

The Viridis Schools Federation of Orchard, Southwold and Hoxton Garden Schools

Resources Governing Body Sub-committee
at Orchard Primary School

On Thursday 7th March at 4.30pm

INITIAL DRAFT

Committee Members

Sara Fox (SF)

Giuseppa Colella-Mare (GCM)

James Gowland (JG)

Laura Theobald (LT)

Stephen Hall (SH)

Sara Walsingham (SW)

1. Apologies/Consent for Absence

Sara sent her apologies due to attending a previous meeting

Appendix 1 – Document pack pre-sent to Governors

2. Governing Body Organisation

2.1 Membership – No changes to disclose

2.2 Declarations of interest in items on the agenda & Register of pecuniary interests for 2018-19

(SF) noted via the Committee Chair that there was an updated pecuniary list and that the pack copies were not legible; Mr Hall confirmed that the list in the pack sent was not the most updated list of declarations. **Action: Mr Hall to update for the next meeting.** As regards to the pack copies they are not all necessarily vetted before they are sent out, however he will reiterate with those producing the pack to make sure copies are of a good standard as it was noted that some documents were hard to read.

2.3 Terms of Reference – Unchanged

2.4 Governing Body Annual Calendar - Next Resources subcommittee meeting will take place on 23/05/19 at 4.30pm prior to the Full Governor's meeting.

3. Agreements of the meeting from the last meeting

(LT) queried the teacher insurance as she was not present at the previous meeting

GMC confirmed that the insurance in question is for a pool of supply teachers rather than employers liability which is covered by LA.

(LT) also suggested that as the Federation invests in teacher development that there should be more publicity around it, raising the profile of what is done well.

(JG) noted one action to be amended was his phone number on the Emergency Management Plan which has now been corrected.

Minutes All agreed

4. $\frac{3}{4}$ Year budget review & forecast

Budget review is slightly more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the year at 10 months. Overall the budget is on track and no significant items to mention.

Page 1: Income

Income budgeted and the out turn to 31st March is almost equal with a difference of £8k more than expected. A loss in the EYFS delegated funds but a gain in other areas. One such area that stood out has been the Bank interest which was far greater than previous years at around £8K which was £6K more than budgeted in previous years.

The Apprenticeship Teacher scheme returned the value of around £800 per teacher, per month from September. With the Government also returning funds due to the increase in teachers' salaries of 3.5% in September which means they returned the 2.5% which outweighed the claw back in EYFS. This difference in EYFS was due to the school not having enough children allocated to Nursery placements in the May census.

(SW) confirmed that the EYFS claw backs are based on actual figures each term and it is adjusted accordingly

The other factor for EYFS claw back is the 30hr funding. 52 parents who had eligible codes did not renew their codes in time and in turn some of the funding was lost.

The Federation is also expecting an additional Free School Meals grant of around £30K due to the recount of historical numbers of children on FSM by the DfE and an additional £40k for the capital budget. Again this is the DfE redistributing left over money they have in the capital budget, this will be restricted to Capital and should be in the account before 31/03/19; this will therefore mean that the capital account will show a surplus in capital as the additional funding will be brought forward to next year.

Page 2: Expenses

Expenses are broadly the same as last year's budget; the Teaching and Support staff budgets show an underspend due to staff teachers leaving. This is compensated by the overspend in Agency teaching and support supply.

(LT) noted that she would have expected supply to be higher but can see that this shows there has been better management of internal staff for cover.

It was confirmed that using long term supply to cover teaching assistant roles has been a better strategic plan, for if the need arose of having to make drastic budget cuts it would be easier to do. This was in light of possible budget cuts that are looming.

A significant saving is E19 - Learning Resources; this is predominantly due to the fact that the photocopier contracts since being renewed have made a saving of £17,500. All new contracts have NO settlement figures making it much more viable to move at the end of the contract if the Federation wishes.

E20 – ICT Learning Resources has had an over spent due to the new 3 year lease of ICT equipment as discussed in the last meeting (new iPads and Chrome Books for the schools and a new asset management system). This was not included in the budget and the first quarter of the lease needed to be paid.

(JG) mentioned that there has been some positive feedback of the new chrome books already.

It was confirmed that the chrome books are speedier and easier to use and overall cheaper than laptops. This is the 1st phase of the project to renew technology; the 2nd phase will be to replace offices/teachers' PC's and some old white boards. New quotes will be required for these and will hopefully be ready to be presented to the GB to the next Resources meeting. The project is hoped to be finished by the end of the summer holiday. The new IT provider is really good and assisted in the renewal of all the equipment with very little disruption to the children's learning. The Business Manager will budget for this project in the new Financial Year and hopes to pay these outright. The other project scheduled for the summer is to review all servers across the Federation in order to streamline systems and its management by creating cloud based systems.

Overall the carry forward is currently estimated at £430K however it may be around £560 or more once all the committed orders and the accruals have been looked at.

The carry forward amount tends not to be clawed back by the LA as the school does not reach the threshold of more than 8%. (SW) confirmed that if a school were to reach the threshold with specific plans to use the carried over amount the LA does not claw it back.

The idea is to spend the budget but at the same time try to also keep a healthy balance with scope to manoeuvre if in an emergency.

4.2: Anticipated budget forecast for 2019-20, risks & planning

New budget forecast for next year has now been received however Pg.21 is not the most up to date version of the new budget. There is a slight increase on the new version. (GCM) has calculated an increase in funds of around £200k which takes into account the increase in pupil roll at Orchard. The gain in budget is more around the EAL and Prior Attainment area of the budget allocated by the LA.

So although the AWPU has gone down, there has been a gain in the EAL and Prior Attainment. This was confirmed by (SW) that this is part of the move towards the new national funding formula. The LA are taking steps in trying to ease the transition to the new National Formula; yet they might not be able to keep the current level of funding for many years to come. However Hackney is still one of the highest funded authorities.

GCM to conclude stated that there is a small increase in next year budget which is welcome, as always there is a need to send the new Budget plan to HLT by end of April followed by a signed copy which will be ready by the end of May following the next Resources meeting and Full GB meeting where the budget plan will be approved.

5. Staffing Update

Mr Hall recorded this section of the meeting as part of a project he is putting together relating to the Apprenticeship scheme that has been going for a year. (Pg.23) is an update paper to a similar paper put forward earlier in the programme presenting the rationale for recruiting apprentice teachers, how it would work, the resource implications and the risks. It has been successful thus far and will be continued into next year. Some funding for this programme was returned back from the DfE although the school had budgeted for the programme. The quality of those recruited was of high quality. Out of the five recruited one dropped out and the other four all went on. The by-product of this has built stronger relationships with the London Metropolitan University. In terms of recruitment for September 2019 it has been helpful as there are four teachers who have

trained within the organisation ready to start in September 2019 with six to seven apprentice teachers. The risk remains that the apprentices are unqualified teachers however they are partnered with a qualified teacher.

The basis is that those recruited have some school based experience. This programme differs from the School Direct or PGCE program as the apprentices are immersed in the school all the way through their training rather than a work placement period. They are released every other Thursday to attend university, they can and study every Thursday giving them the best of both worlds.

(LT) confirmed that she also followed the Teach First programme and the above programme seems to give a middle ground that looks positive. (LT) also emphasised how great the school is doing and suggested putting some blurb in the local press with success stories as an example school.

Mr Hall confirmed that the Headteacher Ms Davie had recently spoken at a DfE event to talk about the Apprenticeship programme and its successes. Local teaching school clusters have approached the Federation enquiring about the programme as they did not adopt the scheme and are now interested in how it is working. The School Experience days have been very good and a number of applications have come through this route and funding the University course is financed through the Apprenticeship Levy. This is currently viable as the levy is still not very used and therefore funding is still available. The government will still meet 90% of the costs. The success is the measures of the experience of the classroom.

(JG) questioned why the programme is to start in June rather than September.

It was confirmed that this would give the apprentice time to get settled and familiarise with the school settings including the fact that the programme is run over four terms.

5.2 Structure including leadership structure

Pg.25: structure page: Orchard will complete its transition to a three form entry school in 2021. Ms Davie has successfully been leading the changes as this has impacted on the size and structure of the team at the school. As regards the other schools (SH) is trying to avoid a vertically grouped class in Yr1 and Yr2 at Hoxton Garden next year. Poppy class would be the class, if needed to be vertically grouped. Currently unsure of how many Reception children there will be although confident ORC will be full. Early signs are positive for Southwold and at HG though it is still not known what the total will be.

The structure of Phase leaders as well as DHT/AHT has been confirmed at SW & HG. ORC is still changing with the current view of having three DHT which may change to two DHT and four AHT. There are opportunities to grow staff at ORC. A DHT who went on maternity may not return but still to be confirmed. (SH) will report back.

As mentioned before it is extremely difficult to recruit and unfortunately some classes have had more than one teacher in a year.

(LT) mentioned that retaining teachers was picked up in the parent survey and is there a staff survey?

(SH) confirmed that the Federation wants to retain high quality teachers. The schools have undertaken a work load audit which asks the teachers to look at their working pattern and identify if there are areas in which the school can change practice to support this. The Marking Policy will be reviewed and staff are being consulted on this. Recruitment is hard and agencies are getting more astute in recruiting NQT candidates straight from colleges then charging schools for their employment. Although over all the Federation has recruited well.

The Staff Survey is sent out in the summer term

6. H&S

6.1 Matters arising, 6.2 Safeguarding, 6.3 GDPR & H&S training

- Scaffolding has been erected at HG over the entrance in order to fix some works needed to the façade, however the length it will take to finish these works is not yet known, this is down to LB Hackney to fix but we have no final date.
- A LA statutory H&S audit was due at HG but has to be rescheduled (ORC & SW completed)
- Updating electrical works and overhaul all the fire doors in all three schools. Using a private contractor who is more robust and subsequently more costly.
- GDPR & H&S training online has taken place for all staff which highlighted that some support staff have weak IT skills, this is being looked into.

7. Financial Value Standards Review

7.1 Finance Audit Findings: Governors Congratulated (GCM) and the finance team for the outstanding audit results.

No substantial findings other than two minor observations: 1/ a note regarding Self-Employed persons contracted to supply a service to the school. 2/ There should be clear evidence in the minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting that key governance documents have been presented, reviewed and formally approved. **ACTION: to be noted & confirmed in future FGB meetings**

7.2 Individual Governor Standards Matrix to be completed and returned: Copies were emailed Governors to print them and fill out their individual matrix and return them to (GCM).

These are needed for auditing purposes and the Federation Business Manager reviews them and sees what training a Governor may need across the board. The Federation Business Manager was thanked for her work and the success of this audit.

ACTION: (JG) and (SR) need to send theirs to GCM.

8. Premises Update

8.1 Recent Capital Works, 8.2 Planned capital works, 8.3 Site security, 8.4 H&S issues arising

Pg. 61: shows a taster list of premises works of jobs/works to be carried out at each site during half term, Easter and the summer holidays.

Beverly Shore, the School Manager at SW helps GCM by liaising with the contractors, organising quotes and plays a part in the premises management.

(SW) questioned if all or some of the listed premises jobs are all in the new budget

Mr Hall confirmed that some have already been taken into account but others will be budgeted in the next budget. For example: the kitchen re-organisation in terms of space at Orchard will need to be addressed due Orchard's expansion. And the KS1 playground needs to be refurbished.

Site security at Hoxton Garden has been looked at. The keys had to be changed due to a break in. It is the most vulnerable sight as people are getting in. HG is placed in the middle of the estate. The CCTV will need to be upgraded as a by-product of the H&S audit but moreover the break in at HG was captured on CCTV but the quality of the images were so poor.

9. Catering Services Contract Renewal

The catering contract is due up for tendering soon as the five year contract is due to expire. There have been varying issues with them which have been discussed over time. Whilst looking at the options one possible avenue is to go down the route of “Chef’s in Schools Programme” which has been adopted by Gayhurst School / Leap Federation. This programme is to employ an executive chef and all staff TUPED over in-house again. The Executive Chef would come from the restaurant industry; they oversee the menu and cooking as well as train up the staff with the overall view of making the food look and taste like restaurant quality food.

Initially it seemed a positive way forward, however once it was investigated better and taking a look at the financial model of this programme it does not look to be the best way forward. It would not be cost effective in the long run and all kitchen would need to be managed by the schools’ managers. To undertake this programme would require a wholesale change in school culture and attitudes towards the kitchen and this was not something that all parties had subscribed to. It was agreed that the proposal was unlikely to be successful without the full backing and support of the senior team, and that whilst it was an interesting project, the aim to have ‘restaurant quality food’ did not necessarily fit with the current longer term aims of the school or the needs of its communities.

Tendering needs to start in the summer. Any issues that the Federation may currently be facing can be discussed and put forward during the new tendering process, with the aim that the current provision can be improved in a more conventional way.

10. Policies

The Procurement Policy was put together as it was one of the documents requested by the Auditor when they announced their arrival. (GCM) did not have such a document as was unaware it was needed. Yukon at HLT sent over the policy and it has been adjusted to the Federation’s requirements. The auditor was pleased with it.

It highlights the area about “self-employed” persons. However the argument is that these ‘self-employed’ persons for example our gardener; HMRC make it clear that if there is an SLA it needs to be renewed and reviewed and therefore the school is liable to renew the SLA. The question is how often, the Auditor did not specify nor what points needed to be actioned. Therefore the school will need to add to the policy how often it will renew SLA’s with self-employed persons possibly every year/or two; this is to be clarified by GCM in May.

The Procurement Policy is to be amended to: “each person self-employed to be renewed every two years”.

11. AOB

None

Meeting ended 6.30pm