

Minutes of Schools Forum Meeting 24th May 2018 at The Avenue Centre, Reading

- Present:** Ita McGullion - Kennet Day Nursery Manager
 Justine McMinn- Head of E P Collier
 Mary Shorland (Observer) - Business Manager @ E P Collier
 John Cosgrove - Head of Christ the King
 Peter Kayes - Chair and Governor of Ridgeway
 Simon Utley - Head of Blessed Hugh
 Isabelle Sandy - Business Manager at Kendrick
 Phil Davies - Head of Prospect
 Tracey Green - Business Manager at The Avenue
 Mark Hester - Business Manager at Cranbury College
 Ali McNamara - Union rep
- RBC:** Steven Davies - Education & Schools Business Partner
 Helen Redding - SEND Improvement Adviser
- Apologies:** Paul Wagstaff - Head of Education
 Toni Crossman - Head of Emmer Green
 Jean Read - Governor at Caversham and Newbridge Nursery
 Cllr Ashley Pearce - Lead for Education
 Andrew Johnson - Head of Maiden Erlegh in Reading
 Rachel Cave - Head of Highdown
 Ashley Robson - Head of Reading Boys
 Jo Budge - Head of Blagdon Nursery
 Richard Rolfe - Governor of Micklands

STANDING ITEMS

1.	Welcome and Apologies
	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted.
2.	Minutes of the meeting held on 15th March 2018 & Matters arising from the minutes
	Minutes were agreed from 15 th March 2018.

3.	Schools Forum Membership Update
	Steven Davies presented. Current 3 Primary Academy reps have not attended for the whole academic year, Email from La will need to go out to all primary academies to ask for reps. Especially important to have reps before October 2018 schools forum for 2019-2020 transitional formula. Jean Read, Governor for Caversham and Newbridge will be stepping down after today's meeting. A replacement will need to be re-elected.
4.	Draft 17-18 Dedicated Schools Grant Outturn and 18-19 Budget
	Steven Davies presented. The Outturn report notes the provisional figure for Year End 17/18. As shown in Table 1, the net deficit on Central Expenditure has been reduced to £2.9m as at 31 st March 2018. Annex 1 breaks down the provisional outturn and costs through 17/18. It is noted that there is increased underspend in Schools Block due to retained budgets in Growth Fund, Schools

	<p>Improvement, Admissions and allocated Additional DGS budget. These funds are expected to go towards the deficit in the High Needs Block. Outstanding SEN top-ups pre April 2016 have also been written off which has also gone towards reducing the High Needs Deficit.</p> <p>Table 2 shows the details of the deficit since 14/15. By 20/21, it is forecasted that the deficit will be down to £0.149m.</p> <p>Section 7 picks up the Schools Budget for 18/19. The Local Authority will assist any schools which go into deficit with a potential for a loan past 30K. SD will be reviewing the maintained schools NNDR budgets from Summer 18 term. Any adjustments will be made in year.</p> <p>Paul Wagstaff is undertaking planning work around pupil placements and a plan will be developed future years. The LA is aware that from September 18, pupil numbers will decrease which could potentially reduce 19/20 funding. A response to this will be prepared and presented at Schools Forum.</p>
5.	Maintained Schools Balances 18-19
	<p>Steven Davies presented.</p> <p>Graph 1 shows the balances by school sector as at end of financial years 17 and 18. Appendix 1 gives a full breakdown of individual schools positions. Between years 17 and 18, Schools Balances only decreased by 8% as opposed to 34% between 16 and 17. Some schools have already recognised this situation and are reshaping in advance. Due to inflation affecting payroll and wages, the situation is not expected to get better. Paul Wagstaff and Steven Davies have been visiting schools over the last month to look into the situation.</p> <p>The Local Authority need to ask Schools Forum if they want to look into the balances. If so, Steven Davies will send a spreadsheet to each school for them to complete, in regards to why they are holding excess balance and what this will be used for.</p> <p>Steven Davies has looked at historical balances over the last 5 years and the amount of surplus budget that schools are holding has decreased. The Education Lead Councillor is aware of this situation. Through 17/18, 71% of schools had an in-year deficit. The Local Authority appreciates that special schools may need more intervention than others and will keep an eye on the situation.</p> <p>The above was discussed and Schools Forum concluded that they agree the Local Authority should look into the Maintained Schools balances. Excess balances report will be published for the next meeting.</p>
6.	High Needs Update
	<p>Helen Redding presented.</p> <p>Helen explained her recent work undertaken as part of the High Needs review and SEND strategy. Point 5 details Helen's most recent update.</p> <p>A survey took place from January 18 - March 18 which looked at the specialist services commissioned by schools themselves. Results are shown in the chart under point 5.12. Helen spoke about the need to look into the reasoning behind the types of therapy being used (for example, the increase in Play Therapy) and to look into how schools can combine their resources to decrease the need for outsourced services. There is further discussion to be had around this in particular, consulting as to which school types can offer which services.</p> <p>It is being discussed as to whether the Inclusion budget under High Needs Block should be used</p>

	<p>to support any exceptional needs. Helen will report back on this at the July Schools Forum.</p> <p>It was fed back to Helen that it is important to be supporting fathers of children with additional needs as well as mothers. It was felt that sometimes support services left out the fathers role in terms of support.</p> <p>It was also noted that the map under Appendix 1B would be useful with diagnosis data from Health overlaid, so it was clear as to the types of services needed in which areas.</p> <p>Helen's progress was noted and thanked.</p>
7.	Schools Forum Academies 18-19 Proposed Dates and Venue
	<p>Steven Davies presented.</p> <p>From October 2018, Schools Forum will be moving over to the Civic Centre Council Chambers due to changes at The Avenue. This will also make it easier for councillors with committee meetings to attend. Parking will need to be booked in advance through Civic Security.</p> <p>Dates of meetings are listed for diaries. Budgetary decisions will need to be made in the January meeting due to time constraints.</p> <p>It was discussed that the timing of Schools Forum was an issue for a potential member. After a brief discussion, it was agreed that the current time of 5pm would be kept.</p>
8.	Agenda Items For Future Meetings
	The next meeting will be held on 12 th July 2018 (5pm) at The Avenue Centre, Meadway Room
9.	Any Other Business
	It was noted that the website www.schoolcuts.org.uk uses government figures in order to give an idea of the budget cuts affecting schools.