

SCHOOLS FORUM

TUESDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2015

PRESENT: -

School Members: Rhian Cockwell, Primary Headteacher
Andrew Henstridge, Primary Headteacher
Jackie Smith, Special Headteacher
Wendy Conaghan, Academy Headteacher
Ben Slater, EOTAS
Alison Lowe, Primary Headteacher
David Bell, Secondary Governor
Annabelle Billett, Swindon College
Claire Owens, Inclusion Manager
Susan Smith, Primary Headteacher

Non-School Members: Kate Adams, Early Years Representative
Peter Smith, Trade Unions

Officers: Peter Nathan, Head of Education
Ian Burbidge, Head of Finance, Schools
Anne Mackay, Finance Manager - Education

Apologies for absence were received from Charles Lay (Special Governor), Ray Williams (Primary Governor), Sue Banks (Secondary Headteacher), Andrew Miller (16-19 Partnership).

Councillor Fionuala Foley was also in attendance.

18. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

19. Public Question Time

The following question was asked in accordance with standing Order 28 –

Questioner

Alastair Dixon-Patterson, Lydiard Park Academy.

Question

Mr Dixon-Patterson asked a series of questions relating to (a) his previous Education Other Than at School (EOTAS) and budget enquiry and (b) his outstanding enquiry regarding SEN funding modelling.

Response

The Chair thanked Mr Dixon-Patterson for his questions. The Chair and Mr Ian Burbidge, Head of Finance, Schools responded at the meeting.

Special Resource Provision Funding Review

The Forum considered a report submitted by Mr Ian Burbidge, Head of Finance, Schools, setting out the results of the Special Resource Provision (SRP) funding review. Mr Burbidge referred to the SRP review task group set up to consider options relating to the impact on the level of funding available to SRPs for the 2016/17 financial year. He thanked all schools involved in the data gathering, discussions, information provided and for their support and co-operation.

Mr Burbidge referred to the current situation and introduced the three options available for consideration by Forum members. The Forum considered the issues highlighted and vigorously discussed the options. At the invitation of the Chair, Mr Alastair Dixon-Patterson, Lydiard Park Academy asked if there were any management funding savings to be made in relation to this issue. Mr Alastair Dixon-Patterson further commented that the modelling system worked but if the overall budget was fixed, then individual bandings would need to be adjusted within the budget.

The Chair, Mr Burbidge and Mr Peter Nathan, Head of Education responded to comments regarding the following issues:

- The effect on funding between the primary and secondary settings if the Specific Learning Disabilities (SpLD) bandings went down one band and physical disabilities (PD) bandings were increased by one band.
- How all the options presented in the report would affect colleges.
- Confirmation that information regarding future funding costs be moderated by schools without SRP units attached to them to ensure costing and evaluation of data provided was uniform across all schools.
- Acknowledgement that further discussions would be required on whether the SRP funding process would be reviewed annually or, as historically, every three years.
- Option 4 – to provide contingency for SRP units by reducing allowances and removing the Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in an SRP.
- Importance of agreeing a funding process for one year at the next meeting of Schools Forum in January 2016 with the requirement to review the funding principals for future years.
- Clarification that SRP were commissioned services and a review of contracts would be required before any changes were implemented.

Resolved: That, the Head of Finance, School, together with the Special Resource Provision Task Group, be requested to submit recommendations on the preferred options to address the funding pressures being experienced by certain types of Special Resource Provision, at the next meeting of this Forum.