

# GLADSTONE ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

"Learning, caring, growing together"

## MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY

**DATE:** Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2017

**TIME:** 6.30 p.m.

### **PRESENT:**

Mrs Emma Jane Birley

*Mrs Helen Kindness \**

Mr Peter Southward

*Mr Ray Williamson \**

Mr Jonathan Jeeves

*Ms Kimberley Proud \**

Miss V Lewis (Clerk)

*Mrs Andrea Cowley \**

*\* new members – not currently on committee proper therefore non voting*

### **Additionally Present:**

Mrs Caroline Sarney (School Business Manager)

## **MINUTES**

### 1. Welcome from Chairperson

EJB welcomed committee members to this evening's meeting.

**Action: None Required.**

### 2. Introduction of new governors

Clerk introduced new governors Andrea Cowley, Helen Kindness, Kimberley Proud and Ray Williamson to the committee members. Julian Leader was unable to attend this evening but will be introduced at the next meeting of the School Improvement Committee on 28.2.17. New governors are attending each committee to allow them to choose which they would like to be involved with prior to the next meeting of the full governing body on 14.3.17 when they will all also be invited to introduce themselves properly.

**Action: None Required.**

### 3. Apologies for absence; consider acceptance of apologies

Apologies received from: -

Keith Wright – on Ofsted visit/course

Sarah Stuart – unwell

Shaun Marshall – apologies received

All apologies were considered and accepted.

**Action: None Required**

### 4. Confidentiality

Items 7 and 10 may have some confidential content; relevant staff will withdraw and discussions will be recorded in Confidential Minutes if appropriate.

## **Action: None Required**

### 5. Declaration of Interest in any Agenda item

Items 7 and 10 may include staff interests and relevant staff will withdraw if this is felt to be appropriate.

## **Action: None Required**

### 6. Minutes of previous meeting 11.10.16 and Matters Arising

The Minutes from the meeting on 11.10.16 were presented. Proposed by PS as he is the only governor present at this meeting who was present at the meeting on 11.10.16. Minutes were signed by EJB (countersigned by PS as EJB absent from 11.10.16 meeting) and returned to the Clerk for filing as per procedure.

**Action: Minutes from meeting 11.10.16 to be filed as per procedure**

**By: Clerk**

### 7. Finance, Premises, Health & Safety : Mrs Sarney (SBM)

CS gave new governors a brief overview of the current school financial position and the LA services which support the school's financial management.

Governors were referred to the 5 year forecast, the LA only require a 3 year forecast but 5 years is useful for longer term planning. Following amalgamation in 2014 the 5 year forecast showed a £1 million deficit. Ordinarily a school would not be allowed to show such a high expected deficit but due to amalgamation and the appointment of a new headteacher it was negotiated that school could have additional time to draw up a recovery schedule for the budget. In Autumn 2016 the FMS Officer visited and advised that to be in line with LA expectations the £200k deficit needed to be cut by £100k for two consecutive years to be balanced at the end of Year 3.

There is a lot of uncertainty regarding income and funding, with the expected new funding formula now delayed. The situation was laid out for staff at the January training day, they were given a full set of expenditure data and then asked to identify possible moneysaving ideas. Ideas raised were considered and costed by CS. These savings total just over £70k which is a very encouraging start. When combined with other savings to staff costs the two year £200k reduction target is achievable.

The balances being carried forward until 2018/19 look ok and CS is happy to set the start budget as such. However when the FMS Officer visits again in early March he may or may not agree to submit bearing in mind the 5 year forecast.

#### Governors were asked to consider:

- In order to reduce supply staff costs it is proposed to train 4 current staff to act as additional HLTAs. They would then be able to cover short term absences and avoid the costs of supply teachers. There is a cost for this of approx. £1000 with Leeds Carnegie University but staff can act up whilst training is ongoing so benefit would be immediate. EJB advised that the Scarborough Teaching Alliance is planning on running their own HLTA training and this would be cheaper than other options. She will let CS have this information as soon as possible. The proposal is also reliant on staff volunteers but the school is optimistic this won't be too much of an issue. ***All governors agreed this plan/expenditure for training.***

- At present school uses offsite venues for sports activities (3 x venues once per week and 2 x venues three times per week). It is proposed to make better use of the closer Sainsbury's Playcentre which would reduce transport costs and to reduce Y6 sports to 2 venues instead of 3. **All governors agreed these proposals.**
- Residential visits are subsidised but this subsidy is offset by the increase in Pupil Premium the incentive promotes. Charges have been raised slightly this school year for the first time since 2010 so this will reduce the subsidies slightly. It is therefore proposed that no further changes be effected at this time, not only does it seem like false economy but the visits are a huge part of the GRPS ethos and a great benefit to our pupils considering our demographic. **All governors agreed.**
- Due to high amount of support staff overtime claims it is proposed to restrict claims to staff supporting visits or working extra hours to provide 1:1 support for pupils or attending training. Most overtime claims are understandable (covering a visit/meeting/other staff absence etc). It was acknowledged that many staff do over and above their contracted hours without putting in claims, even MSA's who are on the lowest pay scale. Staff make resources in their own time or adapt planning for particular pupils. However some staff claim overtime for doing work on their own initiative outside of their contracted hours and whilst this is admirable any overtime should only be undertaken for directed specific tasks pre-approved by the deputy headteacher. Where staff work extra hours to attend training courses, these could possibly be offset against time expected to be worked on training days.

Governors discussed. EJB said that obviously claims for work undertaken on request or for covering necessary periods (visits etc) are appropriate however anything not explicitly directed should not be authorised. **All governors agreed that overtime claims should only be for the cover of visits OR any specific duty, provision or task directly requested and pre-authorized by the deputy headteacher.**

- Classes currently receive a 'Christmas Present' costing £30 and an end of year attendance treat based on rewards earned throughout the year. These are obviously very nice for the pupils but do not offer much educational value and therefore it is proposed to keep these only if they can be paid for or at least heavily subsidised by FRoGS fundraising. **All governors agreed.**
- Theatre in Education run by Lee Threadgold is expensive and will be limited to £800 per year group. They would therefore still be able to have topic themed workshops but performances of shows would not be bought in. **All governors agreed.**
- Reassessment of day visits to try to take better advantage of the local area and hopefully reduce transport costs. **All governors agreed.**
- It has been agreed to sell one of the school's three minibuses. It is rare all 3 are used at the same time and keeping two would still enable a whole class to be transported at the same time. **All governors agreed.**
- Wider Opportunities class music lessons (WOPs) will be stopped as staff feel the pupils gain very little. **All governors agreed.**
- The Life Channel contract finishes this year and will not be renewed. It is an expensive item which is not used effectively by parents and/or pupils. **All governors agreed.**
- Staff provisions: although staff milk costs £800 per year logistically there is no room for 100 separate milk supplies! Staffroom water cooler cancelled. It is proposed to continue to buy flowers for those on long term sickness from school as it is a good morale booster. **All governors agreed.**

EJB queried the high cost of staff parking. CS advised that this is completely offset by payments from staff under income code 9212 so completely cost neutral to school.

**Governors agreed the full list of proposed savings as detailed.**

The licences for the pupil/staff database (used for attendance, SEN, behaviour etc) and finance software are due to end in March and school has been looking at the options moving forward. Members of staff attended a roadshow event last week and in the next two weeks will be receiving more in depth demonstrations from the suppliers most interested in. **As the decision deadline is before the next meeting on 14.3.17 governors**

*agreed that they were happy to accept the evaluation of relevant administrative and SLT staff and approved the expenditure.*

Governors discussed the options re staff absence insurance.

Teachers: CS outlined that deciding whether to go with Day 6, 11 or 16 insurance is always a gamble but that having knowledge of some ongoing long term illnesses and possible maternity leave she felt it would be appropriate to consider Day 6 or 11 rather than this year's Day 16. *Governors discusses and agreed to opt for Day 6 insurance for Teachers.*

Support Staff: It was decided after assessing 3 years data that support staff insurance would not be bought in 2016/17 however due to an unusual level of illness this has backfired. Therefore, being aware again of some continuing illnesses and possible maternity leave periods she recommended purchasing insurance for 17/18. *Governors discussed and agreed to opt for Day 16 insurance for Support Staff.*

*Governors agreed the start budget subject to approval of FMS Officer (if agreed this will then be submitted following Full meeting on 14.3.17).*

### **Premises**

The amount of money promised for building and improvement works following amalgamation has been reduced and is now a maximum of £240k. Therefore instead of new build projects it is now proposed to reorganise the building to, in theory, provide more flexible use for the behaviour area and provide a small meeting room next to the Headteacher's office. This is currently at feasibility study stage and CS will update governors as and when she has more information.

The new Health & Safety Officer has visited to audit school's paperwork. CS is in the process of completing some noted action points.

**Action: Pass on HLTA training info from STA to CS**

**By: EJB**

**Action:**

### 8. Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) & Financial Control Checklist

The SFVS is the annual return completed by the school and agreed by governors using the Financial Controls Checklist as guidance. CS advised she has completed the SFVS and the Checklist which supports conclusions drawn. RA will sign off as Chair of Governors at the next Full meeting on 14.3.17 and there should be no issue with submitting by the deadline of 31.3.17.

**Action: Agree completed SFVS and forward to Governors for formal agreement at the next full meeting 14.3.17**

**By: CS**

### 9. Financial Benchmarking

This is an annual requirement to run comparison data from the LA on software which they provide. In the case of GRPS it is not possible to find a comparison set of 10 due to our size and other features. Therefore it is necessary to compare using audit commission data. Generally GRPS appears to be in the middle of most comparative factors and shows, as expected, that we have average to low spending but also low levels of income.

**Action: None Required**

### 10. Headteacher's Report (including Staffing)

KW not in attendance but his report was circulated prior to the meeting.

Governors' attention was drawn to staffing issues arising including:

(2) A member of support staff is undergoing dismissal proceedings on the basis of ill health which she is aware of and accepts. There is a meeting scheduled to finalise this, however if she does not attend there will need to be a dismissal hearing and a panel of governors convened. This will be discussed again as and when the need arises.

(6) School is currently auditing the SEN provision following the departure of one of the SENCOs Mrs Viney. Mrs James is running the role alone with SEN admin support at present but it may be more appropriate to employ a second SENCO to share the burden of this considerable responsibility. The cost of a second SENCO has been built into the budget plan already.

**Action: None Required.**

11. Review, agree and adopt Policies:

All the policies are model LA versions which have been agreed by relevant unions and audited by legal services. They are personalised to reflect the school's individual characteristics and any relevant individuals.

Revised Budget Management Policy

**Governors agreed to adopt the policy.**

Attendance Management & Leave Policies

**Governors agreed to adopt the policies.**

Recruitment & Selection Policy

**Governors agreed to adopt the policy.**

**Action: File agreed policies as per procedure**

**By: CS (SBM)**

12. A.O.B.

No other business raised.

**Action: None Required.**

**Meeting Closed at: 8.15pm**

**Signed (Chair)** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

