**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**DERBYSHIRE SCHOOLS’ FORUM**

**Minutes of the Meeting Held on 22nd June 2017**

**At 6.00 pm Committee Room 1, County Hall**

**Members Present**

David Beaumont, Linda Du-Roe, Shirley Harvey, Stephanie Marbrow, Julie Cadman, Liz Moorsom, Bridget Handley, Sue Kennedy, Martin Brader, Kam Grewal-Joy, Pauline Wensley, Julien Scholefield, David Plummer, Karen Hudson, Michelle Hill, Chris Anderson

**Substitute Members**

Alan Thomas, Joy Williams

**Observers**

Cllr Julie Patten, Cllr Jim Coyle

**Officers/Others**

Chris Allcock, Mary Murkin, Ruth Lane, Karen Gurney, Kathryn Boulton, Julie Hudson, Justine O’Donoghue

**Apologies**

Barbara Arrandale, Gill Hutton, Tracey Burnside, Lisa Key, David Channon, Andrew Webster, Andrew Wild, Angela Stanton.

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

**17/17 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were given as noted above.

Chris Allcock welcomed Councillors Julie Patten and Alex Dale onto the Forum. Additionally Michelle Hill was welcomed as the new Derbyshire Network 16-19 representative, replacing Sammy Jones. It was also noted that the Pingle and Heritage school representatives were no longer members of the Forum following their schools’ conversion to Academy status.

**17/18 Minutes of the meeting held on 9th February 2017**

Matters of accuracy

No points were raised.

Matters arising

No points were raised.

**17/19 Nominations for Chair/Vice Chair – oral report**

Chris Allcock invited nominations from members (not observers or officers) for the positions of Chair and Vice Chair of the Forum. Anyone interested should express their interest by e-mailing [schoolsforum@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:schoolsforum@derbyshire.gov.uk) or to Chris’ own e-mail address. Nominations have to be received on or before 31 August 2017.

**17/20 Mainstream Schools’ Membership of the Schools Forum**

Chris Allcock presented the paper which informed the Schools Forum of the need to update its membership to reflect the number of schools converting to academy status. The paper outlined the current and proposed future memberships as follows.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sector | Current | Revised | Change |
| Primary | 12 | 11 | -1 |
| Secondary | 6 | 4 | -2 |
| Academy | 4 | 7 | +3 |
| TOTAL | 22 | 22 | 0 |

The LA maintained school representation would be split equally between heads and governors. As there would be an odd number of primary school representatives then the Constitution provides that the number of heads would be the higher figure.

The Forum’s Constitution, which defines the Membership and operation of the Forum, is a matter for the Council and a paper proposing the above changes is expected to be presented to Cabinet in September 2017. It is hoped that the changes can be made to the membership in time for the Forum’s October 2017 meeting.

No views were offered regarding the proposed changes.

Forum agreed to note the proposed changes.

**17/21 Apprenticeship Levy**

Julie Hudson, Programme Development Manager and Justine O’Donghue, Programme Development Worker for the Derbyshire Adult Community Education Service presented the paper.

In summary,

* Derbyshire Adult Community Education Service are the employer provider for DCC
* DCC Levy is £2.2m of which schools are paying £1.3m
* Government top up the Levy in the Digital Account by 10%
* Levy is kept centrally, funds have to be applied for, and if not spent HRMC will swallow up any balances
* The apprenticeship has to be a real job for a minimum of 12 months, for 30 hours per week and include 20% of ‘off the job’ training
* Apprenticeships can be offered to existing staff if it can be shown that there is a significant difference in job role
* Applications should be sent to Workplace Learning or contact Justine O’Donoghue 01629 535005.

A discussion then took place and it was established that;

* There is no upper age limit for an Apprentice
* The Levy does not pay towards wages, only training
* If the 20% training time is ‘on the job’ in schools, schools do not receive the training fee
* If the 20% training is done outside of school, it is paid for out of the Levy
* Levy can be used to upskill existing staff but the upskilling has to be for a significantly different role
* Existing staff in Apprenticeship roles can be paid at their existing rate
* If the Digital Account is empty the employer contributes 10% of the training costs
* Church Aided schools don’t pay the Levy because the employer is the Diocese and, if their wages bill is less than £3m per annum, the Levy is not applicable.

**17/22 Dedicated Schools Grant Out-turn 2016/17**

Karen Gurney presented the paper and highlighted the following points:

* £5.159m of DSG reserves have been used in 2016-17 mainly to maintain multipliers supporting schools’ budgets.
* The two main areas of overspend were the Early Years clawback, as a result of fewer children taking up provision than originally funded by the DFE, and claims on the de-delegated funding, mainly due to increased insurance costs and claims on the contingency element. The LA self-insures in part and as more claims are made the costs to schools will increase. It is important that schools ensure every effort is made to minimise claims through good health and safety practice etc. as this will help ensure premiums remain affordable.
* The table of school balances shows reducing year end balances across the nursery, primary, and secondary sectors, the scale of the reductions are unprecedented and reflect the pressure on school budgets. The only sectors to see an increase in balances were the special schools and PRUs. The year on year comparisons had been adjusted to reflect schools which became academies during the year.

David Beaumont asked what was the unallocated High Needs Block funding. Karen replied that it was funding that was not committed when the start of year budgets were set and in effect was a contingency. The funding was not required during the year hence the underspend.

The Schools Forum:

1. Noted the final outturn of the 2016-17 Dedicated Schools Grant;
2. Approved that the accumulated re-pooled surplus be retained centrally in 2017-18; and
3. Noted the changes in schools’ balances.

**17/23 National/local funding update**

Chris Allcock presented a paper tabled on the evening confirming the education funding relevant areas of the Queen’s Speech on 21st June 2017.

The local implications are still largely awaited and surround decisions to be made on the National Funding Formula (NFF). Assuming a “soft” formula is in place it is likely that a short consultation will be required in the autumn to agree on the changes/ transition locally.

10 Primary and 2 Secondary Schools are expected to require a licensed deficit in 2017-18 in accordance with existing arrangements.

School redundancy costs to date are currently in line with the previous year’s and the amount re-pooled. However, further costs are anticipated and any deficit in this fund may have to be taken from other re-pooled budgets.

Chris also highlighted the falling school balances and he expects further reductions in the coming years.

David Plummer raised the issue of small schools and their viability and asked if there has been any revision of the small schools strategy. He said schools are approaching his academy to join as a way of overcoming budget deficits.

Chris Allcock and Kathryn Boulton replied that there had been meetings and a group, originally consisting of some School Forum members, had now morphed into a small schools group looking at the issue. The general feeling is something needs to be done, more schools are working together and in some cases federating to reduce costs by sharing leadership costs including SEN roles within a cluster of schools.

Once we know what the NFF looks like and the size of the national funding for schools, the work will probably need to be accelerated as projected school balances show increasing levels of deficits.

There was a request that the School Forum be kept informed of the progress of the work in respect of small schools and this was agreed.

The Forum agreed to note the report.

**17/24 Funding for new Free Schools in Derbyshire**

Mary Murkin presented the paper and highlighted that where the LA wants to open a new school the DfE states it must be an Academy/Free school. The LA has to provide:

1. the capital funding for the build (S106 money from developments may contribute towards this);
2. pre-opening costs, generally recognised to be £220k per school; and
3. any post opening costs necessary to fund the school whilst pupil numbers become established.

Five new schools are planned, likely to open in September 2019 and pre-opening costs would total a maximum of £1.1m which will need to come from DSG reserves. Schools Forum approval will be required to create a central budget to meet the pre-opening costs. Post opening costs are unknown at this stage and, as there is no extra DSG funding, the additional cost could require a reduction in formula multipliers across all schools.

A discussion took place around whether or not it was more economical to extend schools or complete new builds and were developers contributing towards the costs. Kathryn Boulton confirmed that a strategy had been used in making decisions and in some cases it was not possible to extend a primary school as its location was not local enough to the new housing. Two schools did not have sponsors allocated, it is for the DfE to find sponsors and a school would not be built if one could not be found.

Schools Forum agreed to note the report and the potential calls on DSG resources to support new free schools.

**17/25 Other Business**

With the permission of the Chair, Stephanie Marbrow mentioned the Neglect and the Graded Care Profile and said that training sessions had been arranged specifically for school staff with the following ones still remaining:

Wednesday 28th June – Henry Fanshawe School

Thursday 29th June – Bolsover Secondary School

Tuesday 4th July – Buxton Community School

Bookings can be made via e-mail to [safeguarding.training@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding.training@derbyshire.gov.uk)

**17/26 Dates of future meetings**

Forum was advised that the late autumn/winter evening meetings will start at 4:30 p.m. rather than 4:00 p.m. to allow school representatives more time to attend.

5th October 2017 - 6pm-8pm – Committee Room 1, County Hall, Matlock.

6th November 2017 - 4.30pm-6.30pm - Rangewood Room, Post Mill Centre, Sth Normanton.

14th December 2017 - 4:30pm-6.30pm - Sporton Room, Post Mill Centre, Sth Normanton.

8th February 2018 - 4.30pm-6.30pm - Sporton Room, Post Mill Centre, Sth Normanton.

18th June 2018 - 6pm-8pm - Committee Room 1, County Hall, Matlock.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm.