

**Eastburn Junior & Infant School Governing Body
Resources Committee
Minutes of meeting of held on 19 November 2018**

The meeting opened at 5.49pm

Present: Ian Bester, Ann Craggs (Chair), Richard Grayson, Sarah Teal, Jo Waterhouse (Head), David Wilson (Associate Member and DHT)

In Attendance: John Hughes (Governor observer), Helen Osman (Clerk – BC/SGS¹), Heather Toner (School Business Manager – SBM)

The amendments shown below were agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 14 January 2019.

Res 17/18 Apologies for absence and their acceptance

Apologies had been received, and were accepted, from Rebecca Reynolds.

Res 18/18 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 19/18 Declarations of interest for items on this agenda

There were no declarations of interest.

Res 20/18 Minutes of meeting held on 08 October 2018 and matters arising

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

Item Res 06/18 – Referring to the Clerk's note on and Head's action on page 4 of the minutes, the Clerk said that this matter had now been resolved. The cumulative deficit at the end of Quarter 2 had been £20k, as shown in the Quarterly Budget Monitor form, rather than the £2.3k reported orally. ***The Committee took note.***

Item Res 07/18 – The Business Manager (BM) said that the transfer of the school's account to Lloyds Bank presented a convenient opportunity to review the account signatories. Signatories were currently the Head, Business Manager and **Administrator Deputy Headteacher** plus Katy Walsh, as the Chair of the Governing Body (Chair/GB):

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¹ BC/SGS – Bradford Council's School governor Service

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the school recommended that in future the signatories include the Deputy Headteacher (DHT) instead of Chair/GB.

Governors discussed whether it was necessary for a governor to be a signatory to the account. They noted that this arrangement had been put in place when there was significant leadership change and there had been concern that internal signatories might not always be in post and/or available. The role of Chair/GB was thus as a fourth signatory rather than to countersign checks. In fact, it had not been necessary for Chair/GB to sign any checks, so the proposal would not represent any change in practice.

- **The Committee unanimously agreed** that the four signatories to the school bank account should be the Head, Deputy Headteacher, Business Manager and ~~Administrator~~ Inclusion Leader.

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

Res 21/18 **Receive update on budget position and consider whether action is required**

Paper: Untitled Budget Monitor form at 09-11-2018, circulated prior to meeting. Amended version tabled at meeting and attached as Annex A (signed minutes only)

The Business Manager (BM) informed governors that the revised version of the budget monitor form (Annex A) differed from the version circulated prior to the meeting in that the forecast outturn for budget heading E19 (non-ICT Learning Resources) was now shown as £60.5k rather than £67.5k, thus reducing the forecast deficit from £17k (1.94% of budget) to £10k (1.14% of budget).

The forecast deficit of £10k compared with the £20k forecast deficit shown on the Quarter 2 budget monitor and the £13k deficit predicted in the original budget. The reduction in the forecast deficit reflected the school's expectations of areas where further money could be saved. It was possible that a few other small areas of saving might emerge as the financial year progressed.

Asked whether the school had been obliged to forgo planned actions in order to achieve these forecast savings, the Head said that it had not purchased resources for Guided Reading, though this was partly because the school had not yet fully committed to the Guided Reading approach. Governors noted that, if the forecast savings could be achieved without impacting on firm plans, it could be argued that the school had over-budgeted. The Head said that funds had been drawn from every available budget line to support learning. She reminded governors that the non-ICT Learning Resources budget line tended to be spent by the end of the academic year (ie the end of the first quarter of the financial year) so that learning resources were available from the start of the academic year in September; expenditure thereafter was generally minor.

Replying to questions, the BM confirmed that the possible additional savings that she had indicated might emerge would be marginal; governors should not expect to see any new saving in the order of tens of thousands of pounds.

Governors noted that the variances between the forecast outturn and original budget under the various budget headings were minor, providing reassurance that the school was budgeting carefully.

Risk

The Head said that the outstanding supply teacher insurance claim presented a significant risk to the budget position. For the benefit of newer members of the Committee, she outlined the position: the school was owed £11.4k in supply teacher

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insurance which had not been paid because the insurance provider had gone into difficulties. This receipt was included in the budget forecast.

Since the last meeting of the Committee, the claim had been passed to a second company, which had now agreed to pay it. The BM had provided the school's bank details. However, the e-mail account had been hacked and the details of the account changed: the company had sent the payment to a private bank account in Germany. The school had taken the following actions:

- Informed Bradford Council's Legal Team, who were seeking to recover the monies owed.
- Informed the Office of the Information Commissioner of the breach.
- Informed the school's IT consultant, who had confirmed that the account of the Business Manager, but no other school account, had been hacked and a forwarding device installed. There had been no loss of personal data and the forwarding device had been removed.
- Informed the police fraud unit.
- Worked with the school's Data Protection Officer to ensure that systems were now secure.
- Resumed two-stage verification of paymentse-mail accounts.

Governors noted that the circumstances were unusual, in that most school payments were made by cheque.

Asked whether other schools had been affected, the Business Manager said that a BM at another school had received an e-mail from her that she had not sent: she had informed Bradford Council.

Governors agreed that the school had taken all reasonable steps following the breach.

Asked the view of the insurer, the Head said that their position was that, once the monies had left their account, they were no longer responsible. Governors did not accept this: the insurer could not have had good reason to send the payment to a private account in Germany, knowing that the claimant was a school in the UK. The Head said that BC/Legal was pursuing this.

Res 22/18 **Review and discuss financial benchmarking data from 2017-18**

Agenda papers

The Head reminded governors that the information on the agenda papers related to the 2017-18 financial year, since when the school had undergone significant change. The financial benchmarking information needed to be considered in that context. For example, while the benchmarking data showed Eastburn as spending £46k more than the cluster average on teaching staff (budget heading E01), the school had since appointed a number of Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs), which had significantly reduced expenditure at E01 as well as providing a better mix of more and less experienced staff.

The Head said that agenda paper Res 22/18(a) was based on a line by line review that she and the BM had conducted of the financial benchmarking data. The following key points emerged from discussion:

- Expenditure on support staff (E03) was lowest in the cluster (all 1 Form Entry schools in Bradford): there was no scope for further saving here, because the school had already reduced support staff to the absolute minimum.

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- The Head said that there might be scope to make some further saving by reducing PPA² time for teaching staff. Governors noted that this could be expected to have an adverse impact on pupil outcomes and might well lead to increased expenditure on supply staff as pressure on staff led to increased sick leave.
- **Replying to questions**, the BM said that Eastburn received £40k less in Pupil Premium funding than the cluster average.
- **Replying to questions**, the Head confirmed that Andrew Redding, Head of Bradford Council's School Funding Team (BC/SFT) had confirmed that the action that Eastburn had already taken action to reduce expenditure (ie staffing restructure) had not yet been taken by other schools: the relative expenditure by schools in the cluster could be expected to change further as other schools took the necessary action. The Head said that BC/SFT had also indicated that Eastburn was among the top ten schools in Bradford that were unable to move out of deficit despite having restructured.
- **Asked** whether other schools had a Pastoral Manager, the Head said that some did and some did not. The Pastoral Manager worked part time in this role and part time as a Teaching Assistant, but was wholly accounted for under Other Staffing, E07. This budget heading also included Funzone staffing.
- The Head said that the high level of expenditure on Agency Supply Staff (E26) had reflected the absence of two members of staff on long term sick leave.
- **Replying to questions**, the BM said that Salix was the school's provider of lighting services.
- Asked whether the reduction in costs of teaching staff (E01) due to recruitment of NQTs would be partially offset by the costs of supporting these staff and providing the additional PPA time to which they were entitled, the Head said that this was so. The school had considered carefully its capacity to support such staff and had concluded that it could support the two NQTs and one Recently Qualified Teacher (RQT) who had been appointed, but no further such staff in the current year.
- Governors queried the data at E13 (Grounds Maintenance) in agenda paper Res 22/18(b): the variance shown between 2016-17 and 2017-18 was 7%, but the spend per pupil and percentage of total expenditure under this budget heading were the same in both years. The school would look into this.

Head

Head

The Committee agreed that, in future, it would be useful to see staffing costs broken down as follows:

- Teaching staff
- Classroom support staff (TAs etc)
- Other staff (office and site staff, Pastoral Manager etc)
- Non-salary staff costs (pensions, redundancy payments etc).

A more detailed breakdown was not necessary.

The Committee agreed that, in future, it would be useful for one or more governors to be involved in the line by line review of the data conducted by the Head and BM, to increase their understanding of the budget and provide assurance to the Committee as a whole that the data was being used effectively in school to ensure value for money.

² PPA time - 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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Res 23/18 Approve audited accounts for 2017-18:

Agenda papers

Replying to questions, the BM confirmed that both accounts had been externally audited.

a) School Fund account

➤ **The Committee unanimously approved** the audited School Fund account for 2017-18.

b) Funzone account – Replying to questions, the BM said that the payment of £51k shown in the account was a transfer of funds from the Funzone bank account to the school.

➤ **The Committee unanimously approved** the audited Funzone account for 2017-18.

Action

Res 24/18 Note financial audit report and approve action plan

Agenda paper

Replying to questions, the Head and BM said that the financial audit had not raised any issues of which the school had been unaware. The report included some useful recommendation, which the school was implementing: for example, it had introduced a third level of authorisation to ensure full separation of duties. As both the Head and BM were new to post, they had welcomed the feedback.

Governors were pleased to see that the audit had confirmed that procedures were effective or mostly effective. **Asked** whether the timescales in the Action Plan were realistic, the BM said that they were. Noting that several recommendations were for governors, the Committee agreed to review them at the next meeting – the recommendations in question were:

- Recommendation 6 – To agree a remit for the School Fund account, including written Terms of Reference outlining the purpose of the fund and the type of expenditure that could be made from it. Head
 - Recommendation 7 – To update the school’s finance policy to incorporate the new management structure and revise the school’s scheme of delegation accordingly, clearly stating the levels of financial authority within the school. Head
 - Recommendation 8 – To produce a New Governor Induction checklist, which should include the provision of key financial information, to be completed for all new governors and retained in the governors’ file. Head
- **The Committee noted** the audit report and **approved** the Action Plan.

Res 25/18 Approve tender for energy supply

Agenda paper

Asked whether most schools used the proposed energy supplier, the BM explained that the West Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation conducted a regular tender exercise and schools were invited to sign up on the terms agreed centrally. The school recommended that the Committee agree to sign up. **Replying to questions**, she said that the agreement would run until 31 March 2023 unless subject to early termination.

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- **The Committee unanimously agreed** to sign up with NPower for the supply of electricity according to the terms set out in the agenda paper, a copy of which was signed by the Chair.

Res 26/18 Briefing on Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

Agenda papers

John Hughes said that he had worked through the SFVS document with the Business Manager. The Committee reviewed and approved the responses they had drafted to Section A of the form, as read out by the BM. The following points were made in discussion:

- **Question A6** – Does the school have access to an adequate level of financial expertise, including when specialist finance staff are absent (eg on sick leave)?

Governors noted that this was challenging in a small school with minimal staffing. If the BM were absent, day to day financial transactions would be handled by the administrator and the Head would work with the school's Bursar. If necessary, the school would be able to call on support from the Business Manager at Miriam Lord³ or local schools. Governors noted that the risk was thus not zero, but would be managed.

- **Question A9** – The Head said that her Performance Management review meeting had not yet been held, but reminded governors that the GB had appointed an external School Improvement consultant to advise the Performance Management Committee.

John Hughes said that he and the BM were due to attend training on the SFVS on 04 December 2018. Following that training, they would prepare a full draft response for consideration at the net meeting.

*J Hughes,
BM*

Res 27/18 Review staffing structure and recommend any changes to Governing Body

Item deferred at the request of the Headteacher because the information on staffing ratios and costs expected from the unions was not yet available.

Res 28/18 Note report on progress of, and support for, Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs)

The Deputy Headteacher (DHT) said that the two NQTs had undergone their first half-termly observations and review meetings: their first formal assessments would be submitted to Bradford Council's NQT leader at the end of the autumn term. Both were on track to complete their qualifying periods successfully. **Replying to questions**, he confirmed that both were receiving the support (including mentoring that he personally provided) and additional PPA time to which they were entitled.

Res 29/18 Note update on any other staffing issues arising since previous meeting

None reported.

Res 30/18 Note update on current building works and consider whether action is required

³ Miriam Lord – Miriam Lord Primary School, provider of an Executive Headteacher and Business Management support in 2016-17 to 2017-18.

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The BM said that work to the boiler was due to be completed in the current week. There was no further update on work to the fire alarm and roof.

Action

Res 31/18 Approve 3-5 year rolling maintenance and development plan

Agenda paper

The Head said that the works shown as high priority on the agenda paper were those that either related to Health and Safety or could be undertaken at low cost; they would be undertaken in 2018-19. Those that were extremely high priority were covered in the budget. Medium priority works were those that were desirable rather than essential or low cost, and would be undertaken in 2019-20. There were many improvements that the school would like to make, but which were precluded by budget constraints. Fortunately, however, the premises were overall in a good condition. The focus would therefore be on ongoing maintenance and refreshing of the premises; a small fund would be set aside for this when the 2019-20 opening budget was prepared.

Replying to questions, the Head said that the school received an annual capital budget of £6.5k. Bradford Council had clawed back 70% of the 2018-19 budget as the school's contribution to major capital works (eg the roof and the boiler), leaving approximately £1k in the current year's budget. The BM advised that it had been necessary to draw down capital funding from next year's budget to meet the 70% contribution (because 70% of the 2018-19 capital budget had not remained at the time these large projects were agreed). Thus the works identified in the agenda paper would need to be funded, mostly if not wholly, from the revenue budget (budget headings E12 and E13, Building and Grounds maintenance and improvement).

Asked about the project headed "Lath and plaster ceilings – Victorian part of school", the Head said that this related to work undertaken by Bradford Council to install a suspension ceiling in Reception. The school was arguing that BC should rectify the problem. A governor thought that this could present a Health and Safety risk: the school would raise it again with BC as a high priority issue.

Head

Res 32/18 Note update on any other premises issues arising since previous meeting

None reported.

Res 33/18 Note update on implementation of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Agenda paper

The Committee noted the report of the visit undertaken by Rebecca Reynolds on 05 October 2018 to review the school's arrangements in relation to GDPR (agenda paper).

The Head said that the school's Data Protection Officer had recently completed a GDPR audit: the report and action plan would be brought to the next meeting. **Asked** whether there were any matters raised in the audit that required governors' immediate attention, the Head said that there were not. The DPO had recommended a full IT audit to ensure the security of the schools systems, and was obtaining a price for the work. Governors welcomed this: such an audit should be undertaken as soon as possible in view of the breach discussed at Item Res 21/18.

Res 34/18 Review policies and other key documents:

Agenda paper

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Date: _____

- a) eSafety policy and procedures – **Replying to questions**, the Head confirmed that all staff had read the policy and procedures. **Asked** whether they were required to sign to confirm that they had done so, she said that they were not but that they would be required to do so from 2019-20: this, and some other items, had been added to the list of key policy documents that staff were required to sign for each year. More importantly, the school was putting appropriate training in place and ensuring that eSafety was embedded in the wider curriculum.

Asked whether devices used by staff off site should not be encrypted, the Head and DHT said that USB drives were encrypted. The devices themselves did not store any school data and could not be used to gain remote access to the school's server: thus there was no need for them to be encrypted.

➤ **The Committee unanimously approved** the eSafety policy and procedures.

Noting that the policy required that governors monitor eSafety, including through discussions with staff and reviewing logs, **governors asked** what mechanisms the school proposed to put in place for this. The Head said that mechanisms would be devised by the school and brought to the next meeting for approval.

Head

Governors discussed the use of a mobile device by staff in school to take photographs of pupil activities for the website, prospectus etc. The Head said that, at present, she used her personal mobile 'phone for this. The Head at Miriam Lord had a mobile 'phone provided by the school for both school and personal purposes. Governors did not consider it appropriate for photographs of pupils to be taken using the personal 'phone of any member of staff, regardless of whether or not the 'phone was provided by the school. **The Committee asked that** the school look into the purchase of, and draft rules of use for, a device that:

Head

- was capable of taking photographs and uploading them quickly and easily to the school system;
- would be kept securely on site at all times except when in use for events off-site (eg school trips);
- had the facility for security measures such as password protection, fingerprint or retinal recognition;
- included a requirement that all photographs be deleted from the device once they had been uploaded to the school system.

Res 35/18 Urgent other business referred from Item Res 18/18 above

There was no other business.

Res 36/18 Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be held at **5.45pm on Monday 14 January 2018.**

The meeting closed at 7.21pm

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Date: _____