



St George's Primary School

St George's Primary School
Resources and Premises Meeting
Tuesday 13th March 2018
Lower Site 5:30pm

Present

Community Governors	M. Wiggins P. Walters A. Ward	Chair of R&P Committee
Parent Governors	C. Scott	Vice Chair R&P Committee
Staff Governors	B. Cassidy	Headteacher
Also Present	C. Roberts K. Choudhary G. Morris	Business Manager Clerk H&S Compliance Officer
Apologies	L. Horton R. Olsen B. Clark	

Item 1 Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of AOB

Noted and received as above.

Item 2 Minutes of previous meeting

Accepted as a true and accurate record.

Item 3 Action Points from previous meeting

R&PC informed that;

- The schools Financial Manual has been reviewed and signed off by Chair of Governors.
- The school is no longer to be used as a Polling Station venue.
- Roof Leak and repairs were completed in January '18. There have been no major subsequent leaks. R&PC reminded that the school has not paid for this work given contractors liability for the original poor quality of work undertaken. There is further work scheduled to take place

on interior masonry work but work cannot begin until the wall is completely dry – circa Summer Term '18.

- R&PC informed that the school has had funding approved from LA for the road side crash barrier to be extended, clear access points, relocate benches and improve signage. Time scales have not been set however the work has been approved by all relevant stakeholders. LA have promised that they would be in contact but end of Month. R&PC reminded that the school has enjoyed a strong working relationship with Roadside Compliance Officers with the aim of ensure the outside environment is as safe as possible.
- Policy Approval has been deferred to FGB.
- C. Roberts, G. Morris and B. Cassidy met since the last R&PC meeting to discuss the schools Lockdown Strategy and have identified a number of practical and logistical issues in addressing Lockdown Strategy which are being dealt with in conjunction with the contractor - ATLAS. The aim is to have training in May '18 with the view of updating Parents in June '18. The strategy will be shared with R&PC at the next meeting.

Item 4 Health and Safety Compliance Officer Report

H&S Compliance Officer Report circulated as part of the papers.

G. Morris verbally highlighted the following points from the report;

- Following a brief inspection of the trees on both sites by the Landscape Gardeners it was noted that remedial works where required, Man Coed came to site to price the works but noted the report was not very thorough and some trees in poor condition had not been noted. The remedial works have been undertaken and a detailed tree inspection is due to take place.
- A new ICT suite has been installed on the upper site. Prior to the final install various works needed to be undertaken, i.e. radiators removing, new lighting and a complete redecoration. This work was undertaken at short notice but was a success.
- A drone has been used at lower site to photograph the high level brickwork at the school i.e. chimney stacks etc. Various areas do require remedial works due to brick work starting to seem unstable. The evidence has been sent to the Local Authority.
- After an annual inspection of the Schools lightening protection system at both sites it was discovered that over £2500 of remedial works was required. This was challenged with the LA as they managed the projects which had made the lightening protection systems non-compliant i.e. Sports Barn top site and the new and old reception areas at lower site. The LA agreed to pay for the works, and the works have been completed.
- Work has continued in the Centenary Garden i.e. installing new edgings too paths and the railing separating the play equipment from the outside classroom have been made safe, whilst allowing a seating area to be created.
- Quotes have been sort to replace the windows in the hall at top site. The quotes vary to a considerable level i.e. £16000 to as low as £6000. The windows will have openings which will be electrically controlled. R&PC informed that there may be an issue with Asbestos but SLT will keep the group informed.
- Ideas are currently being discussed about how to improve the reception office area at the top site. Various options have been discussed and the door from the reception office has been recycled and used on the maths resource storage cupboard.
- A date needs to be set for a governor health and safety inspection for both sites.

RESOLUTION: It was suggested that SLT have already provisionally set a date for the Governors H&S Inspection - Thursday 19th April '18.

ACTION RP5 (03/18): K. Choudhary to contact Governors for expressions of interest to work with SLT on Governors H&S Inspection - Thursday 19th April '18.

R&PC thanked G. Morris for his input into the meeting.

Item 5 Update on Local Authority Premises Action Plan

B. Cassidy delivered a verbal report following meeting between himself, C. Roberts and Mike Woosey from Wirral LA in February '18. It was suggested that there was good, open and frank discussion about the state of the school premises and how the school can move forward.

At the meeting Mike Woosey shared SLT concerns with the school premises – especially the Lower Site. As such, LA have agreed to fund a Full Condition Survey (with an action plan). This survey will feed into some of the issues raised by G. Morris in Item 4 around issues with the roof.

It was stated that there is a need for a long term plan for the school premises as (in its current state) it's sustainability is only circa 10 years. At the moment DfE have not released their next funding cycle for New Builds nor Refurbishment Grants. In the case of a Refurbishment Grant, up to 80% of a building can be refurbished.

It was suggested that either grant could possibly apply but until SLT and LA have a clear view on the status of the school premises, it is very challenging to move forward with either option in any way.

The Full Condition Survey will be commissioned within this financial year (2017/18) and SLT will chase the date over the coming weeks. LA did tentatively suggest that it is expected that this work will be completed in this academic year. It is a considerable expense however this is an expectation of LA's.

There was a discussion around how the school can move forward with regards funding. There are two funding streams available; LA and the Academisation route. Whichever funding stream the school goes down, there needs to be a clear plan for the premises.

B. Cassidy and C. Roberts have also met with Jean Fairbrother and Andy McMillian from LA regarding sharing compliance data shared. It was agreed that by 31st May annually, the school will submit all Compliance Reports which would include, for example, Asbestos Surveys, H&S Surveys, Renewal Polices.

Item 6 2018/19 Planned Capital Projects

B. Cassidy suggested that while there are lots of smaller projects are ongoing as discussed in Item 3 (expected expenditure circa £2k), there are three major projects upcoming where work is not only desirable, but essential due to safety concerns;

- **Top site office:** this area is not fit for purpose and the whole area must be safer for staff. For example, extensive need for extension leads present a multitude of issues. There are some structural issues that need to be addressed.
- **Top site main hall:** there is a potential asbestos issue within the proposed window replacement which will lead to an increase in cost. The main hall needs to extend areas

for sports use, floors need replacing and a generic overhaul to ensure the area is fit for purpose. This work will be addressed with the next 3 - 4 months.

- **Nursery Completion:** R&PC were reminded that half of the Nursery has already refurbished. As such, the other half needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. Works to include flooring, lighting, kitchen area, tiling, painting etc. It was suggested that the increase in Nursery income makes the investment viable in the longer term. A particular challenge is the conservatory area which has a canvass roof and as such, is not fit for purpose however the school cannot address this particular issue in the short term due to funding constraints.

R&PC asked what was the area used for if only canvass?

RESOLUTION: It was suggested that pupils use this area as an indoor/ outdoor play area.

G. Morris left the meeting.

Item 7 National Funding Update

B. Cassidy delivered a report on decisions taken by Wirral Schools' Forum on National Funding Formula transition and implications for FGB.

R&PC reminded of national government announcement on the introduction of National Funding Formula (circa 15 months ago) and as part of the introduction of this formula, LA's would have the option to take decisions on the formulas implementation – either phased in over 2 years till 2020 or introduced in its planned format in 2018.

Disappointingly, Wirral LA and the Schools Forum have taken the decision to phase in the formula. This approach presents certain challenges given the school had expected the National Funding Formula to implemented in 2018 – not phased. As such, the schools forecasted yearly income budgets will see a budget shift of circa £62k per year (until 2020) from the budget discussed at the last R&PC meeting.

It was stated that this deficit is a direct result of the National Funding Formula being delayed until 2020 and an agreement made by School Forum that local schools would give a 0.5% contribution into the Special Education Maintenance Funding for the next 2 years.

R&PC reminded that budgets discussed in previous meeting highlighted that there had been shortfall in student admission numbers by 20 – resulting in £70k shortfall in F2 cohort. As such, it was suggested that the school is facing a 'double whammy' of budget cuts.

It was stated that there is some good news on horizon with LA suggesting that the schools admissions figures look promising moving forward. As such, SLT are very hopefully that the school will enjoy an increase in numbers.

SLT stated that this information is very important as provides context for all discussions moving forward.

Item 8 Period 10 Budget Update

C. Roberts tabled **Period 11 Budget**.

ACTION RP6 (03/18): K. Choudhary to shared electronic version via shared drive with R&PC.

C. Roberts informed R&PC that the difference between the signed off and LA submitted Period 9 document and latest revision is circa £78k.

C. Roberts stated that the schools forecasted balance moving forward is £55,684.

C. Robert highlighted that 2021 shows a deficit however this indicative figure does not take into account National Funding Formula.

B. Cassidy stated that the school has deliberately only planned for the next 2 years because until there is further clarity on pupil numbers and defined statements on National Funding Formula there are too many variables consider. The school's main priority in the short term is to ensure there is a balanced budget by the end of 2019/20.

Item 9 Projections for 2018-20 using indicative budget figures

Addressed in Item 8.

B. Cassidy reinforced the point that the school has only budgeted until 2019/20 and have really focused only on essential spending surrounding premises and equipment. Over the next 2 years the budget tolerance level for going into deficit will be 0.2%

R&PC asked what does the school do if it is in debt?

RESOLUTION: If the school is in debt, the school would have to manage the deficit through savings. LA will only allow a 12-month deficit plan because the LA no longer has the capacity to 'prop up' budget deficit schools.

R&PC asked is there are any vulnerability for the education sector around Brexit?

RESOLUTION: It was suggested that this is an issue for the public sector in general.

R&PC asked if the school is required to take on Apprenticeship?

RESOLUTION: The school is not required to do so but the school has had Apprentices in the past. While there is some funding available to help with the cost of Apprenticeships, given the current financial landscape, the burden to the school does not make this a viable option.

Item 10 Financial Issues

R&PC asked to accept changes to Financial measures within schools;

- **Debit card orders and small VAT claims:** while the school does enjoy considerable saving by purchasing on line, school staff are often faced with the considerable and time lengthy burden of chasing back VAT. As such, SLT sought R&PC approval that in small VAT claims are not retraced where is not cost effective.

R&PC asked what is the threshold?

RESOLUTION: It was stated that this would be a judgement call on a case by case basis. R&PC suggested that standardised and set approach would be more agreeable. As such,

the decision was taken that *“any saving must always exceed the loss of the VAT claim however where the loss is over £50 the Finance Manager must seek approval from the Business Manager”*.

- **IR35 Protocol:** For context, R&PC was informed that this is used where the school contracts someone whom is self-employed and the where there is a burden of proof to ensure that this person is paying appropriate rate of tax or PAYE. The school has been informed that they are now required to Complete Tax Requirement check on every supplier who is self-employed.

R&PC stated that this is an extremely frustrating requirement and unnecessary burden on schools already challenging workloads. As such, R&PC asked the school to contact the LA to express the Governing Body frustration in this matter.

ACTION RP7 (03/18): B. Cassidy to write to LA Head of Finance to voice the Governing Body frustration with regards to IR35 Protocol.

R&PC noted and accepted the changes re 1. **Debit card orders and small VAT claims** & 2. **IR35 Protocol**

Item 11 School’s Financial Value Statement

R&PC informed that C. Roberts has sent this to P. Walters for approval. He has read through it and endorses this document. P. Walters signed the tabled document.

ACTION RP8 (03/18): K. Choudhary to send signed version out to R&PC via shared drive.

Item 12 Performance management Overview

B. Cassidy delivered confidential and anonymous report on performance management and mid-year reviews.

It was suggested that the new system is greatly improved with members of staff are required to review against their appropriate standards.

The process is open and transparent with agreement between all parties needed before sign off. Information is ‘locked in’ and as such not be amended retrospectively. As such, it is a joint and honest appraisal based on performance criteria – it is not something that is ‘happening to someone’.

R&PC informed that all SLT appraisals are conducted by B. Cassidy as direct line manager.

M. Wiggins left the meeting.

Item 13 Arrangements for HT Mid-Year Review

R&PC informed that P. Walters, B. Clark and C. Scott will be meeting on 28th March ’18 to discuss B. Cassidy Mid-Year Review.

R&PC informed that School Improvement Associate will be involved in this process and copied into any notes prior to the meeting.

Item 14 Workload review Feedback

Workload Review Action Plan Circulated in the papers.

SLT met with P. Dunning and R. Olsen and all staff involved on in the workload group the week after OFSTED in December '18.

R&PC informed that this was a really useful meeting and everyone agreed that the extensive action points had been met. As such, the decision was taken to disband the group but SLT would conduct an annual survey with staff using the online report framework and this work has been built into the annual schedule of work.

SLT thank all staff and governors for their contributions in this area.

Item 15 SLA Arrangements

C. Robert informed R&PC that the school has renewed the following SLA agreements with LA as they provided the school with best on Value for Money;

- Basic Finance
- Payroll
- Risk and Insurance
- Occupational Health
- EWSO Service (6 half days support)
- Software Support (administration and SIMs)

With regards to HR, the school looked at various options with SAS Daniels, John Cook Legal Services and Hill Dickinson. The decision was taken to stay with SAS Daniels and the school secured a better SLA and reduced renewal cost largely due to an improvement with internal HR processes. As such, SLT suggested that stability was the best way to move forward.

With regards IT, R&PC reminded that the school is locked in with Hi-Impact for 3 years (until Sept 2020).

R&PC asked if the platform currently used would be transferable should the decision be taken you look elsewhere at the end of the SLA?

RESOLUTION: R&PC informed that the Windows 10 operating system is owned by the school and as such is transferable.

With regards to Staff Absence Insurance, C. Roberts informed R&PC that the school is currently in negotiating the renewal fee with its current and existing preferred partner - Schools Advisory Service. The renewal premium has slightly increased (circa £4k) form previous year and the school is exploring ways of mitigating the increase.

Schools Advisory Service is the preferred partner given their extensive wellbeing package which, for example, includes services such as fast tracked physiotherapy and counselling. R&PC were informed that staff can access this service confidentially as SLT receive an anonymised usage report.

Item 16 Mini Bus Arrangement

R&PC reminded that the school now has its own mini-bus and several members of staff have undertaken the LA mini-bus assessment course, consisting of a theory session and an hour driving assessment.

The bus signage has arrived and is scheduled to be applied to bus in the coming days.

Should there be persons wishing to take the mini-bus assessment and not currently have D1 on their driving licence the cost to achieve D1 is usually circa £1k. This is a consideration for the school moving forward.

The Caretaker is to be shown the weekly checks that must be undertaken and documented and kept with the minibus. Also various essentials need to be put in to the mini-bus i.e. torch, hi-viz jackets, foot pump etc.

C. Roberts has compiled compliance file. C. Scott commented that she had seen this.

R&PC wanted to note their thanks to PTA for their endeavours in securing the bus.

Item 17 Resources and Premises Suggested Annual Planner

Resources and Premises Suggested Annual Planner circulated as part of papers.

B. Cassidy highlighted that the annual planner will be used to ensure distribution of key work for the R&PC moving forward.

R&PC accepted this document. **Ratified**

Item 18 Date and Agenda for next meeting

- GDPR (deferred to FGB)
- Catering Finances
- Dragon Club Finances
- Staff Absences Report
- Absence management training feedback/ action points
- Lockdown Strategy

Meeting finished at 7:10pm

Next meeting – Tuesday 22nd May @ 5:30pm

Chair Sign Off

Date

Item	Summary of actions from C&P meeting	Whom	Date to be completed
3	RP5 (03/18): K. Choudhary to contact Governors for expressions of interest to work with SLT on Governors H&S Inspection - Thursday 19 th April '18.	K. Choudhary	March '18
8	RP6 (03/18): K. Choudhary to shared electronic version via shared drive with R&PC.	K. Choudhary	March '18
10	RP7 (03/18): B. Cassidy to write to LA Head of Finance to voice the Governing Body frustration with regards to IR35 Protocol.	B. Cassidy	March '18
11	RP8 (03/18): K. Choudhary to send signed version out to R&PC via shared drive.	K. Choudhary	March '18