

Public Consultation – Questions and responses

Wednesday 6th June 5pm – 6pm held at Camelford Primary School

- Attended by 15 people, including staff, parents/carers, governors and 1 union representative (Sharron Lobb, negotiation secretary for Cornwall NASUWT)
- Presentation by Jon Lawrence followed by questions.
- The meeting ended at 6pm.

Q1. Will the NCLT recognise the trade union associations?

Yes

Q2. What happened to staff when the school left the LA to become a Co-operative Trust and will they TUPE across now?

The schools values its staff, they are the most important asset. No member of staff will be worse off. Due to harmonisation, some support staff will be better off as their pay grades will go up.

There will be a staff TUPE consultation meeting.

The NCLT will be following the advice of Michelmores, solicitors.

Post meeting note.

As a co-operative trust school, staff are currently employed by each school's governing body. The move away from the local authority was made in July 2010 so the proposed move to MAT will not be as great as the move from LA maintained straight to academy. The Trustees will adopt the STPCD which means there shouldn't be any difference between now and in October.

Q3. Where does the funding come from now and where will it come from after the change?

The funding comes from the Government now and it still will if the schools become a MAT, but through a different mechanism. At the moment the funding is sent to County, who have to follow recommendations from School's Forum, before dividing the money up and sending it to schools.

Q4. Will more or less funding be received?

The schools shouldn't receive any less, but funding will work differently. It seems for academies there are pots of money which are only available for academies to apply for, such as, School Improvement Development Funding.

To help make what funding we have go further the Primary Headteachers and Deputy Headteacher are already working across schools, other staff could too if they agree. There are plans to share excellence, this will provide better opportunities for children, be beneficial for staff and also save money. We have to be more efficient if we are to maximise the resources we are given.

Post meeting note.

Funding is the biggest challenge facing schools. With increased overheads schools will need to be more business-like to remain vibrant and successful.

Q5. What will happen to any fundraising?

Money raised through fundraising will stay with that particular school. The PTAs work hard and it is important these funds stay in their school for the benefit of their children.

Talking of extras, by working collaboratively it has been possible for one primary school to receive £34K of IT equipment. The School Business Manager has been very successfully looking into funding opportunities for all – we want all schools to have the best possible.

The schools will not be in competition with each other, but helping one another. The whole community is responsible for the education of its children, regardless of the school.

Q6. It feels like the culture now is just right. The co-operative trust didn't work due to one or two 'blockers' and no power to do anything about this. At the moment the individual schools have autonomy which is great, but how can the NCLT protect itself against any 'blockers' in the future and maintain its vision.

A Shadow Trust Board has been set up and is working its way through various procedures and documents; this includes the Scheme of Delegated Authority which details at which level any future decisions will be made. This will be reviewed annually. This is the key document which sets down power and gives the MAT clout to take decisions.

The key players are the Trustees, who's skills and qualities will be assessed before appointing. Trustees take decisions for the benefit of all schools not one school.

As most of the Trustees will not work in school, there will be advisory groups who they will rely on for information.

The NCLT does not want to grow too much and any other local schools looking to join will need to subscribe to the NCLT values.

Post meeting note.

The NCLT can only be successful if all schools are successful, this demands fair and equitable treatment. This means a change in mindset/outlook from competition (my school) to collaboration (our schools) – collaboration will mean some compromise and relinquishing some authority for the common good. Trustees must get the SoDA nailed down and ensure local governing boards can still play the right role.

Comment by NASUWT Rep

Across the 5 schools there are several NASUWT members, the MAT can apply for funding for training for a school representative. It is not suggested there is a need and there doesn't need to be an issue, it can be used just for staff welfare; training can include dignity at work, H&S, mental health. They can be just a point of contact.

It was noted, due to the lack of union representation in school, the school has set up its own staff welfare group to provide a venue for staff to raise/address any issues. This works well. The staff are valued, looked after and supported and they in turn do their best for the students.

The PowerPoints and questions will be uploaded to the website to accompany the consultation paper; this paper contains many other questions and highlights other concerns parents/carers might have.