

Minutes of the Schools Forum – 14th March 2019

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

Status: Agreed

Name	Establishment	Representing
Sue Blackburn (SB) Chairperson	Coalbrookdale & Ironbridge Primary	Maintained Primaries – South Cluster
Helen Osterfield (HO)*	Tibberton Primary	Maintained Primaries - Small Schools
Claire Lamb (CL)	Redhill Academy	Academies
Michael Scott (MS)	Newport Girls High School	Academies
Mark Davis (MD)	St Peter’s Bratton Primary	Maintained Primaries – Wellington Cluster
Paul Broomhead (PB)	Burton Borough Secondary	Maintained Secondary Schools
Jo Weichelbauer (JW)	Ladygrove Primary	Maintained Primaries – Central Cluster
Gill Eatough (GE)	Learning Community Trust	Academies (Special Schools)
Penny Hustwick (PH)	ABC Nursery	PVI Representative
Shirley Reynolds (SR)*	Cabinet Member, Education & Skills, Telford & Wrekin Council	Telford & Wrekin Council
Tracey Smart (TS)	T&W Finance Manager	Representative of the Director of Finance
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

* Part of meeting

1. Apologies - AW.

1.1 Apologies were received from:

Shaun Tyas – St George’s Primary School

Lee Hadley – Abraham Darby Academy

Heather Davies – The Bridge Special School

Heather Loveridge - T&W Assistant Director Education & Corporate Parenting

1.2 MD was welcomed to the meeting as the Maintained Primary Schools member for the Wellington Cluster, replacing Becca Butler.

2. Minutes of the 17th January 2019 meeting and matters arising.

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

http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/8788/january_-_minutes

2.2 TD gave an update on agenda item four, the use of High Needs funding, for FY1920:

- **Reintroduction of the SEN contingency fund:** Calculations for April to August allocations have been completed and funds will be passed over to schools in April. A similar exercise will be completed in September to cover the period to March 2020.
- **Introduce two 8 place resourced provisions:** Two primary provisions are planned to be established for the Autumn term. Confirmation and details will be released as soon as possible.
- **Increased funding to be paid to mainstream schools via inclusion panel:** New guidance and forms will be ready for the Summer term 2019. Funding bands will match those for an EHCP plan.
- **Outreach Support:** Discussions held with SENCo's at network meetings regarding what they would like this to look like. Agreement with special schools required. Implementation planned for Autumn term.
- **Training for mainstream school staff:** Each school will be allocated one free place on Autism Education Trust (AET) level 2 training starting in the Summer term.

3. Early Years Budget Proposals for 2019/20 - TD.

3.1 The Forum were presented with a paper which can be viewed at the following link:

http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/8795/march_-_early_years_paper

3.2 TD summarised the paper. The budget and funding plans were very similar to that of the previous year, in the context of the same level of funding per child from the DfE. The increase of £20,000 in funds retained to support the early years team was in the context of the team remaining part-funded by the local authority and with much lower DSG support than in most other local authorities.

3.3 PB asked what percentage of funding was passed through to providers, in the context of the DfE minimum requirement being 95%. TD confirmed that T&W passed through 97.5%. PB also queried the higher funding for 2 year olds compared to 3 and 4 year olds. It was explained that this was in the context of the lower staffing ratios and resulting higher costs that were required for younger children.

3.4 The Forum supported the 2019/20 budget plans for early years.

4. Distribution of Falling Rolls Funding 2019/20 – TD/SW.

4.1 The Forum were presented with data for those schools that met the criteria for the falling rolls funding and this can be found at the following link:

http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/8796/march_-_falling_rolls

4.2 TD reminded the group of the minimum requirements to be considered for falling rolls funding i.e. school numbers must have fallen by more than 3% and the school must have a good or outstanding Ofsted rating.

- 4.3 Seven schools had submitted an application for funding and these applications had been shared with the Forum membership prior to the meeting. Due to the school specific information within the applications they will not be shared beyond the Forum membership.
- 4.4 Two of the members present, HO and MD, excused themselves from this agenda item as they had submitted applications for funding.
- 4.5 The group then discussed which schools should receive funding. It was agreed that when the discussion was school specific, this would not be minuted in detail.
- 4.6 CL and GE queried whether LA officers were not in a better position to make allocation decisions as they had a better feel for the state of individual schools finances. In addition, GE pointed out that £50,000 was a modest sum of money to allocate.
- 4.7 Following some discussion about the applications, the Forum decided to postpone the decision on which school will receive funding from the falling rolls fund until the May 2019 meeting. By the time of this meeting, schools closing balances from FY1819 and allocation of reception places for September 2019 will both be known. When communicating this postponement to schools that had applied, it was agreed to notify them that the Forum's view was that it was very unlikely that any funds would be allocated to school holding significant revenue balances.

5. Funding and representation for Trade Unions – TW/HL.

- 5.1 This agenda item was postponed until the May 2019 meeting.

6. Any Other Business - SB.

- 6.1 SB said that the NAHT was looking to collate information on schools with deficit budget situations and asked colleagues to be willing to share this information, to assist in the campaign to persuade the Government to allocate more funds to schools in the next Spending Review.
- 6.2 SB also raised the issue of violence towards schools staff from parents, there is evidence that there is a rising trend nationally.
- 6.3 AW stated that we have been notified by the DfE of directed changes to the Scheme for Financing Schools. The Scheme is a document that sets out the financial relationship between the local authority and schools. Although these are mandatory revisions, the LA has a duty to consult all maintained schools before the Scheme is approved by the Forum. The amended Scheme will be distributed to schools shortly.
- 6.4 There being no other business the meeting closed at 10:30.

7. Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting, the final meeting in academic year 2018/19, is as follows:

Thursday 23 May 2019 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