

Minutes of Schools Forum Meeting held on 16 March 2017 at The Avenue Centre, Reading

Present

Jo Budge – Head of Blagdon
Jean Read – Governor of Caversham and New bridge Nursery
Charles Clare – Head of Geoffrey Field Junior
Justine McMinn – Head of E P Collier
Peter Kayes – Governor at Ridgeway
Richard Rolfe – Governor at Micklands
Leo Gilbert – Head of Reading Girls
Simon Uttley – Head of Blessed Hugh
Isabel Sandy – Business Manager at Kendrick
Phil Davies – Head of Prospect
Ali McNamara – Trade Unions
Mandy Wilton – Head of Cranbury College

RBC

Steven Davies – Education & Schools Accountant
Ann Marie Dodd – Director of Children Services
Myles Milner – Asset Management

Apologies

Yvonne Jackson – Head of Wilson
John Cosgrove – Head of Christ the King
Stieve Butler – Head of Meadow Park
Ashley Robson – Head of Reading School
Sue Bourne – Head of Avenue

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

- Chairs welcome.
- New members introduced.
- Apologies were noted.

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 JANUARY 2017

Amendments noted:

- Delegations voting outcomes to be reordered and heading amended.
- Voting outcome is ambiguous. Results to be made clear. Education Services Grant & Union Facilities Agreement: 6 were in favour rather than 5 recorded.
- Last bullet point of Section 7. Issue regarding decisions on form and deprivation funding to be resolved. Steven Davies to resolve as Richard

Blackmore has left. Information to be returned by 31/03/17 for funding to be released.

- “It has been suggested that...” to be added after “Going forward”. Last bullet point in 7.

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/ SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP ISSUES

- Four new members.
- Three primary representatives. Allocations to be changed to make this work.
- 1 vacancy for maintained schools.
- PVI sector representative has stepped down. Authority finding new rep.

4 DSG BUDGET MONITORING 2016-17

Presented by SD

- As previous stated in previous meetings, the High needs block is overspent. £3.6m deficit made up of £1.2m 15/16 and £2.4m from 16/17. This is the one and only reason why school budget factor values have been reduced by 1.5% for 17-18
- EY block. 2YO capital and 30 hours project be used by end of March. To be confirmed in May.
- Schools block. Pressure has gone up as during the last Schools Forum the growth fund was approved. £295k over expenditure forecast here.
- Local Authority is asking Schools Forum to approve 3.9m carry forward into 17/18. Some provision in 17/18 budget to reduce this. Discussion held surrounding the issue and potential impact.
 - In favour of agreeing to c/f deficit: 10
 - Against: 0
 - 1 person did not vote
- Anne-Marie explained the situation surrounding finding solutions to the deficit and lowering expenditure.
- Query raised regarding Capital Funding for SEND. This will be considered in terms of lowering deficit if it impacts on other budgets.
- It was raised that we must keep in mind any consequences on children and young people as a result of budgets. Willingness to invest in the long term with regards to evidence. Explained that actions will have financial effects across the whole council as well as schools.
- Capital from Miles Milner:
 - Discussion around who was liable for what equipment during schools expansion. Document to be recirculated around all schools. Miles is happy to discuss thoughts before the final sign off.

5 SCHOOLS BUDGET 17-18 UPDATE (inc Apprenticeship Levy)

Presented by SD

- Confirm maintained school budgets sent out 8th Feb. Submissions to be returned by 28th May. If schools are struggling to balance budget to let Steven – LA Schools Finance know.
- Pension percentage (under Berkshire Pension Scheme) increase 17.7% – 21.9% for non-teachers.
- Apprenticeship levy affects community schools and academy payroll over £3m. Extra on-cost of 0.5% for non-teachers.
 - **Since Schools forum meeting, Notification to all schools have gone out stating that the 0.5% is on all payroll and non-teachers only is incorrect.**
- Catering & Service level agreements. Schools should know if this affects them.
- Business Rates have gone up in Reading. If due to valuation Business Rates do go up contact Steven.
- SEN banding systems. SEN team are looking into changes to replace band 6 and provision map. Should benefit schools. More information to follow – possible July Schools Forum.

6 NATIONAL FORMULA CONSULTATION (Schools and High Needs)

Presented by SD

- “Soft” Formula for 18-19 – Funded on national formula but with local control
- “Hard” Formula for 19-20 – No local control
- Reading should receive £2.1m extra but subject to transitional impact. This will be reduced to £1m in the first year during transition. These are figures from EFA and will change with 17-18 data.
- Requesting for Schools Forum formula sub group to help transition from soft (18/19) to hard (19/20) formula.
 - Volunteer from HT at Reading Girls.
 - Email request to be sent out for volunteers.
 - Steven to try and get a good mix of all types and stages.
 - Agreement was made to set up working party.
- Proposed National Funding hard formula moves funds from basic entitlement (AWPU) to other supplements that will greatly impact schools in low deprivation areas.
- 18-19 Formula does leave open the option to reduce Reading’s soft formula by 1.5% in 18/19 to again support the High Needs Block. But the main proposal is to help schools transition into the “hard” School formula in 19-20.
- High Needs formula emphasises historic spend factor. Benefits of this is that than no authority will lose out on current funding. Without this High Needs budget would have been reduced by £1m.
- Population factor based on school population in Reading and not the number of pupils living in Reading. (Recoupment factor)

- Government announced extra capital funding for SEN for all local authorities.

7 AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS (STANDING ITEM)

- Future agenda items to be emailed to Peter Kayes or Steven Davies

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- None recorded.