

DEVON EDUCATION FORUM

23 January 2019

Present:-

Schools Members

Primary School Head teachers

Mr M Boxall
Mr A Dobson
Mr J Stone
Mr P Walker

Exeter Children's Federation
Marwood Primary
Denbury Primary
First Federation Trust (*Academy Member*)

Primary School Governors

Mrs A Blewett
Mr M Dobbins
Ms M Wallis
Mr A Walmsley

Kings Nympton Primary
Exmouth Marpool Primary
Whimple School (**Chair**)
First Federation (*Academy Member*)

Secondary School Head teachers

Mr R Haring
Ms A Mitchell
Mrs J Phelan

Ivybridge CC (*Academy Member*)
The Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust (*Academy Member*)
Cullompton CC

Secondary School Governors

Ms J Elson
Mrs J Larcombe
Mrs T Sturtivant

Exmouth CC (*Academy Member*)
Uffculme Academy Trust (*Academy Member*)
Tiverton High

Nursery School

Mrs S Baker

Westexe

Special School HeadTeacher

Ms S Pickering

Millwater School

Special School Governor

Mrs F Butler

Marland School

Non-Schools Members

Mr R Gurney
Mr J Searson
Mrs L Wright
Mr B Blythe

Teachers Consultative Committee
Exeter Diocesan Board of Education
Early Yrs Private, Voluntary & Independent (*Substitute Member*)
16-19 West England School & College

Observer

Councillor J McInnes

Cabinet Member – Children's Services and Skills

Apologies

Ms M Marder
Mr T Newman
Mr R Gasson

The Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust (*Academy Member*)
Chulmleigh Academy Trust (*Academy Member*)
WAVE Multi Academy Trust (*Academy Member*)

96 **Minutes**

DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2018 be signed as a correct record.

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

DISCUSSION:

DAPH welcomed the clarification of the Regulations appended to the minutes of 20 November 2018 referred to in Minute 90 (bullet 1), in relation to the use of the DSG High Needs Block for students aged 19-25.

In response to whether there were likely to be further unforeseen costs regarding the small number of historic cases of 19-25 young people with EHCPs, the County Treasurer advised that it was not anticipated there should be any further young people within that category although Devon had no control over some factors eg consideration by tribunal.

98 **Membership**

DISCUSSION:

The Forum noted the resignation of Mrs S Barnett (Early Years Private, Voluntary and Independent representative).

Mrs L Wright was present as the current EYPVI substitute member.

Arrangements would be put in hand for the local authority to consider and appoint the EYPVI representative(s).

ACTION:

County Solicitor (Fiona Rutley)

99 **Head of Education & Learning Update**

DISCUSSION:

The Head of Education & Learning reported on:-

(a) Early Help for Mental Health (EH4MH) Members welcomed that following concern regarding the uncertainty around ongoing provision, the principles of EH4MH provision had now been confirmed. It had been confirmed as a priority included in the new service specification and wider funding had been made available. The detailed provision was now being worked upon.

(b) SEND Ofsted Inspection December 2018 Devon had had sight of the draft report affecting all providers (including CCG, schools and LA) within Devon. The final report was anticipated end January/beginning February 2019. The draft report had raised no new issues that Devon was not already aware of. Strategies to address these were therefore already being worked upon and implemented. Devon had made significant progress on the timing of EHCPs with a target of 95% EHCPs to be on time for October 2019.

In response to DAPH/DASH concerns:- reducing delays in the EHCP process was improving information becoming out of date from the draft plan stage; the Head of Education & Learning would continue to build and improve upon proactive communications and relationships with schools to help to resolve SEN issues before the draft plan stage, although educational

psychologist input continued to have a higher priority within the statutory SEND Code of Practice.

The SEND Improvement board (responsible for the action plan) and officers would further review and refresh the action plan to respond to the Ofsted report. A smaller action group would also be created to focus on the fine detail of specific actions. This would be chaired by Jo Olson as chair of the DCF Local Area Partnership

The Chair acknowledged the work driving SEND improvements over the last two years.

(c) Recruitment Associations were invited to participate in shaping a new Devon recruitment website/advertising campaign to help address recruitment issues including the shortage of high quality mathematics, physics and chemistry teachers.

(d) Attainment/Key Stage results (some figures unvalidated, summary tabled) compared nationally and by Devon's statistical neighbours. Although attainment was a more positive picture, work was being progressed to understand the generally downward trend in Devon's Progress results.

DECISION: that the Progress/Key Stage results summary be circulated electronically to DEF members.

ACTION:

Head of Education & Learning (Dawn Stabb)

100

Finance Update

DISCUSSION:

The Forum considered the report of the Chief Officer for Children's Services and County Treasurer (DEF/19/01).

The Forum also noted the respective minutes of the Schools Finance Group (SFG) of 9 January 2018.

The report (DEF/19/01) covered:

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2019/20 Budget Planning
Schools Block 2019/20

Central School Services Block 2019/20

High Needs Block 2019/20 (including pressures and planned actions)

Early Years Block 2019/20

Other Schools Grants 2019/20

Month 8 DSG Budget Monitoring Position 2017/18 (including DSG Month 8 forecast and major variations; High Needs Month 8 forecast and budgets).

The County Treasurer summarised sections 1-6 of the report. Discussion on these sections included:-

-members' had some reservations regarding the EFSA schools funding allocations 2019/20 announced 17 December 2018; Devon will be funded £294 per pupil lower than the national average, £26.8million in total.

-the continued considerable budget pressure of the High Needs Block (section 4) and whether there could be an increase in Alternative Provision places at least in the short term until strategies within the Devon Inclusion Project could take effect to support pupils with SEN and complex needs;

-that as a lot of the budget was needs-led, the LA could not guarantee demand and it therefore challenging to achieve the management action required in year 2019/20 to meet pressures of £5.34m; There was a request that DEF members be provided with a breakdown of the 2019/20 £2.4m management actions (paragraph 7.6 of the report) regarding the 3rd – 5th year action within FE. Actions were currently being worked on;

-the 16-19 representative would welcome continued dialogue to offer improved value SEN placements.

The County Treasurer further summarised section 7 of the report (Month 8 DSG budget monitoring) and members' discussion included:-

-it was acknowledged that Devon had played a considerable part in the additional £250m of funding for high needs 2018/19 and 2019/2020, with Devon receiving £1.54m each year;

-the Secretary of State decision regarding the disapplication request was expected shortly and by 28 February 2019 at the latest.

- Due to the local formula Devon Secondary schools will see a lower minimum funding per pupil level than those of Cornwall and Plymouth.

-any plan B for HNB budget pressures to avoid the ongoing cycle. Costs of independent sector high needs provision was a national issue and delays in additional Devon infrastructure had been beyond Devon's control. The growth to this budget line was therefore unfortunately expected to continue to grow but the rate of growth should slow down due to other action taken. This growth is recognised within the 2019/20 budget. The Children's Scrutiny Committee on 21 January 2019 considering the 2019/20 budget supported proposals (subject ratification by the full Council Budget meeting on 21 February 2019) to corporately set aside £3.5m next year to cover changes to accounting rules requiring the Council to finance any High Needs deficit from 2021/22;

-that as requested by SFG a communication to Headteachers to explain the revised disapplication request to 0.25% was being prepared by the County Treasurer in consultation with DAPH and DASH and would be sent out shortly.

- Governors requested as part of communication on budgeted it should include expectations for the next 3 year budgets, an explanation of the short term and guidance for the medium term, 3-5 years.

DECISION:

(a) that the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2019/20 EFSA announcement on 17 December 2018 as set out in section 1 of report (DEF/19/01) be noted;

(b) that the Schools Block, High Needs Block and Early Years Block for 2019/20 as set out in sections 2 to 6 of the report be noted;

(c) that month 8 DSG monitoring position as set out in section 7 of the report be noted.

101 Standing (and other) Groups

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

(a) Schools' Finance Group (SFG)

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2019 (considered under Finance Update minute 100 above)

(b) School Organisation, Capital and Admissions (SOCA)

Minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2019.

102 **Dates of Future Meetings**

Meetings to be held at County Hall, Exeter, at 10am (unless otherwise specified):

Wed 20 March 2019
Wed 19 June 2019
Wed 20 Nov 2019
Wed 22 January 2020
Wed 18 March 2020.

<https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/mgCalendarMonthView.aspx?GL=1&bcr=1>

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 11.40 am

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