

DEVON EDUCATION FORUM

20 November 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 Hines

Kings Nympton Primary

Exmouth Marpool Primary

Whimble School (**Chair**)

Rydon Primary (Education SW Trust) (*Academy Member*)

Secondary School Head teachers

Mr R Haring

Ms M Marder

Mr M Shanks

Mrs J Phelan

Ivybridge CC (*Academy Member*)

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

Education S W Trust (*Academy Substitute Member*)

Cullompton CC

Secondary School Governors

Ms J Elson

Mrs J Larcombe

Mr A Walmsely

Mrs T Sturtivant

Exmouth CC (*Academy Member*)

Uffculme Academy Trust (*Academy Member*)

The Ted Wragg Multi 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 Years Private, Voluntary & Independent

PETROC

Apologies

Mr R Gasson

Councillor J McInnes

WAVE Multi Academy Trust (*Academy Member*)

Cabinet Member – Children's Services and Skills

DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2019 be signed as a correct record.

124 Standards Committee Monitoring

The Chair welcomed Mr Hodgins, DCC Standards Committee attending the meeting for monitoring purposes.

125 Matters Arising from the Last Meeting and Report back on Issues Raised with Cabinet/f40 Funding Group

DISCUSSION:

The County Treasurer reported that Councillor McInnes (Cabinet Member - Children, Schools & Skills and Chair of f40) had welcomed recent government announcements for further education spending but stated that these were not sufficient to bridge the High Needs Block gap.

Devon schools would continue to provide support/evidence to f40 when requested.

The County Treasurer would be attending an f40 meeting next week and would report back to the January 2020 meetings of the Schools Finance Group and DEF as appropriate.

126 Membership

DISCUSSION:

Further to primary, secondary maintained/academy elections held over the summer 2019 and a subsequent resignation, DAG were conducting Autumn Term 2019 elections to fill outstanding vacancies.

Additionally, Ms Clare Barden, Executive Principal Devon WAVE had now been elected as the Alternative Provision substitute member.

127 Head of Education & Learning Update

DISCUSSION:

The Head of Education & Learning reported on:-

(a) Babcock LDP Contract (ending 2022)

A Project Board (including DAPH/DASH and DAG representatives) had now been established to consider what sort of services the County Council and schools wished to see for the future when the current contracted ended. The contract could not be extended and this process was not a reflection on services from the current provider.

Schools, governors and other stakeholders would be encouraged to respond to a survey on services (including 66 statutory services) due to be sent out early December 2019, closing 14 January 2020.

(b) High Needs

In order to help to address the significant funding gap within the High Needs Block and less dependence on the independent school sector, a £15m bid was being made to the meeting of the Corporate Capital Group, subject to ratification when the County Council budget is approved in February 2020. This would provide an additional 300 places at Devon special schools, commencing from September 2021 (all 300 places by 2024) with significant projected direct and cost avoidance savings.

128

Finance Update

DISCUSSION:

The Forum considered the report of the Chief Officer for Children's Services and County Treasurer (DEF/19/09) regarding the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget monitoring report month 6 (2019/20) forecasting overspend of £18.7m. The forecast table (paragraph 1.2) did not include £3.5m reserves (awaiting clarity on the recent DfE consultation on the conditions of grant).

The Forum also noted the respective minutes of the Schools Finance Group (SFG) of 6 November 2019.

Members noted that month 7 monitoring would not be formally carried out due to budget preparations however Schools Finance Group members would be kept informed of the position.

Members discussion also included:-

- welcoming the £3.5m reserve set aside awaiting on the DfE consultation, not dependent upon another;

- continuing concern at the HNB funding gap (now £18.7m) and that the current HNB structure was not fit for purpose;

- DfE consultation on Minimum Per Pupil Funding mandatory formula factor anticipated to proceed;

- concern that schools (via the DSG) were anticipated to pick up HNB costs associated to post 16 places, which accounted for 197 placements (36%) of the independent special school sector;

- various initiatives to reduce the use of the independent special school sector (eg mainstream schools accessing outreach specialist SEN provision in special schools).

DECISION:

- (a) that month 6 DSG monitoring position be noted;

- (b)(i) that the County Treasurer raise the Forum's concern over schools picking up 18-25 HNB costs as part of a DSG Deficit Recovery Plan for 2019/20 with f40; and

- (b)(ii) a letter be sent to the DfE on behalf of the Forum seeking clarification on this matter.

ACTION:

County Treasure (Adrian Fox)

129

2020-21 Schools Funding Arrangements

DISCUSSION:

The Forum considered the report of the Chief Officer for Children's Services and County Treasurer (DEF/19/10), as well as noting the respective minutes of the Schools Finance Group (SFG) of 6 November 2019.

The report covered:-

- 2020-21 Schools Funding (including DCC consultation with schools responses)
- Delegation and De-delegation

-Centrally Held Funding.

A total of 105 (29%) school responses had been received (compared to 155 last year), with analysis in the report's appendices A-E. In respect of the movement between DSG blocks (paragraph 1.35 of the report), school views had been sought regarding transferring up to 0.5% from the schools block in 2020-21 (one year only, not a permanent basis). However due to further developments and likely requirements by the DfE members felt it prudent to further consult schools at this stage on this particular point. It was felt that schools were more likely to consider transferring funds if these could be utilised to pump prime a specific project of benefit to all schools as part of a DSG recovery plan, rather than to just offset the HNB deficit. The consultation outcome would need to be considered during the next cycle of DEF meetings and for submissions to DfE in January 2020. The Forum was mindful of the HNB in the short term for next year's budget, the 5-10 year plan and HNB culture.

DECISION:

(a) that Cabinet be recommended to approve the proposals for the 2020-21 schools revenue funding formula (as set out in section 1 (1.43) of report DEF/19/10) i.e. to:-

- (i) remove the reception uplift in line with the national funding formula factors
- (ii) increase the primary lump sum to £110,000
- (iii) set the MFG at plus 0.5% rising to plus 1.84% depending on affordability
- (iv) set all NFF factors at the new rates prescribed in the October 2019 operational guidance
- (v) increase AWPU for all pupils if funding permits;

Note (i) – (iv) above: that the final funding rates may change subject to affordability when the October 2019 pupil data and Schools Block DSG settlement is confirmed in late December 2019.

(Vote: Schools, Academies and PVI members)

(b) that the views expressed by schools regarding transferring 0.5% to the High Needs block be noted, but that further consultation on this be carried out without delay;

(c) that the de-delegation proposed services for maintained primary and maintained secondary schools be approved (as set out in section 2.3) of report DEF/19/10) be approved on a maintained primary/secondary basis, i.e.:-

- (i) behaviour support services
- (ii) support to under-performing ethnic groups and bilingual learners
- (iii) licences and subscriptions

(note: All licensing is covered by a national licence and the DfE charge the local authority except CLEAPPS (LEA Provision of Science Services)

- (iv) trade unions
- (v) jury service /magistrates duties
- (vi) maternity
- (vii) contingencies (including schools in financial difficulties and exceptional events);

(Vote: Maintained primary members)

(Vote: Maintained secondary members)

(d) that the centrally held funding allocations (as set out in section 3.4) of report DEF/19/10) be approved i.e. to:-

- (i) continue to give £60,000 for the Emotional, Psychological and Social Wellbeing Service, co-produced by Public Health Devon and schools
- (ii) retain the funding centrally at the same level as 2019-20 for Phase Associations
- (iii) retain the funding centrally at the same level as 2019-20 for Schools Admissions Service;

(Vote: Schools, Academies and PVI members)

(e) that consultation responses in appendices D and E relating to sections 2.3 and 3.4 of report DEF/19/10) be noted;

(f) that the local authority's disapplication requests that have been applied for and awaiting approval be noted (section 4.1 of report DEF/19/10).

ACTION:

County Treasurer (Adrian Fox)

130 Standing (and other) Groups

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

(a) Schools' Finance Group (SFG)

Minutes of the meetings held on 11 September and 6 November 2019 (considered under Finance Update minute above).

(note: SEND/High Needs Block Invest to Save Projects (SFG minute 2, 11 September 2019 approved under the Forum's urgency procedures – see minute 131 below)

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

Minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2019.

131 Items taken as a Matter of Urgency

To note the following matters approved by this Forum in accordance with its urgency procedures as detailed in the constitution:

(a) SEND Invest to Save Projects (SFG minute 2, 11 September 2019 approved);

(b) DEF Proportionality maintained/academy primary representation - update (DEF minute 120, 19 June 2019).

DEF members, as well as primary phase schools and academies had been consulted upon proportionality following the expected academy conversion of a schools member's school not proceeding.

DECISION:

that as no comments had been received from primary phase schools and academies, the existing maintained/academies primary phase ratio would remain at 6:2 (instead of moving to 5:3) until the next annual review (for September 2020) or earlier in the event of any resignation of a primary maintained schools member.

132 Dates of Future Meetings

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

Wednesday 22 January 2020

Wednesday 18 March 2020.

Wednesday 17 June 2020

Wednesday 18 November 2020

Wednesday 20 January 2021

Wednesday 17 March 2021.

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

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 11.50 am
The Schools Forum web is www.devon.gov.uk/schoolsforum