

**Minutes of the Resource Committee
for Alfreton Park Community Special School
held on Monday 1 February 2016**

Present: Mr W Jowett (Chair) Mr R Sowter Mr M Clemens
 Mrs C Smart (Head) Mr J Glasby

In attendance: Ms S Whitaker, Clerk, Mrs S Siddons (temporary Business Manager covering for Ms Dallman) and Ms R Dallman, Business Manager

R13. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

R14. Declaration of Interest

No Governor declared an interest in the following agenda items.

R15. Agree Any Other Urgent Business

I. Transport

The Head spoke to a previously circulated paper which had highlighted the LA's plans to cease offering free transport. This could have a significant effect for the school as the children are from a wide geographical area. The Head asked whether the Governors would take this on to oppose the proposals as her role is to educate the students not to transport them to and from school. Governors discussed the issue and agreed that this is an issue for the parents to pick up rather than the school. **A Governor asked whether there is a PTA who could lobby the Local Authority** and it was noted that there is. It was **agreed** that the Head would notify parents of the LA's proposed cuts and invite them to respond to the LA. Governors agreed that there would be no action by Governors on this issue at this time. **ACTION: CS**

Mr Clemens arrived at the meeting.

II. Preparation for budget meeting with Finance Patch Officer

A discussion took place around the predicted deficit budget for 2017/18 and Ms Dallman advised that Governors may need to look at cuts wherever possible. Governors noted that Andy Walker, the school's Finance Patch Officer is due into school on Wednesday 3 February to consider the budget split for 2016/17. **A Governor asked what the predicted deficit currently stands at for 2017/18** and Ms Dallman advised that 2016/17 has a predicted carry forward of £70k, with a predicted deficit of £248k for the following year. Governors noted that plans will have to be put in place to avoid a deficit budget. Governors noted that there is a predicted surplus of £274k from this year's budget.

A Governor asked what has brought about the predicted deficit and the Head

advised that funding has reduced due to the loss of a child who attracted a high income and expenditure has increased which includes the increase in national insurance and pay increases of 1% for staff. Governors noted that the single status compensation will cease after this year which will also impact on the income. The Head advised that when staff have left the staffing structure has been reviewed in order to save on staffing costs wherever possible. The Head advised that the music therapy provision has been cut and she is reluctant to cut staffing levels as this will impact the quality of provision of the children's education.

A Governor asked whether the Head and Ms Dallman have identified any areas where cuts can be made and the Head advised that the 6th form staff could be reduced by one teacher but a TA would be needed to replace the teacher.

A Governor asked whether the Governors are able to evidence where savings have been made and Ms Dallman advised that one area is the level of staff absence and systems will be introduced to reduce the number of days cover that needs to be bought in. Ms Dallman advised that this is an area of high cost. The Head advised that when staff are absent it puts stress on those member of staff who are covering which can contribute to those members of staff going off sick due to stress.

Ms Dallman advised that staff will be moved around school when vacancies naturally occur rather than advertising vacancies. **A Governor asked whether monthly reports could be produced for the Governing Board in order that the budget can be monitored** and Ms Dallman advised that this can be done. **A Governor asked whether a back to work interview is done** when staff are absent and the Head confirmed that it is done. The Head continued to say that the absence control policy is being followed carefully. Ms Dallman advised that the Leave of Absence policy is being looked at as there are numerous requests for absence that are not covered through the sickness cover.

A Governor asked whether a redundancy position is necessary who pays the redundancy pay and the Head advised that it has to be paid from the school's budget. Ms Dallman advised that once the profile of the pupils is known a plan can be formulated in September for future funding and expenditure.

RI6. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 September 2015

The minutes of the previous meeting had been previously circulated and were agreed as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair on behalf of the Committee.

RI7. Matters Arising

Ms Dallman advised that the contractors are now on site and the pool has begun. Sue Pegg has been onsite to look at proposed work for Bingham House, it was noted that the costs would be reduced if the work continues rather than the workmen leaving and having to set up again. **A Governor asked what the proposed finish date for the pool is** and it was noted mid-September.

It was noted that there is no plan yet in place to demolish the old pool building. Ms Dallman drew to Governors attention that there is no access planned for the redevelopment of the pool. Demolishing the old pool has been discussed in relation to the Bingham House development

Ms Dallman advised that following the last pool working party meeting she has drawn up a rota for the usage of the new pool compared to its current use for purposes of letting the pool out to external users.

The average rental would be £55 per hour without staff. A Governor asked whether the school can rent the pool without staff present and Ms Dallman confirmed that they can. Ms Dallman advised that the school would not consider an exclusivity contract which would reduce the letting income.

Ms Dallman advised that there is a possible income of £41,925 if the pool is let for the maximum period of available time at an increased letting cost. Governors discussed how much other schools were charging for the letting of their pool. A Governor asked whether the pool is currently generating any income and Ms Dallman advised that it is minimal at less than £4000 per annum.

A Governor asked who would take charge of letting of the school's pool and it was noted that there is the Pool working party currently in place.

A Governor asked whether Ms Dallman could ensure documents are dated when they are emailed to Governors and this was agreed.

R18. Premises Issues

I. 3-Year Maintenance Plan

Ms Dallman had previously circulated the 3-Year Maintenance Plan and a Governor asked whether Governors could have a fob for the door. It was agreed that Mrs Gadd would issue these to Governors at the forthcoming Full Governors Meeting, with the fobs being signed for.

Ms Dallman advised that there is still enough money in the budget for the planned maintenance to be undertaken. A Governor asked whether the caretaker is still to undertake the decorating of the smaller rooms and Ms Dallman advised that this is no longer the case and a decorator will be employed.

Willow, Larch, toilets and corridors will be decorated the half term holiday with new flooring being fitted. A Governor asked whether there is a plan to take up the old floor in Willow and Larch and it was noted that due to asbestos being present the new floor will be laid over the old floor. A Governor asked whether this would make the floor safe and the Head confirmed that it would. Ms Dallman advised that the new flooring is acoustic and is vinyl.

Ms Dallman advised that during the Easter holidays the main entrance will be re-floored and the offices decorated.

A Governor asked whether the budget plan has been reduced or increased for refurbishment and Ms Dallman advised that there was £10k which will carry forward into 2016-17 in the budget previously and as a new school building had been anticipated, refurbishment of the fabric of the school had not been seen as a high priority for spending.

Ms Dallman then spoke to the previously circulated plan highlighting future plans. A Governor advised that the 6th form building needs attention and the Head advised that until a decision is made on Bingham House, spending will not be done as the building's use may change if the 6th form does move to Bingham House.

A Governor highlighted that on the quotes some companies had quoted for different things and Ms Dallman advised that she has experience of some of the contractors and has been satisfied with their work historically.

II. Quotes for Decorating

Governors noted that the quotes were within the Head's expenditure limit and had been brought for information.

III. Quotes for Floors

Governors noted that the quotes were within the Head's expenditure limit and had been brought for information.

IV. Caretaking and Cleaning

Ms Dallman advised that the current situation does not work for the school as cleaning and caretaking services are bought in from the LA, but then workmen need to be employed to undertake repairs and refurbishment. Ms Dallman proposed that the caretaking package was not bought back from the LA and instead the school would go with a cleaning only package from the LA. The proposed arrangement would allow for a head cleaner who would grit the road etc. This would save approximately £8k which could be put towards using a local handyman to do any odd jobs around school and undertake routine work and also be there for emergencies.

The school currently buys into Option I at a cost of approximately £8k per year and if this is not bought into the budget for maintenance would be £19k.

Governors noted that Option I is currently in deficit. A Governor asked what the current balance for Option I stands at and it was noted approximately £5k in deficit. A discussion took place as to how to clear the deficit balance for Option I.

A Governor asked Ms Dallman whether she had estimated the time that a handyman would be needed for and it was noted approximately 20 hours per week at a cost of £20 per hour or less.

Governors **agreed** that they would discuss whether to buy into the LA's caretaking package and a handyman would be used on an ad-hoc basis for routine maintenance jobs further at the Full Governors' meeting. **ACTION: FG TO DISCUSS AT THE BUDGET MEETING**

Ms Dallman advised that she had investigated the issues regarding using an external cleaning company and there are issues of TUPE to be considered.

R19. Financial Issues

I. Minibus

Ms Dallman had previously circulated information for Governors' attention. **A Governor asked if grants have been successful for a minibus could a lease still be done** and it was noted not and that the minibus would need to be purchased outright. Ms Dallman advised that three applications for funding have been put in for the purchase of a minibus. **A Governor asked whether a minibus could be purchased on HP** and Ms Dallman advised that two of the companies would require the school to hand over a deposit and the third would give the school a lump sum of money. A discussion took place around the difference between leasing and purchasing a minibus. **A Governor asked how confident Ms Dallman is of securing a grant for the minibus** and she advised that the Variety Club visited recently to look at the school but a decision has not yet been received, although Ms Dallman advised that whilst she is confident that they may help, there is a long waiting list. **A Governor asked what size minibus would be purchased** and Ms Dallman advised it would be comparable to the current bus. A Governor pointed out that the classes are increasing in size and the Head advised that this would have to be considered. It was noted that the tailgate on the current bus would not last much longer but it would cost £2k to repair. **A Governor asked whether this would be a good use of money** and Ms Dallman advised that it might have to be paid if the monies are not forthcoming to purchase a new one immediately.

A Governor asked whether the Raise the Roof fundraising had been diverted to fundraising for a minibus. The Head advised that due to fundraising rules and regulations this was not possible. It was noted that the wait time for grants could be up to 18 months.

A Governor asked whether Amber Valley Community Transport had been investigated and it was noted that this is due to cease shortly. **A Governor asked how much money the school needs to raise towards the new minibus** and it was noted £15k. A Governor asked how long it would take and this was discussed.

A Governor asked whether the minibus would be owned by the school outright and it was noted that it would be.

It was **agreed** that this would be reviewed later in the year.

II. Annex I Budget Update

This had been covered under previous agenda items.

In addition Governors noted that the Head is exploring the possibility of ‘selling’ some of the IT Technician’s time to other schools which would generate an income into the budget. Governors noted that The Long Eaton School have withdrawn their support to Holbrook school for Autism who have expressed an interest in purchasing hours from Alfreton Park. **A Governor asked whether the IT Technician has capacity to work at other schools** and Ms Dallman confirmed that he does. **A Governor asked whether there could be a long term arrangement to share the costs of the IT Technician with another school** and Ms Dallman advised that currently Holbrook have high need but once systems are in place the amount of time would be reduced. The Head advised that the Federation are investigating buying into a contract with a company such as Integris.

III. SFVS Annual Return

The committee members **agreed** a response to the annual SFVS return which will be proposed to the Full Governing Board on Monday 8 February 2016.
ACTION: FG TO RATIFY

R20. Personnel

Governors noted that Sharon Siddons is to cover for Ms Dallman during her maternity leave. It is Ms Dallman’s intention to return to school on Monday 9 May 2016.

A Governor asked about the members of staff who are absent long-term and it was noted that the Head is following the absence control policy.

R21. Health & Safety Policy – to review and approve

The policy had been previously circulated. **A Governor asked who had written the policy** and Ms Dallman advised that in the short-term she had updated the Governors names within the existing policy and will look at rewording the policy during the summer term. Ms Dallman advised that the school should have a Health & Safety committee in place to monitor Health & Safety. A Health & Safety Audit needs to be undertaken and this will be done upon Ms Dallman’s return from maternity leave. **ACTION: RD**

Governors **approved** the Health & Safety Policy as written.

A Health & Safety Committee will be formulated with Mr Jowett representing the Governing Board, Mrs Smart and Ms Dallman who will meet three times each year and report back to the Governing Body.

Ms Dallman advised that she is putting together the Health & Safety audit with documents which are hyper-linked to each other.

A Governor asked who has responsibility for Health & Safety within the school and this was discussed. The Head advised that Health & Safety walkabouts have regularly been undertaken with results reported to the Resource Committee.

R22. Any Other Business

Was covered at the beginning of the agenda.

R23. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next RMC Committee will be held on Monday 18 April 2016 at 1.30 p.m.

Summary of Meeting Action Points				
		Action	Who?	When?
1.	R15.	Send a letter to parents re: proposed transport cuts	Cheryl Smart	By half term
2.	R18.	Full Governors to discuss Option I	FGB	8.2.16
3.	R18.	Full Governors to discuss Caretaking & Cleaning	FGB	8.2.16
4.	R19.	SFVS – Governors to ratify	FGB	8.2.16
5.	R21.	H&S Committee to undertake H&S Audit	RD, CS, WJ	End of 2016

Ongoing Action Points			
	Action	Who?	When?
1.	Chair and Vice Chair to meet with SLT	Govs	asap