



**St George's
Primary School**

St George's Primary School

Resources and Premises Committee Meeting

Tuesday 7 February 2022

Lower Site 5:30pm

Present

Community Governors

B. Clark
A. Lee

Parent Governors

C. Scott

Chair R&PC Committee

Staff Governors

B. Cassidy
H. Rice

Also Present

K. Choudhary
S. Jones
J. Evans

Clerk
Business Manager
Finance Officer
Deputy Headteacher

Tracy Skarratts-Jackson

Apologies

M. Wiggins
J. King

Item 1 Welcome, Apologies and declarations of AoB

1.1 Noted and received as above.

1.2 AOB: Site Managers Report

Item 2 Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

2.1 Minutes accepted.

2.2 J. King and B. Clark booked in for Health and Safety visits in Feb 2023.

2.3 All other actions completed or to be discussed in the meeting.

Item 3 Decision about increase charges

- 3.1 Brief discussion out of hours provision, holiday club and catering services.
- 3.2 **DECISION TAKEN:** Defer any decision around increase in charges until school budget is announced and financial reports digested by governors.
- 3.3 **DECISION TAKEN:** Defer this item to upcoming FGB on 16 March 2023.

Item 4 Wallasey Village Library

- 4.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 4.2 R&PC informed that the asset transfer of Wallasey Village Library has been approved by the council.
- 4.3 School to be a constant trustee with no corporate or personal liability. Used by school but not owned (protects community asset and liability).
- 4.4 SLT stated that the trustees had secured c£100k funding for this. £77 capital funding to ensure the building is fit for purpose and £22k revenue funding to get it up and running as a community asset. that
- 4.5 R&PC asked when will this be up and running?
- 4.6 **RESOLUTION:** September 2023.

Item 5 Asset Management Plan Review

- 5.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 5.2 SLT suggested that this document only needs to be shared with governors with 3 years of reporting included. However school is keen to ensure clarity on scale of the works undertaken and transparency regarding costs and the direction of travel.
- 5.3 There are 3 projects in planning phase for Easter and Summer.
- 5.4 SLT stated that they remain concerned around the delays on the Mezzanine Project.
- 5.5 SLT highlighted that the issues around the boiler not being fit for purpose and LA still have not addressed. This was raised as a concern in the 2017 CDC survey.

Item 6 CDC Survey

- 6.1 Circulated as part of the papers
- 6.2 An introductory letter from the DfE is located [here](#), and further information in relation to the programme can be found [here](#).

- 6.3 R&PC reminded that the previous 2017 CDC suggested that the life span of lower site was c.10 years.
- 6.4 The school is in Tranche 5 of the CDC2 programme, with a visit due to take place between February 2023 and July 2023.
- 6.5 R&PC reminded that the previous 2017 CDC suggested government and LA were keen to look at another site. There has been no movement.

Item 7 Energy Grant

- 7.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 7.2 SLT stated that the school was recently awarded a c.£28k [grant](#).
- 7.3 SLT suggested that the school will try to recoup some of the recent expenditure in the area and refocus funding toward curriculum.
- 7.4 SLT will target the grant towards LED light and windowsills for the school as the aim of the grant is to reduce that burden of energy cost on the school moving forward.

Item 8 Management of Communicable Disease advice to schools

- 8.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 8.2 SLT suggested that the school constantly shares [updated advice](#) for schools.
- 8.3 R&PC asked does the school translate the advice directly into school policy?
- 8.4 **RESOLUTION:** The school uses the advice as a guidance tool. Is a live document so impacts immediately on school policy.

Item 9 Role Based Risk Assessments

- 9.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 9.2 R&PC reminded that these are all updated annually and highlighted some examples on VDU (also on the drive). Will be shared with all employees in the next staff bulletin.

Item 10 Fire Safety Audit

- 10.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 10.2 SLT suggested that all action points contained in the report are in hand, highlighting that the report is RAG rated.
- 10.3 SLT expect that the school will have completed actions by 27 February 2023.

- 10.4 SLT suggested that the main expense is lower site – in particular, the old fire doors. R&PC informed that over 24 doors need replacing, at a cost of over £1k a door.
- 10.5 As a short-term measure, school has identified an interim solution signed off by commissioned partner.
- 10.6 R&PC asked does the commissioned partner audit to completed actions?
- 10.7 **RESOLUTION:** No. The school signs off.
- 10.8 SLT invited governors to come to school and walk through the audit.

Item 11 School Funding Update

- 11.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 11.2 R&PC informed that the school has still not received any final models from LA.
- 11.3 R&PC reminded that this is a habitual issue that means that the school is required to do internal modelling. This delay funding model is exasperated by Wirral LA's refusal to move away from Excel software for budget forecasting.
- 11.4 SLT stated that the that National uplift forecast at 5.2%. SLT suggested that they had initially forecasted 5%. The base funding rate increases will be:
- a basic per-pupil rate of £119 for primary pupils, including pupils in reception
 - a lump sum of £4,510
 - an FSM6 per-pupil rate of £104 per eligible primary pupil
- 11.5 SLT stated that making a revised claim as a split site school under [new guidance](#).
- 11.6 SLT suggested that the key issues pulling together a school funding model are:
- Need to project staffing increase. Inflation matching would be a minimum of 6%.
 - Schools' Forum advice is 103% increase in electricity and 66% increase in Gas.
 - Additional top slice from LA at between £14k - £20k for increased costs and SCIGG
 - Unsure on tuition grant. Predicting 3-4% uplift
 - Offset against 1.25% NI employer contribution rise
 - Offset against Public Sector Pay Agreement.
- 11.7 R&PC asked if the forecasted staffing increases are in addition to previous year increase?
- 11.8 **RESOLUTION:** Yes

Item 12 Period 9 Budget Update

- 12.1 Circulated as part of the papers.

- 12.2 SLT stated that there had been some problems with LA spreadsheet alongside some coding issues. This has now been resolved.
- 12.3 S. Jones discussed Period 9 update, suggesting that the school had budgeted on worst case scenario. That said, the budget overview is looking really promising moving forward.
- 12.4 R&PC asked if 2022/23 budget is anticipated but 2023/24 and 2024/25 is budgeted?
- 12.5 **RESOLUTION:** Yes

Item 13 Financial Reports

13.1 Circulated as part of the paper.

13.2 Catering Update:

- Since September 2023, the school has managed to change some of its supplies and started to order from Asda which has been proved very successful
- School managing to keep the whole school plate costs at 0.91p (December 2022) which is below the target of £1.03. This is being achieved by analysing food cost and choosing seasonal fruit and vegetables, promoting healthy eating by reducing sugar in the desserts with natural sweetness from fruit. This does not and will not compromise the quality of the offer.
- School plans to promote school meals and healthy eating, starting with Early Years on Saturday 4 March, which will entail food tasting sessions and promoting the quality and value of the school meals we provide.
- The next stage is to do food tasting drop-in sessions at home time, so parents collecting children can pop in and sample some of the food on offer.
- School trying to reduce its carbon footprint by reducing the deliveries or shopping locally.
- School's offer is good – and achieves a balanced budget.

13.3 Nursery Update:

- Currently 79 on roll.
- As discussed in previous meeting, the LA have been in to measure the floorspace and must cap nursery numbers from Autumn 2023 to 70.
- Income will stay around the same if the 70 children are all full time.

13.4 Dragon Club (extended services):

- Total numbers on role: 852 (Children) 686 (Parents)
- The school's busiest evening is Tuesday where they are full most weeks - followed by Wednesday and Thursdays.
- Holiday Club is always fully booked.
- R&PC informed that the service has created a new logo for the school's EYFS setting that they are naming after Sue Taylor.

- SLT stated that this is a low-cost service, but the school needs to look at this moving forward given increases in costs moving forward.

Item 14 Access Software Option

- 14.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 14.2 J. Evans delivered a presentation on the new financial planning software that the school has commissioned, highlighting that it is much needed as;
- The school currently use FMS, provided by the local authority
 - Same system since 2006 with very few significant upgrades
 - No plans by the LA to change systems until all schools have become academies.
 - Means we would have had the same system for over 20+ years
- 14.3 J. Evans highlighted that the current system is;
- No longer fit for purpose for St Georges to provide wider support to the school
 - It is a very limited system on what it can do, does not talk with the school's salary budget software
 - Reporting is a big issue, lack of instant transparency for budget holders authorising spend, doesn't export to excel
 - Cannot support a future as a cash managed school
 - Communication with banks, HMRC (MTD)
 - Time consuming to reconcile tasks and TAB
 - Audit has identified issues with purchase authorisation
- 14.4 SLT stated that the new Access Education Software has been secured at a favourable rate for the next 3 years and represents excellent VFM at c.£4k (0.1% of the school's budget)
- 14.5 R&PC asked what does cash managed school mean?
- 14.6 **RESOLUTION:** At the moment, the school cannot see the bank account day to day and rely on monthly statement. Moving towards a cash managed school provides increased flexibilities in transparency, scrutiny, and reporting.
- 14.7 R&PC asked does this bring in cash flow management issues?
- 14.8 **RESOLUTION:** Yes.
- 14.9 R&PC asked what has the LA said about the school adopting the new software?
- 14.10 **RESOLUTION:** Very little.
- 14.11 R&PC asked how much training involved?
- 14.12 **RESOLUTION:** Very limited as it is very intuitive
- 14.13 R&PC asked is the software configurable or basic 'off the shelf' package?

- 14.14 **RESOLUTION:** It is configurable
- 14.15 R&PC asked how long will the school have to run the new system in parallel with the LA system?
- 14.16 **RESOLUTION:** Very light touch but for as long as remain the school remains LA maintained.
- 14.17 R&PC asked when will school fully implement/ start using the new software?
- 14.18 **RESOLUTION:** Next financial year
- 14.19 SLT stated that the new software package will save more that it costs. As such, provides much better VFM.

Item 15 School's Financial Value Statement

- 15.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 15.2 R&PC informed that the new SVFS statement reviewed by B. Cassidy, C. Scott and S. Jones in advance of this meeting.
- 15.3 SLT stated that the latest statement reflects the most recent audit – with nothing major coming out of it.
- 15.4 SLT to revisited **ACTION 3(11/22)** from previous meeting with J. King.

Item 16 Finance Policy Updates

- 16.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 16.2 SLT discussed Finance Manual and Charge Card Policy, suggesting that the updates came about through recent audit.
- 16.3 SLT highlighted that the school's expenditure limits have been revised as follows;
- Governing Body: £30,000.00+
 - Finance Committee: Between £20,000 and £30,000.00
 - Headteacher and Business Manager have delegated responsibility for any items of expenditure up to £20,000.00 This is reviewed on an annual basis. Prior
 - Finance Committee or Chair of Governors approval (whichever is soonest) to be sought outside of this limit and reported at the earliest opportunity.
 - Deputy Head: Up to £5,000.00
 - Assistant Head Teachers and the Business and Finance Officer: Up to £3,000.00
- 16.4 SLT highlighted the policy re Quotations for Goods or Services
- Verbal quotes are not accepted over £1,000, any quote below this must ensure that best value has been sought. Quotations must be submitted electronically before a purchase order is raised with note to the agreement of the verbal quote and date.

- Goods and services up to the value of £3,000 are acceptable providing there is an agreed price in writing (electronic) and do not require more than 1 quote.
- Where the estimated value of goods or services is in excess of £3,000 and less than £10,000 in any one year written evidence of 3 quotes is required.
- Where the estimated value of the goods or service is over £10,000 and less than £49,999 in any one year 3 written quotes should be obtained and discussed and agreed at Governors.
- For goods or services over £50,000 in any one year, five written quotes should be obtained and discussed and agreed at Governors.
- If for any reason it is not possible to obtain the required number of quotes (e.g. specialist goods or services) the reasons for this should be discussed and agreed at Governors.
- If the lowest quote is not accepted the reasons for this should be discussed and agreed at Governors.

16.5 R&PC asked is it possible to merge the Procurement Policy and Charge Card Policy documents into the financial manual for ease of reference?

16.6 **RESOLUTION:** Yes

16.7 **ACTION 1(02/23):** SLT to merge the Procurement Policy and Charge Card Policy.

16.8 **DECISION TAKEN:** Policies approved. Ratified.

Item 17 Arrangements for Perf Management Mid-Year Review

17.1 Circulated as part of the papers.

17.2 SLT highlighted the following;

- Curriculum Staff 20 - 31 March 2023
- Non-Curriculum staff in April 2023
- HT TBC

Item 18 SLA Arrangements

18.1 Circulated as part of the papers.

18.2 R&PC informed that this is now a standing agenda item to ensure that governors are aware of all SLA agreements and can challenge on VFM.

18.3 SLT highlighted the following LA SLAs;

- Basic Finance
- Payroll
- Risk and Insurance

- Occupational Health
- Schools Library Service (delegation budget)
- Scholar Pack and LA Software Support. Looking to move away from this and directly to Scholar Pack due to service quality issues.

18.4 SLT highlighted the following broader SLAs;

- HR until 2025 with Work nest (previously Ellis Whittam)
- IT with Hi-Impact until Sept 2023. Will look at 3-year renewal with VfM options.
- Staff Absence Insurance (School Advisory Service. Waiting for renewal quote)
- PCS Cleaning advice
- ATLAS Security
- Catering compliance with RPJ3

18.5 R&PC ask how often SLA are reviewed?

18.6 RESOLUTION: Continually. SLT highlighted that the poorest performing SLAs are the LA commissioned ones.

Item 19 UK GDPR Arrangements

19.1 Deferred to upcoming FGB.

Item 20 HR Policy Updates

20.1 Circulated as part of the papers.

20.2 Only 1 update: Management of absence policy.

20.3 SLT stated that this is a LA Policy that the school must adopt.

20.4 SLT suggested that there are very minor changes to previous policy.

Item 21 Health and Safety Policy Updates

21.1 No policy update for this meeting.

Item 22 Dragon Club Policy Update

22.1 Circulated as part of the papers.

22.2 R&PC informed that this is a new policy rather than edited from previous version – a complete rewrite.

22.3 R&PC asked what was the basis for doing?

22.4 RESOLUTION: To make it clearer what is expected from all stakeholders.

22.5 **DECISION TAKEN:** Policies approved. Ratified.

Item 23 Gifts and Hospitality Declaration

23.1 R&PC informed that 4 staff members declared gifts over £50. All vouchers from groups of parents.

Item 24 AOB

24.1 S. Jones shared the Spring Term 2023 Premises Manager's Report;

- October 2022 – Top Site has had external areas painted and the reception office.
- November 2022 – Fire Risk Assessment conducted by Firesec, recommendations are being worked through to be completed by 28th February 23.
- January 2023 – Asbestos Management Plan updated for both site. Simon Parrott from LA visited and confirmed all paperwork is up to date and compliant.
- January 2023 - Topsite library shelves installed. Painting to follow to be completed by the end of the month.
- February Half Term - Lean to on the back of the EYFS building to be completed to cover the length of the outside area.

Item 25 Date and Agenda Items for next meeting

25.1 Agenda Items: Policy updates

25.2 Meeting finished at 6:50pm

25.3 **Next meeting:** Tuesday 16 May 2023

Item	Summary of actions from meeting	Whom	Date to be completed
15.4	SLT to revisit <u>ACTION 3(11/22)</u> from previous meeting with J. King.	SLT	Feb '23
16.7	<u>ACTION 1(02/23)</u> : SLT to merge the Procurement Policy and Charge Card Policy with financial manual	SLT	Feb '23