

DEVON EDUCATION FORUM

22 January 2020

Present:-

Schools Members

Primary School Head teachers

Mr M Boxall	Exeter Children's Federation
Mr C Butler	Otter Valley Federation (<i>Substitute Member</i>)
Mr A Dobson	Marwood Primary
Mr P Walker	First Federation Trust

Primary School Governors

Mr L Cottrell	Tavistock Primary (<i>Substitute Member</i>)
Mr M Dobbins	Exmouth Marpool Primary
Ms M Wallis	Whimble School (Chair)
Mr A Hines	Rydon Primary (Education SW Trust) (<i>Academy Member</i>)

Secondary School Head teachers

Mr R Haring	Ivybridge CC (<i>Academy Member</i>)
Ms L Heath	Uffculme Academy Trust (<i>Academy Substitute Member</i>)
Ms A Mitchell	The Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust (<i>Academy Member</i>)
Mrs J Phelan	Cullompton CC

Secondary School Governors

Ms J Elson	Exmouth CC (<i>Academy Member</i>)
Mrs J Larcombe	Uffculme Academy Trust (<i>Academy Member</i>)
Mr A Walmsely	The Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust (<i>Academy Member</i>)

Nursery School

Mrs S Baker	Westexe
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Special School HeadTeacher

Ms S Pickering	Millwater School
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Special School Governor

Mrs F Butler	Marland School
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Alternative Provision

Mr R Gasson	WAVE Multi Academy Trust (<i>Academy Member</i>)
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Non-Schools Members

Mr R Gurney	Teachers Consultative Committee
Ms S Lockwood	Exeter Diocesan Board of Education (<i>Substitute Member</i>)
Mrs L Wright	Early Years Private, Voluntary & Independent
Mr B Blythe	PETROC

Observer

Councillor J McInnes	Cabinet Member – Children's Services and Skills
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Apologies

Mrs A Blewett	Kings Nympton Primary
Ms M Marder	The Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust (<i>Academy Member</i>)
Mr J Searson	Exeter Diocesan Board of Education
Mr J Stone	Denbury Primary
Mrs T Sturtivant	Tiverton High
Ms F Wood	Tiverton Federation (<i>Substitute Member</i>)

133 **Minutes**

DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2019 be signed as a correct record.

134 **Devon School Leadership Services (SLS)**

DISCUSSION:

The Chair considered this item as a matter of urgency further to recent developments and for DEF to consider the next steps to progress the matter.

Further to the Heads' Liaison Group on 13 January 2020 when this matter was discussed, DAPH and DASH (Devon's primary and secondary Headteacher associations) formally requested that DEF recognised Devon School Leadership Services (SLS) as a new entity and successor primary and secondary headteachers' organisation.

The transition period was planned to take place during the Summer Term of 2020 when the existing phase associations would be wound up and Devon SLS CIO would take on the roles. From April 2020 the phase association budgets would be operating as one.

DAPH and DASH would now discuss with the County Treasurer how the LA would delegate and monitor the funding.

DECISION:

(a) that DEF recognises that Devon School Leadership Services Charitable Incorporated Organisation (charity number 1186756) would take on the functions of DAPH and DASH, including representation on statutory boards; and

(b) that the funding be passported to Devon SLS to achieve these functions in line with the October 2019 School Funding Consultation, subject to agreement regarding the funding delegation/monitoring role of the LA.

ACTION:

County Treasurer (Adrian Fox)

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

DISCUSSION:

The Cabinet Member - Children, Schools & Skills reported on his ongoing work as Chair of f40 group regarding fairer funding and high needs national funding issues.

136 **Membership**

DISCUSSION:

Members noted that the DAG Autumn Term election had confirmed Adrian Hines as a Primary Academy and Alex Walmsley as a Secondary Academy representative, although other vacancies still remained.

137 **Head of Education & Learning Update**

DISCUSSION:

The Head of Education & Learning reported on:-

(a) Learner Services, currently with Babcock LDP (ending 2022)

The preliminary survey results (closed 14 January 2020) on what future services School leaders and Governors wished to see when the current contract ended, were tabled. These results were also in line with the service themes the LA was proposing, with the addition of mental health support.

(b) Ofsted Children's Services Inspection

Members noted the Inspection was in week 2 of 3. So far front door and early help services had been examined with positive feedback to date on these areas.

(c) Attracting Teachers to Devon Recruitment Campaign

Details had been circulated with the agenda with the total cost of £10,000, or a part package could be considered. Members would welcome the total package to address the difficulties in recruiting and retaining specialist teachers and more experienced school leaders.

DECISION:

(i) that the total package be approved @ £10,000, to be funded 50% by LA and combined 50% by DAPH/DASH (% proportion to be agreed by the associations); and

(ii) that a small working group from schools be convened to agree the detail and final website.

ACTION:

(c) Head of Education & Learning (Dawn Stabb), DAPH/DASH for working group and/or HR (Samantha Mullins)

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Finance

(a) **Finance Update**

DISCUSSION:

The Forum considered the report of the Chief Officer for Children's Services and County Treasurer (DEF/20/01) regarding the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2020/21 Budget Planning including:-

ESFA Schools Funding allocation announcement;

Schools Block;

Central Services Block;

High Needs Block (with detailed explanation of funding shortfall, demands and planned actions);

Early Years Block;

Other School Grants; together with the

Month 8 (2019/20) Budget Monitoring position.

The Forum also noted the respective minutes of the Schools Finance Group (SFG) of 8 January 2020.

Members noted that the High Needs Budget Table 2 (section 4 of the report) should read 2020/21 (not 2019/20).

Budget monitoring report month 8 (2019/20) forecasting overspend had increased by £1.2m to £21.5m but early indications for month 9 was showing a more stable position.

Following DEF's last meeting regarding members' concern that schools (via the DSG) were anticipated to pick up HNB costs associated to post 16 places, the County Treasurer reported on his discussions at f40 regarding the Forum's concern over schools picking up 18-25 HNB

costs as part of a DSG Deficit Recovery Plan for 2019/20 and response from ESFA 21 January 2020 to the Forum's letter seeking clarification on this matter.

DECISION:

(i) that the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2020/21 ESFA announcement on 19 December 2019 on Schools Funding allocations 2020/21 (as set out in section 1 of report DEF/20/01) be noted;

(ii) that the Schools Block, Central Services, High Needs Block, Early Years Block and Other School Grants for 2020/21 (as set out in sections 2 to 6 of report DEF/20/01 respectively) be noted; and

(iii) that Month 8 DSG monitoring position (2019/20) (as set out in section 7 of report DEF/20/01) be noted.

(b) Transferring of Funding to the High Needs Block

DISCUSSION:

The Forum additionally considered the report of the Chief Officer for Children's Services and County Treasurer (DEF/20/02) *as appended to these minutes*, following further consultation with schools 6-19 January 2020, regarding schools' views on a one-year transfer of 0.5% (£2m) from the schools block to the high needs block (HNB) in view of the significant high needs budget pressures. 60% (221 schools) responded, with 86% (191 Schools) disagreeing to the transfer (evenly split primary/secondary phase).

The report outlined two options:-

-Option 1: Not agree the transfer, where underlying HNB budget issues were not going away and this delayed the process and risked the shortfall becoming bigger as actions were delayed.

-Option 2: Agree the transfer, to enable the authority to fully cost plans and develop potential support to reduce the demand on high cost places. Officers recommended this option to transfer as inevitability planned action was required to managed the HNB continued demand.

The Head of Education & Learning also reported on extensive work being carried out in conjunction with partners, including health services to reduce the impact on the HNB including early intervention and early years initiatives.

Members recognised the LA was in a very difficult position and that this was reflected nationally. Work continued with the f40 campaign group, Devon MPs and DfE as supported by the LA and DEF. DEF was committed to working with the LA to find a way forward following the results of this consultation.

Following a short adjournment members reconvened and:-

DECISION:

(a) that whilst the Forum could not support Option 2, i.e. the transfer of 0.5% (£2m) from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block at this stage (noting that 86% schools did not support this), the Forum was supportive of partnership and collaborative working with the LA and others to find a solution; and

(b) that up to £100k be approved, to be transferred from the Schools Block to High Needs Block to employ an external adviser to plan, cost and evidence invest to save, outreach and other short and long term initiatives to manage the continued demand on the HNB, with the findings required prior to the annual schools funding arrangements consultation with schools in October 2020.

(Vote: Schools, Academies and PVI members)

ACTION:

County Treasurer (Adrian Fox) and Head of Education & Learning (Dawn Stabb)

139 Standing (and other) Groups

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

DISCUSSION:

(a) Schools' Finance Group (SFG)

Minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2020 (also considered under Finance Update minute above).

DECISION:

That in receiving the SFG minutes, DEF also noted that 2020/21 Premiums would be reduced by 20% for teachers and 10% for support staff cover.

DISCUSSION:

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

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2019.

SOCA had brought to DEF's attention the following two items:-

- Seeking endorsement to the revised Designated Area Protocol; and
- Seeking a joint letter to be sent to the new Secretary of State regarding the Admissions Code.

DECISION:

(i) that the revised Designated Area Protocol as considered by SOCA on 24 September 2019 be endorsed;

(ii) that a joint DEF/LA letter be sent to the new Secretary of State requesting that in the next revision of the Admissions Code, the DfE add clear guidance to schools seeking information before a child is placed on roll, whilst ensuring the child's rights remains the focus of the document.

ACTION: (b) (ii) Head of Education & Learning (Andrew Brent)

140 Dates of Future Meetings

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

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 12.15 pm

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