



**Eastburn Junior & Infant School Governing Body  
Resources Committee  
Minutes of meeting of held on 25 January 2018**

The meeting opened at 5.33pm

**Present:** Ann Craggs, Bryan Harrison (Executive Head), Sarah Teal

**In Attendance:** Michelle Hudson (BM/ML – to Item Res 25/17)<sup>1</sup>, Helen Osman (Clerk – BC/SGS<sup>2</sup>), Heather Toner (School Business Manager – SBM), Joanna Waterhouse (Head of School and Associate Member)

**Res 19/17 Elect Committee Chair**

Item deferred because the withdrawal of any governor who might be nominated would leave the meeting without a quorum.

**Governors agreed** that Ann Craggs should chair this meeting.

**Res 20/17 Apologies for absence and their acceptance**

The absence of Graham Sheard without apology was noted.

**Res 21/17 Notification of other urgent business and requests to vary the agenda order**

No other business was notified and there were no requests to vary the agenda.

**Res 22/17 Declarations of interest for items on this agenda**

There were no declarations of interest.

**Res 23/17 Minutes of meeting on 16 November 2017 and matters arising**

**Action**

<sup>1</sup> BM/ML – Business Manager at Miriam Lord Primary School, the home school of the Executive Headteacher

<sup>2</sup> BC/SGS – Bradford Council's School governor Service

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- ***The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting, signed by the Chair and passed to the Head of School.***

Other matters arising were in hand, had been completed or would be discussed under other items on the agenda for this meeting.

***The Committee requested*** that hard copies of papers be made available by the school for meetings of this Committee.

HoS

## Res 24/17 Receive Quarter 3 (end-December) Budget Monitor

*Agenda paper – updated copy tabled at meeting and attached as Annex A (signed minutes only)*

Michelle Hudson, Business Manager at Miriam Lord (BM/ML) reported that income had changed little since Quarter 2. The exception was additional income of £15k at budget heading I10 (Receipts from supply teacher insurance claims), which was offset by an increase in expenditure at E26 (Agency supply teaching staff).

The increase in forecast expenditure at E01 (Teaching staff) reflected the appointment of two experienced job-matched teachers to a post for which the school had budgeted for an NQT<sup>3</sup>. The Head had previously briefed governors on this appointment, which he considered excellent value for money.

The £27k reduction in forecast expenditure at E03 (Support staff) reflected a technical adjustment: the costs of redundancy payments had been moved from this budget line to E08 (Indirect employee expenses), where forecast expenditure had thus increased by £22.5k.

BM/ML said that, barring the unforeseen, the school remained on track to manage within the revised budget for E12 (Building maintenance and improvement).

BM/ML said that the originally planned expenditure at budget lines E27 (Bought-in professional services, curriculum) and E28 (Bought-in professional services, non-curriculum) had not included provision for a number of items, including: sufficient payments to the provider of PPA<sup>4</sup> cover; professional support for Early Years; Educational Psychologist services; certain lessons (eg music) for which parents reimbursed the school. Forecast expenditure had therefore increased by £6k under each of these budget lines.

The increased expenditure at E28 also included the costs of Headteacher recruitment, several referrals to Occupational Health and the compilation of the Governing Body (GB) Skills Audit and Self Review.

The school now forecast an overall in-year deficit of £103k and a cumulative deficit of £83k, or 9.72% of budget. **Asked** whether this was normal, the Executive Headteacher (ExecHT) said that it was not. He reminded governors that the deficit included non-recurring items including substantial costs relating to redundancy and other staffing issues. As previously reported, Andrew Redding, Head of Bradford Council's School Funding Team (BC/SFT), was satisfied that the school had done everything possible to reduce costs while also managing legacy issues, and understood that there was no realistic prospect of the school clearing a deficit of this scale on its own. He remained hopeful that

<sup>3</sup> NQT - Newly Qualified Teacher. Qualified and undergoing 1 year training post. Governors have a responsibility to ensure that NQTs are given the support and training to which they are entitled, including induction time away from the classroom as well as the usual Planning, Preparation and Assessment time to which all teaching staff are entitled.

<sup>4</sup> PPA - Planning, Preparation and Assessment time (teachers must spend 10% of their working week out of contact with their class in order to plan, prepare and assess class work)

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it might be possible to secure a write-off of the deficit, though there could be no guarantee of this. He had made very clear that, if a write-off were agreed, it would be a one-off: the school must then manage entirely within the allocated budget.

If a write-off of the deficit were agreed, **Governors asked** whether there were any areas of expenditure that the Committee and the school needed to monitor particularly carefully. The ExecHT said that, like all schools, Eastburn needed to continue to manage costs of supply staff carefully – this was a particular issue for schools such as Eastburn that were going through a period of turbulence as they made the required improvements: long term absences and the costs of Occupational Health referrals tended to increase as schools addressed long-standing staffing issues. From experience at his own school, he was able to assure governors that this would ease as the school became more stable. Governors noted that the need to reduce staffing meant that there was no longer any flexibility within the staffing structure to enable the school to cover absences internally, although they also noted that the main concern was around long term absences, which would not generally be covered internally.

**Asked** whether further Pupil Premium (PP) income was anticipated, and whether it was being spent as effectively as possible, the ExecHT said that this was on the agenda for the Governing Body meeting on 05 February 2018. The school had relatively few pupils who were eligible for PP funding, which was not therefore a major income stream for this school.

**Replying to questions**, BM/ML said that income from the Fun Zone was included within the budget at Item I08 (*Income from facilities and services*).

The ExecHT said that staffing had been reduced to the bare bones. The Head of School (HoS) said that the school was being very clear about the roles that staff were paid to do, as set out in their job descriptions. The ExecHT said that Miriam Lord was also reviewing job descriptions carefully, for example to ensure that UPS<sup>5</sup> staff, who were expected to undertake work beyond their own classes, were deployed effectively. It was applying more rigorously the principle that staff should not be compensated twice for taking on additional responsibility: they should either be paid more for that responsibility or they should be given release time, but they should not receive both additional pay and release time. This represented something of a culture change and could not be achieved or realise savings overnight, particularly in view of pay protection arrangements.

#### Res 25/17 **Approve the audited accounts of the Fun Zone**

BM/ML said that, as an after school club, the Fun Zone fell within the purview of the school and the Governing Body. Since 01 April 2017, the Fun Zone costs and income had (properly) been included in the general school budget. There was thus no separate account that needed to be audited and approved by governors.

**Replying to questions**, BM/ML confirmed that the charge for Fun Zone sessions was covered in the Charging and Remissions policy.

[Michelle Hudson left the meeting at 5.57pm]

#### Res 26/17 **Preparation for drawing up 2018-19 budget**

*Agenda papers*

<sup>5</sup> UPS – Upper Pay Scale (as opposed to Main Pay Scale, MPS)

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- a) Review financial benchmarking data for 2016-17 – Governors noted that the school's expenditure on teaching staff, as a percentage of its total expenditure, was similar to that of other similar schools locally. Its expenditure on educational support staff was higher than average; this would change in future as the reduction in staffing took effect. Expenditure on agency supply staff was the highest in the cluster, reflecting the instability in staffing as discussed at Item Res 24/17 above.

**Asked** why the school's expenditure on other staff was highest in the cluster, the ExecHT said that this included the Pastoral Manager: other schools might code expenditure on such a staff member under another heading.

[Sarah Teal left the room at 5.59pm]

Governors noted that, at just below 80% of total budget, the school's expenditure on staffing was towards the high end of the cluster. This did not, however, take account of the current staffing restructure.

**Governors asked** whether expenditure on non-ICT learning resources was a little high. The HoS explained that this included one-off investment in 2016-17 that had been badly needed – the school's expenditure relative to that of other schools could be expected to be lower in future. However, while expenditure on learning resources looked higher than other areas on the graph at section 2 of the agenda paper, it was in fact just below average for the schools in the cluster. The school badly needed to spend more on up to date books and other resources.

Governors noted that energy costs had been high but could be expected to reduce with the forthcoming replacement of the boiler and savings on electricity charges through the installation of different lighting.

- b) Review Service Level agreements and contracts – The ExecHT reminded governors that the purpose of this item was not for the Committee to review every contract or Service Level Agreement (SLA) but, rather, to be assured that the school had systems in place to review all contracts and SLAs regularly to ensure that they continued to represent best value for money. The school informed governors of: new SLAs or contracts; SLAs or contracts that were coming to an end; substantial changes in costs; and any concerns about the services received.

Replying to questions, Heather Toner, School Business Manager (SBM) undertook to include in future versions of the agenda paper the previous costs of each contract/SLA so that governors could identify any increases that appeared excessive.

**Replying to questions**, the SBM said that the costs of the sports coaching service were covered by Sports Premium funding. **Asked** whether the school would be able to demonstrate the impact of the Sports Premium funding, school leaders were clear that it would. They added that the Bradford City service was good value, and better than other providers of sports coaching.

[Sarah Teal rejoined the meeting at 6.07pm]

Governors noted the need to review the costs of continuing to draw on the services of the current ExecHT on a consultancy basis in future, and of the services of BM/ML.

**Asked** whether the school had plans to move to alternative suppliers for any major services, the HoS said that it did not. The Web Anywhere service was proving disappointing and would be reviewed when it became due for renewal in May 2019. It might prove necessary to review the increasing charges for the text service, but not in the context of setting the opening budget for 2018-19. The ExecHT said that Miriam

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Lord had recently introduced Marvellous Me<sup>6</sup>, which was proving flexible, good value and popular with parents.

Governors thanked the SBM for preparing this useful breakdown of the school's service contracts and SLAs.

- c) Review 3-5 year rolling plan of building maintenance and development – The ExecHT said that, in view of the school's financial position, the agenda paper should be regarded more as a prioritised wish list than as a firm plan. Based on safeguarding walks and first-of-the-month checks, it gave a clear view of the school's priorities in the event that any money became available. Any safeguarding or health and safety issues would, however, be dealt with promptly as part of a separate, short-term plan that was in hand.

The ExecHT said that work required to comply with Fire Regulations, which would take place during the Easter 2018 break, would also support the work needed to the ICT suite and library. For this reason, the ICT suite/library had been prioritised and would also be undertaken at Easter 2018 – a written proposal for the work was awaited.

**Asked** whether this work would be undertaken by the Site Manager, the SBM said that, as far as possible, it would.

Governors noted that, within the space of two years, the school premises had been significantly modernised. This would stand the school in good stead in terms of its budget. This rolling programme would ensure that the school remained on top of maintenance.

- d) Review 3-5 year rolling plan of ICT renewals – The HoS said that, as with the buildings maintenance and development plan, the ICT renewals plan should be regarded as priorities in case money became available rather than as a firm plan. The school had recently invested in ICT hardware, including in replacement of the wireless network, so significant further expenditure would not be required in 2018-19.

[Bryan Harrison left the room at 6.20pm]

Ideally, the HoS would like to purchase a further set of fifteen laptops to take the total to thirty. However, it might be necessary to trade this off against the works to the ICT suite and library. **Asked** whether the additional laptops would be for the ICT suite, she said that they would, rather, be mobile, on trolleys.

The HoS said that the existing iPads and iPods were in reasonable conditions. The Netbooks had not proved good value and would not be replaced – they were now reaching their end of life.

[Bryan Harrison rejoined the meeting at 6.23pm]

The HoS said that the school paid £6k per annum for two mornings per week of IT support. The service was both proactive and preventative. Governors considered this to be very good value for money.

The HoS said that the only real area in which the school's ICT was lacking was staff laptops. These were on the ICT renewals plan but could not be afforded at present.

## Res 27/17 Consider scope to increase joint purchasing with other local schools

<sup>6</sup> Marvellous Me – an app that facilitates whole school engagement with parents about their child's learning and character development. [Website](#)

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The HoS said that the school purchased supplies such as photocopier paper jointly with other schools, and the SBM was continually in contact with her opposite numbers in other schools to share information on best value providers of goods and services. Joint training for both teachers and Teaching Assistants (TAs), including Educational Psychology training, was run through 2VLC<sup>7</sup>. If the school had spare places on training that it had organised for staff, it offered those places to other local schools.

**Res 28/17 Report on staff pay statements**

The Head of School reported that all teaching staff had received pay statements setting out their entitlements.

**Res 29/17 Update on any other staffing issues arising since previous meeting**

The ExecHT reported that a part time Year 1 teacher was leaving to take up a post in a special school. The other part time teacher in Year 1 had agreed to work full time until the end of the academic year: she would be on her existing permanent contract for her current part time hours and on a temporary contract for the additional hours. This arrangement had been approved by PACT HR<sup>8</sup> and gave the school space to decide how best to fill the post from September 2018.

The Reception teacher was absent from school long term and was receiving support from Occupational Health. **Replying to questions**, the ExecHT said that the class was being covered by the same supply teacher who had covered it previously, but that this teacher could only work four days per week. The fifth day was therefore being covered by a second supply teacher who was also known to the school. Although this was not ideal, the school had considered it better than bringing in a full time supply teacher who was an unknown quantity. In light of the positive changes that had been made in Reception during the supply teacher's period of cover, her experience and her willingness to take responsibility for moving the class forward, governors agreed.

**Res 30/17 Review Safeguarding Audit and Action Plan as submitted to Local Authority in December 2017**

*Agenda papers*

The ExecHT said that the main issue in the Action Plan that fell within the remit of this Committee was the question of extending the green fencing around the entire site. This was desirable, but the risk of an intruder was low and the cost would be tens of thousands of pounds. **Replying to questions**, the HoS said that the school did not suffer greatly from people coming onto the site in the evenings and at weekends. Governors agreed that, given the low risk and the school's financial position, extension of the fencing could not be afforded at present.

**Res 31/17 Review progress against Fire Action Plan**

The HoS said that, due to the work that had been done in the last two years, systems were now working well. **Asked** whether the Named Governor for Health and Safety (NG/HS) had conducted a health and safety (H&S) walk and reviewed the Accident Report, the HoS

<sup>7</sup> 2VLC – Two Valleys Learning Collaborative: an example of a Locality Achievement Partnership (LAP)

<sup>8</sup> PACT HR – Bradford Council's traded HR support service

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said that he had not, although he had been asked. Governors expressed concern that no governor had undertaken a H&S Walk recently and **the Committee asked** that the HoS ask NG/HS again to undertake the H&S Walk and intimate to him that, if he were unable to do so in the near future, the acting Chair would do it.

Sarah Teal said that she would undertake a Safeguarding Walk in her capacity as Named Governor for Child Protection (NG/CP).

The HoS said that a number of planned works by Bradford Council were due to be undertaken. These included the fire detection system, cloakroom doors and the introduction of fire breaks in the ceiling void. The intention was that this work should be undertaken during the February half term break, though the timeframe was subject to change in light of the work that BC was undertaking to check schools in light of the Grenfell Tower fire.

**Replying to questions**, the HoS said that a number of evacuation drills had been undertaken involving a variety of different circumstances (eg at lunchtime, during Fun Zone, during clubs led by other providers, with one or more exits blocked, with a child hidden and therefore “missing” for the purposes of the drill). These drills had proved useful in demonstrating that systems and the use of alternative exits all worked in practice. The school had discussed invacuation (“lock-down”) procedures with staff and would conduct a drill before the next meeting of this Committee.

HoS,  
NG/HS,  
A Craggs

NG/CP

HoS

#### Res 32/17 Update on any other premises issues arising since previous meeting

**Replying to questions**, the HoS said that the gates closed at 9.00am. This was working well. The HoS said that one response to the Parent Questionnaire had asked why all areas of the site were not gritted: she had explained that it was good practice only to grit those areas where people were supposed to walk. Other areas were taped off, and parents and others should not enter those areas.

The HoS said that the school had now reached the top of BC’s list for replacement of the boiler. A temporary boiler would be installed in a Portacabin in the car park until the work was completed at Easter 2018. There would be some disruption to staff car parking, but no other significant disruption to school life.

The HoS reported that the roof in her office was leaking. **Asked** whether the roof had not recently been repaired, she said that the repairs had been only to the old, Victorian slate roof. The leak was in the newer, flat roof section.

The HoS reported that work to the emergency lighting in the library had now been completed.

#### Res 33/17 Review policies and other key documents:

*Agenda paper*

- a) **Charging and Remissions policy** – Governors noted the changes to the previous policy. The HoS said that milk provision was now outsourced and parents paid the provider directly.

**Asked** whether staff were aware of the changes to the use of Fun Zone, the HoS said that they were. It was likely that the school would leave the cost unchanged at £4.50 per session for the present, but it would check the pay costs, including the forthcoming increases in pay and pension costs, before making a final decision on this. **The Committee agreed** to review the charges for before and after school clubs from September 2018 at its next meeting.

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The HoS said that uptake of before school sessions and the first of the two after-school sessions was healthy. Uptake of the second after-school session was lower – it was sustainable at present, but might not remain so. The school was considering potential incentives to attend the second after-school sessions, such as a reduction in price, the planning of activities etc – any such incentives would need to be carefully costed to see whether they would provide good value.

➤ **The Committee unanimously approved** the Charging and Remissions policy.

- b) **Risk Assessments** – The HoS said that the school had risk assessments in place as appropriate, including for residential visits. Where providers had their own risk assessments, the school used those as well – so, for example, the provider of an adventure playground would have its own risk assessments and qualified staff, but the school would conduct its own risk assessments in relation to travel to and from the venue, the specific medical and other needs of pupils etc.

The HoS said that the overall approach taken by the school was to work from a comprehensive model risk assessment, delete the elements that were not relevant and add any elements that might relate specifically to the matter in question. This minimised the work involved and ensured that elements were not overlooked.

The Clerk reminded governors that all school visits that involved an overnight stay, overseas travel or hazardous activities must be approved by them. Asked when this should be done, she advised that it should be done as far in advance of the trip as possible. **The Committee asked** that approval of the planned residential visit to Ingleborough Hall be put on the agenda for the next Governing Body meeting.

**Res 34/17 Urgent other business referred from Item Res 21/17 above**

There was no other business.

**Res 35/17 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting would be held at **5.30pm on Thursday 08 March 2018.**

**The meeting closed at 7.00pm**

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