



Devon Association of Governors

Minutes of the Executive Committee held on Thursday 15th July 2004 at 5pm at the West of England School, Exeter.

Present: Mike Billington (Vice-Chair and Chair for the meeting); Roger Adcock, Judy Burgess, Ivan Godfrey, David Gravell, Margaret Hosford, Jane Lucas, Don Paterson, Ian Rogers, Claire Tod, Leon Winston, Jenny Currie; Jean Willder and Joan Hammond (Torbay).

Apologies: Laurie Burbridge, Debbie Clapshaw, John Gale, Simon Howes, Margaret Ladbury, Douglas Lomax, Helen Morrison, Carol Robinson, Rob Shilvock, Iris Watson, Martin Weiler.

Minute Circulation: All members of the Executive Committee; Phil Norrey, Director for EAL; Lyndsey Stone, Acting Deputy Director for EAL; Ingrid Fisher, Assistant Director for EAL; Jean McEntire, Chief Executive NGC; Jane Phillips, N.A.S.G.; Sarah Lyster, Regional Chair, NGC; DAG website.

04.26 Introductions and welcome Welcome to Jean Wilder and Joan Hammond from the Torbay Governors Association.

04.27 Issues for Item 7. None.

04.28 Minutes of the meeting of 6th May 2004 were agreed as a true record.

04.29 To deal with matters arising not dealt with later in agenda

- Area Meetings - feedback from this term's meetings are on DAG website and circulated to all schools. Next term's meetings (Dawlish + N. Abbot + Teign : Exmouth + O-S-M + Sidmouth : Axe Valley + Honiton) are being fixed for late September and early October.
- Annual Assembly - a provisional date of April 16th has been arranged with County Hall. Issues with catering and microphones have been resolved
- DAG/DGS conference - possibly a Friday/Saturday in June/July 2005. **Ivan Godfrey to discuss with Judy Burgess.**
- Letter of thanks sent to Vicky Rollason for her excellent presentation.
- Purchase of Computers - It was agreed that DAG should purchase a computer for the Secretary to use at home. The computer recommended by ScoMIS is the CompuSys Desktop. It has 1 year's Warranty provided by CompuSys under the Devon County Council contract, and can be put on maintenance after this period. **Ivan Godfrey to order from ScoMis.** The Secretary will also discuss with Jenny Currie use of a laptop that he has on long-term loan.
- NGC SW Region. DAG was asked to nominate a voting representative for the SW regional meeting in October at which votes are made for the NGC Area Executive member. **Ivan Godfrey's nomination was agreed.**
- 04.22 Extended Schools Steering Group. ' Final ' plea for a governor rep led to a deluge of offers. 2 governors with school experience of working on Extended Schools - John Udy (Ide First) and Andy Mulcock (Ladysmith First) - are both acting as representatives. Others who expressed an interest will form an e-mail contact network with them. They asked for feedback from DAG over extended schools and would like to raise questions and views from a collective

rather than just a personal viewpoint. The committee felt that the issues around Extended Schools were still a concern for many. **It was agreed to invite the Extended Schools advisor, Jon Bell, to the DAG Executive meeting in November this year to hear his views.**

- **DAISI. It was agreed to nominate James Hennessey to act as DAG's representative and nominee for Chair.** DAISI arranged a farewell gathering for Zannah Doan (Chisholm) at which DAG was represented by David Gravell. She was presented with flowers and a gift voucher to commission work from an artist of her choice.
- Comparative Data. Judy Burgess has 4 governors to meet with the Finance Dept. to discuss comparative data.
- NAGM members agreed by a huge majority to change the name to National Association of School Governors (N.A.S.G.) NASG thanked DAG members for their comments on the manifesto. A School (or group such as DAG) can join NASG for a fee of around £50 -£60 p.a..
- Consultations. On behalf of DAG Mike Billington responded to the consultation on School Transport and Leon Winston on the School Profile.
- 04.24 Link with Exeter College. **Ivan will send info on DAG to Pippa Warin of Exeter College ;** it was agreed in principle that links with Exeter College would be a positive move.

04.30. Links with Torbay Jean Willder, (Chair) and Joan Hammond (Vice-chair) gave an outline on the background and current make-up of the Torbay Governors' Association. Torbay LEA has 44 schools so is much smaller than Devon, but its proximity means that there are many shared issues. TGA are pleased that there are informal links with DAG, and thanked Ivan for sharing information and inviting them to executive and area meetings. Mike Billington recently addressed a Torbay meeting. It was agreed that Devon and Torbay governors may find it useful to attend discussions relating to shared issues and would let each other know when these were taking place. For example the DAG area meeting at Newton Abbot would be a logical one for TGA to attend. TGA invited DAG to their annual conferences and executive meetings. The next one on November 11th will include a presentation by the South West Regional Officer for Workforce Remodelling. This is a good example of how the two organisations can link governors with national issues in a regional setting. For more information contact Jean Willder. JPCW@K-swinford.freereserve.co.uk or Tel 01803 665789. The committee looked forward to the link continuing, and thanked Jean and Joan for their presentation.

04.31. DAG - The Year Ahead

There was a discussion on how to implement agreed priorities. There is a large amount of 'business' to go through at meetings (an age old problem for all governing bodies) sometimes resulting in less time to be pro-active rather than re-active; **i.e. how do governors set the agenda instead of responding to it?** It was felt that it would be worth trying to reverse the current system and deal with 'business' in the second hour, and spend the first hour discussing one or more important relevant issue. This could include a short time split into groups to discuss, then back together to debate. It was agreed that any presentations should be allocated 20 minutes with 20 more for questions and answers. An example of an issue to debate is the excellent draft document ' Achieving Excellence - A Vision for Learning in Devon '. As the deadline for comments is September, this should be discussed at the next meeting.

04.32. Committee representatives - Reports Back

Issues Raised:

- Exeter Governors' Consultative Forum - Martin Weiler has sent letter to all Exeter governors. 'Shaping the Future' document has been sent to all parents in Exeter.
- EDP 6 - Sharing Good Practice. It was agreed to debate the issues raised by our rep at a future meeting.
- Schools Support Services Board. There is a possibility for schools to use e-teach for recruitment - a viable alternative to the TES. Governors should discuss this.
- The Admissions Forum took place on 14th July and the report was circulated at the meeting and

is appended to these minutes.

- Schools Forum on 2nd July, and Schools Organisation Committee on 14th July - Margaret Hosford and Mike Billington gave verbal reports.
- Workforce Remodelling Steering Group - Jane Lucas gave verbal report. The next WR meeting will be on Friday 15th October. Margaret Hosford agreed to join the group as the DAG representative. Jane Lucas will continue as a DGS/DAG representative.
- Branch business: Crediton area held meeting on 16th June at Tedburn St Mary and have produced an excellent model good practice document. **The committee endorsed and congratulated Crediton on the document.** It was agreed to ask Crediton area's approval for the wider distribution of their ideas.
- DAG has been invited to nominate a rep on the Healthy Schools Steering Group. **Ivan will contact network.**

04.33 Officers' Reports

Finance .

- Ian Rogers circulated Interim Accounts 04 which were accepted. Thanks were again expressed to him.
- In response to a query from a governor asking whether governors can claim expenses for attending DAG area meetings it was agreed that the existing policy whereby a school pays expenses at the discretion of the Governing Body should continue.

Secretary.

- NASG Executive Election. Ivan Godfrey was nominated for membership of the Executive. Nomination papers signed by Mike Billington.
- The Secretary has received several concerns about the disruption caused by SATs in primary schools. These have been forwarded to NGC / NASG. **It was agreed to debate SATs at a future meeting.**
- Roger Fetherston, head of DCS, has e-mailed Ivan a letter referring to changes in financial support that DCS can offer regarding HT Appointments that will be sent out with the HT Appointments Pack next term. Ivan has commented on this and there will be a second draft - Ivan to forward this to Leon Winston, Mike Billington and Margaret Hosford.
- Jane Phillips is a member of the Advisory Group on Implementation of Freedom of Information which is run from the Dept of Constitutional Affairs and there is worry that schools are not ready for implementation on 1st Jan 05. The conference will be particularly useful to Heads and Bursars/School Secretaries. Ivan has forwarded these details to our LEA and to local headteacher / bursar organisations.
- Ivan and Judy met representatives from Available Light TV to discuss their proposals on programmes for governors. The government is planning an educational TV channel, whose aim is to help teachers/schools share good practice. Available Light are looking for 8 different schools to take part to give evidence of governors in action and to show governors' points of view.

04.34 Dates of future meetings

Tuesday 21st September 2004, 5pm for 5.30 start at the West of England School, Topsham Road, Exeter. (please note time).

04.35 Review of meeting

Margaret Hosford will write to thank the West Of England School for their hospitality; the venue and refreshments were excellent. Thanks were also expressed to Mike Billington for chairing the meeting. It was agreed to have a 5pm for 5.30pm start next time.

The meeting closed at 7pm.

ACTION POINTS

- 04.18 (04.29) Ivan & Ian to order and liaise over payment for computer
04.22 (04.29) Ivan to invite Jon Bell to Nov meeting (also John Udy and Andy Mulcock)
04.24 (04.29) Ivan to send DAG info to Pippa Warin - Exeter College
04.29 Ivan and Judy to discuss DAG/DGS conference
04.31 'Achieving Excellence - A Vision for learning in Devon' Executive members to read in preparation for discussion at the next meeting
04.32 Ivan to contact network for DAG rep on Healthy Schools Steering Group.
04.32 + 04.33 Agenda items for future meetings - Sharing Good Practice and SATs
04.33 Ivan to forward HT appointments draft to Leon Winston, Mike Billington and Margaret Hosford.

DEVON ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNORS Reports back for Executive Meeting on 15th July 2004
--

EDP2 Priority Group 4 Inclusion

Date of Meeting 05/03/04
Items to discuss at Executive Meeting
Items for Information

Representative Peter Brotherton
None

- Raising Standards in Geographical Areas with proven or potential under-attainment - activity is almost 100% complete : progress towards Success Criteria - 75% : barriers - DfES refuse to amend targets : there are no barriers re the evaluation of OFSTED Judgements and the work will be completed shortly.
- Raising the Attainment of Minority Ethnic Pupils and Travellers, and those who are at risk through Racism, including members of minority Faith The data for the attainment and progress for ethnic pupils is inconclusive as some ethnic groups are achieving above average whilst others are below average. Black African and black Caribbean children are achieving below average. The barrier to raising attainment of these groups is how it can be addressed.
Racial incidents - all schools should have policies and measures in place and have procedures for reporting racial incidents, but the level of reporting is low.
Traveller Education - PLASC information indicated 37 Traveller children whereas over 500 children are known to TES. Anne Walker is checking the data to ensure that PLASC records matches TES records.
- Raising the Attainment of Minority Ethnic Pupils for whom English is an Additional Language by direct support, and by training for staff and governors in schools Loraine Davis has been working with literacy consultants and Activity is almost at 100%. There are issues of lack of resources, particularly relating to working with the Chinese community.
- Raising the Attainment of Pupils with SEN The Target Groups under this Activity were queried as attainment would be limited because of small cohorts. For example, the attainment would not include work being with EBD and Autism Spectrum pupils. Guidance is being drafted concerning outreach with Physical Difficulties schools. This is 75% complete. Training programmes linked to Plymouth University are in place. The first cohort complete their training this year. Enhanced Outreach - 50% complete. It will be necessary to establish a strategy and secure funding. Inclusion sampling - some work has taken place but more dissemination of data is to be carried out.
- Raising the Activity of Gifted and Talented Pupils It would appear that work with Gifted & Talented (G/T) pupils is more comprehensive than in other South West LEAs. The G/T handbook for teachers is available and teacher training has been arranged. The profile of G/T pupils has been raised in schools although no reference to this was made in the Academic Council report. There is a low base of G/T pupils at K/S 1, particularly Science. Additional work will take place at Summer School. Strategies are in hand to raise aspirations for Yr 8 students in mathematics. The Conference was well subscribed.

- Raising the Attainment of Children in Public Care The initiative of installing computers in foster homes is in its second year and is continuing. The Early Years PEP has been introduced. The successful Celebration of Achievement will be repeated this year. Two specialist EWOs for LAC have been appointed to raise attendance throughout the county. Nine recommendations and an Action Plan have been agreed through the Education/ Social Services LAC Steering Group and adopted by the County Scrutiny Committee.
- Raising the Standard of Sick Children To provide 10 hours Link education would require 28 tutors and some children would not be able to cope with 10 hours. Discussions are taking place with schools with a view to retaining some medically referred pupils.
- Raising the Attainment of Pupils at Risk of Exclusion through Teenage Pregnancy or Drug Use There are no statistics available for teenage mothers, but all secondary schools should have a policy which is reviewed annually. There is an early 'drop out' from school of girls who become pregnant. They are invariably difficult pupils who are pleased to be out of school and schools do not regret losing. The teenage pregnancy rate is not sufficient to attract additional funding. Sex & Relationship (SRE) courses have been well attended. Drugs education is being provided to all schools. All schools must have a policy for dealing with drug-related incidents. All secondary schools and 67% of primary schools have policies in place. Healthy Schools - the partnership work is progressing well and is on target. 89% of schools are involved in accreditation work.
- Raising the Attainment of Permanently Excluded Pupils and those at risk of Exclusion through disaffection Overall, exclusions for the current Academic Year are down on last year PSA Pump Priming Funding is being used to establish new K/S 3 PRUs in Barnstaple, Exeter and Totnes, draft an In-Year Admissions policy (this is being dealt with by the Admissions Team), develop a creative package for excluded pupils.

Schools Formula Issues Group

Date of Meeting	28/04/04	Representative	Alex Gibson
Issues to discuss at Executive		None	
Issues for Information			

- Revising the 'Needs-Led' percentage for primary and secondary schools. No decision was taken but it was agreed that this issue needs to be looked at as part of item 2. The issue is what is the minimum acceptable baseline percentage of the needs-led funding outcome for schools – i.e. below which schools will not be allowed to fall. At present it is 76% for Primary Schools and 82.4% for Secondary Schools. No decision was taken because any change would be affected by any modification to the new Formula.
- A review of the new formula – is it working? Unfortunately I had to go just when the discussion was hotting up! In brief, the discussion was about how to validate the outcome of the resource allocation formula in terms of what schools ended up getting. The issues were whether it is appropriate and whether it is possible to look at whether the allocation process has ended up with what seems to be a fair distribution of resources. If you like, how to tell between the everyday squeals of indignation about under-funding from 'genuine' cases of hardship. As you can imagine, the very idea of what is "fair" is a difficult one and the discussion was, shall we say, interesting! I wasn't in at the end of the discussion, but I am almost certain that the officers will have been asked to go away and collate what evidence they can find and report back to the next meeting.
The long and short of it then, is that my report on these matters is a holding one – a review of the outcome of the formula is under way, and I shall report on what transpires as and when it does.
- School Carry Forwards and EAL Budget update
- Comparative Statistics – the next step?
- Devon Youth Music – Update.

EDP Priority 3 14 - 19 Education

Date of Meeting 07/05/04 **Representative** Dr. David Keep
Items for Discussion None
Items for Information

- Roger Fetherston the new Chief Adviser chaired the meeting, though much of the input was from Andrew Lovett, who is to be Head of Tiverton in September. There is no new rep. from DASH
- In place of Minutes and Matters Arising we had a single sheet monitoring summary, which was effective.
- Gilly Browning led us on Priority 3.1. Under-performing Subject Departments. It was agreed to write a questionnaire to measure the effectiveness of Advisers' intervention.
- Andrew Lovett took us through 3.2, Vocational learning, much of which is in cooperation with FE. It is very difficult to quantify what is taking place: only 12/37 schools had responded to a survey and many of these were complacent. LEAs are not regarded as important by DfES in 14-19 improvement. New B.Tec. courses are starting in September for which little guidance is available. Schools often prefer training from Exam Boards to LEA.
- There was an oral second-hand report on EDP 3.3 indicating little change since the last meeting.
- There was some discussion about the value of this committee and its future is to be reviewed.

Zero 14 Plus, Devon Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership

Date of Meeting 05/05/04 **Representative** Iris Watson
Issues to discuss at Executive None
Issues for Information

- QUARTERLY REPORT Attention was drawn to the report on page 18 which identified that we have achieved 95% of the target set for new childcare places in the 2001-04 strategic Plan, an achievement of which we can be very proud.
- CHILDREN'S CENTRE UPDATE It was reported that the Strategic Plan has been approved in principle and we had to prepare and submit Implementation Plans for each centre which gave details on how the core criteria such as Qualified Teacher input, early Years and Childcare provision, links with JobCentre Plus would be met. these were submitted before Easter and we are still awaiting a decision. The early years and childcare will be delivered through the NNI's.
- CHILDREN'S TRUST PRESENTATION by Pat Clewer, Social Services Directorate. The full minutes are available on request.
- ANY OTHER BUSINESS It was advised that that National Play Day is 4th. August 2004. DevonPlay has appointed two new specialist members of staff. £200m NOF funding is being distributed to District councils throughout the country to spend on Play. Play Policy for Devon is being produced. Play Conference being planned for October 2004..Play for All free training is being promoted on Saturday 5th. June

Schools Support Services Board

Date of Meeting 12/05/04 **Representatives** Ivan Godfrey and Rob Shilvock
Issues to discuss at Executive None
Issues for Information

- Levels of buyback of services are continuing at a generally good level
- Update on progress of School Meals' Review. Report likely to be completed by end of term
- Ingrid Fisher outlined proposals to change the structure of DYM with a focus on ensemble work in the future. Tuition will be undertaken by individual tutors dealing directly with schools.
- Further groups have been established to advance the idea of brokerage of alternative service providers and to support procurement across Devon.

Zero 14 Plus - Play Strategy Meeting

Date of Meeting 25/05/04 **Representative** Iris Watson

Issues to discuss at Executive None

Issues for Information

- A new task group is being created to spearhead the Devon Play Strategy.
- I was invited to attend as a representative of D.A.G., as I also serve on the Early Years Committee
- One of the main thrusts of this group will be to invite all District Councils to formulate their own Play Provision Strategy with an overall policy for Devon.
- All policies must cover inclusive play and to be aware of disadvantaged areas.
- Government funding of £200m will come through in 2005/6 and will in due course be shared among the District Councils, the money to be dedicated to Inclusive Provision. Training additional Play leaders will have immediate attention. It will be recommended that use of school buildings - Ref. Extended Schools - is encouraged and this should play a major part in providing the space /premises required. A further meeting will be called A S A P.
- NOTE A PLAY CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD IN OCTOBER 2004.

Exeter Governors' Consultative Forum

Date of Meeting 15/06/04 **Representative** Martin Weiler

Issues to discuss at Executive None

Issues for Information

- Second meeting of new look Forum
- Discussed extended schools and new funding for this for each academic council
- Considered in particular early years possibilities. Exeter has two district coordinators for this
- Shaping the future document going to all governors in Exeter
- Conference on 16 Sept on pupil democracy
- Next meeting at 7pm on Mon 15 November at Stoke Hill First School; topics will include Children's Centres and intra-Agency co-ordination

EDP 6 Sharing Good Practice

Date of Meeting 18/06/04 **Representative** Joshua Wright

Issues to discuss at Executive

Points raised below

Issues for Information:

- All activities are making progress inline with their agreed success criteria. However the measure of effectiveness and value for money provided by these activities are difficult to show.
- An area which I feel needs to be discussed is a how we identify best practice and as Governors how we ensure this best practice is shared with as many people as possible. This came up during a discussion on how the LEA is helping to disseminate best practice which they need to show for the pending OFSTED inspection. The response from the officers at the LEA was 'by professional judgment.' As Education is now such a data rich environment, and that levels of accountability across all public sector employment is increasing, I feel that professional judgment now has to be back up by data.
- As Governors we need to ensure there are common criteria for identifying best practice, that best practice is shared and insist that school refer to best practice models when changing policy. When we have commonality of language we can then ensure equity of provision for all pupils across Devon.

Schools' Forum Meeting

Date of Meeting 02/07/04
Representatives As listed
Issues to discuss at Executive None
Issues for Information

- Margaret Hosford took the chair
- Members welcomed after discussion the draft document " Achieving Excellence - A Vision for Learning in Devon "
- Meeting updated on progress of Healthy Eating Review and asked Director for EAL to write to parents at the appropriate time to explain the objectives of the new policy and stress its countywide importance
- Meeting updated on changes to music service provision and raised related issues.
- The future of the Schools' Mutual Board for Absence of Teaching Staff was considered. A report will come to the next meeting on how the Board might run more effectively.

Schools Support Services Board

Date of Meeting 08/07/04
Representative Ivan Godfrey
Issues to discuss at Executive
Any of the itemized points below?
Issues for Information

- Concerns expressed about letter sent to individual minibus drivers telling them about requirement to retake DCC test. This had not been handled in the agreed way. It was established that is a requirement of insurers that this should be done once every 4 years. Ray Beale will discuss with Transport Team
- Ongoing concerns about arrangements for ex DYM tutors and their employment conditions. This will be followed up as a matter of urgency
- Proposal from Judy Burgess to move to a system of levying a relatively low charge to schools for in-house GB training approved in principle.
- Excellent presentation from E-Teach offering a staffing recruitment service at a fraction of the cost of newspaper advertisements - providing there is a strong countywide interest expressed. 17 Devon secondary schools have already joined the scheme.
- Excellent presentation on the development of e-procurement for use by schools. This should reduce unnecessary paperwork and also lead to some financial savings.

Admissions Forum

Date of Meeting 14/07/04
Representative Roger Adcock
Issues for Discussion None
Issues for Information

- Co-ordinated Admissions 2005. Secondary: Now agreed and adopted from 1 September 2004 for 2005. Primary: Delayed until 2006. Proposals out to consultation. Two points of entry to stay but kept under review.
- VA Primary: Most admissions policies legally defective. County consulting. Anglican diocese to help co-ordinate responses and common admission forms. LEA prepared, as legally required, to challenge schools not coming up to requirements.
- CC. Exec. wants additional criterion for over-subscription added for 2005/6: "children with exceptional medical or social justification are allocated places automatically, rather than as now, such places being discretionary.." A draft protocol has been prepared.
- Admissions v. PANS. Many schools admitting above Pan but not informing LEA. Some did not realize that Pan remains with year group. (N.B. Somerset said PAN only legal for year of entry).
- Casual Admissions. Debate about next nearest and next next nearest school. Agreed to try the latter as an option subject to reasonable travel distance.
- Primary Co-ord. Admissions 2006. Debate about central processing of applications. Will be kept in but probable compromise of schools acting as post boxes.

- Inclusion. Re-integration of excluded pupils. New protocol working well engendering co-operation of schools. There is a small team working on this.
- SEN Admissions. Apart from statemented children these operate as for other children.

Devon Strategic Plan Meeting

Date of Meeting 14/07/04 **Representative** Ivan Godfrey
Issues to discuss at Executive None
Issues for Information

- Meeting bringing together representatives from all walks of life in Devon to review progress on identifying Devon's current state and agreeing common aspirations for the future
- Document, " Focus on Devon ", summarizing Devon's qualities and needs presented and talked to by leading members of the local community
- ' Champions ' for different fields (e.g. environment, children, law and order, housing) spoke to identify key aspirations for the future contained within the " Community Strategy " document
- Much group work aimed at producing a shared set of realizable goals that the partnership could work towards over the coming year
- This is a very worthwhile and ambitious venture aimed at trying to link together all groups working to improve the quality of life within Devon. Nothing can be achieved overnight - lots of hard work on small issues that will eventually contribute to a greater whole!

S.O.C. Meeting

Date of Meeting 14/07/04 **Representatives** As listed
Issues to discuss at Executive None
Issues for Information

- Mike Billington elected Vice-Chair of S.O.C. for coming year
- Closures of MLD centres at Tavistock Primary and The Castle Primary, Tiverton and opening of 8 place CIDs Resource Bases noted
- Changes to Ratcliffe Special School noted
- From February 2005 the governor group on S.O.C. will require a rep from the nursery school sector.