

Monmouthshire County Council

Directorate of Children and Young People

Schools Budget Forum Meeting Minutes

**Extract of draft minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday
24th January 2019 at 4.30 pm in County Hall Usk.**

Present:

Mr S. King
Mrs E. Lewis
Mrs C. Whittaker
Mrs A. Waters – Chair
Mrs B. Randall
Mrs M. Harris
Mrs E. Becker (substitute Mrs A. Holloway)
Mrs M. Harris
Cllr M. Powell
Mr P. Nurcombe
Mr S. McLester
Mr P. Strong (substitute Ms Z. Elsmore)
Mr W. McLean.

Advisors:

Mrs N. Wellington
Mr M. Jay
Mrs S. Evans

Also present:

Cllr P. Murphy - Cabinet Member for Resources (items 1 – 4)
Mrs K. O'Hara – Business Manager Chepstow.

1. Welcome and apologies, to consider consent for those apologies.

Members were welcomed and introduced themselves, the following provided apologies and consent was provided for these:

Cllr R. John
Dr A. Daly
Ms Z. Elsmore
Mr S. Rees
Cllr M. Groucutt
Mrs S. Wright
Mrs A. Holloway
Mrs L. Greensmith

4. Consultation on the Budget for Monmouthshire County Council 2019 - 20.

We welcomed Cllr P. Murphy to the forum to present the proposed budget for 2019-20 for Monmouthshire County Council.

We are pleased to note that over the last 4 years £21m of savings have been delivered within the Monmouthshire County Council budgets. We understand that the proposal is to increase council tax by 5.95% for 2019-20.

The budget for Monmouthshire County Council has seen a cash reduction of 1% this will be a decrease of £936k. Monmouthshire County Council is still the worse funded authority and the gap between best and worst is increasing.

We were given details of the teachers' pension pressure, this equates to £112k per month. We get £1,002 per head compared to the Wales average of £1,352.

We are pleased to note that all pay and pension pressures for schools will be met, the living wage will continue to be met. While all of these have been built into the assumptions, there is still a gap on the budget of about £600k. We were provided details of the budget by directorate and understand that schools and social care have the highest budgets for the authority.

Pressure for the children and young people's directorate are £1,189k with the savings being identified as £1,191k. The significant pressures include £784k for 7 the increase in teacher pension rates from 1st September 2019. We discussed the details of the savings for Monmouthshire County Council.

The investments for education are as follows:

£66k – ALN New bill to support staff / training to prepare for the changes outlined in the new bill.

£167k – ALN pressure identified in month 7 forecast. This will support band funding and independent placements.

558k – 2% teachers pay award

£227k – 2% non-teaching pay award

£343k – New pay spine

£172k – Rates for Monmouth and Caldicot new schools.

£784k – Teacher pension increase from 16.5% to 23.6% from 1st September 2019.

The proposed saving are as follows:

£40k – Early years grant funded posts.

£58k – SpLD service redesign.

£208k – Teacher's pay award funding from Welsh Government.

£72k – Before schools clubs continuation of £1.

£40k – Gwent Music this is a cut to the contribution to the service. The current contribution is £156k.

£275k – Mounton House funding as a reflection in the reduction in pupil numbers.

£23k – Federated schools this is a continuation from 2018-19 budget.

Overall increase in the ISB of 4.11%

We discussed the capital proposals, this include the proposal to fund replacement schools for King Henry and Chepstow.

We were given details of the consultation period which ends on the 31st January and how to respond to the consultation.

We were then asked for questions and comments.

Members asked if the increase in the rates for our new schools could be appealed, we understand that we regularly appeal rates bills and this has seen a significant saving in some areas, however given that the schools have only just been valued it is unlikely that any appeal would result in a reduction. We noted that Monmouth is still an estimate as the final valuation has not been received. Members were interested in how the rates are allocated to Monmouthshire County Council, this was explained in that we collect on behalf of Welsh Government and receive our allocation annually.

There were no further questions and we thanked Cllr P. Murphy for his presentation.