

**Minutes of the Schools Forum – 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

**Virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams and YouTube**

**Status: Draft**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Establishment</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Gill Eatough (GE) <b>Chair</b>	Learning Community Trust	Academies (Special)
Christobel Cousins (CC)	Lilleshall Primary School	Maintained Primaries – Newport Cluster
Rachel Cook (RC)	Newdale Primary School	Maintained Primaries - Central Cluster
Robert Fox (RF)	Donnington Wood Junior School	Maintained Primaries – North Cluster
Sarah Roberts (SR)	High Ercall Primary School	Maintained Primaries – Wellington Cluster
Heather Davies (HD)	The Bridge Special School	Maintained Special Schools
Simon Wellman (SW)	Director Education & Skills	Representative of the Executive Director of Children's services
Tim Davis (TD)	Group Accountant	Representative of the Director of Finance
Andy Wood (AW)	Senior Accountant - Schools	Representative of the Director of Finance

**1. Apologies - AW.**

1.1 Apologies were received from:

Darren Lennon – Linden Centre PRU  
Yvonne Crilly – Woodside Primary School

**2. Minutes of the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2022 meeting and matters arising - GE**

2.1 The minutes of the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2022 were distributed to the Forum members but would be reviewed at the next full meeting of the Forum.

2.2 There were no matters arising that would not be covered in the current meeting agenda.

[13<sup>th</sup> January 2022 draft minutes.](#)

**3. De-delegation for Statutory School Improvement Services – SW/TD.**

3.1 GE described the background to the agenda item and stated that this had been discussed at length as detailed in the minutes distributed. SW had distributed additional information as requested by the Forum and hopefully this would enable the members to vote on the proposal to de-delegate £90,826, £6.31 per pupil, to replace the 50% of the School Improvement and Brokering Grant being removed by the DfE for 2022/23.

- 3.2 AW stated that we had received apologies from DL who also stated that he was in favour of the proposed de-delegation.
- 3.3 Subsequently apologies were received from YC with the message “I spoke at length with members of the South Cluster, who were all willing to approve the de delegation and were keen to acknowledge the support from the School Improvement team at the LA. They did ask me to pass on, however, that they would all appreciate additional information related to funding moving forwards, especially as the funding will cease completely in two years”.
- 3.4 RC stated that she had lots of feedback from the central cluster, following the useful email from SW to all schools. The question was raised as to whether academies got the LA support for school improvement free, whereas maintained schools are being asked to pay for it. SW confirmed that academies do not receive the same school improvement support from the LA. There were concerns about ‘green’ schools being charged at the same rate as “red” schools but also an acceptance that school categories can change. Central cluster supported the proposed de-delegation subject to a review of school improvement provision over the next twelve months.
- 3.5 CC agreed with all the points made by the central cluster. The Newport cluster had met and asked for it to be confirmed that de-delegation next year would be reviewed again and not automatically taken; TD confirmed that a fresh Forum vote was required each year. Newport cluster felt that the de-delegation charge was expensive for Green schools. A concern was raised about sustainability of the service due to potential further academisation and the rising cost to those remaining maintained schools. The cluster also asked if the increasing funding that the LA was receiving from house-building could be used to fund this rather than schools; in response it was pointed out that the DfE direction was to ask schools for the funding, not to use LA general funds. The Newport Cluster were in favour of the de-delegation.
- 3.6 SR stated that Wellington cluster agreed with the points made by the other clusters. There was a perception of some duplication of LA and Severn Teaching School support. Wellington cluster voted in favour of de-delegation for 2022/23.
- 3.7 HD stated that Special schools were in support of the proposal for 2022/23. Pressures on schools needs to be fed back to the DfE. It would be useful if the difference between LA school improvement responsibilities and the SevernTeaching School service was clarified for schools.
- 3.8 RF stated that schools that needed support found it really useful. Data on effectiveness is still needed. It was pointed out that de-delegation would have a larger cash impact on the two remaining maintained secondary schools, currently unrepresented on the Forum. GE pointed out that both the secondary schools had been approached to be members of the Forum but had declined to nominate a member. North cluster voted in favour of the de-delegation.
- 3.9 SW stated that schools are asking good questions and that the service will review policies and procedures with schools and ensure that they meet the DfE requirements, which may evolve with legislative change.

3.10 TD reiterated that this is only a vote for the 2022-23 financial year and that this issue will be raised again in good time for the 2023-24 financial year. Late notice of this change from the DfE had resulted in the short timeframe to get this item through the Forum. The LA therefore understands schools requests for more information, but thanks Forum members and schools for their understanding.

3.11 A vote was then held and maintained members of the Forum unanimously supported delegation of £6.31 per pupil for statutory school improvement services in 2022/23.

#### **4. AOB - GE.**

4.1 There being no further business the meeting closed at 10:21.

#### **5. Next Meetings**

The dates of the forthcoming meetings for the academic year 2021/2022, are as follows:

- Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 9.30 am
- Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at 9.30 am

[Planned Forum Meetings](#)