

GLADSTONE ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL
"Learning to Succeed"

MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY

DATE: Tuesday 7th May 2019

TIME: 6.30 p.m.

PRESENT:

Mr Ray Williamson
Mrs Jane McLeod
Mr Wayne Thickett
Miss V Lewis (Clerk)

Mr Peter Southward
Mr Keith Wright
Mrs Andrea Cowley (Chairperson)

Additionally Present:

Mrs Caroline Sarney (School Business Manager)
Ms Jane Pepper (Chair of Governors)

MINUTES

1. Welcome from the Chairperson (2 minutes)

AC welcomed governors to the meeting.

Action: None Required.

2. Apologies for absence; consider acceptance of apologies (2 minutes)

All committee members present.

Action: None Required.

3. Confidentiality (2 minutes)

No items identified as needing to be recorded confidentially.

Action: None Required.

4. Declaration of Interest in any Agenda Item (2 minutes)

None declared.

Action: None Required

5. Minutes of the previous meeting (12.3.19) / Matters Arising (10 minutes)

The Minutes from the meeting on 12.3.19 were presented. Proposed by JM seconded by PS. Minutes were signed by AC and returned to the Clerk for filing as per procedure.

8) Finance:

RW: what reactions have there been from staff re changes to the travel claims procedure?

CS: not yet shared, we want to complete the staffing restructure first, staff are already dealing with a lot of change. It is felt that the outcome of the staffing restructure needs to be rolled out and then from the start of next half term set the scene for leave, travel and course expenditure plans from September in clear terms so that everyone will know the expectations and provision.

13) Lockdown Procedure:

KW: I have spoken with Sheena from the Playcentre. Their code word is 'Lockdown'. It is proposed to run some trial drills and then identify a formal procedure after identifying challenges etc. The word is clear and unambiguous but isn't a frightening word for pupils. More to follow.

15) A.O.B (Website):

CS: have had no feedback from anybody so I am working with the website design service adviser at SICT to come up with a new format, design and template.

RW: I did have a look online and there are some excellent examples.

CS: worked with adviser and looked at good examples. We have looked at templates and they have started a mock up. Not sure it will be ready in time for the HT recruitment period. A lot of the main content can be transferred across but some does need updating, mostly parts that need other staff input such as curriculum and SEND. I know what the format is going to be, but there are areas that need work.

JP: is the website compliant at present?

CS: existing one is yes.

RW: perhaps in the meantime, and in light of the headteacher recruitment procedures starting, we could brighten the existing one with more pictures or something?

CS: will try to complete asap.

Action: Minutes from meeting 12.3.19 to be filed as per procedure

By: Clerk

Action: Roll out trial lockdown procedure

By: KW

Action: Ongoing website design work

By: CS

6. Correspondence (10 minutes)

Requests for leave during term time received from: -

Nadia Phillips – Requested Friday 18th October 2019, the day before her wedding. States that wedding was booked before term dates for this school year released. Governors commented that provision term dates are released at least 2 school years in advance, and half term is always the final week of October, start of November or bridged across the two.

Olga Iwaniszcuk – requested one day's leave on Monday 13th May 2019 as the previous day is her son's first Holy Communion and there are family from Italy and Germany travelling to celebrate. Governors felt that although the date of the religious service is not chosen by Mrs Iwaniszcuk, the celebration could have waited until a school holiday.

Les Ramm – verbally requested two day's leave on 20th and 21st June 2019 for a 'significant family event' from KW. Mr Ramm needed to know whether his request would be granted sooner than the governing body meeting schedule allowed so KW agreed in principle subject to governors' agreement.

RW: it's difficult to say no to either Miss Phillips or Mrs Iwaniszcuk in light of the fact Mr Ramm has already been informed he may take his requested leave.

JM: all requests must be treated consistently.

JP: we need to be careful not to set a precedent.

KW: I think we need to ensure staff are more secure on the process for **exceptional leave** and what is and is not allowed from September. I am happy to draft a letter to this effect.

RW: the more requests which are agreed, the more staff will make requests.

AC: I agree it's important to apply a consistent approach but at this time do we need to balance this out with staff morale

CS: Send letter about leave requests, the more firm application of the Leave Policy, requests for training and travel claims after May half term, making it very clear to all staff.

Action: Response letters to staff members

By: Clerk/AC

Action: Letter to staff re policy, leave etc as discussed

By: KW/JP

7. Health & Safety / Premises Update (10 minutes)

CS: refer to my report.

- No significant issues arising from H&S inspection (governors previously sent HandS inspection report. Some issues have been completed and some scheduled.
- Roof works being carried out.
- County has agreed to fund works to create a nappy changing room / facility which will be completed in the Summer. We will pay for a bed costing approx. £1500 approx.

JP: location of the room?

CS: take a corner of Rubies classroom (Room 107) which is not really used at present and knock through into the current disabled toilet next door.

JP: the guidance used to be to change nappies standing up wherever possible to promote pupils' independence.

CS: unless there is a developmental issue or issues re child / staff height differences. There will also be safety bars installed for pupils for upright changing where appropriate / possible. The need for a room with bed has arisen because a staffmember injured their back whilst changing a child on the floor in an unsuitable space. It will mostly be used for pupils with underlying medical issues, rather than those who are simply not toilet trained yet. Special Needs LA adviser has visited and provided advice.

AC: it is appropriate to have a special facility for dignity and respect.

JM: from September there will be less staff so having a work related injury absence would be the last thing needed.

Action: None Required.

8. Staffing Restructure Update (10 minutes)

CS: the restructure is just about complete. Many fixed term staff have now secured other posts. The Selection Committee has undertaken a skills audit and offered initial posts / redundancy as appropriate. Phase Leader interviews took place today and the outcome is now known. The LA will fund redundancy payments but not pension strain costs, which we were aware of. This has been factored into the start budget.

Action: None Required.m,

9. Finance: P12 Budget Monitoring and 2019/20 Start Budget (20 minutes)

CS: still finalising the outturn for this year because of a variance between our figures and County's. The start budget being presented is based on a balance b/f of £343k but County are stating £360k. We

have not been charged for various things such as minibus insurance and sports bus costs which may get picked up next time.

The general advice is to produce a 3 year budget, which at present is just about balanced based on pupil numbers for 3 classes. However, we now have 102 allocated pupils for Reception intake in September which is obviously too many for 3 classes. However we are only first choice for 86 of these. Families have until 4.6.19 to lodge an appeal, followed by 4 weeks for appeals to take place. Meaning we won't know accurate allocation and class sizes until July – which is unhelpful for financial and staff planning.

There are still increasing in year deficits so we must be aware of this when making decisions re future spending, staffing and planning.

Funding generated by the possible extra 12 pupils would not cover a 4th teacher and TA. The plan at this stage is to review the organisation of EYFS with HH, VG and JP to try to come up with a cost neutral option.

JP: this is an opportunity to improve the provision and environment whilst also making savings. HH has also been visiting other settings to look at management options in other schools.

CS: this review was already being considered but this situation re pupil numbers has pushed it up the agenda.

CS: number of staff hours and posts has decreased, as per the staffing restructure. There have been radical savings but we do still need to consider ongoing issues.

CS: we need to submit the proposed start budget to County for their consideration and agreement. We can either send it as is and make any necessary changes at the time of the revised budget or make changes to reflect possible extra staff expenditure. My feeling is to submit this version and then reassess moving forward.

All governors agreed to submit the current Start Budget to the LA.

RW: Are county pleased with our saving efforts?

CS: I had to submit a business plan with the idea before and after the staffing restructure. Aside from their indication that they will be funding redundancy costs there has been no response or reaction from County! The final outcome of the process has definitely not been as terrible as it could have been; all permanent staff who wanted to retain a post have done so.

RW: would have been nice to have recognition of our success and of the work involved.

KW: because of how transparent and well managed the process has been by CS the unions were happy with the process and outcomes.

AC: I would like to formally acknowledge on behalf of the Resources Committee, and I'm sure the whole governing body, the excellent management of the restructure process by CS. Her input, work and efforts have meant the restructure has been a success; staff have been treated fairly and the process completed with positive outcomes for the school.

RW: can we see the business case sent to the LA?

CS: yes – will circulate.

KW: motion put through at the recent National Heads Conference that headteachers facing further unmanageable funding reductions (ie. staff cuts which would make school operation impossible) will ignore any growing deficit in favour of running their schools. There was a lot of positive feedback from members at the conference. The aim is to raise the profile of the unmanageable funding situation for schools and 'force the government's hand'.

CS: do we want to consider changing our maximum admission number to perhaps 90 moving forward?

KW: I did enquire but the response was that this would not be agreed as technically we have the literal space to admit 4 classes per year group.

AC: reducing the maximum admission limit would allow for forward planning on a more long term basis.

CS: extra classteacher and TA salaries and then oncosts will undo a significant amount of the extensive savings achieved via the restructure.

KW: there are things we can do with the 'extra' classroom space(s) re community, outside providers etc We need to feed back to the LA the fact that the school will be crippled by extra costs. LA will also mention mixed year classes which is not ideal and I disagree with fundamentally.

KW: William Burchill said that as we have space for 120 pupils per year group he cannot agree to reduce top 90. We need to put together a business case to support our view.

CS: arrange for William Burchill to come in?

KW: yes I think so.

CS: I think this process needs to start asap.

KW: JP and I can write a joint letter with a supporting business case and invitation to visit.

JP: Strategic planning for school places needs to be linked with school admissions. The whole situation needs to be addressed at a local level, with recognition of local impact.

Action: Submit Start Budget to the LA **By: CS**

Action: Circulate LA Business Case for Staffing Restructure to Res. Committee **By: CS**

Action: Prepare letter and Business Case re reducing PAN to be Sent to William Burchill at the Education Office **By: KW/JP/CS**

10. Policies to Approve & Adopt (5 minutes)

FMS004: Contracts Review Schedule

Document has been updated with current costs for 1920. Governors noted the G4S Cash Collection Service and Minibus Leases need to be added.

Action: Make amendments / additions and file policy schedule **By: Clerk**

11. A.O.B. (2 minutes)

Staffing Update:

KW: I have provided a report re staffing updates and union input. Some concerns from unions re Venn involvement so we have taken this on board and are moving forward without them at present.

CS: the Opportunities Area is rolling out a Health and Wellbeing award. Interesting, but needs more staff input and involvement than just myself. Need to be committed to undertaking training etc to achieve the various Awards and have 'Champions' in school. Governors were positive and asked for more information, CS will forward information from Susan McGuinn. JP: worth taking advantage whilst the OA is in place.

KW: perhaps we could appoint a governor who would be responsible for wellbeing to meet with staff and unions etc intermittently and feed back to the GB re staff wellbeing. They could also be involved in the Health and Wellbeing Award. Can be revisited at the next full meeting.

KW: following a meeting with the NEU, NASUWT and UNISON re staff wellbeing and workload there was recognition that teachers were not being asked to do more than their contract, but that some arrangements such as lunchtime meetings (which is not during directed time) were causing concern and affecting staff negatively. Staff also need to be given perspectives and reasoning behind processes such as learning walks. Outcomes were positive and future periodic meetings are planned with union reps. We have not needed to put any staff on the formal developing performance process. We have needed to challenge but this has been successful without formal stages.

AC: I agree the GB link would be a good idea. Shows proactivity between staff and governors.

KW: we could run a survey that is then examined by the Governor to understand any issues or areas that are cropping up.

AC: provides us with positive investment in people.

Headteacher Succession/Recruitment:

JP: We should all by now have received the letter from KW about his new appointment – congratulations! There is now a process for us to follow. We are utilising Resourcing Solutions from the LA, which will involve a cost but they will produce and undertake a bespoke programme of support including administrative tasks, setup of adverts, documentation etc which is governor driven. Have spoken with James Annetts, the recruitment specialist for the coast working with the Opportunities Area who has liaised with Richard Benstead, and the OA has agreed to fund relocation costs of up to £8k if this is applicable to the appointed candidate.

Have also liaised with Heather Mensah, School Improvement adviser. Interview days 8th and 9th July are booked and will allow the governing body to formally ratify an appointment at the scheduled full governing body meeting 9.7.19. The successful candidate will be joining the school in January 2020 or possibly September, depending on the successful candidate.

The next stage is to form a working party (Selection Committee) and then undertake a needs analysis, using the attached proforma. Basically this helps identify what we are looking for in the new headteacher. Ideally the working party needs to be 5 non staff governors plus a reserve. At present we have 4: JP, RW, PS, TD. Anybody interested in joining the working party needs to be able to definitely commit to the pre booked interview days of 8th and 9th July and an evening / twilight shortlisting meeting (date TBC).

JP: firstly, does anyone else wish to participate? And, also it would be very welcomed for all governors to consider the needs analysis template and provide any ideas and feedback to the working party via myself or the Clerk. Will also contact the SI Committee members to give them the same information. CS to liaise with JP re the document prior to the working party meeting.

AC: I could book this in?

Governors agreed that AC's experience in HR would be an asset to the working party.

JP to contact Resourcing Solutions to confirm date for shortlisting – potentially Tuesday 11th June from 5pm if this is possible for Resourcing Solutions and LA advisers.

Needs Analysis meeting confirmed for Thursday 16.5.19 from 2.30pm onwards.

Action: Forward Health & Wellbeing Award information to governors By: CS

Action: Conduct staff wellbeing survey By: KW

Action: Contact SI Committee members re next steps HT recruitment By: JP

Action: Circulate current National Standards for Headship to Selection Committee prior to 16.5.19 meeting By: JP

The Meeting was closed by the Chair at 8pm

Signed _____ Dated _____