

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**DERBYSHIRE SCHOOLS' FORUM**  
**Minutes of the Meeting Held on 23 January 2013**  
**At 6.00 pm at County Hall**

**Present:**

Brendan Hickey, David Baker, Mike Davison, Peter Crowe, Peter Hamer, Atholl Donaldson, Peter Thorne, Martin Brader, Lesley Hartley, Andrew Cartledge, Paul Mason, Roger Tomlinson, Linda Du-Roe, Rosemary Mackenzie, Angela Colmar, John Crofts

**Substitutes:**

Deborah Turner, Alison Brown, Jonathan Fawcett.

**Observers**

Cllr Longden, Cllr Ellis, Ollie Pardo.

**Officers/Others**

Chris Allcock, Mary Murkin, Chris Tilley, Ruth Lane, , Lesley Hodkin, Les Biggs, Chris Woodhouse, Julian Scholefield.

**Apologies**

Julie Bloor, Joe Burkin, Wendy Sharp, Denise Cunningham, Lindsey Partridge, Julie Cadman, Simon Beardall, Andrew Wild, Philip Sunderland, Penny Pennington, John Holmes, Chris Wayment, Janet Mallett, Cllr Lewis.

Chris Allcock informed the Forum that Fenella Dowler, previously Acting Headteacher at Holbrook School for Autism, had moved to another school outside the Authority, and would therefore no longer be attending the Forum.

The meeting was quorate.

**13/01 Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

The positions of Chair and Vice Chair for the period January 2013 to December 2014 needed to be appointed. Chris Allcock had asked at the last meeting for anyone who was interested in either position to contact him. Martin Brader had volunteered for the position of Chair which was duly accepted by the meeting. Linda Du-Roe volunteered at the meeting for the position of Vice Chair which was also accepted by the meeting.

**13/02 Minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2012**

The minutes were agreed as a true record. Paul Mason raised a matter arising from the minutes. A large number of concerns regarding the proposed 2013-14 budgets were raised at the last meeting and he had been asked to write to Michael Gove to convey these concerns. He had done this and received a reply from David Laws, expressing appreciation of the correspondence, understanding of the concerns, and consciousness of the need to ensure unintended consequences of Government plans were not incurred by schools. He confirmed that early in 2013 there would be a review of the effect of different factors of the new budgets to enable adjustments in 2014-15, if appropriate. The reply also stated that the Capital Funding element of the DSG was

not ring-fenced so local authorities could distribute this funding as they saw fit. Paul was also aware that the F40 and Governors Association had also written, expressing their concerns and received a similar reply from David Laws. The Governors Association felt SEN funding in particular was causing other local authorities the same problems as us. The Government response asked for information of detailed cases of detrimental effects on schools to be presented to Michael Gove and David Laws by 1<sup>st</sup> February 2013.

### **13/03 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Settlement 2013-14**

Chris Allcock presented the paper. The DSG proposal went to Cabinet on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2013 and was approved subject to the call-in arrangements. Chris highlighted that the DSG had been reduced by £820k in respect of revised funding arrangements for hospital education.

The increase in DSG reflects an increase in overall pupil numbers within the LA. Although a decline of 2% has been seen in 11-16 year old pupils, this was more than offset by an increase of 2% in primary sector pupils. The Forum's attention was drawn to Appendix 1 which detailed the list of functions to be held centrally for 2013-14 which had been previously agreed by the Forum with the exception of Licences (item 12) which is the subject of a separate agenda item.

Appendix 2 detailed the amounts to be transferred to the High Needs and Early Years Block, and Chris explained the reasoning behind each item.

The outcome of the settlement is that the multipliers published in the 2012 consultation can be honoured and schools' gains will be capped at 2.5% per pupil, in line with schools' consultation responses. There is some residual DSG to allocate due to capping of gains (£1,888k) release of central DSG (£2,500k) and release of the £650k central redundancy budget as this becomes a LA responsibility from April 2013.

Overall approximately £4,296k extra is available to be distributed to schools. In order to ensure all schools benefit from this additional money, it will be treated as newly delegated funding, which ensures it is not subject to MFG or capping restrictions. It is therefore planned to increase the lump sum by £2,000 and increase the pupil led multiplier by £34 for 2013-14.

Questions were invited from the floor. Paul Mason asked if Schools Causing Concern (SCC) funding applied to Academies and LA mainstream schools and Chris Allcock replied that it did. Paul also asked whether the ghost funding arrangements in Key Stage 1 (KS1) still applied. Chris Allcock replied that very recent new arrangements had been introduced whereby if a child was admitted on appeal into KS1 there was no longer a requirement to ensure the maximum class size was 30. Work was still required to be completed by the LA in this area to assess the financial impact.

Chris advised the Forum that the increase in Early Years funding was mostly to support the new funding for vulnerable 2 yr olds, and he still has to resolve the Special School budgets which would be brought to the March meeting.

A question from the floor asked if there would be any extra money for Special Schools and Chris replied that an extra £250k had been allocated for special/nursery provision. The Forum member stated her Special School had already started shedding staff in anticipation of revised budgets. A member from the Nursery sector said that Nursery

schools were still struggling after the changes to their funding arrangements 2 years ago. Chris replied that if schools had special problems they must be looked at individually.

Forum agreed to note the report.

### **13/04 Copyright Licences**

On 19<sup>th</sup> December 2012 the DfE announced they would purchase block licences on behalf of all schools and Academies from the Copyright Licencing Agency (CLA) and Music Publishers' Association (MPA) and recharge amounts to LAs, who would be allowed to retain funding centrally out of the DSG to meet the costs. Therefore the only additional funding now to be delegated in Derbyshire relates to the Education Recording Agency (ERA). Currently this is purchased on a block basis by the LA at a 30% discount.

Although replies to the consultation document originally opted for this responsibility not to be re-pooled, the LA now thought it would be preferred option in view of the savings applicable. Chris explained that all sectors would need to re-pool the funding to enable the 30% discount to apply.

Questions were invited from the floor. Peter Crowe stated that schools were forever receiving letters inviting them to purchase various licences, and he would like some guidance as to exactly which licences were necessary. Chris replied that he couldn't answer that question outright but if a written question were received he could research the issue.

A vote was then taken as to whether to re-pool the licences funding. All Primary sector members at the meeting voted in favour of re-pooling and Chris indicated that he had spoken to 7 non-attendees about this issue earlier in the day and 6 were in favour of re-pooling and 1 was against.

All Secondary sector members at the meeting voted in favour of re-pooling.

Therefore licence funding would be re-pooled and Chris stated that he would ask Academies to contribute towards the costs appropriately.

### **13/05 – Academy Funding - update**

On 19<sup>th</sup> December 2012 the DfE announced that the Local Authority Central Services Equivalent Grant (LACSEG) funding is being abolished, and that from April 2013 there will be no additional DSG LACSEG funding for academies over and above their formula shares. The only DSG funding to be retained centrally will apply equally to schools and academies e.g. High Needs Block, admissions etc.

The Education Services Grant (ESG) will now be created which is split into two rates, the ESG Retained Duties Funding Rate and the ESG General Funding Rate. The second more significant rate will fund LAs for their on-going responsibilities in respect of schools only and is at a lower rate than academies, who receive funding directly from the Government. Academies should also receive this General Funding Rate to reflect their additional responsibilities. However, in the short term Academies will receive a higher rate either based on a protected local or national rate to prevent

turbulence in academy funding. The additional funding will be met by the DfE although the Government is trying to align rates over a reasonable period of time.

No questions were raised and the report was noted.

### **13/06 – Single Status - update**

Les Biggs presented the report. He explained that the LA was close to agreeing the wording of the 'Working for Us in Schools' document and looking to communicate this to schools in the next few days. He stressed that information regarding the implementation of Single Status in schools was constantly updated on the Extranet and reminded everyone to make sure all school staff are aware of the contents as many employees in schools don't have access to the extranet individually.

Les stated that the advice and guidance to Headteachers and Governors still needs to be written and tested with schools but Governors will not need to evaluate jobs using the Hay scheme so no special training will be required.

It has been discovered that there is a significant error factor in the data held regarding actual job positions held for school staff, and a data cleansing exercise would need to be completed in schools in due course. A similar problem had been encountered when the Single Status exercise was completed in the LA. It has also become apparent that lots of staff do not appear to have job descriptions, or they need updating, and schools will be asked to undertake this exercise.

Les confirmed that the slotting and matching process had still not been discussed with the Trade Unions and acknowledged that the timescale was very tight for implementation on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014. It was emphasised that Single Status should be discussed in schools and he welcomed comments and feedback from staff.

Paul Mason asked why only three Governors were required on the slotting and matching panel. Les replied that schools had fewer Governors than in the past and that if only three were on the panel, a different three could be nominated for the appeals panel if required. He also confirmed that Trade Union representatives were not likely to be involved in the formal slotting and matching process as they would have a vested interest but they might wish to attend as observers as appropriate.

Forum noted the report.

### **13/07 Replacement of DSAS with SAP - Update**

Chris Woodhouse from the Core Systems Team introduced the paper. He explained that the DSAS system was very old and limited in capability in terms of development for the modern age of change. In view of the LA's substantial investment in SAP, it was decided to look at applying it to schools. In late 2011, SAP was showcased to schools at a series of events and was generally well received. A pilot was agreed by Cabinet in June 2012 and 16 schools took part, the pilot schools varied in terms of size, sector, and broadband connection. SAP had generally been well received by the pilot schools. In November 2012, Cabinet agreed a general roll-out to schools. Training would be crucial and will involve 5 days classroom training for everyone, around the County. Additionally written manuals will be provided, there will be a dedicated support team via the IT Servicedesk, and further school based training will

be available if required. Migration will commence at the end of April and will be on a gradual basis.

Peter Crowe asked when schools will be migrated. Chris replied that the next group consisted of 4 secondary schools before Easter, which had already been chosen and agreed. The plan is to do larger schools first, but they will take into consideration schools' individual preferences, but area clusters were proposed to enable local training.

Rosemary said her school is a pilot school, and it is going well, however she had a couple of individual issues. Chris replied that he would address those in the next training session.

Chris Woodhouse said letters regarding the SAP project would be going out to schools very soon and Chris Tilley volunteered that CAYA would pass on any information regarding SAP to schools at the next round of Headteachers' meetings in March.

A Forum member stated that his was a cheque book school and that worked very well on a financial basis and shouldn't all schools work in this way?

Another member enquired about the overall time frame for implementation and Chris Woodhouse replied that the original end date was 31/3/14 but that is ambitious.

It was asked if any of the pilot schools were not on the EMBP connection and Chris replied yes and it hadn't proved a problem.

The Chair asked that as not all schools use DSAS, how will they benefit from the investment in SAP, are they losing out in any way? Chris Allcock replied that they weren't losing out, rolling out SAP was intended to save money overall as having schools on the same system was most cost effective. There are some cheque book schools however, if all schools were on cheque books this would increase the costs of audit, payroll and accountancy and result in less money for schools generally.

The Chair raised the issue that in some other LA's Forum members had specific training and asked in members would be interested in such training. One member stated he agreed that was a good idea.

Peter Crowe indicated that this was likely to be Rosemary Mackenzie's last meeting and he wanted to express a big thank-you from the Forum for her commitment over the years, especially on behalf of Special Schools.

The Forum thanked Rosemary for her contribution to the work of the Forum.

### **13/08 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2013 at 6pm.