

Minutes of the Schools Forum – 19th September 2019

Walker Room, Meeting Point House, Southwater, Telford Town Centre

Status: Draft

Name	Establishment	Representing
Sue Blackburn (SB) Chairperson	Coalbrookdale & Ironbridge Primary	Maintained Primaries – South Cluster
Paul Broomhead (PB)	Burton Borough School	Mainstream Secondary schools
Claire Whiting (CW)	Redhill Academy	Academies
Christobel Cousins (CC)	Lilleshall Primary School	Maintained Primaries – Newport Cluster
Michael Scott (MS)	Newport Girls' High School	Academies
Gill Eatough (GE)	Learning Community Trust	Academies (Special)
Penny Hustwick (PH)	ABC Nursery	PVI Representative
Tim Davis (TD)	T&W Group Accountant	Representative of the Director of Finance
Andy Wood (AW)	T&W Senior Accountant - Schools	Representative of the Director of Finance
Seán Taylor (ST)*	NASUWT	Teaching Unions

* Part of meeting

1. Apologies - AW.

1.1 Apologies were received from:

Heather Loveridge – Assistant Director Educations & Corporate Parenting.

Mark Davis – St Peter's (Bratton) Primary School.

Robert Fox – Donnington Wood Junior School.

Lee Hadley – Abraham Darby Academy.

Jo Weichelbauer – Ladygrove Primary School.

Tracey Smart - T&W Finance Manager.

2. Minutes of the 23rd May 2019 meeting and matters arising - TD.

2.1 The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record. The minutes can be found at the link:

https://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/10163/may_2019_-_minutes

2.2 Agenda item four was revisited later in this meeting (item 4).

3. Membership of the Schools Forum / appointment of Chairperson & updated constitution - TD.

3.1 The group were asked for nominations for the post of chairperson for the academic year 2019-2020. As there were no other volunteers to take on the role SB kindly agreed to continue for another year.

- 3.2 TD highlighted that we need an appointment to fill the post 16 member vacancy and the LA would pursue this.
- 3.3 AW advised the group that the constitution had been updated to take account of changes to the relevant pieces of legislation and to generally tidy it up to take account in changes to the membership. The updated version has been uploaded to the website and can be found at the following link:

https://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/452/schools_forum_terms_of_reference_and_constitution

4. Funding & representation for Trade Unions - ST.

- 4.1 Shelley East was due to attend but is now planning to attend the November meeting.
- 4.2 ST introduced himself to the Forum and presented a handout which can be found at the following link:
- Insert a link here when approved on website!
- 4.3 ST outlined the main points within the handout, including the legislative background to the longstanding assumption that contributions to union facility time would be made from the school budget. Members of the Forum explained the circumstances in T&W that had led to de-delegation for union facility time ceasing some years ago.
- 4.4 GE explained that some schools and academies contribute on a voluntary basis. GE also stated that there is a problem in finding local union members who are willing to act as union representatives. This could be linked to the comparative lack of funding available.
- 4.5 CL advised that the decision not to de-delegate was taken as a result of a failure from union representation to divulge what funding from schools had been spent on. She also considered that the absence of de-delegation has not led to significant local problems being apparent, and that in these circumstances here would be a reluctance to start contributing again.
- 4.6 CC stated that a number of schools believe that funding for union activities should come from union members fees rather than from funding allocated to educate children.
- 4.7 MS stated that the Forum still wants to see what monies contributed to union facility time is spent on.
- 4.8 TD summarised that from this and previous meetings, the consistent view of the Forum has been that without accountability for de-delegated funds the Forum would not support de-delegation.

- 4.9 CL stated that members could not decide on de-delegation for all schools without the unions first approaching all schools so that discussions could be held at cluster meetings prior to the Forum vote.
- 4.10 ST stated that a letter would be sent out to all schools and academies requesting voluntary contributions to the Union facility time fund for FY1920. There would also be a letter to all schools requesting schools to de-delegate for FY2021. Both of these letters would be with schools so that there was sufficient time to discuss at cluster meetings and with governors prior to the November meeting.

5. School Funding 2020/21 Onwards - TD.

- 5.1 TD presented a paper which can be found at the following link:

[https://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/10574/september_2019 - school funding 2020-21 onwards](https://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/10574/september_2019_-_school_funding_2020-21_onwards)

- 5.2 TD advised that the LA are attempting to model the funding formula for FY2021. Unfortunately until the detail behind the allocations and the actual rules for the funding formula have been finalised by the DfE can only estimate what the final formula will look like.
- 5.3 In recent years we have been moving towards the national funding formula (NFF) in that we have allocated funding to schools by using the same ratio between drivers as the DfE when they allocated the quantum to the LA. Whilst the DfE is adding 4% to all pupil drivers the introduction of a higher minimum funding per pupil will override these drivers for qualifying schools. The main differentiating factors for schools with higher per pupil funding are deprivation and low prior attainment schools, i.e. schools with more deprived and lower attaining intakes have higher per pupil funding. Thus the new minimum funding levels will direct funds to schools with lower levels of deprivation and low prior attainment.
- 5.4 The Forum were advised that the LA is minded to continue to mirror the NFF allocations as far as possible, unless there were strong representations from schools for a different approach to be taken. No such views were expressed by Forum members.
- 5.5 Regarding high needs, since the Forum paper was written the DfE have promised a minimum 8% increase per pupil for each LA. For T&W this would deliver additional funding of around £1.75m – we would hope for somewhat more than this given local population growth. This additional funding for high needs is very welcome given the pressures in the area. The current budget position on high needs is suggesting that after recovering the deficit situation in FY1819, we may once again end with a deficit in FY1920, although it is too early in the financial year to be confident of the outcome.
- 5.6 Forum members expressed a view that they would be unlikely to support the transfer of 0.5% of funding from the schools block to high needs in FY2020 in the context of the additional funding. There was a view that if possible some of the additional funding should be directed at those schools that had high numbers of high needs pupils in their school compared to school demography, i.e. to the most inclusive schools in the area.

5.7 TD agreed in principle with this and stated that at the November meeting Simon Wellman would be attending to give an update regarding the additional funds being invested in high needs in FY1920 and to discuss the funding for high needs for FY2021.

6. AOB.

6.1 AW reminded the group that dates for Forum meetings for the AY2021 had been sent out and asked member to ensure that these dates were in their diaries. In the context of the turbulence at national government level, with the implications for the timing of the release of school funding information, we may need to arrange an additional Forum meeting. Forum members will be kept informed regarding this.

7. Next Meetings

The dates of the meetings for the academic year 2019/20, are as follows:

Thursday 21 st November 2019	9.30 am	Meeting Point House
Thursday 16 th January 2020	9.30 am	Meeting Point House
Thursday 12 th March 2020	9.30 am	Meeting Point House
Thursday 21 st May 2020	9.30 am	Meeting Point House

A full record of future meetings can be found at the following link:

http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/507/forum_meetings