

The Market Drayton Learning Partnership

Including

Market Drayton Infants School

Market Drayton Junior School

The Grove School

Report on the Consultation

Full Governing Body Meeting

Thursday 18th September 2014

At 6.00 p.m.

At

The Grove School, Market Drayton

INTRODUCTION

This document summarises the feedback from The Market Drayton Learning Partnership public consultation exercise for Market Drayton Infants School, Market Drayton Junior School and The Grove School. This consultation report was produced on behalf of the Governing Bodies by the Co-operative College who also facilitated the consultation.

Copies of the consultation documents were published on the school websites and distributed widely to consultees including parents/carers, learners, staff, teacher associations and support staff trade unions, local Headteachers and Governors, the appropriate Local Authorities and elected members in the catchment areas of the schools.

In addition separate consultation meetings were held for staff and their union representatives, as well as for parents and carers at all of the schools. Additionally a general public meeting for anyone with an interest was held. These meetings were well publicised locally.

The views of learners were sought via school assemblies and a separate meeting with a student council, which were supportive of the proposal.

This document summarises the responses received for the consultation as a whole. Included within this report are a summary of the views and comments received from individuals. All responses will be made available to the Governing Bodies for examination when they consider this consultation. Individual responses are also available for examination by contacting the school.

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1. Executive Summary

A great deal of consultation has taken place with regard to these proposals.

- i) A summary pamphlet and the questionnaire (Appendix B attached) were issued to all the required consultees. Booklets One and Two were placed on the schools websites and hard copies made available to anyone who requested a copy. It was made clear in the consultation document how to obtain copies.
- ii) The consultation was promoted widely and approximately 1900 consultation documents were distributed when consultation officially opened.
- iii) Staff, parent/carer and public meetings were held at Market Drayton Junior School on behalf of MDIS, MDJS and The Grove School. Representatives of the local teacher associations and trade unions were invited and a number of representatives attended these meetings (see Appendix C).
- iv) Simultaneously with the public consultation, learners in the schools were consulted via assemblies and their school council or equivalent method and there was support for the proposals from learners of all schools.
- v) Overall there were 95 response forms returned (5% return) and a strong majority 76 (80 %) of these were supportive with only 14 (14.7%) responses being against the proposal (these were largely from one group of staff at Grove School who may have misinterpreted the proposal as being linked to becoming an academy.) There were a further 5 (5.3%) people unsure about the proposal and requested further information (see Appendix A).
- vi) There were 3 written responses to the consultation, all from Shropshire LA, all in support of the proposal and each from Anne Gribbin to the Heads of the consulting schools. (see Appendix D).
- vii) It is clear from the responses of staff and the views expressed at the meetings that some staff are concerned about the potential impact on their pay and conditions. A letter to obtain the required assurances has been sent to the LA (see Appendix E). In addition a staffing protocol (see Appendix F) developed with Unions and Professional Associations and which has been adopted in other Co-operative Trusts has also been proposed.
- viii) At the time of compiling this report all of the proposed partners remain committed to the proposed Trust and working within the charitable aims of the Trust to raise standards and promote community cohesion. The Trust and the partners, as well as the mutual co-operative membership dimension, including the proposed Stakeholder Forum are likely to have a positive impact on the schools and their communities and further assist in the raising of standards.

2. Overview of the Consultation Feedback

In most consultation exercises responses tend to be made by those who have strong views and not by those who accept the proposals being put forward. In this case the level of written responses to the questions was above the level received with other comparable consultation exercises.

Many of these were showing some concerns although on the whole were still largely supportive of the proposals.

It is clear from the comments made by a few staff members that clarification need to be given regarding change of employer, pay and conditions and pensions. It will be important to ensure the necessary arrangements are put in place by the Local Authority and Governing Bodies to protect the rights of employees as outlined in the assurances letter (see Appendix E) and protocol (see Appendix F).

A few parent/carer returns were concerned about the perceived loss of autonomy of individual schools, and so some reassurance by Head Teachers and Governors needs to be given here also.

Some suggestions were received about extending the partners to include for example, MMU or Keele Universities as well as opening up the associate partnerships to include all feeder primary schools.

There were concerns expressed by a number of respondents about how the trust may affect the running of a school. Each school will retain its own Governing Body and continue to run the school in the same way as a LA maintained school. Each school will receive their budgets separately from Shropshire CC just as now, using the same formula.

The individual governing bodies will continue to run their own schools and will be strengthened by the addition of two trust appointed governors. The Trust will be, a mutual co-operative membership trust, which will be democratically accountable to its members consisting of pupils, parents, staff, local organisations and others interested in supporting the schools. This membership base will strengthen the links with the local community and lead to greater involvement with the local community through the co-operative nature of the trust.

Additional income that is raised for a particular purpose by a body such as a PTA or Friends Association will continue to be allocated by the body that raises the funds.

Additional funding opportunities may arise by the charitable nature of the Trust and there may be benefits in working together on projects to access additional resources.

As for buildings the same maintenance agreements with the LA will continue and the schools will be treated in the same way as now regarding capital works. If anything, the concerns about selling off land is more secure than at present as it will require the agreement of the school's governors as well as the Trust board and a strong case could be made as a co-operative members should also be consulted.

A further question asked what happens if the trust fails. This rarely happens but in such an eventuality, and after consultation to end the Trust then the schools

would remain as foundation schools and the governors would hold the buildings and land in trust for their respective schools.

There was strong support for the proposed partners 75 (79%) with only 10 (10.5%) expressing concerns with one or more partners and a further 10(10.5%) indicating they thought other partners should be considered.

Should the Trust be formed then the governing bodies have these suggestions to consider as to who might make suitable partners at an appropriate time in the future.

There was overwhelming support for the vision of the trust from 85% of respondents. 8 (8.5%) felt that these were not a priority and 1 respondent said they wanted to make an addition to the vision, there were 6 no responses (6.3)

There was support (73%) for the trust appointing a minority of governors. A further 11 (11.5%) were in favour of this but expressed a concern. 8 returns (8.4%) indicated that the trust should appoint more governors. 6 were against the proposal and there was 1 no response.

Most schools received a large number of comments in the last section (Q5) of the questionnaire. This response is well above the number received in similar consultations and demonstrates the engagement of their communities, which bodes well for the future and the community forum. Some of these comments were further illustrations of points raised in previous sections of the questionnaire, for instance ideas of organisations and additional schools the trust could work with or conditions of service for support staff, which will not be repeated here.

Governors should read their own feedback from the response forms and decide how they will use this information to assist future planning.

As can be seen from the summary above all the statutory requirements were met or exceeded and it was clear how further information (including Booklet 2) could be obtained. This information was available in advance of public meeting to allow people to consider the proposal and decide whether or not to attend meetings and ask questions.

In our experience this is a fair summary and indicates that whilst there are a number of concerns about the proposal expressed by some respondents, which the governors need to consider, the majority of respondents at all of the schools were clearly in favour of the proposal.

The three statutory requirements each Governing Body should satisfy itself that they have met are:

- to enhance (and definitely not adversely) affect standards
- that the consultation exercise complied with regulations and guidance
- the views and comments from respondents have been properly considered.

While there are some clear concerns raised by a small number of people the overall response to the consultation was very positive and pupils, parents and carers, and staff are overwhelmingly supportive of the proposals.

3. Recommended Action

It is clear that the view of those consulted overwhelmingly supports the proposal for becoming foundation schools and adopting the Trust.

There are understandable concerns about the rights of employees and the reassurances provided by the Local Authority (see Appendix E) now need to be implemented as outlined in the letter from the Local Authority.

The Governing Bodies should communicate this to all staff immediately they receive the assurances from the Local Authority concerning pension matters and also regarding the application of existing policies around potential redundancy costs and related matters.

There is no need to hold additional consultation.

It is also recommended that:

- the Governing Bodies communicate to all staff that the written assurances from the Local Authority regarding pay and conditions (including pension arrangements) for support staff and also regarding the application of existing policies around potential redundancy costs and related matters have been received as soon as this is forthcoming from the Local Authority.

Appendix A – Total Summary of Responses

This summary is for the Market Drayton Learning Partnership, Market Drayton

A total of 95 questionnaires were received following over 1900 consultation documents being sent to all parents/carers, staff and governors of the consulting schools as well as to a significant number of interested parties, a response of nearly 5 %.

These broke down as follows – 33 from parents; 37 from staff; 13 from Governors; 12 from Others. Copies of all responses are available for governors' perusal.

The number of responses for each question is given below together with the comments received. The background of the respondent, where known, is also given.

Q1. How do you feel about the school changing their legal status and acquiring a Trust?

| | Parents/ Carers | Staff | Governors | Other | Total |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------|-----------|-------|-------|
| I support the proposals | 19 | 27 | 12 | 9 | 76 |
| I am not sure and would like more information ... | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| I do not think the school should change category and acquire a Trust because ... | 3 | 8 | 0 | 3 | 14 |
| I support the change of category, but not acquiring a Trust because ... | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

Comments received:

Staff: I believe schools and education should steer clear of politics and you should not enter a scheme because of concerns regarding OFSTED judgments and change of categories.

Other: I support the proposals but only now that it has the backing of the unions.

Staff: I would prefer to retain the link with our Local Authority and the benefits and security this provides. For example, Shropshire LA allows staff to take a portion of their salary as untaxed childcare vouchers. If our school category changes I would hope our new employer would offer similar schemes.

Staff: I do not support the weakening of the democratic process that Trusts/Academies represent. Schools should be part of a community not a business.
Staff: The benefits to the students still haven't been clearly identified more so than at present.

Parent: Although it sounds good in theory – in practice individuals elected in future could have motives that are not totally in the interest of improving education, some may not have the competence.

Parent: Over ½ the pupils at Grove have not been to either infant or junior school in Market Drayton. Would they be at a disadvantage or “Missed out”?

Staff: We already have strong links with primary schools at the Grove and there is no reason why we cannot do this without the “Trust” status.

Staff: I do not see any benefits of changing. Everything explained to us already happens anyway. I am not comfortable not being employed by the LEA anymore and fear there would be more changes to my role.

Staff; I am not sure and would like more information on the change of employer.

Other; I do not think the school should change category because I think it would be a bad idea at the present time to join with one that was a very near failing their Ofsted.

Other; I do not think the school should change category because I think the school is doing great as it is.

Parent; I do not think that the school should change category and acquire a co-operative trust because...Market Drayton Infant/Juniors have received Good Ofsted reports and will continue to do so as a separate entity. As a co-operative trust there would be too much external interference.

Parent; I do not think the school should change category and acquire a co-operative trust because... Holidays – I believe are able to change dates/amount: Land – able to sell off: Staff – unqualified staff/pay low: These are just some of the things that have been spoken about my parents, I would like to hear more.

Staff; I am not sure and would like more information particularly on... continuity of terms and conditions for non-teaching staff. Pensions etc.

Staff; I am not sure and would like more information on employment terms/pensions.

Other; I do not think the school should change status and acquire a cooperative Trust because I don't think it would be a good move for the schools as a whole.

Q2. How do you feel about the proposed partners in the Trust?

| | Parents/ Carers | Staff | Governors | Other | Total |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------|-----------|-------|-------|
| Q2. These are the right partners | 28 | 27 | 12 | 8 | 75 |
| I am concerned about the school working with ... because ... | 5 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 10 |
| I think the school should also think about working with ... | 1 | 6 | 0 | 2 | 9 |
| No Response | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

Comments received:

Concerns / I think the school should also be thinking about working with...

Parent; I am concerned about the school working with the proposed partner because...Standards may go down at my child's school.

Parent; I am concerned about the school working with the proposed partner because... Reason in question one, worried that share staff could pull the school down, as other schools are in special measures.

Parent; I am concerned about the school working with the proposed partner because...The Grove is not a very high achieving school but I suppose it may also benefit and develop.

Other; I think the school should be working with...may look to include other schools in the future.

Other; I think the school should be working with a university such as Keele or other institution offering a wide range of degrees. Such a partner could support high aspirations for Market Drayton students who may have little perspective on future possibilities open to them. Ideally students could visit the university and engage in activities which would help them to envision possibilities of their future education at that level.

Governor; I think the school should be working with the most appropriate higher education provider, such as Keele University or MMU because the partnership aims to raise aspirations as well as standards and will hopefully work to establish further and higher education, rather than a job in a local factory, as the natural goal for the great majority of our town's young people as they leave school.

Other; I am concerned about the school working with the proposed partner because parents won't have any say in most of the decisions made.

Staff: Yes, but other feeder primaries need to be included.

Staff: Cluster primaries should definitely be included in some way in future.

Staff: I think the school should be working with more than just primary in MD so as not to ostracise all our other feeder primary schools.

Staff: I think the school should be working with the other village feeder schools as well. Because if they feel excluded they could encourage their pupils to attend other academies/schools in the surrounding areas.

Staff: Work with all feeder primary schools because the Trust partnership should just not be limited to the town schools. It would be only fair that all primaries linked to Grove are included.

Other: I believe that schools should work together, whether they are in partnership or not. More of our feeder primaries should be involved in this.

Staff; The right partner however, I hope we will still build upon our links with our other feeder schools. Possibly with the view to include them in the future.

Staff; I think the school should be working with very many more primaries and junior schools in the catchment, especially rural schools that frequently provide us with our highest achieving students.

Parent; I think the Market Drayton Learning Partnership is absolutely right for the Town schools. However I am concerned that local village schools may feel isolated. Grove also need to consider the impact on its own intake from these feeder schools. It could be negative for the Grove if these schools link with others that have a different secondary at their heart.

Parent; The school should work with an academic partner who can bring a rounded range of skills and experience that will benefit the whole curriculum e.g. Keele Uni.

Staff; I am concerned working with the proposed partner as not enough is known about who they are, what they do etc..

Parent; Also work with Shropshire Council because "Governors" do not make good decisions.

Parent; I am concerned that (1) they are over 3 different sites. (2) Less than ½ these children make up Grove.

Staff; I think the school should also be working with all feeder schools within the catchment area because we do not want to alienate our other feeder schools and possibly lose pupils.

Staff; I am concerned about working with proposed partner because of going into a 'trust'. I think working with our schools is a good thing (which we already do) I would not want to exclude other schools but don't think it needs to change from what it already is.

Staff; I think the school should also work with the other outlying feeder schools because the bigger we are the better the protection and the village feeder schools could feel isolated and look towards Newport and Wem for protection they may be able to offer, then we will lose them altogether.

Staff; Also partner with MMU we regularly have student teachers from here.

Other; I am concerned about the school working with... because they will own all the land and have the right to sell.

Other; They have the right to sell their assets change hols, uniforms ect ect which is going to end up costing parents.

Parent; I am concerned about the school working with the proposed partner because... Longlands have had damaging Ofsted reports and due to its location, have children from poorer families around Fairfields. Sharing resources with Longlands would be detrimental to MD Infants/Juniors. I do not support this. Longlands should remain separate but have a plan of how to improve standards (Behaviour, Learning etc.) without damaging the good work done by MD Infants/Juniors.

Q3. How do you feel about this vision?

| | Parents /Carers | Staff | Governors | Other | Total |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------|-----------|-------|-------|
| Q3. This is right for the school | 29 | 30 | 13 | 8 | 80 |
| I do not think ... should be a priority in the vision because | 2 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 8 |
| I would like to see ...Included in the school's vision. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| No Response | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 6 |

Comments received:

Parent; I would add working closely with key employers within the community.

Staff; Remove 'develop the skills and expertise of staff across all schools' and 'further share resources and skills between schools' as it is good to share resources but would be concerned about this as I trained in an 11 – 18 school not primary.

Staff; This is right for the school however we can still do this without being a 'Trust Co-operative'.

Parent; I would remove from the vision and key aims because inclusive democratic structures. The present democratic structures do not work – the present "governors" have shown that they are not competent at fulfilling their present roles.

Staff; I would remove sharing resources because they can be scarce already – sharing all round may benefit but could be one sided.

Parent; I would add...encourage links beyond Market Drayton (e.g. University and commercial industry) for investment in our schools and to bring specific projects to raise aspirations and achievement/understanding of the world and opportunities beyond Market Drayton !

Governor; I would add ...Increase ambition – academic and vocational of all students in Market Drayton.

Staff; I would remove from bullet point 3 'with a particular focus on our most vulnerable children' it excludes a significant majority of our students (and is out of *ore). I would add explanations of how these might happen.

Staff; I would add ...to include all staff and their representatives in the making of decisions, policies and changes.

Other; This is what we are already doing!

Staff; by including adult centred learning. This would then enable parents and students to fully understand the work being undertaken.

Other; I would remove from the vision and key aims...due to failing schools need to be on the same level as all schools.

Other; I would remove from the vision and key aims... because parents not had time to decide and all the key information.

Parent; I would remove from the vision and key aims... "Further share resources and skills between schools" I am concerned at this as this implies rotating the teaching staff between the schools. Children need continuity and will not get this if teachers are shared between the schools. This is damaging to children's learning and will decrease the value and entity of the school of MD Juniors/Infants. Sort out Longlands (Behaviour/Learning) and it will attract better calibre of teachers. My children should not suffer to help someone else's.

Other; I would add... The aims for students should include not just outcomes as in measurable attainment figures, nor just enjoyment of learning, but also developing aptitude for future learning, character and resilience.

Other; I would remove from the vision and key aims... I need more info.

Q4. Are you happy with the Trust appointing a minority of governors?

| | Parents/ Carers | Staff | Governors | Other | Total |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Q4. Yes – this sounds like a good idea | 24 | 24 | 13 | 8 | 69 |
| Yes, but I am concerned about... | 2 | 8 | 0 | 1 | 11 |
| No, I would prefer the Trust to appoint more Governors because... | 4 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 8 |
| No, I do not like this proposal because... | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| No Response | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

Comments received:

Staff; Yes but I am concerned about who those governors may be and hope they would be elected for that role not just be automatically, through current position, co-opted on.

Staff; No I do not like the proposal because I would like more LEA involvement (stay as it is currently) and would not feel comfortable with this.

Staff; No I do not like the proposal because I am not sure I would like to be employed by the governors rather than the County Council.

Parent; No as I foresee a lot of disagreements.

Parent; No I do not like the proposal because "governors' have shown they are incapable of using further powers.

Staff; No I would prefer the Trust to appoint more Governors because a wider range of views would then be considered and greater input on benefits/appropriateness to school.

Parent; Yes. Governing Bodies are changing and have more community governors – would the Trust governors be in addition to the extra community governors?

Other; Yes but concerned about ...who they are, or will be.

Staff; Yes but I am concerned about...who would these two governors be – I have little trust and faith in some of the current governors !

Staff; Yes but I am concerned about the possibility of the Trust selling off the Grove grounds.

Staff; Yes, plus governors from cluster primaries? To be kept in the loop.

Staff; Yes but I am concerned about any one person making major decisions – All decisions should involve at least one school representative.

Parent; Yes but I am concerned how these governors would be selected.

Parent; The legal minimum may not be enough.

Other; No_ I would prefer the Trust to appoint more Governors because ...not much of a debate on issues with just two governors.

Other; No, I would prefer the Trust to appoint more Governors because ... more governors to work on behalf of parents decisions.

Parent; No I do not like the proposal... I don't think that there should be a Trust.

Parent; No – I would prefer the Trust to appoint more governors because... There would be a wider range of ideas and input from the governors and sometimes I feel parents* should have more input in schools decision making and future development. *governors (outside input).

Staff; Yes, but I am concerned about the Trust will be as good as its governors.

Other; No I would prefer the Trust to appoint more Governors because would have a better decision on how schools are run.

Q5. Do you have any other comments, concerns or suggestions that we should think about before we publish formal proposals?

Comments received:

Staff; That the LGPS is being transferred for support staff. That the Grove school field – which I believe is a real UPS and becoming a rarity and is an invaluable asset is not sold off. That links with other village primary schools are quickly made by inviting them (if they wish to join) to join us. And that as soon as is possible Longlands School is brought into the fold.

Staff; Even though the letter highlights that pay and conditions (and roles) will not change my union advice suggests otherwise and this does concern me a great deal.

* The school assets being held by the Trust – could this land be sold off for other purposes? * Uncomfortable how much power the governors might have over my job (not sure how this would work) need to build more trust here after recent events in school. No box to say do you agree or disagree. I disagree.

Staff; I do not want to be employed by governors because they have powers to change our conditions of service, pay and pensions. They will have the power to give control of our school to private companies and other organisations. Also, once we become a Trust we can not revert to a community school without extreme difficulties.

Parent; I thought 'the vision' is what schools were meant to be about/doing already. What about the cost of implementing 'the vision'?

Staff; Sharing of skills etc increasingly worried. Other feeder schools feeling isolated from Grove due to partnership. Concerned about not being employed by L.A.

Parent; I would be interested to know more as this evolves and perhaps to become involved.

Staff; At no point has anybody been able to reassure me that any changes to a Trust would be beneficial to the education of the children. What I see happening in schools that have moved away from LA's is a weakening in collaborative purchasing power, an increase in corruption and a focus on the profit motive rather than on children's education. I have not answered the other questions as I do not consider them relevant to my point of view.

Governor; As the main 11- 19 school in Market Drayton, I feel that Grove should also involve all the feeder schools to join the Trust. This would include Hodnet, Moreton Saye, Norton-in-Hales, Woore, Cheswardine, Buntingsdale, Hinstek. Also Hugo Maynell who Grove has worked with.

Staff; I do not feel the original discussion with staff explaining the process was coherent. It led to confusion and staff feeling it was the start of an academy “take-over”.

Staff/Parent; Continuity between primary and secondary.

Staff/Parent (Grove/Longlands) Safety in numbers.

Governor; The power of the Trust Board. E.g. If the Grove feeder rural schools wanted to join the Trust but the rest of the Board did not consider this appropriate. Or The Board wanted to raise capital against , say part of the Grove estate – could Grove Gov be outvoted?

Governor; 1) The partnership should consider partners/associate partners carefully – I would like to see quality universities and companies attracted to influence the academic and vocational ambition of students. 2) Rural schools are essential to the success of Grove. The partnership must ensure primary feeders are included at some level within the partnership. We lose their support and view of Grove as the quality next step for their students at our peril.

Staff; I accept that this proposal makes sense in a school where staff have faith and trust in the governing body, this simply is not the case at Grove. I can not stress enough how important it is to the future of the school that the governing body be changed as a matter of urgency.

Staff; I think that a Trust co-operative is the right move within the current environment in education – where schools are being encouraged to become academies. I am also in favour of working more closely with all our feeder schools. However I would like more security in terms of contracts, working conditions and pensions particularly for our support staff – where this assurance isn't as strong as that for teaching staff. In addition I think staff and union representatives should be more involved and consulted on the changes at each stage of the progression to Trust status. I think this involvement should also continue and I understand that the co-operative is committed to working with unions.

Other; The aims in Question 3 are what we have been doing for many years and have continued to improve upon these years. The way this is put over is that this is new and that the hard work that we have all been doing has not been acknowledged. Communication is key to success. Much more of it please.

Staff Governor; My only concern is the governing body and I think that there should be a re-election of its members, particularly the Chair, to ensure the best possible ‘management’ of staff and also regain the confidence of all staff.

Staff; As the governing body would employ its school's staff, I would like there to be a re-election of school governors and chair (prior to the proposed implementation date) to ensure a high calibre of individuals to represent us.

Staff; Only further concern is that in the light of each individual governing body becoming the employer of staff at these schools, would the co-operative college ensure that these people would have the necessary training and at least some experience of managing staff? Similarly in light of the new appointments made at the Grove how can the trust ensure that total transparency between all stakeholders – especially Governors and staff is met during the transition process. We must not forget that we are doing this for the benefit of the students and any future children that come into partnership.

Governor; Trust would be a very positive development for all concerned.

Staff; - The aims in Question 3 are what we've always done and strived to continue doing. Shouldn't there be more recognition of the work that is being carried out ? – Concerns regarding Governors effectively leading schools – how much of a say will have people who do the day-to-day jobs have?

Other ; After attending both meetings concerns have been resolved. Am sure as with everything there will be teething problems. It's important to continue with good communication with parents.

Staff; Is the land protected? MDJS have a fantastic outside area. Would the Trust be able to sell it off? Concerned that any further partners may not have enough educational knowledge – we don't need to become a 'business'. All schools would need to be as open as each other in sharing skills, resources etc. How would this be ensured? Would it be ensured all of the schools have the same PD Days? This is difficult for parents if they vary.

Governor; I feel that staff need something in writing confirming that pay and conditions will stay the same, including pension and redundancy payments. Also – will future pay increases be in line with the council's?

Other; Schools should all wait 12 months or more to be all at the same level. Meetings to include all i.e. Parents, teachers, governors, trustees at a time/day to suit every-one.

Other; I think that this should be put on hold for another 12 months, give all parents to have a meeting at a time day and place that everyone could attend.

Governor; I am pleased that this proposal is being worked on in the current time scale in view of the highly uncertain political situation (both locally and nationally). I hope that the changes can be implemented promptly so that the Partnership can proceed as soon as is practical.

Staff; I look forward to becoming part of the Market Drayton Learning Partnership.

Parent; I feel that this proposal is a huge risk and not something to be rushed into or bulldozed through. I want my concerns to be taken into account along with other parent/carers who I'm sure share the same views. I work very hard to provide for my family and will continue to do so. Myself and my wife purchased our home close to Market Drayton Infants and Market Drayton Juniors (Both only a few hundred yards from our home) to enable our children to obtain a good standard education in a safe learning environment. I feel that by, and I quote, "Further share resources and skills" and "develop the skills and expertise of staff across all schools" implies sharing of staff whether rotational or otherwise between the schools. I fear my children will not have continuity of staff which is important not only for their educational learning but also for their social and emotional development. I understand that Longlands needs to be improved and a quick fix would be to send some of the Juniors/Infants teachers to Longlands and vice versa, but as I have already stated numerous times upon the questionnaire, I fear this would have a detrimental effect on Market Drayton Junior School and Market Drayton Infants. These 2 schools have worked very hard to improve their standards and should be recognised and applauded for this fact. I keep mentioning MD Infants due to the fact that Longlands is in fact an infants and primary. Longlands needs to be improved but continue to be a separate entity so not to negate on the others. Rest assured I shall be present at the parent meeting and I will make sure my fears and opinions are heard. I need to be satisfied that my children's education and development will not be put at risk or lowered as this is something I feel very strongly about and will not let this happen without my trying to prevent this. Regards. Parent/Carer.

Parent; Where can we get more info? Is there going to be further meetings to discuss?

Parent; I think a meeting is need to discuss further and hear both sides. Is there a website where we can get more information from? What do all the staff think? Very worried that this will pull in school down, as I have heard of schools doing this and going into special measure. Like everyone I just want the best for the school and everyone involved.

Parent; I feel that due to the ever increasing population of Market Drayton and the impact this is having on our schools, this proposal seems an excellent step forward to help maintain and improve the standards of our schools.

Staff; I am concerned that as a non-teaching member of staff I will not have the same terms/conditions of employment. Also I am concerned about my pension as no mention of this has been in any letters I have received.

Staff; In case of disciplinary / dispute etc that may include decisions made by the governing body what would the process be? Who/where would non-teaching staff go to resolve issues?

Governor; I look forward to the changes!

Other; Needs to be put on hold for 1 year more meetings for everyone.

Staff; I do not have any concerns at the moment as I understand my employment agreement will remain the same.

Staff; My only concern is that if there is a change of Governing Body and/or Headteacher in the future would they have the ability to change teachers terms and conditions?

Other; I remain somewhat uncertain about the practical benefits of the proposal, and would be concerned to see how the vision becomes translated into concrete actions that will benefit students, the schools and community.

Governor; While understanding that Longlands Primary School can only join the partnership as an associate member at this stage, I hope that it can become a partner, with two representatives on the Trust Board, at the earliest opportunity. This would maintain the equal status of all four schools in the Market Drayton Town Schools Collaboration and hopefully ensure that the Learning Partnership serves the whole community and all its children and young people. In the same spirit, I hope the partnership engages cooperatively with other early years providers in the town.

Appendix B – Consultation Documents

Available at the Meeting

Appendix C – Notes from Meetings

Not yet received

Appendix D – Letters of response

Letters of support from

Anne Gribbin Head of Education Improvement and Efficiency, Shropshire Council

Letters of Concern

Martin Tanner Vicar St. Mary's Church, Markey Drayton. More info required

Copies of these will be available at the Consultation Report Determination Meeting

Appendix E – Local Authority assurances letter

Date

Dear xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx,

Assurances from the Local Authority regarding pension arrangements, costs of early retirement and redundancies and related matters.

I write as Chair of the Governing Body of the xxxxxxxxx school. You will be aware that we are currently consulting on changing our school category from community to foundation and at the same time acquiring a charitable trust. The proposed change will mean that the governing body becomes the employing body on implementation day [1st December 2014]

This process is not TUPE, but somewhat similar and taking place under The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007) which provides for all rights, powers, duties and liabilities to transfer existing staff from the Local Authority to the Governing Body of the school. Employees will be employed by the school's Governing Body instead of the Local Authority. The Governing Body will continue to recognise the same teachers' associations and trade unions. The existing rights of teachers will be fully protected if the school acquires a Trust as the Governing Body will still be bound by the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

The Governing Body will set terms and conditions for its own associate (support) staff. However, terms and conditions will be safeguarded as per the prescribed regulations for existing staff and our associate (support staff) will maintain the same employment rights as Local Authority employees.

However, there are now a number of matters we require written assurances on from the Local Authority. These are as follows:

A). Liabilities affecting the governing body in respect of employment matters
The governing body may, as employer, in some circumstances have to appear at an Employment Tribunal to defend the school, if, for example, candidates for a post at the school complain that a governing body's decision or procedure discriminated against them, or if an employee complains that they had been dismissed unfairly.

We would like an assurance in writing that the local authority recognises that in cases of dismissal, it has to pay any compensation or legal costs awarded by an Employment Tribunal unless it can show that it has good reason to charge the school's delegated budget (for example, if the local authority had previously advised the governing body that an Employment Tribunal was likely to decide a dismissal was unfair).

B). Responsibility for the cost of premature retirements and compensation for redundancy.

The governing body, as the employer, can grant premature retirement to the staff for reasons of redundancy, or can terminate a member of staff's employment in the interest of the efficient discharge of their employer function. The governing body also decides on the level of compensation to grant any member of staff they may make redundant.

We would like an assurance in writing that the local authority recognises that it, as the "compensating authority" has to pay "mandatory compensation" towards a teacher's annual pension and retirement lump sum if they are granted premature retirement by the governing body. We do recognise that the local authority has the power to take the costs of premature retirement from a school's delegated budget if the authority has not agreed to the premature retirement. Similarly, the authority is empowered to take the costs of discretionary compensation for redundancy from a school's delegated budget if they have good reason to do so (an example of this might be if the local authority thought the discretionary payment in a particular case was too high in relation to its own policy).

C). Pensions of associate (support) staff.

Associate (support) staff at foundation schools are allowed to continue to be in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), if the local authority, with the consent of the school governing body, has by a statutory resolution specified them to be eligible to belong to the scheme. Otherwise, the associate (support staff) will no longer be members of the LGPS and it will be for them and the school governing body to make alternative pension arrangements. In our case, the governing body has resolved to seek to ensure continuity of pension arrangements for associate (support staff) through the local authority and the LGPS. We are now formally seeking written assurances that

- i) the local authority will agree the statutory resolution specifying that associate (support) staff currently in the LGPS will continue to be eligible to belong to the scheme. We would ask for a copy of the actual resolution and the minute of the meeting where it was agreed.
- ii) the local authority will also agree to associate (support) staff currently not in the LGPS, continue to have the right to join it going forward and that a similar offer be made to new associate (support) staff joining the school in the future.

Yours sincerely,

(Chair of Governors)

Appendix F – Draft staffing protocol

A Protocol on Employees' Terms and Conditions and Union Relations

1. The school will continue to adhere to the national and local conditions of service currently in place for its existing employees and will continue to employ new staff on these terms. All employees' continuity of service will continue, and contracts will only change in that the employer will become the Governing Body. Other contractual details will remain the same.
2. Recognition of the same trade unions and professional associations will continue, and the school will engage with the Unions in the same way in the future, in line with existing local agreements.
3. The School believes that trade unions help ensure good employee relations, will encourage employees to become union members and will inform new appointees accordingly. The School will, on request, provide the trade unions with names and work locations of new appointees.
4. The relevant unions are the teacher unions (ASCL, ATL, NAHT, NASUWT, NUT and VOICE) and the unions representing support and other professional school staff (GMB, UNISON and Unite).
5. Consultation on internal procedural matters and working and organisational arrangements will be dealt with in the first instance by discussions with union representatives within the school, who may ask for support from their local or regional officers if they think this is necessary.
6. If the school in the future considers varying existing terms and conditions, or not adopting variations agreed through the mechanism for negotiating between the Local Authority and its employees, it will notify the local authority representatives of the recognised unions, and will negotiate with them, through a forum consisting of representatives of the school and internal and/or external representatives of each of the recognised unions. In the unlikely event that there is a breakdown in negotiations on terms and conditions, the matter may be referred to the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) in order to seek resolution of the issue. Either party may determine that a matter is referred to ACAS for conciliation. Both parties may subsequently agree, where necessary, that a matter is referred to ACAS for arbitration. Whilst these procedures are being followed the School will honour the status quo ante.
7. The school will write to all employees at the date of transfer to inform them that their new employer is now the Governing Body and that their conditions of employment will not change.

Appendix G - Unison / SCS National Agreement and NASUWT/SCS Protocols –

These documents will be distributed at the Consultation Report Meeting

Appendix H – Reconstituted Composition of the Governing Body.

- C.1 The current situation of electing parent and staff governors will be maintained, as will the appointing of Local Authority governors, and the co-opting of co-opted (formally community) governors. However the Governing Body will now have a minority of governors appointed by the Trust, (foundation governors).
- C.2 As the date that this trust would legally be formed is after 1 September 2012, the new regulations – the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 will need to be adhered to. These regulations state that the governing body of every maintained school must be constituted in accordance with this regulation.

The total membership of the governing body of a maintained school must be no fewer than seven governors.

The governing body of a maintained school must include the following:

- a) at least two parent governors
- b) the headteacher unless they resign the office of governor
- c) one staff governor; and
- d) one local authority governor

The governing body may in addition appoint such number of co-opted governors as they consider necessary provided that the requirements in regulation 14 are met in respect of governing bodies of foundation and voluntary schools. **This states that: The governing body of a foundation school which is not a qualifying foundation school must also include at least 2 (but no more than 45% of the total) foundation governors.**

The total number of co-opted governors who are also eligible to be elected as staff governors under Schedule 2, when counted with the staff governor and the headteacher, must not exceed one third of the total membership of the governing body.

- C.3 The Governing Body will undergo some changes in order to comply with the appropriate legislation. The proposed structures are outlined below alongside the existing structures to allow a comparison.

| Governor type | Current | Proposed |
|--------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | |
| Local Authority | | 1 |
| Parent | | At least 2 |
| Staff | (inc HT) | 2 (inc HT) Can co-opt staff but total staff must not be more than one third of total |
| Co-opted (formally Community) | | As many as you want |
| Trust/Foundation | 0 | 2 |
| Total | | TBA |
| Associates | | TBA |