

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

24 June 2015

Present:-

Schools Members

Primary School Headteachers

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| Mr J Bishop | Broadclyst Primary (<i>Academy member</i>) |
| Mr A Dobson | Marwood Primary |
| Mr J Stone | Denbury Primary |
| Mr P Walker | Sidmouth CE Primary |

Primary School Governors

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| Mrs A Blewett | Kings Nympton Primary |
| Mr M Dobbins | Exmouth Marpool Primary |
| Mrs P Furnival | Ivybridge, Woodlands Park Primary |
| Mrs M Wallis | Whimble Primary |

Secondary School Headteachers

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| Mr D Chapman | The Dartmoor Federation |
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Secondary School Governors

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| Mr I Courtney | The Dartmoor Federation Chairman |
| Ms J Elson | Exmouth CC (<i>Academy member</i>) |
| Mr M Juby | Braunton Academy (<i>Academy member</i>) |
| Mr A Walmsley | Exeter, St James |

Special School Headteacher

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| Ms C May | Pathfield School |
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Special School Governor

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| Mrs F Butler | Marland School |
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Alternative Provision

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| Mrs V Skelton | Schools Company North Devon Academy (<i>Academy member</i>) |
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Non-Schools Members

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| Mr J Staddon | Teachers Consultative Committee (<i>substitute member</i>) |
| Mrs T de Bernhart-Dunkin | 16-19 |
| Mrs G Rolstone | Early Years Private, Voluntary and Independent providers (EY PVI) |

Observers

| | |
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| Mrs D Fontana | Exmouth Exeter Road Primary (<i>substitute member – no voting</i>) |
| Councillor J McInnes | Cabinet Member - Children, Schools & Skills |

Apologies

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| Mrs B Alderson | Teachers Consultative Committee |
| Mr M Smith | The Axe Valley CC |
| Mr R Haring | Ivybridge CC (<i>Academy member</i>) |
| Mr P Mantell | Exeter Diocesan Board of Education |
| Mr M Shanks | Coombeshead CC (<i>Academy member</i>) |

742 Minutes

DECISION:

that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2015 be signed as a correct record.

743 Fair National Funding for Education

DISCUSSION:

The Chairman decided that the Forum should consider this item as a matter of urgency in order that Members may be made aware of correspondence received yesterday from f40 lobby group of the lower funded Local Authorities seeking to appeal for action at local level at this important stage of the campaign for fairer education funding.

It was important for school responses to include individual school specific real impact examples illustrating the current funding pressures in a low funded authority. This included primary, secondary, early years and the high needs sectors. The County Treasurer would forward a brief and details to the phase associations for dissemination to schools and to Forum members as soon as possible for responses and evidence needed by early July.

This approach was one of a series of waves of lobbying now gaining momentum and the County Treasurer was arranging a small, one off group of schools, providers and the LA to coordinate a Devon approach to the Call for Evidence on the Costs of Early Years provision.

DECISION:

that the County Treasurer forward details to the phase associations and Forum members and establish a small, one off group to coordinate a Devon approach as outlined above.

ACTION:

County Treasurer (Karen Powlesland/John Holme)

744 Membership

DISCUSSION:

Members welcomed new members:-
Ms Deborah Fontana (Exmouth Exeter Road) – DAG Primary *Substitute* Schools Member
Mr Mark Juby, DAG (Braunton Academy) – Secondary Academy Member

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

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746 Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) – First Year of Reforms, Progress and Position Statement

DECISION:

The Forum considered the report of the Head of Education & Learning (DEF/15/11) on the first year in Devon following reforms outlined in the statutory SEND Code of Practice introduced in September 2014 enabling parents and young people to influence the support they received in Education Health and Social Care. Devon was on track to meet the 1 April 2018 statutory requirement for local authorities to transfer all children and young people with SEN statements to the new SEN and Disability system following a “transfer review”.

Discussion also included that most of the new allocations and workload was within the primary sector for children not already in the system. Any delay in meeting statutory EHCP targets was often in confirming placements. For children requiring residential placements, whilst education elements were agreed and paid there was some delay in health and social care elements. The Head of Education & Learning undertook to follow up any reoccurring issues with the Cabinet Member - Children, Schools & Skills.

Whilst not without teething problems the new process had been generally successful with the SEN 0-25 team and schools working together as the new process developed. Feedback and engagement of schools was essential for ongoing improvements for learner needs, support, provision and resources.

DECISION:

(a) that the positive implementation of the SEND to support children and young people with SEN or Disabilities in school, as well as the SEN transfer process implications for schools and colleges be noted;

(b) that the Head of Education & Learning follow up any reoccurring implementation issues with the Cabinet Member - Children, Schools & Skills;

(c) that an updated report breakdown be circulated to members.

ACTION:

Head of Education & Learning (Sue Clarke (b), Julia Foster(c))

747 Head of Education & Learning Update

DISCUSSION:

The Head of Education & Learning reported (summary tabled) on:-

Ofsted Inspections Spring/Summer Term - showed an improving picture in Requiring Improvement to Good categories. Devon was above the national average for both primary and secondary learners in Good/Outstanding schools 87/80% by phase respectively.

Permanent Exclusions - over 50% all exclusions were at Key Stage (KS) 4 and Devon higher than DfE national rates. KS2 permanent exclusions declining. Pupil characteristics: majority boys, nearly 60% permanent exclusions were children on free school meals, 10% with special needs statements. Introduction of supported managed moves (eg for children with significant issues outside schools) including funding to schools to support reintegration and interventions showed almost 100% successful move (compared to nearly 40% success for all managed moves).

Missing Monday meetings - comprehensive child non-attendance monitoring of least/more complex cases, missing links and ways forward, early help to get pupils back into full time education as early as possible.

Education and Adoption Bill - implications for maintained schools causing concern (estimated 1000 schools nationally) including provision to speed up conversion to academies and intervention.

Safeguarding - good progress made. Members commented on safeguarding training for parents (eg online safety), safeguarding information for year 6 transfer to secondary pupils, message to schools and governors re safeguarding audits, need to have schools training in place for this autumn term.

Holiday Hunger (Free School Meals in school holidays) - trials and projects for main school summer holidays, DAPH survey.

DECISION:

that further CSE safeguarding guidance for schools be sent before the autumn term and followed up in September.

ACTION:

Head of Education & Learning (Sue Clarke)

748 Finance Update

DISCUSSION:

The Forum considered the report of the Head of Education & Learning and County Treasurer (DEF/15/09).

The Forum also noted the respective minutes of the Schools Finance Group (SFG) of 13 May 2015.

The report (DEF/15/09) covered:-

- DSG (Dedicated Schools Grant) 2014/15 Outturn (draft)
- Allocation of Carry Forward from 2014/15
- Early Years Free School Meals
- Mutual Fund Position.

The draft outturn position for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) was an underspend of £30,923k, of which there was a schools carry forward balance of £20.9m. This compared with £17.7m on a like for like basis (after adjusting for in-year academy conversions and closing schools) in 2013/14, a net increase in £3.2m. The allocation of the carry forward underspend from 2014/15 final proposals would be brought to a future Forum meeting once the final position was confirmed. The Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations did not allow for in-year distributions to schools - any redistribution of funding had to go through the school funding formula in 2016/17 financial year. Members expressed disappointment that unallocated carry forward may not be able to be used for schools therefore until April 2016 and asked the County Treasurer to further consider any other possible options and report to the Schools Finance Group at its meeting next week.

DECISION:

(a) that the Dedicated Schools Grant 2014/15 outturn position (subject to Statement of Accounts sign off) as set out in section 1 of report (DEF/15/09) be noted;

(b) (i) that the following allocation of the carried forward under spend from 2014/15 as set out in section 2 (and table 5) of the report be noted* :-

| Budget line | Amount £'000 | Notes | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|--|-----|
| Schools balances | 20,923 | Automatically carried forward in Individual School Budgets | 2.2 |
| De-delegated budgets | (414) | Predominantly schools in financial difficulty and copyright licences – roll forward of surplus or deficit into 2015/16 | 2.3 |
| Local learning communities | 1,301 | Spend planned over an academic year | 2.4 |
| Phase associations | 241 | This includes £72k of ring fenced DAPH income | 2.5 |
| Growth fund/ Falling rolls fund | 2,693 | Planned strategy to build sufficient revenue budget to cover start up and diseconomy costs of new and expanding schools. | 2.6 |

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| High needs contingency commitments from 14/15 | 450 | To meet agreed costs related to SNIPS, reorganisation and additional places | 2.7 |
| Primary Support Partnerships | 276 | Spend planned over an academic year | 2.8 |
| Support for inclusion, including alternative provision | 625 | Funding to support inclusion for hard to place pupils, to support schools with managed moves and to fund schools admitting excluded pupils | 2.9 |
| Atkinson Unit | 34 | 2 year commitment only – school admin support | 2.10 |
| Commissioning “My Plan” conversion | 150 | To provide direct support for providers (schools and colleges) through the transfer and application process | 2.11 |
| Independent Travel Training (ITT) | 80 | To develop young people’s independence and to promote life skills. ITT will be part of EHCP and My Plans | 2.12 |

**NB: 2.3 – 2.12 above require formal approval by Cabinet in accordance with The Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations and the Schools forums operational and good practice guide 2015-16.*

(b) (ii) that the following allocation of the carried forward under spend from 2014/15 as set out in section 2 (and table 5) of the report be approved:-

| Budget line | Amount £'000 | Notes | |
|---|-----------------|---|------|
| Lump sum protection funding for settings under the new EYSFF | 300 | Allows for up to 50% of reduction in lump sum funding. 100 settings reduction from £5,000 to £2,000 54 settings reduction from £8,000 to £2,000. If protection were to continue into 2016/17 at a reduced rate of a maximum 25% add a further £150k | 2.13 |
| Planned carry-forward for delay in implementation of reduction in 2 year old provider hourly rate | 175 | Maximum reduction allowed under the regulations is 1.5% of the prior year rate: from £4.96 to £4.88 in year 1; and to £4.82 in year 2 and so on. | 2.14 |
| Early Years Contingency Fund | 50 | New budget line for 15/16. Smaller settings with lower numbers (due to demographics and rurality, not popularity) may experience financial difficulty as a result of the formula change. The emphasis will always be on building capacity but the reality is that in a very few areas the provision is necessary but numbers are low. | 2.15 |
| Early Years set up costs for new provision in new | 240 | In March 2015 DEF agreed the funding criteria for start up and dis-economy funding for new | 2.16 |

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| schools | | early years provision in new schools. As with the Growth Fund, the budget allocation reflects the strategic plan based on the Education Infrastructure Plan | |
| Capacity building and sufficiency for 2 year olds | 363 | Based on government target to reach 40% of the most deprived 2 year olds and to ensure maximum participation. | 2.17 |
| Total | 27,487 | | |

Vote: all phases maintained schools and academies, PVI

(c) that the Schools Finance Group be given delegated authority to consider and respond to any LA proposal regarding a redistribution to schools of unallocated carry forward as set out in section 2.1, noting that the regulations do not allow for an in-year redetermination of schools' budget shares. DSG under spend from one year may be carried forward to the next funding period and allocated to schools via the funding formula. An exemption may need to be applied for from the Secretary of State to exclude this from the MFG calculation and this may be discussed at the 2016/17 schools formula consultation early in the Autumn term. Final proposals would be brought to a future Schools Forum meeting;

Vote: all phases maintained schools and academies, PVI

(d) that the allocations of growth funding in 2014/15 as set out in appendix A of the report be noted;

(e) that Early Years Free School Meals be approved where the pupils are registered and eligible children, whilst noting the risks, as set out in section 3 (and paragraph 3.4) of the report;

Vote: all phases maintained schools and academies, PVI

(f) that the year-end Mutual Fund position as set out in section 4 of the report be noted.

ACTION:

County Treasurer (John Holme, Karen Powlesland)

749 Finance Intervention Panel Schools (FIPS) Annual Report 2014/15

DISCUSSION:

The Forum received the report of the Head of Education & Learning and County Treasurer (DEF/15/10). FIPS was an officer group scrutinising budgets and recovery plans of schools at financial risk at an early stage, also considering requests and signposting schools to support strategies for long-term financial viability planning. The report also contained a full analysis of submissions and outcomes for 2014/15.

750 Ofsted Inspection Report of Local Authority Arrangements for the Protection of Children Findings

DISCUSSION:

The Forum received the report of the Interim Head of Children's Social Work Services and Child Protection (DEF/15/13) on the Ofsted report published 12 May 2015 with an overall judgement that Devon children's services now "require improvement", where Devon was previously inadequate.

The report stated the quality of work had improved and the welfare of looked after children was safeguarded and promoted, but significant areas remained where practice was not yet good enough and overall was not yet delivering the “good” protection required.

A new Childrens Improvement Plan for Devon, governance structure was being developed in response with regular monitoring by senior management through the Devon Delivery Improvement Group, Children, Young People and Family Alliance Executive, Leadership Team People (LT)) and the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT). The strategic governance model would also include a member of the Devon Education Forum on the Public Services Board.

In response to members’ comments, the strategic governance structure and Devon Children’s improvement plan programme structure had been designed to look at any overlap in working/meetings. Ofsted recognised the County Council had prioritised safeguarding since the initial inspection judgement and consequently although a reasonable service was provided in some areas this could be improved (eg care leavers, where there was now an increase in attention, collection of data and training). The recruitment of social workers in Devon was an improving picture, particularly with mentored newly qualified social workers.

DECISION: that the report be noted.

ACTION: -

751 Children, Young People and Families Alliance

DISCUSSION:

The Forum received the report of the Interim Head of Children’s Social Work Services and Child Protection (DEF/15/12) on:- the Children Young People and Families Alliance, based on the former Children’s Trust model and The Alliance Executive Group, chaired by the Cabinet Member - Children, Schools & Skills with membership including DCC, Police, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and the voluntary sector; its governance and accountability to the Health and Well Being Board and Devon Safeguarding Childrens Board; development of the Children, Young People and Families Plan; partnership working.

DECISION: that the report be noted.

ACTION: -

752 Free Schools

(Mr Bishop, primary academy member declared an interest in this matter by virtue of academy trust being approved to open the Digital Academy free school)

DISCUSSION:

The Forum received the report of the Head of Education & Learning (DEF/15/14) on the inclusion within the Government’s further 500 confirmed Free Schools by 2020 of 2 new free schools in Devon, namely the Digital Academy in West Clyst (Pinhoe) and Kingsteignton Primary in Kingsteignton.

Both schools had been proposed by existing Devon providers, Broadclyst Academy (West Clyst) and the United Schools Trust (Kingsteignton). Unlike some cases previously within the Government’s Free School programme, these two Devon proposals demonstrated opportunities for existing local providers to come forward where there was a need for new schools and due to the strategic fit of the proposals, proven track record of delivery from the proposers and potential financial benefits, DCC Cabinet on 10 June 2015 approved the DfE’s request that the planning gain and sites be made available.

There were expected to be around 60 free schools (including special and alternative provision) in the south west by 2020, noting the education infrastructure plan identified need in the Okehampton, SW Exeter, Ottery St Mary, W Bideford, Ilfracombe, Newton Abbot and Exmouth areas.

753 Standing (and other) Groups

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

(i) **School Finance Group (SFG)**

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2015 (considered under Finance Update minute 748 above).

(ii) **Schools Organisation, Capital and Admissions (SOCA)**

(replacing Schools Organisation and Policy Forum and the Local Admissions Forum)

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2015.

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

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754 Correspondence – DfE Survey, Schools Forums

The Chairman reported he had recently completed on behalf of the Forum a DfE survey on how Schools Forums were run.

755 Dates of Future Meetings

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

Wed 21 Oct 2015

Mon 18 Jan 2016.

The meeting started at 10am and finished at 12.05 pm.

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