

Consultation Responses

Disappointingly only 8 responses were received from 4 schools and the Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee. These are detailed below:

1. Response from School Business Manager – King Henry VIII 3 – 19 School:

The funding of the management structure is crucial to operate the 3 – 19 through school approach.

I disagree with the funding for the premises and grounds maintenance as this does not reflect the additional costs associated with maintaining the new high-quality sports pitches. If the school is able to have autonomy (away from Mon-Life) to 'let' the pitches for community use then this will not be an issue for the school. Historically there has been an arrangement with the leisure centre that facilities are shared (both ways) but this would restrict any income generation.

Local Authority Response:

The leisure centre has an income generation target for these lettings which ultimately provides income for Monmouthshire County Council. In addition, the income generated will also be used to offset the loan repayments for the pitches and the new school building. The maintenance budget for the sports pitches for all 4 secondary schools was delegated to the school budget several years ago. Should the income go direct to the school they would need to make the loan payments and have the income target to meet. The central budgets for Monmouthshire County Council would see a shortfall in income which would need to be generated from other services including schools.

2. Response from Headteacher of Kymin View.

I think the funding formula is fair. I assume that the ratio is based on teachers and management as most schools try to fund learning support assistants through the grants which there is never enough in the budget to cover the WG guidelines for ratios of adults to children.

Local Authority Response:

No changes have been made to ratios for teachers or management structures for the primary phase. There are changes proposed for the secondary phase and these are detailed in the responses below.

Response from Monmouth Comprehensive Governor:

On behalf of the Governing Body of Monmouth Comprehensive School in the position as Chair of the Finance and Resources committee I would like to raise an objection to the proposed changes in respect of School Funding for King Henry VIII 3 – 19 school funding formula.

We feel strongly that all schools within Monmouthshire must receive funding against a common matrix and that the only true and fair measure has to be the number of students on roll.

Monmouth Comprehensive School (MCS) currently educates almost three times more learners than Chepstow Comprehensive School and yet receives the same amount of Leadership Block Funding.

On paper the King Henry VIII 3 – 19 School will aim to educate roughly the same total learners as MCS and yet the current proposal seems to more than double up on Leadership funding and grant an

additional £20,000 with no specific designation. It is utterly wrong to launch a combined 3 – 19 school while still treating the primary and secondary levels of the school as completely different entities and then call for additional leadership on top. This sets an unsustainable and unfair precedent and totally defeats the financial object of a 3 -19 school.

We could also argue that MCS manages two schools within one if we proposed that our Special Needs Resource Base needed additional and different management and leadership funding from the mainstream secondary provision.

We believe the current proposal opens Monmouthshire County Council up to severe scrutiny problems. It will be unavoidable that parents and pupils in Monmouthshire will read this blatant and direct underfunding of MCS pupils. On one hand MCC is suggesting there is no link between numbers on roll and the leadership funding and on the other hand MCC is also suggesting that a school with broadly the same numbers of pupils requires more leadership funding. Both cannot be right. Either all schools must be offered exactly the same amount of money to best support the leadership structure or schools must receive a fair proportion of the funding based on the pupils they are educating.

With only four secondary schools in the county Monmouthshire County Council must be capable of working with Headteachers and Governing Bodies to produce a Leadership funding formula which is fairly distributed and treats pupils across the county with the same level of financial respect.

At this stage the Governing Body of Monmouth Comprehensive School completely rejects the current proposal for the School Funding Formula and specifically Leadership Funding.

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Response from Monmouth Comprehensive Governor:

I am a parent governor at Monmouth Comprehensive School and chair the Student Progression Committee. I am writing in response to the above consultation document. Apologies for not using appendix 1 of the document to provide feedback, I have a pdf document. If you need my input on the appendix please could you send me a word document and I will complete it.

I disagree with section 3.2 of the proposals for a number of reasons:

As a general point the funding formula applied based on number of students appears to have little recognition of the additional costs incurred based on student numbers. If the leadership structure is inadequate I am concerned that there will be a detrimental impact on student learning and progression. If I compare MCS to Chepstow Comprehensive MCS has significantly more students and the same level of funding.

The proposal includes funding for £20,000. I do not understand the rationale behind this and would welcome additional detail.

I do not understand the rationale for the proposed management structure funding for King Henry. The proposal appears to provide more leadership positions than a primary and a secondary school would receive if they were separate entities.

In addition King Henry will be one school and should therefore have the formula for one school applied.

I also recognise the total number of students for King Henry will be similar to MCS and, therefore, believe the proposal to be inequitable.

Response from Monmouth Comprehensive School Headteacher:

I do have concerns about this aspect of the funding proposal.

We have almost 3 times NOR than Chepstow. However, we both get the same leadership block funding. Although I could make a strong case for this disadvantaging us, I can also see that there are reasons for it.

Overall I think that KH8 3-19 and MCS will have broadly similar NOR.

There is however no parity between KH8 3-19 and MCS. The proposed block funding is treating the primary and secondary phase of KH8 3-19 as separate entities by funding them as if they were separate schools, whereas it of course is one entity. This is just not equitable. I am being asked to

accept parity where NOR are vastly different on one hand, but also to accept lack of parity on the other hand, even though NOR are broadly similar.

In a launch phase, and whilst there are separate sites, I can understand that there might be a need for additional capacity. However, once established there will in fact be savings compared to having separate schools.

On top of this, there is an additional £20k in the proposal, for which there seems to be no explanation. At a point where we are being sent messages by Paul Matthews about having to tighten our belts and make cuts, this does not seem equitable at all.

Local Authority Response:

The responses for Monmouth Comprehensive School raise very similar objections and therefore will be answered as one response:

King Henry 3 – 19 Schools has a capacity of 1820 plus 30 for a nursery. The aim of the consultation is to establish one formula for the whole school and not split it between phases.

The school will host two special need resource basis, one for primary aged pupils and one for secondary aged.

Currently all the secondary schools are funded for one headteacher (L31), two deputy headteachers (L21) and 3 assistant headteachers (L14). The current funding for a group 3 primary school is for one headteacher (L17) and a deputy headteacher (L11).

The proposal is to fund the 3 – 19 School one headteacher (L31) two deputy headteachers (L21) and 7 assistant headteachers (L14). The cost of this proposal is an additional £20,432.

The leadership funding for all schools has not been reviewed for several years and the Governing Body of Monmouth Comprehensive School are raising concerns that it is not equitable. In discussion with representatives of Monmouth Comprehensive School they have agreed to accept current proposals and that the leadership funding will be subject to a separate review and any changes will be implemented for the 2025-26 financial year.

Response from Trellech Primary School Governing Body:

We agree with all the proposals.

Response from the Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee:

Thank you for listening to the concerns raised but Monmouth Comprehensive School, it is pleasing to see a solution has been put in place which is acceptable to both the senior leadership team and the governing body.

The formula for maintenance costs sees a reduction in funding with the assumption that there are warranties in place. Has this just been accepted or has any work been done around the actual costs compared to the funding.

Only 7 responses have been received, what was the audience, and do we know why so few responses were received?

Local Authority Response:

The formula was agreed at the time that both Monmouth and Caldicot were being constructed, it was on the assumption that the costs would be lower, during the consultation changes were made to reflect that some routine maintenance would be needed and therefore funding was reinstated for that. No work has been done to look at actual costs against the funding, but this can be done and presented to the school budget forum.

The consultation paper was sent to all members, all schools and all governing bodies. It is disappointing that so few responses were received but this could either be that they were happy with the proposals or that they did not feel it affected them. More work will need to be done in the future to engage.