

## DEVON EDUCATION FORUM

15 January 2018

Present:-

Schools Members

Primary School Head teachers

Mr J Bishop  
Mr A Dobson  
Mr J Stone  
Mr M Boxall

Cornerstone Academy Trust (*Academy Member*)  
Marwood Primary  
Denbury Primary  
Exeter Countess Wear

Primary School Governors

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

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

Secondary School Head teachers

Mr R Haring  
Ms M Marder  
Mrs J Phelan

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

Secondary School Governors

Ms J Elson  
Mr T Newman  
Mrs T Sturtivant

Exmouth CC (*Academy Member*)  
Chulmleigh Academy (*Academy Member*)  
Tiverton High

Nursery School

Mrs S Baker

Westexe

Special School HeadTeacher

Ms B Caschere

Exeter Southbrook School

Special School Governor

Mrs F Butler

Marland School

Non-Schools Members

Ms B Alderson  
Mrs S Barnett  
Mr A Donkin

Teachers Consultative Committee  
Early Years Private, Voluntary & Independent  
ERADE -16-19

Formal Observer

Councillor J McInnes

Cabinet Member – Children, Schools and Skills

*(Substitute members observing only:*

*Mr G Roscoe maintained secondary HT, Mrs L Wright EYPVI)*

Apologies

Ms S Acland  
Mr B Blythe  
Mrs J Larcombe  
Mr M Shanks

Devon Schools Academy (Alternative Provision)  
PETROC – 16-19  
Uffculme Academy  
Education South West (*Academy member*)

**59**        **Minutes**

**DECISION:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2017 be signed as a correct record.

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

In relation to DEF minute 56 (c) and (d), 23 November 2017, the Head of Education & Learning reported that:-

- a recruitment review for Maths teachers was being undertaken by Sub Region D partners (Devon Cornwall, Plymouth and Torbay, RSC and LA) and was being considered by Devon Schools Alliance;
- Children & Young People bullying survey question phrasing and responses had been further considered.

**61**        **Head of Education & Learning Update**

**DISCUSSION:**

The Head of Education & Learning reported on:-

(a) A short survey on speech and language would be sent to Headteachers to complete to inform a project/commissioners reviewing current service and any improvements for the future.

(b) Meeting with Devon MPs, Westminster, 16 January 2018

The Head of Education & Learning sought comments on a draft (tabled) DCC Parliamentary and Member Briefing Note on the DSG Funding – impacts and challenges. The meeting was to further discuss funding allocations to LAs notified December 2017 and the new National Funding Formula and to seek fair and equitable funding for Devon, which when compared against the national average and higher funded London LAs with high/low levels of Additional Education Needs, Devon continued to be significantly underfunded.

Members comments included:-

Financial effects on schools over past 24 months and anticipated increases to be highlighted;  
Funding required to bring Devon up to national average (increase of £268 per pupil);  
Devon needed an additional £4m for High Needs Block to stand still;  
Unintended consequences and impact on schools of decisions taken in other areas of government;  
Devon schools being unable to manage further reductions after long term decline;  
Therapeutic services must be provided for children to prevent larger numbers of children out of school/with mental health conditions but such issues should be funded elsewhere eg from social care;  
Social mobility/rurality meant Devon had significant diseconomies of scale in services provision and accessibility;  
Significant impact on support staff supporting SEN/mental health;  
Positive practice from Work Less Campaign.

**DECISION:**

that the Head of Education & Learning include members comments in the meeting with Devon MPs and circulate the final Briefing Note to Forum members for information.

**ACTION:**

Head of Education & Learning (Dawn Stabb)

62

**Finance Update**

**DISCUSSION:**

The Forum received the report of the Chief Officer for Children's Services and County Treasurer (DEF/18/01).

The Forum also noted the respective minutes of the Schools Finance Group (SFG) of 3 January 2018.

The report (DEF/18/01) covered:-

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2018/19 Budget Planning  
Schools Block 2018/19  
High Needs Block 2018/19  
Early Years Block 2018/19  
Central School Services 2018/19  
Other Schools Grants 2018/19  
Month 8 DSG Budget Monitoring Position 2017/18

Month 8 DSG budget monitoring of High Needs (paragraph 1.4) continued pressures currently forecasting £2.823m overspend for 2017/18. Members were concerned that all Forum members (and not just the Schools Finance Group (SFG)) should be kept more fully informed on an ongoing basis of the effect of management action and whether savings were being met, together with plans to reduce the overspend and private sector provision. A Management Action plan/savings plan was currently being put together for 2018/19.

DAPH specifically requested that the Management Action Plan outlining the proposed £1.9M savings in the High Needs Block with evidence of savings planned or achieved be brought to DEF at the next meeting and as a standing item at future meetings going forward to enable the Forum to have oversight of Management Actions to evidence progress against Plan and its effectiveness.

Some SFG members commented that although recognising a balanced budget had to be set there was concern this may not be met and commented on additional pressure from post 19 High Needs young people.

Whilst recognising the need to keep all Forum members informed an appropriate balance of detail was needed with drilling down continuing by SFG. SFG would continue to make recommendations as appropriate to the Forum.

**DECISION:**

(a) that the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2018/19 announcement on 19 December 2017 as set out in section 1 of report (DEF/18/01) be noted;

(b) that the Schools Block, High Needs Block and Early Years Block for 2018/19 as set out in sections 2 to 6 of the report be noted;

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

(d) that DEF be regularly and more fully updated in relation to the overspend and High Needs pressures, but with detailed consideration continuing by SFG;

(e) that the Head of Education & Learning respond separately to the 16-19 representatives regarding post-16 High Needs.

**ACTION:**

County Treasurer (Adrian Fox) (c);  
Head of Education & Learning (Dawn Stabb) (d).

**63 Children's Centres (Update on Contract)**

**DISCUSSION:**

A briefing paper was tabled updating schools on the recent appointment of Action for Children to run Devon's Children's Centres from April 2018. This followed a competitive tendering process and was set against a reducing Government grant, with budgets reducing from £10.3m in 2010 to £5.8m by 2019. This had been achieved through efficiencies in accommodation and structure for learner services. The new contract was 3 years +1 +1. There would be a transition period in Year 1 whilst current universal services were reduced so the increase in support to the older age range (5-8 year olds) could be tapered in over the year. This supported the Children's Centres Government priority targeting Early Help and vulnerable families.

Children's Centres would continue "open door" support to families especially those in need of improving their chances of employment and would be working with local groups to support their communities.

**64 Virtual School Annual Report, Attainment and Achievement 2017 (Devon's Looked After Children)**

The Forum received the report of the Head of Education and Learning (DEF/18/02) on (unvalidated) data against previous years and national benchmarks (excepting significant changes in Key Stage 4 this year made comparison with previous years not possible). National Council for Education Research (NCER) statistics just released to LAs were not released publicly by the DfE until end March 2018. However Devon's picture for CiC was mainly positive.

**DECISION:**

That the Summary table (on page 3 of 28) also include all children and be circulated to Forum members.

**ACTION:**

Head of Education & Learning (Dawn Stabb)

**65 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 3 January 2018 (considered under Finance Update minute above)

**DECISION:**

that the Growth Fund be discussed at the next meeting of SFG.

**ACTION:**

Head of Education & Learning (Heather Bingham)

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

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2018.

**66**

**Dates of Future Meetings**

At 10am at County Hall, Exeter:-

Wed 21 March 2018

Wed 20 June 2018

Wed 17 October 2018

Wed 23 January 2019

Wed 20 March 2019.

The Meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 11.50 am

The Schools Forum web is [www.devon.gov.uk/schoolsforum](http://www.devon.gov.uk/schoolsforum)

