

Devon Association of Governors

Minutes of the Executive Committee held on Thursday 20th January 2005, 5.30pm at the West of England School, Exeter.

Present: Leon Winston (Chair), Roger Adcock, Laurie Burbridge, Judy Burgess, Jenny Currie, Ivan Godfrey, David Gravell, Margaret Hosford, Helen Morrison, Don Paterson, Carol Robinson, Ian Rogers, Rob Shilvock. Dr Phil Norrey, Director of Education. Jean Willder & Sue Milner (Torbay)

Apologies: Mike Billington, Debbie Clapshaw, John Gale, Simon Howes, Jane Lucas, Claire Tod, Iris Watson, Martin Weiler.

05.01 Judy Burgess, Head of Devon Governor Services informed the committee of her decision to retire in August 2005. She thanked Phil Norrey for supporting governors and Governor Services and Leon Winston thanked Judy for her important contribution to DGS since 1992. She will write a piece for governors in the February issue of Devon Governor.

05.02 The Chair welcomed Dr Phil Norrey, Devon's Director of Education, to the meeting. One year ago 'Devon's Vision for Learning/Achieving Excellence' document was launched, and Phil outlined the progress made since then. In June 04 the national context changed with the Government's proposal for a single plan, bringing together all elements of care for children. Education was one element which includes social care, health, youth justice etc. Devon will develop a transition plan for 2005/06 to cover a broad education/social care agenda. The proposal is that Devon's Vision for Learning will underpin the education element, with the need for a 'Vision for Well Being' to form the basis of the social care element. The single plan for children will be an ongoing process which will take several years to develop. In October of this year the LEA will change to The Children's Services Authority to take into account these changes. There will be one inspection framework for all aspects of children's services - JARs or Joint Area Reviews will form the basis of inspection/evaluation. In 2006/07 all agencies working with children and young people in Devon will be inspected. JARs will be complex and challenging as they cover such a wide range of services.

Devon will need to develop its own education strategy alongside the government's national strategy. Choice, competition and market issues do not necessarily fit into Devon's mainly rural setting. Supporting children and addressing social issues through collaboration are not easy to reconcile with market led policies and competition. Devon governors are part of the process of how Devon's schools are developed in the future. It is important for governors to think about how they can contribute to the debate.

In response to the Vision for Learning consultation, the following have been highlighted for further development: creativity; the voice of the child; further education providers; the role of libraries and other services; the environment and global citizenship. The Schools' Forum has looked at the consultation document and is helping to develop the 05/06 transition plan with a steering group of all parties involved.

Summary Phil Norrey asked governors to 'hold to the vision' as it would take a long time to come to fruition but will ultimately benefit Devon's children. Devon will develop a transition plan for 2005/06 to cover a broad education/social care agenda and the Vision for Learning will underpin the education element. He was supportive of the idea of governors' involvement in the development of Local Learning Communities and will ask DGS to look at how this could be achieved. He will also ask the Deputy Director, Deborah Magill to speak about the matter at the DAG AGM in April.

The Chair and members thanked Dr Norrey for his contribution to the meeting and welcomed his ongoing support for governors. Phil Norrey and Judy Burgess left the meeting.

05.03 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 9th November 2004 were agreed as a true record. Approved and seconded by Rob Shilvock and Laurie Burbridge.

Matters arising from the minutes not dealt with later:

- 04.46 Extended Schools. Jon Bell informs us that the government is planning to issue an 'Extended Schools prospectus' sometime in February. In answer to a specific question asked at the last meeting re. 'charitable status', the following was given to Jon by DfES: '*Section 27 gives Governing Bodies the*

power to provide services and facilities that further any charitable service for the benefit of pupils at the school or their families and other members of the community. Services and facilities that further any charitable service covers a vast range of services including all the key extended school services. Also bear in mind that this piece of legislation does not displace pre existing legislation which allowed schools to provide a range of services and open up their premises for community use. ' For examples of good practice, Jon suggests looking at Zero14+. John Udy has sent Ivan a paper with his observations on developing the Extended Schools agenda for Ide First School in Exeter. Ivan will contact Jon Bell to ask if he could provide some written information which would be relevant and useful for governors in Devon.

- 04.49 Computer for DAG secretary has been purchased and delivered.
- 04.50 Web Forum for Devon will be up and running soon - volunteer monitors are needed - please contact Judy Burgess if you can help. The DAG Website will be updated with new search engine links.
- 04.53 DAG leaflet. It was agreed to go ahead with the draft leaflet as circulated at the last meeting. Ivan and Jenny to edit as per discussion and bring final draft to the next meeting. Aim to print large run of leaflet after the Annual Assembly so new Executive committee can be included (in consultation with Treasurer.)
- Plymouth - Ivan has made contact with secretary of their governor organisation.
- DAISI. Ivan has made contact with the new director, Liz Hill, and will meet with her soon. DAISI have moved recently and they have a new office contact, Clare Saunders - admin@daisi.org.uk. They are looking for a trustee and Vice-Chair (see item 05.05 below)
- DGS letter - Ivan still pursuing with Judy.
- 'Matters arising' - Roger Adcock's book. The committee would like to purchase copies of the book so they can be given to governors for long service (12 years continuous service in Devon). Ivan to enquire from Judy how many governors per year this would involve and report back to the next meeting when numbers can be discussed.

05.04 DAG Annual Assembly Saturday 16th April 2005, County Hall, Exeter Ivan circulated a draft Agenda and Notice. These were agreed by the committee and will be distributed to all schools via LLC groups. Ivan will also invite Torbay and other neighbouring governor associations. Deborah Magill, (Deputy Director for EAL) will be the guest speaker. Refreshments for the main assembly have been ordered, and Leon Winston agreed to organise arrangements for guests' lunch.

05.05 Committee representatives

- Devon Arts in Schools Initiative (DAISI) - are looking for a new trustee (must be a governor) and a new Vice-Chair (should be someone with an arts background but does not have to be a governor).
The basic commitments of a *DAISI Trustee* are:
To attend all Board meetings approximately 5/6 a year.; These are generally held on a weekday between 5.30 and 7.30pm; to attend the DAISI staff and trustees away day which is held once a year; to attend a selection of DAISI events that are held throughout the year if possible; to visit a selection of schools projects run by DAISI and complete observation forms for these visits; to be available to DAISI staff and Board members for support and advice, for example by telephone or email.
- DAISI's Board also needs a *Vice-Chair*. It is anticipated that the individual concerned will succeed James Hennessy (Chair) and therefore will need to be DAG nominated (although DAISI's constitution stipulates that this person need not be a member of DAG).

Please contact Ivan Godfrey if you are interested in either vacancy. Ivan will advertise on DAG updates and at forthcoming area meetings.

- Healthy Schools Steering Group - the report asked governors to find out how their school was progressing towards Healthy School Accreditation. There will be a Healthy Schools review taking place shortly.
- Meeting with Phil Norrey - see discussion above. He was supportive of the idea for governors to be involved in the development of Local Learning Communities (formerly Academic Councils).
- DAG/DGS Conference. Note that the conference is booked for 14th/15th October 2005 at the Crossmead Centre, Exeter. DGS do not have the staffing capacity they had last time, and would like either financial or admin support. The committee agreed to help either with a contribution of £1000 or admin support - possibly Jenny and/or Mike Billington. It was agreed to defer the final figure until after the AGM in April.

Advertising - Ivan's suggestion was agreed: An A5 colour flyer to be produced as soon as there is information on speakers for distribution at the DAG assembly + 2 or 3 copies in the schools post pointing governors towards a booking form which would be a cut off form in the Devon Governor attached to a full page spread of information about the conference.

- Branch business. Don Paterson and Carol Robinson are looking into setting up a local group in the Newton Abbot area. The importance of local groups was highlighted and the committee was pleased that Dr Norrey was supporting this matter.
- Schools' Forum. Hillary Anderson is standing down. The committee agreed to Alex Wood (Tavistock) becoming a full member.
- Exeter Local Planning and Implementation Group. Dr Sue Gay has resigned. The committee agreed that Ivan should advertise for a new member via DAG updates etc. and accept a nomination on behalf of the executive.
- NGC Spring Conference. 23rd April, Bristol. Leon Winston, Ivan Godfrey and Margaret Hosford expressed an interest in attending.

05.06 Officers' Reports.

- Finance: Ian Rogers circulated the accounts for 2004. Ivan will contact Phil Norrey to discuss next year's grant from county. ***The committee agreed for the Treasurer to send the 2004 accounts for audit.*** This will be put into the governors' pack for the AGM in April. With thanks to Ian Rogers.
- Secretary:

* *Cornwall governors.* Andrew Earle is the new Chair, and he has joined the DAG network. Ivan will invite him to the next executive meeting. Roger Adcock has been invited to Cornwall's AGM on 12th March.

* *Torbay Governors.* Jean Willder invited governors to Torbay's meeting on 17th March, with Tony Smith as guest speaker. Torbay's AGM will be on 7th May. Jean will email Ivan with more details.

* *Secondary School governors.* Ivan has sent messages to Secondary Schools about sharing ideas on committee structures. It was felt that it would be useful to have a document showing how schools structure their committees and governing body meetings. This could be extended to other schools. It was agreed that this would be a good thing to pursue, and Ivan will let DGS know that we are looking into it.

* *Work Life Balance.* There will be a Devon conference on March 9th, jointly run with Investors in People. The conference will focus on 3 areas: Governing body responsibility for the WLB of the headteacher. Cutting down on bureaucracy / role of ICT / Bringing about a whole school culture change with regard to worklife balance and individual responsibility within it. If appropriate, Ivan will send details via the network. Governors should check in schools for information, as there is a maximum of 75 places.

* *NASG/NGC* Ivan has resigned from the NASG Executive, but would like to continue involvement as representative on the GovernorLine Board and member of the Outer Ring. Currently there are discussions involving the possible merger of NASG/NGC and the DAG executive would like to support this move. DAG reps who attend NGC conference in April will be able to update executive on further developments.

* *Teachers TV* will be broadcast from early February - look out for the programme slots called 'Just for Governors' and you may see some familiar faces.

* Ivan reported that he will be away from June 10th to the end of August as he was undertaking a sponsored walk across the Pyrenean mountains with wife Sue. They are raising money for Hospiscare and Children's Hospice. Arrangements for the second half of the summer term can be discussed at the next meeting.

The committee passed on its best wishes to Iris Watson, who is unwell.

The committee was asked to consider how they would like to acknowledge Judy Burgess' retirement.

The meeting closed at 7.30p.m.

Date and time of next meeting: Thursday 10th March 2005, West of England School, Exeter.

ACTION POINTS

Secretary/Asst Sec:

- 0.5.03/04.46 Contact Jon Bell to ask for some written information on Extended Schools which would be relevant and useful for governors in Devon.
- 05.03/04.53 Leaflet. Edit as per discussion (expand acronyms/Jenny's phone number /Rogers book mentioned on back/larger typeface/"when schools subscribe to DGS they subscribe to DAG") and bring final draft to the next meeting. Add new Executive after Annual Assembly.
- 05.03 Matters arising book - find out how many governors per year (approximately) serve a twelve year governorship in Devon.
- 05.04 Annual Assembly - circulate agenda and notices - invite Torbay and neighbouring associations.
- 05.05 DAG/DGS Conference. Go ahead with advertising. Discuss admin support at next meeting.
- 05.05 Exeter LPIG - look for a new member.
- 05.06 Finance - Ivan Godfrey to speak to P Norrey about DAG grant.
- 05.06 Cornwall Govs: invite Andrew Earle to next committee
Looking at committee structures - Ivan to inform DGS.

Treasurer:

- 05.06 Finance. 2004 Accounts - send to audit.

Chair:

- 05.04 Annual Assembly - organise lunch for guests

All: Consider how to acknowledge Judy Burgess' retirement.

DEVON ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNORS Reports back for Executive Meeting on 20th January 2005

DAISI

Date of Meeting November 04 **Representatives** - David Gravell; Margaret Hosford

Issues to discuss at Executive - search to find and arrangements for nomination of Vice-Chair

Issues for Information -

- DAISI is looking for a Vice-Chair / potential future Chair and would welcome ideas from DAG. They would like someone with both Arts and Business connections, if possible
- Reports Back were given on recent DAISI activities
- An Away Day is planned for January 26th

Workforce Remodelling Committee

Date of Meeting November 04 **Representatives** - Margaret Hosford; Jane Lucas

Issues to discuss at Executive - None

Issues for Information -

- Training is currently underway for 265 out of the 371 Devon schools
- There will be training directed specifically at governors during next term
- The key issue is the introduction of 10% PPA time and how schools will be able to afford this on a sustainable basis

EDP2 Priority Group 4 Inclusion

Date of Meeting 05:11:04 **Representative** Peter Brotherton

Issues to discuss at Executive - None

Issues for Information

- The meeting was devoted to Activity 7, **Raising the Attainment of Children in Public Care**, also known as Looked-After Children (LAC) and considered (1) the ICT project, the installation of computers in Foster

and Residential Homes, (2) Looked-After Children Dowries and (3) Early Years Personal Education Plans (PEPS). There are about 700 Looked-After Children (LAC), of all ages from birth to 19 years that are the concern of the Devon LEA/Social Services, of which about 500 are of school age. Most live with foster carers, particularly in the early years. There may be up to 700 more who originate outside Devon about whom little is known. Recent data shows that only 54% of Devon LAC children achieve A-G grades and 5% five A-C grades at GCSE. About half of them are not entered for any GCSE subject. Some children may have experienced as many as four changes of family by the time they are ready to start school, making them emotional and difficult to manage, leading to poor attendance.

- **(1) the ICT project, the installation of computers in Foster and Residential Homes** In response to scheme objectives set by central government, Devon Social Services has spent grants of some £158,000 since 2002 on the '4u2' scheme which purchases Home Computers with relevant software, (inclusive of Internet access), for young people in care and leaving care. There has been a focus on KS3 and KS4. Arrangements have been made for ScoMIS to provide support and training and Social Services provide financial support for ongoing maintenance expenses for a limited time. Foster carers meet the cost of consumables and insurance. There is a need to evaluate the impact that this initiative has had. The meeting suggested several areas that might be included on survey questionnaires to be sent to carers and to LAC, which will explore a range of issues on funding, managing, links with schools, perception of benefit, problems of implementation and support. Government funding for this project will be withdrawn after the current financial year. Efforts are being made to obtain funding from Charitable Trusts to enable the scheme to continue.
- **(2) Looked-After Children Dowries** Dowries are small grants (about £50 - £300) designed to support various extra-educational activities for Looked After Children, helping to boost self-esteem and improve motivation. They were introduced three years ago. They are applied for on behalf of LAC by designated teachers, stating the intended outcome or gain for the child, and have so far ranged from helping towards the funding of school trips to violin and horse riding lessons. There has been some overlap with the ICT '4u2' project, some dowry money being used for the purchase of software. The numbers of children was small in the first two years but has accelerated during the third year. It is particularly noteworthy that no application has so far been made on behalf of LAC in Special Schools. Information about this scheme may be obtained from Malcolm Billinge, Senior Educational Psychologist at mbilling@devon.gov.uk. The meeting suggested a range of criteria that might help guide future applications if the number of applications rises.
- **(3) Early Years Personal Education Plans (PEPS)** PEPs, which must be completed for all LAC, whether they are in Maintained or Non-Maintained (Private, Child-Minder, Pre-School) 'settings', are 'over-arching' educational plans, forming an integral part of the Care Plan and referring to, but not replacing, IEPs, Pastoral Support Plans and Connexions Plans. They are initiated by the child's social worker, formulated by social worker and school (designated teacher or other) and reviewed with the Care Plan. All settings, Maintained and Non-Maintained, must have a SENCo. DfES requires Early Years Partnerships to appoint Area SENCOs in Early Years settings. The ratio is one Area SENCO to 20 Year Years settings. A recent straw poll survey suggested that there was confusion and mis-information regarding the status and use of PEPs in a range of settings. Some had never heard of them, thought that LAC were synonymous with SEN children, had none in place, did not know if they had any Looked After Children in their setting and thought that PEPs were IEPs. Further information on this topic can be gained from Judy Topley, Inclusion Childcare Officer (Early Years).

DAG/DGS CONFERENCE

Date of Meeting 11.11.04 **Representative** Mike Billington

Issues to discuss at Executive -

- Members to note that the conference is booked for the 14th/15th October 2005 at the Crossmead Centre, Exeter.

Issues for information -

- Ivan Godfrey and Jane Lucas were at another meeting, so it was just Mike Billington and Judy Burgess discussing matters.
- A theme for the conference was suggested as being "The Child at the Centre".
- Looking at the five themes from "Every Child Matters" and how these link in with what is happening in Devon.

- Various names put forward as potential speakers for the Friday night, Saturday keynote speech and as workshop facilitators. Further enquiries to be made.
- The programme for the day would follow similar lines to the previous conference.
- Next meeting – 10.00am Thursday 130105.

Exeter Governors Consultative Committee

Date of Meeting: 15/11/04 **Representative:** Martin Weiler

Issues to discuss at Executive: None; although note item below on future of this group.

Issues for Information:

- Received update on development of children's centres in Exeter. There is a lot of activity, often but not always based around schools. New challenges for governors of schools that take on children's centres and important we share good practice. Discussion broadened to multi-agency working generally and again implications for governors (i.e. our role with social services, health bodies, midwives etc). All part of growing world of extended schools.
- Were advised that there is a pressure on capital budgets due to building costs going up in Devon. Cost of new builds is going up.
- There are now 12 teaching and 12 non-teaching staff at risk from the reorganization. This is greatly reduced from outset.
- We discussed the future of the group. Debbie Pritchard can no longer provide secretariat and her office can only provide basic admin until end of the academic year. We would like the group to continue but it needs on-going administrative backbone to sustain it. One option would be to link up with the Exeter Learning Community (formerly Academic Council). We agreed to explore this option.
- Next meeting: Thursday 3 March; 7pm Stoke Hill First School

Healthy Schools Steering Group

Date of Meeting: 17/11/04 **Representative:** David Dutton

Issues to discuss at Executive: Dissemination of information below

Issues for Information:

- I suggest Governors might like to ask these questions of their schools: **Schools not yet accredited.** How is the school progressing towards Healthy Schools Accreditation? **Accredited schools.** Unless already accredited in all 8 topics of the award, how is the school progressing towards accreditation in the remaining topics? What steps has the school taken to help other schools in the Academic Council towards accreditation? If fully accredited, is the maintenance of and building on the school's high achievements a regular discussion matter for Governors?
- Appointments. Annette Lyons from Liverpool as the new Adviser for PSHE as from January 2005; Alyson Sheldrake (a past member of the Healthy Schools team) as the Healthy Schools Co-ordinator; and Annabel Stone as the Healthy Schools substance misuse education co-ordinator.
- School Meals Review: the matter is to go before the Chief Executive Management Board; there is a strong will to find the necessary funding.
- A working group for schools facing challenging circumstances is to meet at the Tiverton Hotel on 13 January.
- Discussion of the Action Plan November 2004 to March 2006.
- Three points in particular: ways and means of involving all schools in the Healthy Schools Award; importance of accredited schools maintaining and building on their high standards; and the holding firm by all concerned to the philosophy of Healthy Schools, a philosophy the presence of which is not easily recorded on paper but which lies at the heart of what good education is.

School Organisation Committee

Date of Meetings 23/11/04 : 15/12/04 **Representatives:** As listed

Issues to discuss at Executive - None

Issues for Information

- Agreement to establish a new primary school at Clyst Heath, Exeter
- Strong statement disapproving government proposals Foundation Schools and Expanding Popular and Successful Schools and Adding Sixth Forms was drafted and sent to DfES, all Devon schools and Devon MPs
- A special meeting approved the early opening of the new Wynstream Community Primary School (to replace the 2 Bradley Rowe schools) at the beginning of the summer term (with provisional arrangements for Year 7s for the duration of the summer term)

Admissions Forum

Date of Meeting 23/11/04

Representative: Roger Adcock

Issues to discuss at Executive - None

Issues for Information -

- **Coordinated Admission Schemes for 2006/7**
 - **Secondary.** The scheme now in place will be carried forward with minor amendments of dates.
 - **Primary.** Out for consultation. Consultation **ends 1 March 2005.**
- Agreement needed with VA schools. A supplementary form for VA schools discussed.
- **Admissions 2005 and 2006.** 'The Next Step' (Transfer to Secondary 2005) and 'The Second Step' (Transfer from First Schools in Exeter 2005) published. The LEA will manage Reception admissions for Exeter for 2005. The 'relevant' area for consultation to remain as Devon LEA.
- **Admission arrangements for VA and Foundation Schools.** Note that they have to consult with all admission authorities in the 'relevant area', i.e. LEA and 56 primary and 1 secondary VA and 4 Foundation secondary schools. Proposed to consult electronically.
- **Oversubscription criteria.** Discussed issue of schools not offering places to those not giving them as first preference, arising from Sec of State's order to Essex RC school. A Devon VA school in that situation. Further clarification sought.
- **Inclusion. New DfES guidance** issued 19/11/04 re **Hard to Place Children.** *Governors should look out for this as it has some uncompromising contents, e.g. the school being full will not be an excuse for not taking such a pupil! A new Protocol will be required and a WP will arrange to examine this in the context of the existing In-year Protocol (itself not entirely popular).*
- In the course of discussion two interesting points arose: the threshold of tolerance before exclusion differs from school to school and this will have a bearing on the successful reception of a pupil at another school; and in discussion of SEN it transpires that of those put forward for statementing only 40% are accepted. I asked what happens to the rest and it appears that there is to be an LEA Monitor. It will be interesting to see how this works out.

Meeting with Phil Norrey

Date of Meeting 24/11/04

Representative: Ivan Godfrey

Issues to discuss at Executive- Support from LEA to facilitate development of LLC governor groups

Issues for Information

- Arrangements discussed for January Executive meeting and Phil's presentation on the Vision for Learning (combined with Deborah Magill presentation to the Annual Assembly)
- General discussion on portfolio of services to schools and the development next year of the portfolio of alternative service providers (discussion more related to SSSB!)
- Exchange of views on the government consultation on Foundation Schools and Expanding Popular Schools. Shared concern that this could act against the Devon vision of collaborative work.
- I passed on the comments from our Executive about the benefits to governors / GBs if support could be found within the LLCs for facilitating meetings of local governor groups
- Discussion about the implementation of the final phase of Workforce Remodelling. PN pointed out that falling rolls should not be confused with this issue and that schools should not seek to try to alleviate the falling rolls problem by diverting monies intended for WR.

Schools' Support Services Board

Date of Meetings 23/11/04 : 8/12/04

Representative: Ivan Godfrey

Issues to discuss at Executive - None

Issues for Information -

- Portfolio of Services for 2005/06 has been reviewed with considerable rigour and amendments made as a result of Board members' comments. It should be in schools for the w/c 17th January 2005
- Ongoing concerns about the percentage increases in Capita costs per annum to schools
- Issues relating to school minibuses (cost and regularity of driver tests : frequency of safety checks) still need to be addressed
- Very helpful presentation on CRB checks and the work being undertaken to support schools by Maria Chakraborty and Hugh Griffiths within the Personnel Department
- Input from Brian Sussex on current SCOMIS issues, particularly those relating to the installation of sims.net in to secondary schools in time for the January PLASC records check.
- 2005 will focus on the development of a portfolio for alternative service providers

DAG/DGS CONFERENCE

Date of Meeting 13/01/05

Representatives Mike Billington, Ivan Godfrey

Issues to discuss at Executive -

- DAG contribution to the conference. This could be Financial [I believe we gave £1000 last time] or it could be in terms of Admin Support [someone to help with booking arrangements, confirmations, delegate packs etc.] DGS do not have the staffing capacity that they had last time.

Issues for information

- No speakers confirmed yet. Paul Roberts not available.
- Various other names being approached – Gervase Phinn, Aynsley Green, Debbie Magill, Neil Davies.
- Programme timings to be altered slightly to allow for three workshop slots. Two before lunch and one after. This is in response to comments made after the previous conference.
- Five workshop themes – Being Healthy, Enjoy & Achieve, Staying Safe, Economic Well-being, Positive Outcomes. As per “Every Child Matters”.
- Judy to talk to Lyndsey Stone re workshop facilitators.
- Next meeting 9.00am Thursday 10.02.05.