

**DEVON EDUCATION FORUM
(Devon's Schools Forum)**

18 January 2012

Present:-

Schools Members

Primary School Headteachers

Mr M Boxall	Exeter Montgomery Primary
Mrs H Nicholls	South Brent Primary
Mr P Walker	Sidmouth St Nicholas CE Primary
Mrs L Wells	Lydford Primary
Mrs J Baker	Barnstaple Orchard Vale Primary (<i>Academy member</i>)

Primary School Governors

Mrs P Barnard	Sandford Primary
Mrs A Blewett	Kings Nympton Primary
Mr R Butler	Axminster Primary
Mr M Dobbins	Exmouth Marpool Primary
Mrs Y Short	Newton and Teign Federation

Secondary School Headteachers

Mr D Chapman	Okehampton CC
Mr D Fitzsimmons	Holsworthy CC
Mr A Lovett	Tiverton High School
Mr D Sharratt	Braunton CC
Mr R Newton-Chance	Crediton, Queen Elizabeth's CC (<i>Academy substitute member</i>)

Secondary School Governors

Mr M Canham	Barnstaple The Park School
Mr I Courtney	The Dartmoor Federation Chairman
Mrs C Williams	Newton Abbot Coombeshead CC
Dr C Woodhouse	The Axe Valley CC
Commander M Bamborough	Gt Torrington School (<i>Academy member</i>)

Special School Headteacher

Mr M Dean	Bidwell Brook School
Mrs J Warne	Ellen Tinkham School

Special School Governor

Mrs Faith Butler	Marland School
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Nursery School

Mrs S Baker	Westexe (Nurseries)
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Non-Schools Members

Ms D Booth	Officer with responsibility for Vulnerable Children
Mr N Fowler	Exeter Diocesan Board of Education (CE)
Mr M Gurney	Teachers Consultative Committee
Ms C Noel	Private Voluntary and Independent Early Years
Mr J Peart	14-19

Observers

Councillor C Channon	Cabinet Member - Schools & Learning
Councillor V Newcombe	Chairman - People's Scrutiny Committee

Apologies

Councillor A Davis	Cabinet Member - Children's Services
Mr V Game	Teign School (<i>Academy member</i>)
Ms E Lincoln	Private Voluntary and Independent Early Years
Mr P Mantell	Exeter Diocesan Board of Education (CE)

575 Minutes

DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2011 be signed as a correct record, subject to an amendment to the penultimate line of the discussion paragraph, ie "...schools were invited to submit *their completed survey on music provision needs/wants (delete bids)* to the Devon Music Service by 13 January to be considered as part of the Devon bid response."

576 Norse – Cleaning and Catering Joint Venture (minute 569)

The Head of Education & Learning circulated a draft letter to schools to remind them of their obligations when considering their future cleaning and catering services, as discussed at the last meeting of the Forum.

DECISION:

that members comments at the meeting be incorporated and any further comments be passed to the Head of Education & Learning by 19 January 2012.

ACTION: Head of Education & Learning (Sue Clarke)

577 Matters Arising from the Last Meeting and Report back on Issues Raised with Cabinet

DISCUSSION:

(a) Finance Update (Devon Education Forum 7 December 2011, minute 571)

The Cabinet Member - Schools & Learning reported that the Cabinet on 11 January 2012 had approved the Forum's minutes of the last meeting, including minute 571(a) simplifying for 2012/13 the schools funding formula in respect of funding for free school meals and dual use sports facilities and minute 571(c) in respect of the school budget allocations for 2012/13, the issuing of a single budget for schools in Federations.

(b) Learning and Development Partnership (LDP) Joint Venture Preferred Bidder (Cabinet 11 January 2012 minute 435)

The Cabinet Member - Schools & Learning reported that Babcock International Group PLC had been announced as the joint venture preferred bidder and that a contract for the delivery of education and inclusion services would be awarded with effect from 1 April 2012, subject to the satisfactory resolution of legal issues.

578 Head of Education & Learning's Update

DISCUSSION:

The Head of Education & Learning tabled a summary and updated members on:-

(a) Learning and Development Partnership (LDP) Joint Venture and SDA Value 2012-13;

The transition stage had now started with LDP and DCC officers working with Babcock in preparation for the start of the contract on 1 April 2012. The Devon Education Fund was £50k per annum and Forum for Learning & Achievement (FLA) and the Schools Finance Group (SFG) were to consider how this fund should be managed and whether this fund was for all Devon schools or all Devon maintained schools.

There were now themed service delivery agreements (SDAs) with an emphasis on vulnerable children and support services to schools and to provide a broad platform for trading services with schools.

(b) Headlines (September-December 2011)

8 Devon schools had been judged to be outstanding by Ofsted during the period, 13 good with good capacity to improve and 4 schools were moving out of Ofsted categories. The Head of Education & Learning expressed her gratitude to school governors and staff in bringing about these results and in particular those schools moving out of Ofsted categories. This was against a background of government announcements on underperforming teachers and new Ofsted categories of coasting schools. Devon was continuing to develop its programme of support to vulnerable schools. New DfE guidance to schools on underperforming teachers was not statutory and the associations were considering preparing their own model.

(c) Out of Year Groups 2010-11

The Head of Education & Learning presented data of primary and secondary pupils being placed in year groups below the year group appropriate for their date of birth. These included pupils who were on various stages of the statementing process as well as those not included in statementing stages. Careful consideration needed to be given to any consequences for pupils placed out of year (eg that pupils did not generally catch up at any stage of their education, as well as consequences for post 16 funding, further education funding, funding at age 19 and apprenticeship funding). Guidance would be issued to raise awareness of schools and parents. A very small minority of schools with a very high level of out of year group children would be looked into further.

(d) NEETS (Not in Education, Employment or Training)

The Head of Education & Learning presented a snapshot at November 2011 which indicated for 16-18 year olds, 5.6% were NEETS, 1.6% were not known and 82.9% were in learning. Whilst there was good participation in learning in 16-17 year olds, there were higher levels of NEETS for 18-19 year olds. Devon had not performed as well as its neighbours, but for 18-24 year olds was in line with national statistics.

(e) SEN Audit – Initial Findings

There were a number of initial findings from school returns in the tabled summary and the SEN audit would be looked into in more detail by the Forum for Learning & Achievement and the Schools Finance Group since the audit was highlighting some very helpful information to inform LDP commissioning activity and 30% schools had spent less than their allocation for SEN.

(f) Early Help Strategy – Response to the Munro Report on Child Protection

This focussed on early help for children and young people in troubled families whose well being and safety was at risk.

DECISION:

that further work on the SEN audit findings be undertaken and reported back as appropriate.

ACTION: (c) out of year guidance (e) SEN information and audit analysis
Head of Education & Learning (Sue Clarke)

579 Annual Budget Consideration – Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2012-13

DISCUSSION:

The Forum considered the report of the Head of Education & Learning (DEF/12/01), together with the Schools Finance Group (SFG) minutes of 4 January 2011.

School Funding Reform Consultation;
Academies funding transfer consultation (Local Authorities Central Services Equivalent Grant LACSEG);

Month 8 Budget Monitoring position 2011/12 and recommended allocation to schools of part of the forecast balance of DSG;
Overview of Financial Settlement;
Budget proposals for 2012/13;
LMS scheme changes post consultation;
Employment Tribunal and similar costs.

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Budget monitoring 2011/12 for month 8 indicated that without further action the DSG could be in surplus at the year end by approximately £2.3m (including £1.1m carried forward from 2010/11). SFG recommended distributing £1.3m to schools and academies during 2011/12 and the use of the new pupil premium methodology applicable from 2012/13 (paragraphs 4.3 and 4.4 of the report). This would be subject to a separate report to Cabinet in March.

With regard to the minimum funding guarantee (MFG), SFG recommended that 0% MFG was applied for 2012/13, ie the same rate as applied in 2011/12, provided this was affordable when final numbers were known (paragraph 5.4).

For 2012/13 a different DSG LACSEG methodology was proposed where relevant budgets were reduced in proportion to the DSG recoupmnt for LACSEG. This would lead to reductions of at least 33% on LAGSEG relevant budgets both at the start of the year and during the year as further schools converted. All budget figures given were gross prior to reductions for academies, excepting for post-16. An Academy member raised his concern on discussions with Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) and the lack of clarity over LACSEG and discrepancies between authorities in the year on year reduction in LACSEG applicable to Academies. Devon's year on year reduction was greater than for other LAs. The County Treasurer had and would continue to have further discussions with DfE and the YPLA and will as part of the completion of the s251 budget statement for 2012/13 also keep the LACSEG methodology under review.

The secondary academy school governor also reported he had confirmation from DfE that the increased pupil premium would be applied to Academies from April 2012 even although Academy funding normally runs from September to August.

The TCC representative referred to the allocation proposed for phase associations from the centrally held budgets (section 8) and resources also needed for trade union duties and whether academies should continue to benefit should they withdraw from the central fund. A facilities agreement meeting had recently taken place between academies and six teacher unions and regional trade union officers were to provide further details based on the unions' preferred option ie continuing with the current practise of a levy charge per teacher.

With regard to Local Learning Communities (paragraph 8.3) clarification was sought as to whether the 5% taken out of this budget in Spring 2011 had been repaid and the County Treasurer would clarify and report back to SFG.

The consultation responses on the Local Management of Schools (LMS) scheme changes generally supported the proposals (section 9 and annex B). The majority of schools already used the standard DCC annual budget return which helped reduce central overheads and enabled a consistent analysis; SFG also recommended that at a future SFG meeting further consideration was given to the levying of an administration charge to schools submitting non standard returns.

SFG also commended to the Forum the Financial Intervention Panel Schools (FIPS) position on future payment associated with compromise agreements, employment tribunal and similar costs (paragraph 10 and annex C).

DECISION:

- (a) that the static position of the DSG per pupil funding and the increased pupil premium funding (section 5 of the report) be noted;
- (b) that the following be approved:-
 - (i) budget recommendations in sections 7 and 8 and appendix A of the report

(ii) the minimum funding guarantee (MFG) remain at 0% (provided this was affordable when final numbers were confirmed);

(c) that a one-off allocation of £1.3m be made to all schools from the current DSG (2011/12) balance, on the basis of 2012/13 pupil premium formula, with a further report to Cabinet;

(d) that the LMS scheme changes as previously consulted all proceed, to be implemented by the start of 2012/13;

(e) the proposals with respect to the attribution of employment tribunal and similar costs in annex C of the report be approved, subject to an amendment to the last paragraph of the first page ie:-

“In cases where a maintained school has failed to seek and consider advice...” be amended to:- “In cases where a maintained school has failed to seek and follow advice...”

(f) that schools and Local Learning Communities be given guideline figures (including budget calculator and the distribution of £1.3m one off allocation) at the earliest opportunity;

(g) that the County Treasurer also follow up on queries raised relating to LACSEG methodology and repayment of 5% LLC funding.

ACTION: County Treasurer (John Holme, Caroline Armstrong)

580 **Performance of Schools – Interim Annual Schools and Settings Performance Report**

DISCUSSION:

The Forum received an updated interim annual report by Keystages F-KS5 as tabled. The final report was anticipated in March 2012. The full report would also include analysis of free school meal pupil performance and pupil premium analysis, some data for which was not yet available. Members welcomed the easily accessible format of the document.

DECISION:

that the free school meal and pupil premium analysis be added to the final report and Devon's statistical neighbours be added to the final report glossary.

ACTION: Head of Education & Learning (Suzie Winter)

581 **Devon Education Forum Seminar, 7 December 2011 – Actions and Matters Arising**

DISCUSSION:

The Forum considered the notes of the seminar and action to be taken arising therefrom.

With regard to Local Learning Communities (LLCs), FLA and SFG were keen to support continued funding to LLCs for 2012/13 and would develop priority activity areas on which LLC budgets could be targeted. The allocation method for the future would also be considered, as well as how governors could be involved in LLCs.

DAPH also suggested a one-off task & finish group meeting to look at this Forum's standing groups structure to consider if it was still appropriate given the restructuring of DCC and changing education landscape. The Cabinet Member - Schools & Learning would also discuss at the Local Admissions Forum the duplication of some of its work by the School Organisation & Policy Forum as discussed at the seminar.

DECISION:

that a one-off task & finish group meeting consider this Forum's standing group structure, with two members from each association.

ACTION: Head of Education & Learning (Sue Clarke)/Office of the County Solicitor (Fiona Rutley)

582 Standing Groups etc

(a) The Forum received the following minutes of its standing groups:-

(i) School Finance Group (SFG)

Minutes of the meeting held on 4 January 2012.

Budget matters (items 4 and 5 of the SFG minutes) had been considered under the Annual Budget Consideration minute 579 above).

The County Treasurer also highlighted SFG's recommendation on funding for provision of Broadband to all schools including academies (item 2). The subsidy was originally available to all Devon schools and therefore not subject to LACSEG.

DECISION:

that all schools (including academies) receive a subsidy to cover 80% of true cost associated with the provision of Broadband connectivity at baseline level, involving in-year reimbursement to academies beginning 2011/12.

(ii) School Organisation and Policy Forum (SOPF)

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2012.

With regard to Asbestos Management (item 3), SOPF had endorsed a proposal to remove academies from the DCC asbestos inspection service due to legal issues around liability. NPS would offer a full alternative service to academies through their commercial arrangements. A view expressed was that some lease arrangements and liabilities were unclear. It was however the responsibility of academies to take their own legal advice on liabilities for asbestos in their property.

(iii) Forum for Learning and Achievement (FLA)

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2012.

SEN data (item 6) showed although the number of children on roll had decreased overall, the number of statements had increased. Devon appeared to have a high level of statemented need compared to the national average and work was in progress to understand this growth and further expected growth and consider special school places in response.

FLA had also endorsed the plan (item 8) for symposium events for maintained schools to gather good examples of practice of new areas of education and associations would encourage attendance at these events.

(b) Representations and progress from various standing and task & finish groups

nil

(c) Other Groups

(i) 14-19 Strategic Leadership Group

Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2011.

(ii) **Local Admissions Forum**

No meeting.

583 Dates of Future Meetings

Meetings to commence at 10am at County Hall, Exeter (unless otherwise indicated)

Wed 21 March 2012

Tu 10 July 2012 (replaces W 27 June 2012 – clash with Devon Music Mix)

W 26 September 2012

W 21 Nov 2012 all day - seminar for Forum members only and Forum meeting

W 23 Jan 2013

W 20 March 2013.

The meeting started at 10am and finished at 12.10pm

The Schools Forum web is www.devon.gov.uk/schoolsforum