

## LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance, Premises and Pay Committee of Windham Nursery School held at the school on Friday 24 November 2017 at 9.15 a.m.

Present: Dan Evans (Chair) Charlotte Mayers (Associate Member)  
Sarah Brodie (Headteacher) Steve Tedbury  
Juliet Cassidy

Also attended: Jo Berry (Acting Headteacher Designate)  
Steve Llewellyn (Financial Consultant)  
Beryl Hawkins (Clerk)

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- 1. Apologies** All Committee members were present.
  - 2. Membership** Jo Berry, who would be replacing Sarah Brodie as headteacher governor for the spring and summer terms 2018 was welcomed to the meeting.
  - 3. Declarations of Interest** There were no declarations of interest.
  - 4. Election of Chair for 2017/18** Dan Evans was elected chair for 2017/18.
  - 5. Minutes and Matters Arising** The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5 October 2017, were **confirmed** and signed (copy in the minute book).

### Arising from the minutes:

- 5.1 Floor Area (Ref: Minute 5.7)** Sarah Brodie reported that Charis Penfold, School Improvement Partner, had advised that it might be possible to make good any anomalies in income and expenditure relating to the increased floor area being used by the school in ways other than recalculating usage percentages.
  - 5.2 Commendation (Ref: Minute GB 9.9: 10/10/17)** Steve Tedbury stated that he had, after several attempts to speak directly to Beverley Butler, been able to leave a message for her commending the contractor responsible for the expansion of Jigsaw.
- 6. Review of Contracts** It was noted that there were currently no contract being reviewed.
  - 7. Budget Report** The Committee **received** a finance update report from the headteacher, including budget monitoring sheets prepared by Steve Llewellyn, showing payroll data to October 2017 (copy in the minute book). Steve and Sarah expanded on issues and highlights from the report, and answered governors' questions. It was noted that:
    - Following staff changes in the summer term an advert had been placed for an Early Years Educator. No appointment had been made and the school was currently in the process of negotiating costs with an agency.
    - The lower than estimated cost at E04 was due to the caretaker not taking up post until October 2017.
    - Overspending on administrative/finance staff (E05) was linked to absences in the summer term.

- A prospective apprentice to work in the nursery and one-to-one had been interviewed and the school was checking whether support for coaching could be offered. The candidate was qualified to Level 2 and working towards Level 3.

**Question: Why is there a positive variance under E12 (Building Maintenance and Improvement)?**

**Answer:** Because invoices have not been received.

**Question: What is the current position on income and expenditure for energy?**

**Answer:** When invoices are received they are sent to the Achieving for Children for costs to be split between users. It is assumed that the allocation set aside will be spent.

**Question: Has there been a decision on the future of the Staff Absence Supply Scheme (SASS)?**

**Answer:** The scheme will be continuing. It is assumed that the £4,900 will be spent and that the local authority's shortfall will be met through a reduction in income to schools.

The Committee **endorsed** the overspending on learning resources (E19) to meet the learning needs of the children in the expanded Jigsaw.

The Committee **confirmed** their previous decision that the £19,527 cost of the playground redevelopment should be met from the revenue budget (E13) rather than the capital balance as recommended by the Achieving for Children: the cost of the canopy would reduce the capital balance by £10,276 and the remaining balance should be retained for future projects such as roof replacement.

The Committee further noted that:

- Allowing for repayment of an over-receipt of £14,885 resulting from 3yo vacancies, and an overpayment of £7,151, Early Years Block Funding would reduce by a total of £22,453. Of this, £5,000 would be recouped by the local authority by reducing the school's 2018/19 budget allocation.
- A line for the Early Years Pupil Premium Grant had now been included under I01 (funds Delegated by the Local Authority) and income for this would be moved from I05 to I01 for 2018/19.
- Grahame Craig (school finance for AfC) had confirmed that the school had now over-received £45,000 Jigsaw funding; mechanisms were in place to follow up mispayments and AfC was in the process of checking school budgets in greater depth.
- Income received from parents before Easter would be sufficient to cover the cost of food for Rocking Horse Club.
- Expenditure on Rocking Horse Club staff did not match the income heading as expenditure included work done elsewhere in the nursery, which was included in other income streams.
- Outstanding maintenance work was being planned for the spring half term and it was therefore expected that the variance on property maintenance would reduce from £8,000 to £3,000.

- The school was not able to predict that it would be less than full because of the local authority's budgeting methods.

The Committee **asked** for a report for their next meeting showing what Rocking Horse Club staff do, including other roles and costs split between the different roles.

**ACTION BY: Sarah Brodie/Jo Berry**

**Question: What happened about invoicing for the SASS?**

**Answer:** There has been an issue with the Council system for issuing invoices. The school has received an invoice this week, which includes repayment of the £3,000 paid to schools last year. This will have a negative effect, not yet seen in the account.

**Conclusion**

The Committee concluded that the apparent positive variance did not represent the true picture and was attributable to the outstanding invoice for SASS; the switch to meeting the cost of the canopy from the capital budget; over-receipt of Early Years Block funding; and anticipated higher expenditure on property maintenance. Overall, there was an expected overspend of £10,000, which would have increased to £20,000 had the money for the canopy been transferred from the revenue budget to the capital budget.

**General Overview**

Sarah and Jo answered governors' questions on her report relating to staffing from January 2018, including transition from Sarah to Jo, Jigsaw expansion, premises maintenance and nursery occupancy. It was noted that:

- The cost of employing an apprentice had not yet been included in the budget.
- Nursery occupancy was good and five pupils were likely to be attending for five terms.

- 8. Financial Benchmarking** As financial benchmarking data was not available this item was deferred to the next meeting.

**ACTION BY: Sarah Brodie/Jo Berry**

- 9. Windham School Fund** Due to the audited accounts not being available this item was deferred to the next meeting.

**ACTION BY: Charlotte Mayers**

- 10. Impact of Vacancies from September 2017** The Committee considered a breakdown of loss of income from September 2017 onwards for vacancies in all provisions (copy in the minute book). The Committee thanked Sarah and Charlotte for providing the data and agreed to take no immediate action.
- 11. Staffing** The Committee noted appointments and current vacancies, and the action being taken to fill vacancies.
- 12. Half-yearly AfC Finance Check and Budget Monitoring** The Committee considered recommendations from a half-yearly finance check and budget monitoring carried out by AfC in October 2017 and not covered elsewhere in the minutes.

**Matters arising:**

**12.1 Unreconciled Items** The Committee noted that the list of unreconciled items had now all been cleared from the system and that there was a slight positive consequence.

**12.2 Submission of Minutes to AfC Finance** The Committee confirmed that minutes of meetings only should be submitted to AfC Finance by the clerk after they had been approved by the governing body.

**13. Proposals for Future Provision** Sarah gave a presentation on proposals for future provision (copy in the minute book), outlining the advantages and disadvantages of the various options.

The Committee discussed the options. They agreed that 30-hour groups should be of no less than 13 and **endorsed** Sarah's recommendation to offer 13 30-hour places and 52 15-hour places. It was noted that given the financial constraints staff were in favour of this option, it would have the advantage of continuity of setting and staffing and it was financially favourable. The governing body **agreed** that:

- All those paying for a place would pay to make up to a whole day - £7.36 per hour for 15 hours.
- In addition, parents paying for a 30-hour place would be charged for Rocking Horse Club at the same rate as other users.
- Some places would be reserved for places that were fully paid.

It was agreed that this arrangement would make up some of the likely loss of delivering the 30-hour places.

The Committee considered other possible options that could be pursued if places were not taken up by May 2018 and **agreed** that:

- Cherry Baker should be asked to advise on the feasibility of offering training opportunities to other providers.
- Parental demand for a breakfast club should be assessed through a questionnaire.
- A decision should be made by January 2018 on the offer of free two-year-old places for the summer term 2018.

The Committee thanked Sarah for her work in preparing the proposals.

**ACTION BY: Sarah Brodie/Jo Berry**

**14. Site Update and Building Management** The Committee noted the report.

**15. Health & Safety** The Committee **received** the updated Health & Safety report (copy in the minute book). It was noted that updates to the plan mainly concerned the duties being taken on by the caretaker and related training.

**16. Policy Review** The Committee **reviewed** the following policies and other documents and took action as indicated.

- **Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy** – **recommended** with no change for approval by the governing body
- **Teachers' Pay Policy** – teachers' pay scales added as Appendix A. **Recommended for approval by the governing body**, including the

Option 1 pay scale, with a 2% pay award for main scale teachers and 1% for all other grades

- **Teacher Capability Procedures** – **approved** with no change.
- **Teacher Appraisal Procedure** – **approved** with no change
- **Staff Special Leave Policy** – **approved** with no change
- **Staff Code of Conduct** – **recommended to governing body for approval** (not new to Windham, but required by AfC as a separate policy)
- **Fire Safety Policy** – **approved** with no substantive change
- **General Risk Assessment Strategy** – **approved** with no significant change. Includes a tightening up of the role of the caretaker with regard to procedures.

It was noted that the **Staff Health and Attendance Policy** would be presented to the Committee for approval when the local authority had supplied a copy of its most recent model policy.

**ACTION BY: Jo Berry**

**Question:** With regard to the administration of medicines what is the liability cover?

**Answer:** The school subscribes to the local authority's liability cover and is covered for at least £2 million. The school does not administer over-the-counter medicines, such as Calpol, even if they have been previously prescribed. Most pupils do not need medicines administered if they are only attending for 15 hours a week. For children attending for 30 hours the need may be greater. The school does not sign up to administering any medicines if staff have not received appropriate training.

- 17. Performance Management** Juliet Cassidy reported that she and Cherry Baker had met with Sarah Brodie to review her performance and to set targets and that they had then discussed and **agreed** the conclusions with Charis Penfold; Charis would be meeting Sarah and Jo for a handover of targets linked to the school development plan.

The Committee **agreed recommendations** on pay for the headteacher.

- 18. Schools Forum** Sarah reported that the local authority would not be reducing the High Needs budget in the current financial year.
- 19. Confidentiality** The Committee **agreed** that no confidential minutes were required.
- 20. Future Meetings** The Committee **confirmed** dates of future meetings:

| <b>Date</b>                            | <b>Reports by</b> | <b>Agenda Despatch</b> |
|--|-------------------|------------------------|
| Wednesday 31 January 2018 at 9.15 a.m. | 22/1/18           | 24/1/18                |
| Monday 12 March 2018 at 9.15 a.m.      | 1/3/18            | 5/3/18                 |
| Thursday 10 May 2018 at 9.15 a.m.      | 1/5/18            | 3/5/18                 |
| Friday 22 June 2018 at 9.15 a.m.       | 13/6/18           | 15/6/18                |

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The meeting ended at 11.45 a.m.

| <b>Windham Nursery School Finance, Premises and Pay Committee Action Sheet</b> |  |  |
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| <b>Minute reference</b>  | <b>Action required</b>   | <b>By whom and when</b>  |
| <b>7 Budget report</b>   | Report on roles and costs for Rocking Horse Club split between roles   | Sarah Brodie/Jo Berry<br>For 31/1/18   |
| <b>8 Financial benchmarking</b>  | Arrange for financial benchmarking report to be presented to Committee   | Sarah Brodie/Jo Berry<br>For 31/1/18   |
| <b>9 Windham School Fund</b>   | Present audited statement of income and expenditure to Committee   | Charlotte Mayers<br>For 31/1/18  |
| <b>13 Proposals for future provision</b>                                       | Consult Cherry Baker on feasibility of offering training opportunities to other providers.<br>Consider assessing parental demand for a breakfast club through questionnaire<br>Decide on offer of free 2yo places for summer term 2018 | Sarah Brodie/Jo Berry<br>Immediate<br>Sarah Brodie/Jo Berry<br>Immediate<br>Sarah Brodie/Jo Berry<br>By January 2018 |
| <b>16 Policy review</b>  | Present Staff Health & Attendance Policy to Committee for approval when checked against latest LA model  | Jo Berry<br>For 31/1/18 if available   |