

**Schools Forum Meeting Minutes - DRAFT - held on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015 at The Avenue**

**PRESENT**

Peter Kayes	Governor, Redlands - CHAIR
Caroline Long	Deputy head of New Bridge (Snowflakes) (shared vote)
Emma Payne	Blagrove Nursery (shared vote)
Marianne Best	Headteacher, Cranbury College (shared vote)
Mark Hester	Cranbury College (shared vote)
Karen Hillier	Governor, Caversham and Newbridge nurseries
Julie Kempster	Riverside Day Nursery
Phil Davies	Headteacher - Prospect School
Nicola Maytum	Headteacher, JMA
Justine McMinn	Headteacher, EP Collier
John Cosgrove	Headteacher, Christ the King (RC) School
Charlie Clare	Headteacher, Geoffrey Fields Junior
Joan Boyd	NUT
Ashley Robson	Head Teacher, Reading School (shared vote with
Kendrick)	
Richard Rolf	Governor Micklands Primary (observer for Governor
Reps)	
Viv Angus	Headteacher, Reading Girls School
Isabelle Sandy	School Business Manager, Kendrick (shared vote with
Reading School)	

**RBC Cllrs**

Tony Jones	Lead Member for Education
------------	---------------------------

**RBC**

Austin McNamara	Interim Head Of Education
Russell Dyer	Finance Business Partner
Steven Davies	Schools Accountant
Gill Dunlop	Service Manager
Chris Stevens	Service SEN
Christina Shamaris	Equality Services
Kay Clarke	Equality Services

**APOLOGIES**

Lisa Bedlow	Headteacher, Caversham and Newbridge nurseries
(Caroline Long & Emma Payne in place)	
Cathy Doberska	Headteacher, New Christchurch
Sue Bourne	Headteacher, The Avenue
Christine Kattirzi	Kendrick (Isabelle Sandy's in place)
Rachel Cave	Highdown

---

## **1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

- Welcome
- Apologies

## **2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 OCTOBER 2015**

- Minutes of 15<sup>th</sup> October approved by Forum

## **3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/ SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP ISSUES (STANDING ITEM) - CONFIRMATION OF REPRESENTATION**

- Tyndall Report was to be circulated (this was done via email); this assisted with de-delegation
- Current membership and the terms of office reviewed
- Yvonne Jackson confirmed as new member; vacancy for maintained special
- In respect of Academy shared members the forum just wants confirmation that the existing Academies are happy to continue
- There is no representation notified for the Primary Academies
- SD (finance) has looked at the number of pupils and is comfortable with the representation present (this may need to be reviewed on an ongoing basis)
- There is currently no representative from alternative education sector
- Proposal for Primary Governors (there has been some interest), Richard Rolf is here this evening for the first time - he will act as an observer and substitute should the other 2 governors (Peter and Eileen) not be able to attend)

## **4. DSG BUDGET MONITORING 2015-16**

### **Presented by RD and SD**

- Updated the Schools Forum on the Dedicated Schools Grant in year budget monitoring
- There remains a lot of pressure on the High Needs Block
- At the moment forecasting a pressure of £2 million (previously identified at 1.3 million) - this is a significant issue
- There has been a lot of work currently underway to reduce this deficit
- SD has done a lot of work doing the forecast and projections and the analysis attached as an appendix to the report
- Deficit will need to be funded from 16/17 resources
- This report is to highlight the continued pressure from High Needs Block
- If this continues to be the case there will have to be some big decisions made at the Forum in the March meeting 2016 including moving the deficit into next year
- Appendix 1 provides more detail on the DSG budget
- SD advises that the analysis is based on a financial point of view and the report is around how to explain the current pressure. SD advises that it was agreed at the last schools forum to try to identify head room for the 16/17 DSG to fund the pressure
- 3.2 highlights what the current points are and there is an increase of Needs in Special Schools; Also an increase of exclusion in mainstream

- SEN - issues in Year 5 and Year 6. These students are going straight into high cost placements
- In 2010 there were 272 SEN placement and this currently 378 at this month
- CS outlines that the SEN support continues to 19 years old and could also continue to 25 years old (the plans are not stopping at 16 years old as previously)
- Review of LAC children outlined
- The Avenue and Brookfields are the 2 main special Schools; numbers are going up in those specialist schools and also Independent Schools
- A number of young people are excluded at Year 9 and Year 10. More often or not these children do have packages however this is costing less than the Special Schools placement
- The budgets from government would have been released and able to be discussed at the March 2016 Forum
- How to forecast beyond the financial year. Forecasting trends and estimate how much money is needed; the issue of not doing forecasting at all needs to be addressed
- CS - SEN panel and Head teachers need regular reporting; at the moment decisions are made but are not being followed up via reporting
- AR - why there is overspending taking place needs to be looked at? JC advises that there is a sub-group set up from Schools Forum already for this issue and is on the agenda today
- Cllr Jones advises that there should be caution of any solutions that says to take from this year's budget to fix next year's budgets; Also concern that forecasts have not been taking place
- SD outlines to be mindful of how much money comes from Government when it comes for High Cost Block. There has not been an increase since 2012 (there is a review but this will not be implemented until 2017/2018)
- There is an increase in need and the local authority has had no choice but to meet that need
- Appendix 2 - these graphs are for noting purposes

## **5. SEN FUNDING WORKING GROUP UPDATE (VERBAL)**

**Presented by CS and JC**

- Report produced from the sub-group and handed out to those present in today's meeting
- Looked at Provision; how Provision can be made more effective at the same time of making savings
- This report is specifically around ASD because it's one of the big costs
- 2008-2014 ; it's important to note that this is not comparing like for like; the number of ASD statements has increased by 142
- 34% of High Needs pupils had ASD and nationally it's only 24%
- On October 1<sup>st</sup> 2014 32% identified
- 1.8 - of the 33 pupils counted, 12 are primary and 21 are secondary
- SEMH (Social Emotional and Mental Health issues); this area is the other big area of need; spoke to Primary Heads in March last year; big challenges were around SEMH and ASD

- 15 places from 11-16 year olds in Reading area (Wokingham 25 places to utilise and Bracknell have 56 places to utilise)
- This has been a wide consultation and recommendations made in part 4 of the handout
- Need 3 resource providers in Reading e.g. does not make sense for children to taxi to a school further away, a cost covered by RBC
- A suggestion is to reduce the number of placements at Christ of King at the same time increase placements at other schools therefore saving cost on transportation
- There were 4 children leaving Christ the King who do not have a secondary School to go to that are able to support their needs
- Specialists Outreach places
- Provision for SEMH; issues that are complex and not as easy to put forward in a step by step plan; direction is to try to build capacity so as not to send students to costly out of borough placements
- SEMH - link in with primary and secondary colleagues to develop this further
- ASD - should have concrete discussions with not only Headteachers but governors too
- The diagnosis of ASD comes from CAMHS
- A diagnosis of autism does not mean a statement for autism
- Cllr Jones advises that this area is of high concern and is a big challenge area
- There is a significant difference between the national average of 25% to the 1/3 percentage quoted for the Reading area
- There is a significant mismatch of the needs that exist in the borough and the provision available in the borough; accelerate a fuller and proper plan
- Is there something to be learnt from colleagues in Wokingham and Bracknell who have been able to pre-empt their needs; what strategies, papers and evidence did they use?
- CS advises that this is one of the few authorities in the country that has a pathway; where it has gone wrong is the huge numbers coming through that pathway were not predicted
- NM - Reading Secondary Heads met this morning and unanimously agreed that there has be a systematic and strategic plan for this provision
- CS thanks the forum

## **6. CENTRAL RETENTIONS AND DE-DELEGATION DECISIONS**

Presented by RD

- Cllr Jones - non-pecuniary interest in equal pay disclosed
- This outlines the funding that is held back from the main Schools Grant
- Within this report there is a lot of detail for the forum
- These key decisions need to made in today's meeting

There was a general discussion about the issues to be voted on with reference to the supplementary information provided in the paper.

## **VOTING**

**Retentions (For All Members of Schools Forum)**

Growth Fund

Favour - 14  
Against - 0  
Abstention- 0

Prudential Borrowing

Favour - 14  
Against - 0  
Abstention- 0

Termination of Employment Fund

Favour - 14  
Against - 0  
Abstention - 0

Copyright

Favour - 14  
Against - 0  
Abstention - 0

Admissions

Favour - 14  
Against - 0  
Abstention - 0

Children Social Care - 1

Favour - 14  
Against - 0  
Abstention - 0

Childrens Actions Team

Favour - 12  
Against - 2  
Abstention - 0

School Improvement

Favour - 14  
Against - 0  
Abstention - 0

Commissioning Support

Favour - 14  
Against - 0  
Abstention 0

**(Primary Schools Only)**

## School Kitchens

Favour - 10

Against - 0

Abstention - 0

## De-delegations

(Maintained school members by primary and secondary phase.)

## BEHAVIOUR SERVICES

- MB/MH- If the funding doesn't come from the Forum then the service will not be there.
- PECS term 1 and term 2 already at 20 students it's only midyear
- The service is highly regarded
- Does there need to be both buy back and de delegations

Funding the entire amount (215k) (buy back only for academies)

### **(Primary School)**

Favour - 5

Against - 0

Abstention - 0

### **(Secondary School)**

Favour - 1

Against - 0

Abstention - 0

Buy back to be topped up as there is a shortfall this year (10-15k)  
(this will be taken in from the budget where there is an underspend)  
Bring this back

## SUPPORT FOR EAL/UNDERACHIEVING GROUPS - QUALITY SERVICES

- Long term assessment and specialist service; If school did have this then on their own this would be more costly
- Supported 40% more new arrivals in the 14-15 than previous year
- Community Language support for schools; not to teach but to support in schools
- Impact on the underperforming ethnic groups
- Traded service; some are bought back by schools
- Community language assistant (CLO)

Looking for the continuation of the 85K de-delegated last year

### **(Primary School)**

Favour - 5

Against - 0

Abstention - 0

### **(Secondary school)**

Favour - 1

Against - 0

Abstention - 0

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

### Fund all the Activity across the borough

#### **(Primary School)**

Favour: 5

Against - 0

Abstentions - 0

#### **(Secondary School)**

Favour - 1

Against - 0

Abstentions - 0

### Schools in Financial difficulty

(set aside 25k for St Anne's; this always comes into Schools Forum for agreement)

#### **(Primary School)**

Favour: 5

Against - 0

Abstentions - 0

#### **(Secondary School)**

Favour - 1

Against - 0

Abstentions - 0

### Union facilities agreement

Effective and efficient arrangement ; schools would have to pay more if this support was not in place. This also covers Trade Union negotiations as well.

#### **(Primary School)**

Favour: 5

Against - 0

Abstentions - 0

#### **(Secondary School)**

Favour - 1

Against - 0

Abstentions - 0

## 7. EYSFF WORKING GROUP UPDATE

Presented by RD

- Single funding formula group
- JD and KH are members of this group
- Draw attention to the National Report on Child Care (early years) and looks at extending the offer - links attached

## **8. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS (STANDING ITEM)**

- Reminder if an item needs to come to forum to contact RD, PK or SD

#### **9. PROPOSED DATES/TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

- Next meeting is at 5pm on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at the Avenue

#### **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- CC has presented a paper on what the South Reading Heads have been working on recently; will bring this back to the next forum