



Schools Forum

Date: 13 January 2022

Time: 8.30 am

Venue: Via MS Teams

Item/Paper

A

Public

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM HELD ON 2 DECEMBER – HELD VIA MS TEAMS

Present

School Forum Members

Bill Dowell (Chair)
Caroline Clode – association secretaries
Mark Cooper – Secondary academy headteacher
John Hitchings – Academy governor
Sandra Holloway – Primary governor
Marilyn Hunt – Primary headteacher
Sian Lines – Diocese of Hereford
Stephen Matthews – Primary governor
David O’Toole – Secondary academy headteacher
Alan Parkhurst Primary headteacher (left at 9.15)
Michael Revell – Primary governor
Mark Rogers – Primary headteacher
Andrew Smith – Post 16
James Staniforth – Post 16
Reuben Thorley – Secondary headteacher
Carla Whelan – Primary academy headteacher

Members

Gwilym Butler

Officers

Jo Jones
Neville Ward
Stephen Waters
Phil Wilson
Helen Woodbridge

Observers

Roger Evans
David Vasmer
Nick Bardsley

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Shelly Hurdley, Nathan Jones, Kerry Lynch, John Parr and Alan Parkhurst (partial).

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2021 were agreed as a true record.

Phil Wilson provided a confidential update regarding the Shire Services Finance Review. He added that after the Cabinet meeting, a communication will be sent out to all schools that are affected.

3. School Funding Arrangements

Jo Jones presented her paper.

Schools Forum considered and agreed specific arrangements for 2022-23 as detailed within the report. Shropshire Council’s Cabinet will make a final decision

ACTION

on the school funding arrangements for 2022-23 in January 2022.

Split site funding of £15,000 for Ludlow Primary School only.

Headteacher/governor members unanimously agreed.

Transition of funding between the blocks

The transfer of the remaining balance, up to 0.5% of the Schools Block, into the High Needs Block.

Headteacher/governor members unanimously agreed.

Affordability of the funding formula

In the event that the Schools Block allocation for 2021-22 is not sufficient to fully fund the local formula in line with the NFF, to reduce the MFG as necessary, and within allowable limits, to ensure affordability. Following this, if also required, to reduce the AWPU factor on a consistent basis across all Shropshire schools.

Headteacher/governor members unanimously agreed.

4. Consultation on the Central Retention of Dedicated Schools Grant from April 2022

Phil Wilson presented his paper.

Schools Forum considered the consultation responses received from Shropshire maintained mainstream schools and made decisions on de-delegation and top-slicing for centrally retained services for 2022-23.

Primary pupil growth contingency

Maintained primary school representatives unanimously agreed to de-delegate funding from maintained primary school budgets for a pupil growth contingency for maintained primary schools in 2022-23.

Maternity

Maintained primary and secondary school representatives unanimously agreed to de-delegate funding from maintained primary and secondary school budgets for a centrally managed maternity budget in 2022-23.

Trade Union Duties

Alan Parkhurst had spotted an error on the PowerPoint presentation (for which Phil Wilson apologised) - it was pointed out that the information was correct on the spreadsheet - two schools had voted for the TU model.

Maintained primary and secondary representatives voted for the fixed budget (6 votes) as opposed to the TU Option (1 vote).

School improvement

Maintained primary school representatives unanimously agreed to de-delegate funding from primary maintained schools, holding the unit values at 2021-22 levels.

Redundancy Fund

Maintained primary and secondary school representatives unanimously agreed to top-slice a centrally held redundancy budget from maintained primary and

secondary school budgets in 2022-23.

Statutory School Finance

Maintained primary and secondary school representatives unanimously agreed to top-slice a centrally held statutory school finance budget from maintained primary and secondary school budgets in 2022-23.

Statutory Human Resources and Health & Safety

Maintained primary and secondary school representatives unanimously agreed to top-slice a centrally held statutory HR and health and safety budget from maintained primary and secondary school budgets in 2022-23.

Education Access Service

Maintained primary and secondary school representatives unanimously agreed to top-slice a centrally held budget for EAS from maintained primary and secondary school budgets or to fully delegate and offer buy-back arrangements in 2022-23.

Phil Wilson advised that he will arrange for a communication to be sent out after the meeting to all mainstream maintained schools regarding the decisions taken by Schools Forum.

PW

5. Central School Services Block 2022-23

Stephen Waters presented his paper.

He reminded Schools Forum of the continuation of the reduction of the historic funding figure by 20% per year.

The historic commitments were considered.

Contribution to combined budgets

Maintained and academy school representatives unanimously agreed to continue to contribute £45,220 to combined budgets as per the detail outlined in Appendix C.

Termination of employment costs (currently 231 ex-staff)

Maintained and academy school representatives unanimously agreed to contribute £756,329 to fund a portion of these ongoing pension commitments.

Prudential borrowing costs

Mark Rogers asked what would happen if Schools Forum did not agree to the payment. He was advised that this is largely a formality – however, it enables transparency by ensuring that Schools Forum are sighted. Stephen Waters reported that due to the ESFA's ongoing reductions, the Council is trying to find funding from the base budget to cover the future commitments.

Phil Wilson added that the DfE were looking at funding and there may be a requirement for things to change.

James Staniforth enquired where the capital cost was coming from and was advised that this charge covers both.

Maintained and academy school representatives unanimously agreed to

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

Ongoing responsibilities were considered.

School Admissions

Maintained and academy school representatives unanimously agreed to the increased charge of £253,270 for the provision of a School Admissions Team.

Servicing of Schools Forum

Maintained and academy school representatives unanimously agreed to the budget of £10,000 for the servicing of Schools Forum.

Copyright licences

Maintained and academy school representatives unanimously agreed to the increased charge of £233,440 for the annual copyright licensing fees.

Ongoing Responsibilities that LAs hold for all schools

Maintained and academy school representatives unanimously agreed to continue to contribute £786,466 to ongoing responsibilities that the local authority provides for maintained schools and academies as per the detail of these costs outlined in Appendix D.

John Hitchings suggested that Stephen Waters could provide details around the Monkmoor Campus funding for the next meeting - this was agreed.

SAW

6. Communications

The chair advised that f40 continues to be active, especially around SEN.

7. Future meeting dates:

Thursday 13 January 2022

Thursday 27 January 2022 (provisional)

Thursday 17 March 2022

Thursday 16 June 2022

The meeting closed at 9.22 am