

**Minutes of Schools Forum Meeting held on 12 January 2017,
at The Avenue Centre, Reading**

PRESENT

Peter Kayes Governor, Ridgeway - Chair
Charles Clare, Headteacher, Geoffrey Field Junior
Jo Budge - Headteacher, Blagdon Nursery
Jean Read, Governor - Caversham Nursery
Joan Boyd, NUT
John Cosgrove Headteacher, Christ the King (RC)
Yvonne Jackson, Headteacher, Wilson
Justine McMinn Headteacher, E P Collier
Leo Gilbert, Headteacher, Reading Girls
Simon Uttley, Headteacher, Blessed Hugh Faringdon
Richard Rolfe, Governor, Micklands
Mark Hester, SBM Cranbury College
Laura Ellenor, Headteacher, JMA

RBC

Steven Davies, Finance
Richard Blackmore, Head of Education
Dan Neal, Strategic Lead for School Improvement
Gill Dunlop, Virtual Head CMOE
Theresa Shortland Head of Early Years
Alan Cross, Head of Finance
Christina Shamaris, Team Leader, Equality Services
Kay Clark, Team Leader, Equality Services
Jennifer Mendonca - Minutes

APOLOGIES

Julie Kempster, PVI Sector Under 5s
Mandy Wilton, Headteacher, Cranbury College

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

- Chair's welcome and brief introduction by attendees.
- Apologies were noted.

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 07 OCTOBER 2016

Two amendments noted:

- Today's meeting date was missed in item 12.
- Peter Kayes is no longer a governor at Redlands.

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

- Details of Primary heads who have agreed to continue to be confirmed.
- Cathy Doberska will be stepping down.
- Eileen McElligott has still to confirm whether she wishes to continue as a member.

4 DSG BUDGET MONITORING 2016-17 (with Growth Fund verbal update) - Presented by SD.

- Spending format remains unchanged.
- High Needs Block: Likely deficit of £3.6m at the end of March 2017 based on an estimated in-year budget gap and the carried forward amount from 2015-16.
- Early Years Block is on target. Estimating a small underspend due to being half way on the 2 year programme, which will be used towards the 30 hours project.
- £80k forecast overspend due to increase in business rates and backdated valuations.
- Growth fund - Additional pressure of £140k
 - Capital:
 - Myles Milner has put forward a case for more funding to expand schools which has been approved in principle but requires Member approval.
 - The basis of funding is being reviewed i.e. should it be based on places not filled or on increased places.
 - Members requested that expenses incurred as part of an expansion e.g. wireless connection should be included in the project cost and not passed on to the school. Richard to pick up with Myles.
 - Revenue - Option A agreed. 7 in favour none against.

5 CENTRAL RETENTIONS AND DE-DELEGATIONS 17-18

Central Retentions: Agreement of members sought on items tabled in section 4.2 of 12 January 17 report:

- School kitchens: No longer centrally funded. Schools will buy into an SLA. If not, they carry all costs for equipment.
- Combined Budgets (includes Commissioning, School improvement, Children Social care, Childrens Action team and Servicing schools forum).
- Growth Fund 900k and Copyright Licensing agreement
- Admissions: £50k increase to prevent drastic reduction of service provision. Summary of duties covered are in 4.8 of report.
- Education Services Grant: Made up of general funding rate and statutory duties. All funding for statutory duties are now included in the DSG. Vote carried for its transfer back to a central fund.
- 10 in favour; none against for all items in Table 4.2

De-delegations (Maintained schools only, voted by phase)

- 5.3 - Support for EAL and Underachieving Groups £80k - Primary: 6 in favour, none against. Secondary : Both against
- 5.4 - Behaviour support: - £200k. Service does not generate sufficient income to operate on a partly funded basis. Vote carried for primary element - 6 in favour none against. Both secondary schools voted against.
- 5.5 - Union facilities Agreement £48k. Primary: 6 in favour, none against. Secondary : Both against

- 5.6 - School Improvement - £233k (£348k total when including combined budgets). Vote carried. Primary: 5 in favour, 1 against. Secondary: both in favour. Dan to meet with heads to provide further update.
- 5.7 - Schools in Financial Difficulties: £50k Vote carried. Primary: 6 in favour, none against. Secondary: Both in favour
- 5.8 - Education Services Grant: - £161k Primary: 6 in favour, none against. Secondary: both against.

6 SCHOOLS FUNDING 17-18

- All factors have been reduced by 1.5% to meet the high needs deficit.
- In year pressure will increase the deficit to £3.6m.
- Trajectory predicts ever increasing deficit which is not an acceptable situation.
- In borough provision has to increase to reduce costs. Richard to raise need for capital investment at next Lead Member briefing and CMT.

The proposal to move the available headroom in the schools block (circa £900k) to the High Needs Block was agreed unanimously by Forum members.

7 EARLY YEARS FUNDING 17-18 (to include Deprivation query)

- New national funding formula from April 2017. Theresa will report on transition year at September meeting.
- Primaries base rate has increased.
- Maintained nurseries will lose out.
- Uplift for 2 year old funding.
- Admissions forms have been redesigned to address previous low take up of EYPP.
- Additional funding is now provided for minor adaptations for disabled children.
- Maintained nursery heads manage panel for children with emerging needs.
- The expansion of 30 hours free childcare will put pressure on the team.
- Going forward, it has been suggested that the treatment of deprivation funding and PP will be treated separately and if schools do not complete the return on how deprivation funding has been spent and the impact, no funding will be made. Deprivation funding is thrice the amount of PP. Noted that Richard will need to address issues on form completion requirements and not Schools Forum.

Agreed that £150k be allocated to SEN inclusion fund.

Agreed to an increase in the number of staff.

8 AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS (STANDING ITEM)

Future agenda items to be emailed to Peter Kayes or Steve Davies.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Training session for new members at 4 p.m. on 16th March 2017 prior to next meeting.

Classification: OFFICIAL

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