

GLADSTONE ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL
"Learning, caring, growing together"

MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY

DATE: Tuesday 3rd October 2017

TIME: 6.30 p.m.

PRESENT:

Mrs Emma Jane Birley

Mrs Andrea Cowley

Mr Shaun Marshall

Mr Peter Southward

Miss V Lewis (Clerk)

Mr Ray Williamson

Mr Keith Wright

Mrs Sarah Stuart

Mr Jonathan Jeeves

Additionally Present:

Mrs Caroline Sarney (School Business Manager)

Mrs Philippa Leighton re agenda item 7 (until 7pm)

MINUTES

1. Election of Chairperson for Resources Committee

EJB was asked if she would be happy to take on Chair duties 17/18. She advised she would be happy to do so and there were no other nominations/expressions of interest. EJB proposed by PS, seconded by SM.

Action: Update governing body records

By: Clerk

2. Apologies for absence; consider acceptance of apologies

Apologies received from: -

AC – unknown reason (clerk will check)

Additionally JJ advised he would need to leave at 7.30pm.

Accepted.

Action: None Required.

3. Confidentiality

There were no matters identified as confidential.

Action: None Required.

4. Declaration of Interest in any Agenda Item

There were no matters identified as being of interest to any governor.

Action: None Required

5. Resources Committee Terms of Reference

Governors considered the model Terms of Reference and were happy to adopt. EJB proposed and PS seconded.

Action: None Required.

6. Minutes of the previous meeting (16.05.17) / Matters Arising

The Minutes from the meeting on 16.05.17 were presented. Proposed by EJB and seconded by SM. Minutes were signed by EJB and returned to the Clerk for filing as per procedure.

Action: Minutes from meeting 16.05.17 to be filed as per procedure **By: Clerk**

7. Rec. Red / Rec. Blue playground works proposal (Mrs Leighton presenting)

As a result of RY and RG having playground works it has prompted a re-assessment of the RR/RB play area. The obstacles and fixed play equipment (balls/rocks) now seem somewhat unsafe and staff would preferably like the area to be more in line with the recently refurbished RY/RG area which is now very flat and open.

Concerns from staff include: -

- Safety : children slip/fall on rocks when climbing, particularly when they are slippery in wet weather. No cushioning surroundings such as chippings in case of falls. Prior to the works in RY/RG playground there were far more injuries than now. Mrs Leighton said there have been accidents and injuries in the area, however CS advised that she had no paperwork such as ARF1, accident or major incident forms to suggest or support an unsafe level of injuries/accidents. There had been a recent incident where a staff member (Mrs Wesson) had fallen over the rocks but by her own admission she had been distracted.
- Used as a thoroughfare by parents at the end /start of the day.
- Limited creative use : limited play/education aspects - not giving children the freedom to use the area resiliently ie. being told not to use the rocks etc at times.
- When pupils not allowed on rocks the amount of space is reduced and leads to running etc round the outside. They take up lots of space which could be used for other play/games.
- Access / View : the now open plan nature of the RY/RG area gives a better view for supervising staff as the rocks impede their view.

SM asked whether the proposal was to completely remove the rocks etc. Mrs Leighton said the ideal would be to make the area open plan like the RY/RG area. EJB asked what prompted the RY/RG works. CS advised that the surface in that area had been identified as needing repair works to ensure pupil safety. She added that the RR/RB area was originally designed by speciality play designers and had been used for 7 years. Additionally, Robin Smith, the Lead Health & Safety Adviser, had visited following Mrs Wesson's fall in the play area and was not too concerned, in so much that the area is designed to promote resilient play and that there were already plans for work later in the year. He saw no urgent need for the works to take place ahead of the planned Summer Holiday window.

JJ asked when it was proposed to do these works? CS advised it is already planned for the Summer Holiday 2018 which would allow the cost to be built into 2017/18 budgets since the 17/18 £13k capital allocation has already been spent on: £5k for RY/RG playground works, £6k on C-Touch boards in the

Lower School and £4k committed to replacing the Year 6 projectors which are in an extremely dire, almost unusable state. Governors examined the Y6 projectors and agreed that they are in an excessively poor state so committed expenditure should remain allocated for these upgrades.

EJB said that the rocks etc have been in situ for a significant amount of time, and since works are planned for the Summer then we can probably wait. CS said that funding is a consideration but there is the added issue that the process takes around 10 days meaning that the soonest works could happen is Easter as half terms are not long enough and Christmas holidays will likely involve poor weather which would affect the ability to conduct works at all.

KW said that when he had taken up post he had asked the purpose of the rocks/balls and thought them a little odd but had been reassured that they had been in place for around 7 years. SS and Mrs Leighton said the design had been installed without consultation with staff and parents at the time (approx. 7 years ago). He agreed that logically the earliest possibility any works could be scheduled for is Easter. The expenditure can be built into the 2018/19 budget and commit the works to next Easter/Summer.

JJ asked whether in the short term, until works are undertaken, whether the rocks could be used in a different way or covered/made safer. Mrs Leighton said that if governors would approve works for Easter then it would be a case of maintaining vigilance until then. CS reminded governors that the Health & Safety advisor himself had said that the area posed no immediate concern.

Governors all agreed to scheduling works to the play area during the Easter holiday 2018 so that it would be ready for use in the hopefully warmer summer term.

Action: Action works to RR/RB playground for Easter 2018

By: CS (SBM)

8. Finance : Update from School Business Manager Mrs Sarney

The forecast figures are still not great. The 5 year deficit was down to around £500k but is now back up to £750k largely due to increased staffing costs. It is likely that we will need to have another look at staffing next year.

JJ enquired that the projected expenditure on areas such as supply, learning resources and supplies/services seem to remain static over the 5 year forecast but surely there would be some increase? CS agreed but said that it is hoped to make savings in some/other areas.

RW commented that staffing costs are the greatest expenditure so wouldn't it be better to look at this and make changes sooner rather than later to start saving sooner? CS agreed but said that we need the staff we have, we have a growing number of increasingly challenging children and need more staff, if anything. There are support staff shortages in upper school where there are only TAs in the mornings. KW added that he is trying to avoid drastic cuts re staff which could affect the school's ability to recover from the recent 'Requires Improvement' Ofsted outcome. Reducing support staff at this point would massively reduce teachers' ability to cope with the difficult, large cohort.

KW asked whether the 1819 figures include the proposed 0.5% uplift. CS said no, but the uplift will be eaten up by teachers pay increases etc. Teacher salaries are based on annual increments not pay awards. The funding uplift will still come out as a negative equity due to price increases and staff costs.

KW said that £90k on supply staff could hopefully be reduced by investing in current staff professional development (ie. training more HLTAs). Creative use of in house staff to help reduce supply costs. Once the LA finance officer has been in in November we will have a better idea of funding and staffing options. It was proposed to discuss this further at the full meeting 5.12.17.

Rolling out Maths No Problem across the school means more release days and cover required. There are

not enough HLTAs to cover whole school so supply teachers will still be needed.

KW reminded governors that GRPS is certainly not the only school affected. We are trying to use all our available options to generate income such as using our well skilled teachers as a resource to train / work with other schools.

RW asked when we will be expected to have a response to the deficit budget. As it stands 2021/22. The local authority will be looking for a recovery plan; or else would be in theory coming in, taking over budgets and making savings indiscriminately regardless of the impact on pupils. Many schools are in similar situations and KW feels that if we can show a small step in the right direction we might buy ourselves time as the LA only has a certain number of staff and they will obviously be deployed to schools in order of need/severity.

Staff taken on in September 17 are on fixed term contracts so these could be concluded at the end of the contract. However CS would like to tell them asap if this is the case. Governors agreed to discuss this further at the meeting 5.12.17 after the Finance Officer has been in.

SM said it seems unwise to reduce staff when they are clearly needed, or else they wouldn't have been recruited in the first place. What happens to the posts they currently occupy and the roles they undertake? The requirement / children are not disappearing after all. RW said that obviously this is like being caught between a rock and hard place, we must look at necessity rather than ideals.

Staff had requested some additional support staff be recruited following some giving backword in the Summer and not taking up the posts offered in September. **Governors discussed this but felt that they could not at this point approve this request.**

New lease minibuses have been ordered which will save money in the long run.

Premises works undertaken over the Summer such as Room 108 roofing and the redesign of the Behaviour Support and First Aid areas were arranged and paid for by County.

ICT needs investment. Year 2 now all have C-Touch boards but they cost around £3500 each and therefore other classrooms cannot have them at the moment. All projectors in Year 6 classrooms desperately need replacement as they are virtually unusable. These have been built into the capital budget for 1718 at a cost of around £4k. The iPads are also aging and the plan for these needs to be considered in the coming months. There is a meeting scheduled with subject and year leaders, CS and ICT technician Mrs Herrington as this is now affecting the quality of teaching and must be addressed.

Action: Agenda Finance onto agenda of Full Meeting 5.12.17

By: Clerk

9. Correspondence

None received.

Action: None Required.

10. Approve Health & Safety Policy / Nomination of Health & Safety Governor 17/18

JJ was asked if he would be willing/able and wished to continue as Health & Safety Governor for a further year. He advised he would be and as there were no additional expressions of interest this was agreed by all governors present.

The model Health & Safety Policy has been updated with small practical updates but remains very similar

to previous years. **Governors agreed to approve and adopt.**

Additionally, following the health and safety advisor's visit on 2.10.17, we have been supplied with the relevant updated health and safety related policies HS001 - 30 (such as Fire Safety etc) which were all approved by the local authority H&S directorate. CS supplied governors with copies.

Governors considered all the model policies and agreed to approve and adopt.

Action: File H&S Policy & updated policies as per procedure

By: CS (SBM)

11. Approve and adopt policies: -

- FMS003 Budget Management Policy – Adopted 07.02.17.
- FMS007 Charging & Remissions Policy – deferred to full meeting 5.12.17
- Whistleblower's Policy – Adopted 16.05.17
- Governors Allowances & Expenses Policy – deferred to full meeting 5.12.17

HR021 Model Pay Policy

KW said that the school teachers review body suggested 2% uplift to teachers' salaries but the DfE proposed 2% for teachers on the Main Scale at M1 and M6 and left the rest up to schools to decide. North Yorkshire schools have consulted and decided that M1 and M6 will get 2% uplift but M2, 3, 4, 5 will receive 1%. If we adopt the model Pay Policy this is what we will be agreeing to.

Additionally governors were asked to consider an insert giving guidance on the expected performance for incremental pay increases of those staff on the Upper Pay Spine. KW and CS feel this insert is important as it ensures that only those on the UPS who are actually fulfilling the expectations of the role are awarded the rise.

All governors agreed to adopt the LA model Pay Policy and to include the insert re UPS increment guidance.

HR024 Appraisal Policy

The school has previously adopted the NUT model Appraisal Policy however the new LA model policy has been consulted on and agreed by all relevant unions which seems more fair and objective. **All governors agreed to adopt the LA model Appraisal Policy.**

KW advised that performance reviews of teachers needs to be completed before the end of October and asked for governor endorsement to award any Main Scale to Upper Scale threshold movements arising, though none expected at present. **Governors agreed.**

He also asked that any teacher eligible for incremental rise be supported – **Governors agreed.**

Policies - General

CS advised that she is in the process of compiling a policy adoption schedule to ensure that all policies are considered and approved in line with guidelines. Due to amalgamation and the sheer number of policies this has become a bit muddled and the new timetable will rectify this. All statutory policies are in place.

Action: File policies as per procedure

By: Clerk/CS

Action: Complete Policy Schedule

By: Clerk/CS

12. A.O.B.

Parents Evenings are scheduled for Monday 16th and Thursday 19th October. Governors are invited to attend if they wish to meet / be available to parents and familiarise themselves with the event / procedure.

Governors asked that they receive the weekly newsletter as per last year. Clerk advised that the new MIS system now incorporates the email system and there have been some teething problems but this will be reinstated from this week all being well.

Action: Send governors weekly Newsletter

By: Clerk

The Meeting was closed by the Chair at 8.00pm

Signed _____ Dated _____