

Extra Ordinary Governors Meeting
31st January 2011

Item	Discussions	Actions taken/to be taken
Present	A.Dearen, L Wilson, P Killen,J Coyne, C Molyneux, C Anderson, I Reed, R Alsoraimi, G Lunt	
Apologies	H Jamieson, J Arnold	
Previous Minutes	<p>A Governor stated that at the meeting on 12th January he was under the impression that the school had 3 options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay as we are • Stay as we are and market the school • Consider becoming an Academy with Chester University as an Academy <p>The Vice Chair stated that consideration had been given to all three options and the purpose of the meeting was to take the proposal forward of Shorefields becoming an Academy under the sponsorship of Chester University.</p>	
Matters Arising	None	
	<p>J Burke was introduced and stated that due to unforeseen circumstances C Hankinson was unable to attend the meeting and that he was there to represent Mr Hankinson. The Headteacher and the Chair of Governors had sent a letter to Mr Hankinson asking for confirmation of the following points asked at the meeting on 12th January 2011.</p> <p><u>A) The additionality of funding gained by receiving the 'top slice'.</u></p> <p><u>Resonse</u> Research has indicated that the 'top slice' taken by LAs falls within a range from 8% to 30% with the average falling between 10% and 12%. The University of Chester Trust operates on 3.5% a significant saving to the school.</p> <p>The University have no plans to increase their percentage of the 'top slice in future years and all future decisions would involve principals of the Academies.</p>	

B) The school has a strong business case for increasing numbers on role; a guarantee they would receive 'diseconomies of scale funding' for a school role of 800/900.

Response

The School has a standard number of 180 and Diseconomies of Scale funding for senior management costs becomes payable to academies who start up with less than 90% of pupils on roll and ceases when this % is exceeded or after 4 years. In addition the Academy would receive £51,175 transitional grant based on a formula and be able to bid for a further £45,000.

(If the school wishes to maintain a particular curriculum area the extra £45,000 would fund this)

C) The amount of funding received which would support 're-branding' from the school to Academy Status.

Response

Rebranding covers the provision of uniforms for YR8 onwards for an Academy opening in September 2011 which amounts to £43,200 and other rebranding to the value of £47,000. 'Other rebranding' covers prospectus, website, design work, documentation etc and has to be submitted as a bid.

Year 7 students would not receive money for a school uniform as parents would have to make this purchase as their child would be moving from primary to secondary school.

In the next few years it is expected that a large number of schools will convert to Academy Status and as a result the funds available will quickly diminish.

D) The Headteacher of Shorefields was new in post in September and is leading significant improvement: an assurance that her leadership as Principal would be maintained by the Academy.

Response

The University would be happy to keep the Headteacher in post as Principal of the Academy and feel confident that she would continue to lead the Academy towards excellence and would be central to the transformational change agenda.

E) Terms and conditions for all teaching and support staff will be protected for the duration of the Academy

Response

All teaching and support staff would TUPE under (at least) existing terms and conditions. The Staff Governor present at the meeting had no concerns and felt assured by this.

The LA Governor voiced his concerns about this and stated that correspondence that he had sighted from the Trade Unions expressed an undertaking that current terms and conditions for staff would remain the same. Mr Burke assured the Governor that the Vice Chancellor of Chester University had pledged this promise and would ensure that this would be put in writing.

F) The amount taken by the University as their part of the 'top slice' and details of the services received for this 'top slice'

Response

The University of Chester would take 3.5% in return it would provide services in the following areas; Finance, HR, ICT, Communications, Teaching and Learning, Funding bids, OFSTED support, Curriculum enhancement. In addition access to the services of the Universities (OFSTED outstanding) Faculty of Education.

There would not be a problem with buying in services from other universities as Chester would like to build on good relationships with them in the interests of the school. The University sponsors 3 Academies at the moment but hopes to increase this to 10 academies in the next 2-3 years in a 30 mile radius.

The Headteacher stated that as the school already does its own payroll and HR along with using the LA for some of its Teaching and Learning practices, the school would benefit from the services Chester offers without any additional expense in some cases. We would have the expertise in areas where Liverpool does not such as ICT and communications.

At the moment the school has to buy in the services mentioned above.

G) The costs and implications of transferring a PFI school to an Academy

Response

The conversion to an Academy of a school in a PFI contract is based on the transfer of obligations from the current Governing Body to the Academy Trust without alteration. The Academy Trust is required to enter in to a Schools Agreement with the Local Authority which replaces the current PFI Agreement between the School Governors and the LA. The School Agreement binds the Academy Trust to receive the exact same services which are included in the current PFI Agreements and make the same payments in respect of those Agreements. The legal costs for the preparation of the 2 Agreements fall on the Local Authority and could be as high as £20k although standard templates are available which should mean the costs reduce. No costs would fall on the predecessor school and the sponsor would get a grant to cover their legal costs.

	<p>Currently the school has a PFI contract and it was asked what would happen to the school's assets and liabilities if the school was to fail as an Academy.</p> <p>J Burke also assured the Governors that the University would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the current school improvement priorities and seek to work with staff to enhance them. • Retain a significant degree of autonomy as the University believes in strong local governance of our academies. • Seek to retain and work closely with existing partners that are productive and contribute significantly to achieving academy aims and objectives. It would also seek to involve new partners who can contribute to excellence and the highest levels of achievement for students, staff and the community. <p>The LA Governor asked if the existing Trust would be dissolved. The Vice Chair stated there was no reason why South Liverpool Education Trust could not remain without a qualifying school but there would be no point. There had been plans for Shorefields as a Trust School to form a partnership with Ness Gardens. The Vice Chair will speak to Liverpool University to see if they could take over the partnership but would have to take into account the financial implications for the University.</p> <p>The LA Governor asked what the impact would be if Starrfields was not part of the PFI arrangement. The Headteacher stated that due to the costs and maintenance of the site the school is looking in to the future links with both Starrfields and the CLC within the school.</p> <p>The Vice Chair has recently contacted Brabners Solicitors who are responsible for the conveyancing of the land to the South Liverpool Education Trust but had received a negligible response from them.</p> <p>If Academy Status is to be considered the next step would be for Chester University to approach the DfE and express an interest in becoming a sponsor for Shorefields. This process would be confirmed with letter from the Headteacher and Governors of the school and also a letter from South Liverpool Trust.</p> <p>A consultation period would then commence whereby staff, parents and the unions would be approached. All would be advised that this would be an open minded process with no commitment to a decision at this stage.</p> <p>The LA Governor asked if it could be recorded that there could be an undertaking that nationally negotiated terms and conditions for all staff would apply to their employment for the duration of the Academy. He also asked that the receipt of such an undertaking would be a precondition to negotiations with the University on the conversion to</p>	<p>J Burke will clarify this.</p>
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	Academy Status.	
	<p>The timing of the process was discussed as the school may lose out if the consultation period is extended which may result in Chester withdrawing its sponsorship with Shorefields.</p> <p>The Headteacher stressed that a decision to consider Academy Status would have to be made. A delay to the process makes the school vulnerable either to reorganisation of Academy Status by another sponsor. Chester University is offering terms that could not be made by the LA.</p> <p>The LA Governors asked if his request could be balloted on before the consultation period commenced.</p> <p>The result was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support the LA Governor’s request - 0 votes • To commence the consultation process for Academy Status - 7 <p>The Vice Chair stressed that in terms of moving the decision forward she would like reassurances given to staff that their terms and conditions of employment would be protected if the school was to become an Academy with Chester University as a sponsor but they may not be protected if the LA chose a sponsor for the school.</p> <p>The Vice Chair asked the Governors to vote on the proposal that they wish to become an Academy with Chester University as sponsor and would like to begin the consultation process.</p> <p>The LA Governor felt he could not support offer from Chester University and so voted against the proposal. Against – 0 For – 8 (including a proxy vote by J Arnold) As acting Chair C Anderson abstained from voting.</p> <p>J Burke stated that it is hoped that Shorefields could open as an Academy by September 2011. The consultation period usually lasts about 6-7 weeks during which time staff, parents and the local community will be approached.</p>	<p>The Headteacher will meet with staff on 1st February and inform them of the Governors’ decision. Trade Union Reps will be invited into school to speak to Governors and if requested Chester University. The Vice Chair will contact South Liverpool Trust to</p>

	<p>Once all the meetings have taken place a meeting will be arranged to give feedback to the Governors.</p> <p>Meeting closed at 6.00pm</p>	<p>inform them of the decision.</p>
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