precious resources to support them.

Phil Adams advised that his school receives many referrals of excluded children where there has been very little intervention. He thought there was a need to consider the secondary schools who are excluding a disproportionate number of children.

Stephen Matthews felt that the outreach plan was a good move. However, he cautioned that changing arrangements may not suit all children (eg those with anxiety), and, some children may need four terms.

Julia Dean confirmed that consideration would be on a child by child basis. Full charges could be made after the full year.

The chair reminded the group that their focus is on financial issues.

Mark Rogers felt that some complex and difficult children cannot be coped with. He asked to see cost of TMBSS and of Independent Private Providers.

Julia Dean confirmed that there are some children who will not cope in mainstream schools. Some hubs have been set up and there are more on the way. Also, a SEMH free school is planned.

Phil Adams reminded colleagues of the lack of social services support.

Nick Bardsley advised that Karen Ladd had attended the last T&F Group and had advised that there were only a few referrals to Early Help for excluded children.

David O'Toole explained that the thresholds are not high enough and therefore referrals are being bounced back.

Ed Potter agreed to take this back to Early Help to address.

Alan Parkhurst felt that proposals are not in a position to go to CPG for a decision as some schools would be detrimentally affected.

Marilyn Hunt confirmed that small primary schools would be unable to pay.

Sandra Holloway echoed this, pointing out that budgets have already been set.

JD/SAW

EP

Alan Parkhurst proposed that further work is carried out by the High Needs Task and Finish Group before proposals are taken to CPG for decisions. This was seconded by Marilyn Hunt and agreed by Schools Forum.

**5. Growth Fund 2019-20**

Gwyneth Evans presented Paper D.

Phil Adams agreed with criteria. However, he advised that sometimes population growth occurs after OOC places are taken.

David O'Toole was frustrated that exponential growth has occurred as his school has become more popular but this is ignored. The chair congratulated David O'Toole on his performance.

Mark Cooper spoke of the frustration of not being able to access funding.

Phil Adams added that CIL funding is also hard to access.

**6. School Balances as at March 2019**

Gwyneth Evans presented Paper E and circulated confidential papers which were subsequently collected in.

Phil Adams was disappointed that so many academies did not respond. He felt that Schools Forum needed to have a full, (confidential) figure.

John Hitchings clarified that nursery costs and income are included where the school has responsibility.

**7. Schools Financial Value Standard**

Gwyneth Evans presented Paper F.

**8. New School Financial Value Standards Requirements from April 2019**

Gwyneth Evans presented Paper G.

She confirmed that information will be made available on the SLG.

Phil Wilson suggested that headteachers/governors consider the dashboard which is comprehensive.

**9. Dedicated Schools Grant Update**

Gwyneth Evans presented Paper H.

**10. Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring**

Stephen Waters presented Paper I.

He went through the final outturn position for 2018-19.

The chair reflected that this is a national trend and spoke of the need to keep pressing for extra funding.

Mark Rogers asked about de-delegated items and any surplus from maintained schools?

Gwyneth Evans confirmed that this is reflected in the following year.

Kerry Lynch confirmed that budget information had not been shared with Unions so they had overspent. Paul Jones had agreed to present information to them in future.

Schools Forum noted the report and approved that the £1.411m overspend reported against central retained DSG in 2018-19 is:

- partially funded from the balance of DSG carried forward from 2017-18 which is £0.531m
- and that the remaining deficit of £0.879m will be carried forward to 2019-20 and be recouped over a realistic timescale.

**11. Communications**

Work ongoing – nothing significant to report.

**12. Future meeting dates:**

12 September 2019  
7 November 2019  
5 December 2019  
16 January 2020  
30 January 2020  
19 March 2020

The chair thanked Phil Adams for his contributions as this is his last meeting.

The meeting closed at 10.32 am.

DRAFT