

DEVON EDUCATION FORUM

20 March 2019

Present:-

Schools Members

Primary School Headteachers

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

Mr M Dobbins
Mr A Walmsley

Exmouth Marpool Primary
First Federation (*Academy Member*)

Secondary School Headteachers

Mr R Haring
Ms M Marder
Ms A Mitchell

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

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 (**Chair**)

Non-Schools Members

Mrs L Wright
Mr B Blythe

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

Mrs B Alderson
Mrs A Blewett
Mr M Gurney
Mr T Newman
Mrs J Phelan
Mr J Searson
Mrs M Wallis

Teachers Consultative Committee (*Substitute Member*)
Kings Nympton Primary
Teachers Consultative Committee
Chulmleigh Academy Trust (*Academy Member*)
Cullompton CC
Exeter Diocesan Board of Education
Whimble School

103 Minutes

DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2019 be signed as a correct record.

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

DISCUSSION:

The Cabinet Member - Children, Schools & Skills reported on the f40 group's Fairer Funding campaign developments. School case studies were being worked upon both nationally and in Devon to evidence and highlight the effect of underfunding in education. It was intended to use these studies at an MPs briefing, Westminster on 14 May 2019. Three short films were being made which included involvement of Devon schools for an MPs debate at Westminster Hall. The NEU had recently organised a well supported petition and the Cabinet Member had written to the Secretary of State in his role as Chair of f40.

105 Membership

DISCUSSION:

The Chairman welcomed Ms Dianne Roberts, substitute member for the Early Years Private Voluntary and Independent (EYPVI) sector, appointed by the LA since the last meeting to the meeting.

*NB: Other LA appointments since the last meeting:-
Ms L Wright - EY PVI full member (former substitute member)
Mrs B Alderson - Teachers Consultative Committee
 substitute member (former full member).*

106 Head of Education & Learning Update

DISCUSSION:

The Head of Education & Learning reported on:-

(a) Tier 4 NHS beds for children and young people with severe and complex mental health needs, as well as other medical needs impacting on social interaction and behaviour were regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). These services were aimed at keeping children safe and were monitored by CQC and the Clinical Commissioning Group. Restrictions around external visitors meant it was not always possible to use the usual quality assurance methods for education and therefore the Local Authority was seeking to improve information sharing and monitoring between agencies. Whilst Devon County Council funded education for the under 16 year olds, clarity had to be sought on an individual basis for over 16s. Whilst this provision was generally for a shorter term, occasionally a child required an extended period of time. The Child in Care criteria was applicable for these children. It was noted in the SEN Ofsted inspection report that the out of county monitoring was routinely monitored and the LA was well informed on the quality of education and whether young people were learning, safe and well looked after. Members wished to see quality education with funding from all appropriate providers. It was confirmed that the County Council only paid the education element of these placements.

(b) School funding consultation review briefing had been requested by school bursars prior to the formal Devon consultation with schools, to help bursars to understand the process. This meeting would be attended by the Head of Education & Learning and the Head Accountant – Education & Learning. It was noted there were also regular bursar briefings attended by the finance team and arranged by Babcock.

107

Finance Update

DISCUSSION:

The Forum considered the report of the Chief Officer for Children's Services and County Treasurer (DEF/19/02).

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

The report (DEF/19/02) covered:-

-2018/19 Budget Monitoring Month 10 – Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), section 1 of the report; and

-2018/19 Advanced notice of planned carry forwards, section 2 of the report.

Member comments and point clarified included:-

-in section 1, concerns as discussed at SFG at the High Needs Block (HNB) overall increase of £418,000 due to a reduction in the contribution for Adult joint funded along with increases in other placements. The Head of Education & Learning would be meeting with the Head of Adult Care to resolve the issue of contributions as soon as possible;

-table 2 in section 1, could indicate independent school fees more clearly;

-that the deficit budget carry forward (table 3) was £2.4m HNB to be met from management actions believed to be achievable in 2019/20 and was not anticipated to increase before year end;

-that in relation to table 4 in section 2, of the £112k, approval was sought for the traded income balance for 2018/19 of £15k (as £97k was surplus income c/fwd prior to 2018/19);

-that in relation to table 5 in section 2, the use of underspend in a strategic way/invest to save to maximise improved outcomes for pupils;

-how the FE sector could expand its HNB offer as an alternative to the independent sector.

DECISION:

(a) that month 10 DSG monitoring position as set out in section 1 of report (DEF/19/02) be noted;

(b) that with regard to the allocation of the current known estimated deficit and surplus carry forward from 2018/19 as set out in section 2 of report (DEF/19/02):-

(i) the deficit budgets carry forwards to 2019/20 as set out in Table 3 for Growth Fund and High Needs Block be approved;

-Table 3: Deficit budgets carry forward requests

Budget Line	Amount £'000	Notes	Decision
Growth Fund	109	Deficit Balance – recognised to be offset in 2019/20	2.1.1 approved
High Needs Block	2,473	Deficit Balance – recognised Management Actions in 2019/20	2.1.1 approved
Total Deficit requests	2,582		

(Vote: Schools, Academies and PVI members)

(ii) the surplus budget carry forwards to 2019/20 as set out in Table 4 for De-delegated and High Needs budgets be noted;

(iii) the surplus budget carry forwards to 2019/20 as set out in Table 4 for Phase Associations be approved;

-Table 4: Surplus budget carry forward requests

Budget Line	Amount £'000	Notes	Decision
Maternity	590	Rolled forward 2018/19 underspend to fund ongoing maternity cover	2.1.2 noted
Schools and DSG Contingency	1,067	Rolled forward to fund contingency agreements in 2019/20 onwards	2.1.2 noted
Total De-delegated budgets	1,657		
Hospital Education	49	Rolled forward 2018/19 underspend to fund ongoing Medical AP students	2.1.2 noted
Mainstream SEN	17	Post 16 SEN – ESFA Funding that relates to summer term	2.1.2 noted
Total High Needs	66		
Phase Associations	112	Traded income balance for 18/19 (£15k). Surplus income c/fwd prior to 18/19 (£97k)	2.1.3 approved
Total Central Provisions budgets	112		
Total Carry forward requested	1,835		

(Vote: Schools, Academies and PVI members)

(iv) that the surplus budget carry forward 2019/20 in Table 5 to use for HNB projects (such as invest to save) be approved, subject to the Schools Finance Group working with the Head of Education & Learning to manage the £68,000 budget underspends.

-Table 5: Surplus budget no carry forward identified

Budget Line	Amount £'000	Notes
Licence and subscriptions	35	Accumulated savings no recognised demand in 2019/20
Trade Unions	33	Accumulated savings no recognised demand in 2019/20
Budget Underspends	68	

(Vote: Schools, Academies and PVI members)

ACTION:

County Treasurer (Adrian Fox)

108

Local Area Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Inspection Update

DISCUSSION:

The Forum considered the report of the Head of Education & Learning (DEF/19/04) on the joint Ofsted and Care Quality Commission inspection (December 2018) of the local area of Devon (rather than the individual Local Authority). This Forum was a key stakeholder in the process.

The report listed the three key areas the inspection focused upon. The inspection identified and recognised the strengths in outcomes for children with the most complex needs, strong commitment and dedication from staff, appropriate strategies and plans, together with robust and accurate self-assessment.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HCMI) had determined that a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) was required to address four areas of weakness identified by Ofsted and CQC, to be jointly submitted by 10 May 2019 by the local authority and clinical commissioning group on behalf of the Devon Children and Families Partnership. The draft WSOA would be shared with parents, schools and other stakeholders.

The CQC/Ofsted inspection letter 28 January 2019 was available at:
<https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50054047>

The Head of Education & Learning expanded upon governance, wider areas for development, dissemination of information, together with a detailed analysis and progress of action "C" i.e. the time it took to issue Education Health Care Plans and the variable quality of these plans.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services acknowledged the strengths and contributions made by childrens' centre, early help, school and SENCO staff and commended the hard work of all staff involved (notwithstanding that collectively the local area of Devon had weaknesses as identified to address).

Forum members also commented upon:-

- greater cohesion between 0-25 years and Inclusion teams;
- consistent messages to parents and carers;
- signposting and having one key contact to assist help parents and carers at an early stage;
- need for health to be included within the SEND graduated response to help prevent the hold up of other support services;
- the importance of early years work in identifying and supporting vulnerable/SEN children and families and the impact of reduction in early years services;
- special school outreach support, investing early with early intervention for children and families;
- consideration of using some of the budget underspend (see Forum Finance Update minute 107 above) to commission special school outreach and early years sector provision.

DECISION: that members forward any further comments to the Head of Education & Learning.

ACTION: Head of Education & Learning (Dawn Stabb)

109 Children with Special Educational Needs - Education Annual Report 2017/18

The Forum received the report of the Head of Education & Learning (DEF/19/05) regarding Part A: children and young people with a statutory Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) maintained by Devon LA, in and out of county; and Part B: those attending Devon schools regardless of which local authority maintained the EHCP.

It was encouraging that the number of permanent school exclusions had significantly reduced for students with ECHPs.

The report also highlighted:-

- Part A pupils with an EHCP had increased to 5162 (+26%) on the previous year;
- the number of pupils with EHCPs moving out of mainstream schools had reduced significantly in 2017, particularly secondary;
- SEN appeals had decreased from 13.8% to 6.3%, on % plans issued.

-Elective Home Education had risen over the academic year although those with an EHCP remained stable at 4.5%.

A member also requested an update on the review undertaken on the reasons for the change of attainment of all pupils overall.

DECISION: that an update on the review undertaken on the reasons for the change of attainment of all pupils be made to the next meeting.

ACTION: Head of Education & Learning (Dawn Stabb)

110 Post 16 Offer and Activity

The Head of Education & Learning presented an overview of the County Council's post 16 strategy. Devon's objective and statutory duty was to ensure as many young people as possible were encouraged to remain in education or training, post 16.

Devon currently had a cross provider and cross sector approach, but was increasingly mindful of delivery challenges across the sector, including funding and resilience of post 16 options in FE and sixth form sectors. A national FE review of the process however had not resolved these issues as originally envisaged. The national approach continued to strongly emphasise open market, choice based competition but had not looked at structure, deployment parity and fairness of funding. Devon County Council and its wider partners therefore had role and viability considerations regarding some sixth forms, given the strength of its core FE providers.

Devon was therefore holding a Heads of post 16 provision in school 6th forms in the near future to look at innovative solutions. It was then anticipated to have a wider dialogue to include other Devon FE providers.

Alongside competition, the Devon population aged 16-18 had fallen since 2015 by 6.7% and post 16 destination routes were also changing, with the shift and growth across apprenticeships and employment with training. The NEET rate remained unchanged (5% approx below the UK average). It was important the students were able to make informed choice decisions, with a priority for Devon to ensure that quality, coordinated careers advice and guidance was available across all of the county.

The Learning and Enterprise Partnership (LEP) now had County Council rather than contracted staff involved to develop a more strategic approach. LEP representation was currently under review, working with Somerset, Plymouth and Torbay. The FE convening role had been taken forward by the Association of Colleges and the shared representative, currently the Principal of PETROC College.

Members' comments and discussion included:-

- early quality careers advice for students choosing GCSE options at year 9;
- need for improved link up between business and secondary schools to offer appropriate skills;
- employment and skills board link between education and employers to encourage engagement, particularly around STEM led skills.
- better mathematics/information technology skills for adults available in 6th forms;
- FE sector engagement of all schools to help the transition process and examples of regular dialogue with schools in parts of the county.
- FE model was lower participation, typically 2.5 to 3 days per week to recognise travel difficulties for some post 16 students and their part time job/work experience commitments;
- personalised learning programme for vulnerable pupils or those requiring more support;
- support for schools delivering post 16 and INSET support for staff.
- the narrower key stage 4 curriculum compared with the previous decade.

111 Headteacher Associations' (DASH & DAPH) formation of Devon Schools Leadership Services Charitable Incorporated Organisation

DISCUSSION:

The Forum received the report of the Devon Association of Secondary Heads (DASH) and Devon Association of Primary Heads (DAPH) (DEF/19/03) regarding the present position on implementing the associations' formation of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), instead of developing the former proposal to form a Community Interest Company. The CIO would represent school leaders and to work in a strengthened partnership with Devon County Council.

The outcome of the application to register the CIO was awaited (estimated 12 weeks). It was anticipated Devon School Leadership Services CIO would commence trading from 1 September 2019, shadowing DAPH and DASH until 31 March 2020. Once fully established DAPH and DASH association would be wound up.

The opportunity to streamline and improve responsiveness was welcomed and DAG also supported the proposed joint CIO.

112 Standing (and other) Groups

DISCUSSION:

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

(a) Schools' Finance Group (SFG)

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2019 (considered under Finance Update minute above).

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

Minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2019.

113 Dates of Future Meetings

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

Wed 19 June 2019
Wed 20 November 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 11.55 am

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

