**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**DERBYSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM**

**Minutes of the Meeting Held on 10th November 2016**

**At 4.00 pm Post Mill Centre South Normanton**

**Present**

Barbara Arrandale, David Beaumont, Linda Du-Roe, Stephanie Marbrow, Bridget Hanley, Joe Birkin, Martin Brader, Kam Grewal–Joy, Tracey Burnside, Pauline Wensley, Julien Scholefield, Angela Stanton, Lisa Key, Andrew Critchlow, Karen Hudson, David Channon, Andrew Large, Deborah Turner, Chris Wayment.

**Substitutes**

Phil Sunderland, Alan Thomas, Joy Williams, Cathy Tattersfield

**Observers**

None

**Officers/Others**

Chris Allcock, Mary Murkin, Ruth Lane, Karen Gurney, Andrew Marsh, Bish Sharif

**Apologies**

Gordon Hart, Julie Cadman, Liz Moorsom, Gill Hutton, Carey Ayres, David Plummer, Cllr Caitlin Bisknell, Cllr Jocelyn Street, Andrew Wild, John Crofts, Kathryn Boulton, Shirley Harvey.

Martin Brader chaired the meeting and Chris Allcock confirmed it was quorate.

**16/24 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were given as noted above.

Chris Allcock advised the Forum that the following resignations had been received:

Sammy Jones (16-19) - Bish Sharif would work to find a replacement

Lynsey Page (Primary Headteacher representative)

Phil Sunderland (Primary Governor substitute)

**16/25 Minutes of the previous meeting – 6th October 2016**

Matters of accuracy

David Channon asked for it to be noted that he did attend the meeting.

Page 4 – should have read that Chris Allcock had no reason to believe that the ESG would not end from September 2017. Also the year in the paragraph below had been mis-typed and should read 2016–17 rather than 2016017.

Matters arising

Page 1 – Chris Allcock confirmed that it is now planned to bring papers relating to Exclusions, Alternative Provision and SEN to the December meeting.

Page 4 – Chris Allcock confirmed that the LA view was that a legal challenge regarding the withdrawal of the ESG was unlikely to succeed. It may be that the County Councils Network take up the case but he had no further information at this time.

**16/26 De-delegation of Funding 2017-18: Responses to Consultation**

Chris Allcock presented the paper to seek decisions from school representatives in relation to the de-delegation (re-pooling) on funds for 2017–18. The responses to the consultation from schools showed high levels of support, ultimately the final decision on de-delegation was a matter for the Schools Forum to decide. The rates of contribution for 2017–18 were still to be confirmed, the 2016–17 rates quoted in the consultation were only a guide.

In response to a query from a Forum member Chris confirmed that the percentage of support was similar to last year.

Primary and secondary school representatives both voted unanimously to re-pool all items for 2017-18.

**16/27 Education Services Grant (ESG)**

Chris Allcock presented the paper to update the Schools Forum regarding the potential loss of ESG funding in 2017–18 and to consider potential options for mitigating the impacts in the short term. The report represents an initial look and will be followed by a further report, hopefully in December, with actual proposals for 2017-18 once the Government has made its position clear.

Forum members commented as follows:

* Appendix 1 was very enlightening showing the current responsibilities of the LA funded from the ESG.
* The big issue must be how school improvement support will continue.
* Monetary values need to be put against each service provided, or at least in groups.
* One of the uses of the ESG is the central funding of redundancy costs and this was another key concern, particularly given the potential impact on individual schools.
* How do we know what duties may no longer be the responsibility of the LA?
* Some responsibilities could be passed down to schools but surely some are the responsibility of the employer i.e. the LA.
* This is a vicious circle, at £77 per pupil a school with 1000 pupils would lose £77,000, resulting in a need for redundancies, the cost of which it would have to fund making it even worse off.

Given that the new guidance on LAs’ role in schools has still to be provided, it will be difficult for the LA to reshape and reduce its costs in 2017-18. One measure would be to delegate additional funding though the formula and to top-slice an equivalent sum to help offset the loss of ESG. In the event that Forum wished to adopt this approach at its meeting in December an application to the DfE to exempt the additional funding from MFG would be required so that all schools feel the benefit of this extra support.

The DfE deadline for MFG applications is 30 November 2016 so, in order to give the Forum this flexibility, the Forum was asked to support an “in principle” MFG application. This support was agreed by the Forum.

Other options for covering the loss of ESG could be by the LA trading some of the services with schools or for the LA to cease to provide a service leaving schools to source them from elsewhere.

At the request of Forum members Chris confirmed that he would send a copy of the Appendix 1 to Russ Barr to circulate at forthcoming secondary Headteachers meetings.

The Forum agreed to the report’s recommendations.

**16/28 High Needs Block places 2017-18**

Chris Allcock presented the paper to inform the Schools Forum of the process for determining the number of high needs places to be commissioned in schools, academies and other provision for 2017–18.

The cut-off date for agreeing and submitting the number of places for Group 1 institutions is 25/11/2016. The places for Group 2 institutions are a matter for the LA with no EFA involvement.

Chris pointed out that we have to buy places for both Derbyshire and other LAs’ pupils who are educated in Derbyshire institutions, from Derbyshire’s High Needs Block (HNB). There are no adjustments for imports and exports of pupils in 2017–18 but this is an issue the DfE are considering for the future. He also reminded the Forum that the DfE have advised LAs not to subsidise High Needs Block costs from the Schools Block in 2017–18.

In response to a question from a Forum member, Mary Murkin confirmed that we currently import 84 pupils from other LAs but the numbers were not available for exported pupils.

No further comments were made and the Forum agreed to note the report.

**16/29 – Early Years Funding Consultation Document**

Chris Allcock presented the paper to inform the Forum that an Early Years consultation document has been published to schools with a response date of 30 November 2016. He went through the executive summary, however, the paper had been largely considered at the last Forum meeting. The views of schools and PVI providers would be reported to the Forum later in the budget process.

There were no comments from the floor and the Forum agreed to note the report.

**16/30 – School Sixth Forms – The 14 – 19 landscape and the diversification of School and College provision**

Bish Sharif and Andy Marsh presented the paper to inform Schools Forum of the challenges faced by school sixth forms following changes in Government policy and funding, including the growth of University Technical Colleges (UTCs), Studio Schools, Free Schools and Technical Academies.

They stated that post 16 learning is moving towards a mixed economy not just 6th forms. DfE guidance is that School Sixth forms should have at least 200 pupils and offer at least 15 or more A2 course options. .

A number of appendices were presented as part of the paper and the following comments were made by Forum members;

* The David Nieper Academy will be competing with other small struggling 6th forms in the area when they re-open in September 2017 after a one year suspension.
* Who co-ordinates 6th form education if the EFA provide permission for academies to close 6th forms and the LA provides permission for maintained 6th forms to close?
* Once a 6th form is closed, it is gone.
* Does anyone take into account house building developments when accessing if a sixth form should close?
* If we as an LA get approval to open a new type of provision, it also has to be offered to Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) to run.
* In the 1990s, when the 6th forms were closed in Derby City, it was a very difficult time.
* Schools must advise pupils to go to the most appropriate place to access their individual requirements and the changing landscape of provision means learners may have to cross borders.
* It is difficult to ask schools to collaborate when they are effectively competing for learners.
* At Hope Valley there is no 6th form, other than the SEN provision, and last year pupils moved onto 23 different destinations; the biggest driver for students is choice of subjects.
* The landscape is changing; however, every school is effectively expected to become an Academy by 2020. Is the LA looking 2/3/5 years ahead as to what LA schools may be left?
* With regard to mothballing 6th forms, is there any data to suggest pupil numbers will rise in the future? Schools opted out of the LA in the past in order to retain a 6th form when they were looking to establish a tertiary area. If we try to close 6th forms this may force schools into becoming academies again.
* A group of special schools are considering providing post-16 learning provision.
* What effect will independent and grammar schools have on the LA plans?
* Some schools are becoming an academy in order to open a nursery, a danger is that some will do the same to open a post 16 unit.
* A worry is that our most vulnerable children are the ones who are less likely to travel to other providers and, if nothing is offered locally, they won’t have anywhere to go. The national agenda is supposed to be aimed at improving education for this group.

Andy and Bish gave the following comments:

* When the Ormiston Academy in Ilkeston closed the LA was not consulted; however, it is the responsibility of the LA to find suitable alternative learning for 14–19 year olds.
* It is possible to mothball a 6th form and re-open it at a later date.
* All the data in the appendices had been complied in conjunction with Development Section at County Hall and takes into account building developments.
* Independent and impartial careers advice is very important.
* Sheffield and Manchester are growth areas and pupils move there as they are thinking about jobs afterwards.
* Derbyshire 6th forms will shrink because pupil numbers are reducing and pupils are increasingly likely to go outside of Derbyshire for their education if the offer at Derbyshire Schools is too restrictive.
* The viability of 6th forms will need to be challenged in the future.
* 14–19 Learning Communities may want to champion new collaborative post-16 learning opportunities.
* Overall we need to identify a new strategy for the future.

The Schools Forum agreed to note the report.

**16/31 – Dates of future meetings;**

Future meeting dates were advised as follows;

12th December 2016 (4-6pm) Rangewood Room, Post Mill Centre, South Normanton

9th February 2017 (4-6pm) Rangewood Room, Post Mill Centre, South Normanton

22nd June 2017 (6-8pm) Committee Room 1, County Hall

The meeting closed at 6.05pm.