

SCHOOLS FINANCE GROUP
Notes of meeting
on 3 January 2018 at Larkbeare House

		Attendance		
		3/01/18	8/11/17	12/7/17
DCC				
Adrian Fox (Chair)	Head Accountant (Education & Learning)	✓	✓	✓
Simon Niles	Children's Services Strategic Manager	Apologies	Apologies	✓
Heidi Watson-Jones	Executive Personal Assistant		✓	✓
Olivia Mitchell	Apprentice Personal Assistant		✓	
Heather A Bingham	Service Support Officer	✓		
DAPH – PRIMARY HEADS				
David Barnett	Chudleigh Primary	✓		
Jonathan Bishop	Broadclyst Primary	Apologies	✓	Apologies
Alun Dobson	Marwood Primary	✓	✓	✓
Jamie Stone	Denbury Primary	✓	✓	✓
Paul Walker	First Federation	Apologies	✓	✓
DASH – SECONDARY HEADS				
Daryll Chapman	Okehampton College	✓	✓	Apologies
Lorraine Heath	Uffculme College	✓	✓	Apologies
Gareth Roscoe	The Park Community School	Apologies	✓	
Matthew Shanks	Education South West	✓	✓	✓
SHAD – SENITIENT (SPECIAL SCHOOLS)				
Keith Bennett	Marland School	Apologies	✓	Apologies
Jacqui Warne	Learn to Live Federation	✓	✓	Apologies
DAG – GOVERNORS				
Faith Butler	Special	Apologies	✓	Apologies
Malcolm Dobbins	Primary	✓	✓	✓
Jill Larcombe	Secondary	Apologies		Apologies
Alex Walmsley	Secondary	✓	✓	✓
EARLY YEARS PROVIDERS				
Gemma Rolstone	Early Years – NDNA for PVI providers			✓
Sandra Barnett	Early Years / for PVI providers	✓	✓	
In Attendance:				
Julia Foster	DCC - SEN Strategy Manager	✓	✓	✓
Katrina Callcutt	DCC – Finance	✓	✓	
Dawn Stabb	Head of Education & Learning	Apologies	✓	

1. Item/Focus: Minutes and Matters Arising from meeting on 8 November 2017

Discussion:

Item 2: Growth

- JB queried about the timeframe for growing schools and AF advised that the treatment will be

either for 3 years or until the school reaches 70% capacity, and after that the school will go onto the standard October to October census funding. If the group wish to review this they can; JS felt there was no need to review it.

Item 3: SEND/High Needs

- It was advised that the brokerage meeting had been postponed but would now take place in January 2018.

Item 4: DSG Month 6 Monitoring

- The Information not yet through from Clare, JS to chase.

Item 5: Consultation Responses

- The EH4MH funding of £60k has been agreed. AF to follow up with DS about the planned usage of this funding and if all funding being used for education - question for JO next week.

Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:	Minutes were agreed as an accurate record.
Action:	AF to follow up provision of funded care plans for children requiring care assistance and intimate care within school with DS. JS to chase Clare for info.

2. Item/Focus: DSG monitoring – month 8

Discussion:

- AF reported a net overspend of just over £3m; overall net deficit position to be carried forward to 2018/19. AF pointed out the ring-fenced carried forwards column in Table 1 on page 1. £46k High Needs Funding related to hospital education; £199k Early Years is for the Pupil Premium for summer term and De-delegated budgets £853k. AF highlighted that the de-delegated budgets were £1.965m at the start of the year. Current projections mean that Copyrights have risen by £8k to £146k., whilst Maternity has dropped by £30k to £244k; Trade Unions by £47k to £79k and Contingency by £963k to £384k. Rise of £8k in year for copyright licences; maternity down £30k and TU down £47k. These will be reviewed as part of the carry forward exercise in the March Meeting.
- Central provision over spend £308k related to the growth fund. Early Years under spend of £80k was largely due to releasing the funding for nursery growth, £10k of which is ring-fenced as Trinity Primary will open in the summer term.
- Risks for 17/18 how to deal with the deficit £3m to be recovered in 2018/19; continued pressure on SEN provision and shortfall in growth funding for new school provision.

Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:	Report noted
Actions:	•

3. Item/Focus: SEND/High Needs

Discussion:

- Katrina reported on a £2.8m overspend.
- Key areas - Alternative Provision (e.g. Schools Company) – increase of 51 placements from where the budget was set.
- £70k increase last month - pupils going through from October.
- Incidental budget not being spent.
- SEN mainstream overspend of £433k. JS suggested this needs monitoring to show that a saving is being made and would like narrative for next SFG meeting. JF will help Katrina with this.
- Overspend on SEN SLAs and £120k on therapy costs (because more children needing this).
- £235k overspend on maintained special schools; core offer agreed and backdated to April,

more pupils there than budgeted for.

- £1.6m overspend on independent special schools – increase in price and number of pupils. JS queried price variance – Katrina will look at this. Alex asked if all LAs have similar problems? JS queried budgeting when it can increase so much (e.g. £770k in two months)? JW suggested that if all LAs are experiencing this, then we need to take control, setting out the commissioned arrangements and getting a business plan written by a top CEO because there is a need to get smarter about what is on offer. Could this go back to the Government through F40, e.g. that there is no pricing pressure in post-18 market. Could the pre-18 and post-18 costs be compared? JF confirmed DCC does look at average prices and providers, and there is benchmarking for High Needs, criteria within S251, and, again, DCC are looking at this. DC suggested the same children need to be tracked from pre-18 to post-18 costs, and then argue how increasing costs can be justified. JW said there could be difficult conversations about what is education need. DC sought clarification about joint and sole funded pupils, e.g. education are paying for 57 placements but there are only 13 where someone else is also contributing. We need to be clear about what should be funded by care and what by education? JW concurred, there is a need to articulate what education will and won't do for post-18 and look at what is being funded by care under the sole-funded budget. AD interested in looking into the post-18 funding and find out from other LAs what they pay for in order to get clarity. JW felt that an expectation of outcomes post-18 needs to be set. DC said that, on a comparison of costs, it might be worth putting in post-18 provision. JW explained that for their 10 young people, social care and families pay an element, so that what they provide is very similar to what the independent sector provides but for about half the cost. With 138 children in independent schools – how much growth are we looking at? JF advised that 69 pupils a year are going into post-19, at an average cost of £40k. We need to start having this debate, and setting parameters. DC suggested that Mel Stride MP – be invited to this meeting to get this point across, adding that, for example, 4 year olds are, potentially, not getting what they should as some of that funding is going to post-18. The group agreed that there is a need to raise awareness and start a dialogue. AF advised that F40 responses seemed to want the focus to shift to HNB pressures for LAs and therefore lobby Government accordingly. Councillor McInnes has shown interest in having greater involvement with F40. It was agreed that we should model how much social care should be paying and JF confirmed we could do that.
- Finally, Katrina reported there was an £87k overspend on Sports Centres.

**Key Decision/
Issues for DEF:**

Actions:

- **KC/JF** Comparisons for pre and post 16-18 are needed, using anonymised case studies, and which children from our system to use need to be identified?
- **KC/JF** Identify what other funding is produced for this, eg some from FE?
- **KC/JF** Produce a breakdown of care costs in sole-funded pre- and post-18.
- Arrange for the MP, Mel Stride, to be invited to this meeting – **AF** to check with Dawn Stabb about doing this, if not MS suggested inviting him to a Phase meeting.
- **JF** - Produce a forecast for children we know about now for up to 25.
- **JF** – what is education and what is care? JF working with SHAD on this.
- Endorsing F40s move towards High Needs.

4. Item/Focus: Growth policy – In Simon Niles' absence, it was agreed to carry this item over to the March meeting.

Discussion:

- Very briefly, AF touched on points raised by the group, stating that the deficit will roll forward. Where Academies have received growth funding for 2017/18 we have funded 7/12ths in current year and 5/12ths funded next,
- With regards to seeking approval of the additional £1m will be postponed to the SFG meeting in March.

Key Decision/

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Issues for DEF:	
Action:	•
5. Item/Focus: Financial Planning 2018/19	
Discussion:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard copy of financial planning document passed round by AF and talked through. Rise of £11.8m. HNB rise of £1.1m across the two sectors, mostly due to changes with pupils. EY block has not changed from 17/18 funding formula. No major shifts from previous calculations, factors stated in consultation period planned to remain as projected. JS queried how high needs block in total is calculated, eg how many children then times by what cost to arrive at £5.8m and Katrina said this was the £10k a place. JF said it is time-lagged, and includes some Devon learners in other authorities, as well as some Plymouth learners in Devon. • HNB 18/19 table – movement from previous year and in-year management actions not including carry forward from 17/18. JS expressed some concern about the £1.1m management actions saving, stating a need to be realistic. DC asked if the previous planned savings had become a reality? Katrina said there were 17/18 savings for MyPlans. AF advised after the break that as part of budget prep 18/19 we have seen the Myplans drop by 800 and EHCPs rise by 400. • JW asked about free school meals – are we missing out on pupil premium money coming in and if we are can we make it easier for families to sign up? • AF advised that management actions comes down to the service and MS asked what are the barriers? • LH said there must come a point when a pupil's plan is more about care, rather than education. • DC asked if sole-funded plans are signed off by an educator? JF said education is in section F which includes Ed Psych recommendations, adding that there is a need to quality assure EHCPs. • JF advised that there is a meeting on 26.1.18 to discuss mainstream primary to mainstream secondary and she will send out the details. The group felt SENCOs might be the most appropriate colleagues to attend. 	
Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:	
Action:	AF/DS – to circulate the management actions referred to. JF – to send out details of the meeting on 26.1.18.
6. Item/Focus: Mutual Fund	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AF reported on a £375k surplus in-year on premiums received, and the plan is to give a rebate to those schools which have taken up the service. 17/18 has seen a drop in claims, staying around £60k each month in the summer term, then down to £25-40k from September. Claims are not so large but much more short-term. JS asked if we now need to go back to paying out 100% and making it easier for everyone? It was felt that reducing premiums for new joiners and teachers by 10%, and support staff by 2.2% was good news that should be promoted. • DC counter proposed that the paying of claims should remain at 50% at time of claim and 50% at the end of the financial year as there may be a swing next year. This was agreed to be the continued process. 	

Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:	
Action:	AF to promote as above.
7. Item/Focus: Items for DEF on 15 November 2017	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Month 8 monitoring report - Budget planning for information 	
8. Item/Focus: Any Other Business	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There being no other business the meeting closed for lunch at 12.15. 	

Next meetings:

Wednesday 7 March 2018 from 9.15am – Larkbeare (Exe Room)

Wednesday 23 May 2018 from 9.15am – Larkbeare (Exe Room)

Wednesday 18 July 2018 from 9.15am – Larkbeare (Exe Room)