

Schools Forum Meeting held on the 19th March 2015 at The Avenue

PRESENT

Peter Kayes	Governor, Redlands - CHAIR
Charles Clare	Headteacher, Geoffrey Fields Junior
Viv Angus	Headteacher, Reading Girls School
Karen Hillier	Governor, Caversham
Marianne Best	Headteacher, Cranbury College
Mark Hester	Business Manager, Cranbury College
Joan Boyd	NUT
Isabelle Sandy	School Business Manager, Kendrick
Justine McMinn	Headteacher, EP Collier
Julie Kempster	PVI Sector under 5's, Riverside Day Nursery
Nicola Maytum	Headteacher, JMA
Lisa Bedlow	Headteacher, Caversham and Newbridge nurseries
Rachel Cave	Headteacher, Highdown
Lee Smith	Headteacher, Holy Brook

RBC

Russell Dyer	Finance
Steve Davies	Finance
Kevin McDaniel	RBC
Chris Stevens	RBC SEN

APOLOGIES

John Cosgrove	Headteacher, Christ the King (RC) School
Cathy Doberska	Headteacher, New Christchurch
Anne Higginbotham	Headteacher, St Michaels
Ashley Robson	Headteacher- Reading School

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

- Welcome
- Apologies noted

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 JANUARY 2015

- Minutes agreed by Schools Forum

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/ SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP ISSUES (STANDING ITEM)

- No matters arising
- Changes to membership - Blessed Hugh - Anne McDonald (Finance Manager); Matt Esperley had to stand down; Another Academy representative sort; Civatas Academy to be considered

4. 2014/15 DSG BUDGET MONITORING

Presented by SD

- Last time reported 1.3m overspend on High needs block, remains unchanged
- Work completed on funding; found a few more savings (approx. 100K)
- Civatas Academy opening in September 2015 - need to find 150K to cover the opening costs; this is a Reach 2 school (not a free school); additional savings to help fund this; 150k made in 2 payments
- Stay on target; 900K overspend due to High Needs Block

- Early Years not agreed by council to date (see item 8)
- Same as reported last time
- 50k underspend being transferred to High Needs Block

5. SCHOOLS IN FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY FUND CRITERIA AND BID FROM ST ANNES RC PRIMARY

Presented by RD; Vice Chair CC to continue with this as Chair is involved in one of the schools

(PART 1)

- Recall a de-delegation to set up fund called “schools in financial difficulty”
- Identified schools
- Looked at what other local authorities do and they have similar funds
- License deficient for school
- Schools Forum to agree the criteria; 50K fund
- Question asked if this fund amount was tangible; 50K is probably at the lower end of what other authorities had and felt it is sufficient
- Reason for OFSTED RI judgement? Used what other authorities have done.
- KMD - this idea is to act sooner so the children will benefit quicker
- If the school has had to make a structural change (formal warning or removed a governing body); this came from experience with particular schools
- This is structural costs

ACTION(s)

- This needs to be reworded as this was not clear at Schools Forum- KMD

OUTCOME

- Approved

(PART 2)

- Letter discussed from PK; anticipating by end of next financial year anticipate a deficit of an additional 35K; Asking for financial assistant

OUTCOME

- Approved

6. GROWTH FUND ADDITIONAL CRITERIA AND BID FOR FUNDS FROM CIVITAS ACADEMY

Presented by RD

(PART 1)

- Looking at additional criteria with the Growth Fund
- New academy starting with basic needs (set up costs); 50K 14-15; 100K 15-16 year
- Suggestions for criteria for this new aspect of Growth Fund
- Some local authorities do have criteria which has been looked at
- This is to get the academy to their first census
- Starting on a temporary location (cost involved with this)
- Building and furniture will come out of capital - this is coming from the revenue budget
- Figures in appendix D

OUTCOME

- Agreed

(PART 2)

Vice Chair CC chairing

- Reading Girls - 14-15 - granted 67K; Reading Girls consider 69K (secondary all-pool has gone up)
- 93 girls have been offered Maiden Erleigh II are single offers only
- Demand for more places are still coming through the system

OUTCOME

- Agreed

7. 2014/15 HIGH COST BLOCK: UPDATE

Presented CS

- CS outlines the group and the group has met on 2 occasions
- Discussions to date there is a balance between savings and the needs of the long term specialist provision; looking at the High Needs Block line by line
- Terms of reference the group outlined; Structural savings; spectrum of provision and spectrum of resources that both currently exist to see what works and what doesn't;
- Requested a short life working group (2 x 2 hour meetings) - specialist provision
- Do you have a good idea about a not so good provision; Group will research 'impact'
- KMD updates on Peter Gray who was employed to do a report before Christmas; This will be released to the working group and to Forum as soon as this is approved at council level
- Next meeting for group is next Wednesday

8. 2014/15 EARLY YEARS: UPDATE FROM EYSFF GROUP MEETING

Presented by RD

- Update from last Schools Forum
- Discussions and agreements at this meeting
- Rates payable early years single funding formula; benchmarking done previously
- Look at Block Funding in particular Nursery Schools
- Funding on an equitable basis
- Agreed rates set out in Table 2
- 2 year old placements have increased (one of the highest increases is in the South East)
- 2 year old funding in the Coley area
- Speech and Language contract; this will roll on for another year but this needs to be reviewed thoroughly to justify value for money (this change is approximately a year away)
- Hold back contingency; Scope to release around 800K, potentially could be transferred to the High Needs Block; this decision will be made by the Local Authority
- There is a need to work more closely (Early Years and High Needs Block)
- Early Years needs block amount has not been quantified
- Once the money has been used it can be recovered

9. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS (STANDING ITEM)

- PK (chair) reminds members that they can put items on the agenda for discussion and to contact RD and KMD

10. PROPOSED DATES/TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- Date of next meeting 14th May 2015.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Presented by SD

FUNDING FOR MEDICAL PUPILS

- Medical pupils - a few years ago Cranbury College used to be part of the Local Authority and did a few functions for them
- Now Cranbury College separate body
- Medical pupils mostly referred with mental health issues and mostly effects secondary aged students; this student needs to be supported with medical evidence
- In the past the Cranbury College budget paid for this; this should no longer be the case
- There is no funding to Cranbury College to support this but Cranbury College are still doing quite a lot of support
- Medical pupils come under the high cost category
- Medical pupils given support should be that the first 6K needs to be funded by the home school after this will be picked up via a panel
- Currently Cranbury College paying for all of this and there is no funding
- There will be a letter/email sent out to School's Forum
- NM suggests that secondary schools get together with Cranbury College (Marianne) and discuss this further
- Does the money come from High Needs Block?
- There needs to be clarity on what is being offered by Cranbury College for the money. MB advises that this is variable depending on the child's needs
- VA also advises that Health needs to be included in this process as well

ACTION(s)

- VA and NM to arrange a meeting with secondary heads and MB (and other representatives) of Cranbury College to discuss this further
- KMD to speak to CS and Health Service to identify who needs to be present at this meeting