

**Steeton Primary School Governing Body  
Resources Committee meeting on 09 March 2022 (virtual)  
Minutes**

**Meeting commenced at 13:21pm**

**Present:** John Cooper (EHT), Stefan Mills, Dave Mullen, Emma Wainwright (Chair),

**Associate Member:**

**In Attendance:** Sohail Mahmood (Bursar), Helen Osman (Clerk - SGS)

**Summary of outstanding actions**

Item Res/	Action	Person	Date
44/21	School to investigate why increased use of iPads has not led to a reduction in reprographics costs	K Wheeler	09-03-2022
69/21(i)	Chair and Head to agree final version of the SFVS return	E Wainwright J Cooper	16-03-2022
69/21(ii)	Clerk to run an eDecision process for GB approval of the SFVS return	H Osman	30-03-2022
72/21	EHT to arrange internal review of school contract and SLAs	J Cooper	19-04-2022
74/21(i)	Chair to send details of clothing collection companies to EHT	E Wainwright	18-03-2022
74/21(ii)	EHT to arrange monthly collection of clothing from school	J Cooper	30-04-2022
74/21(iii)	D Mullen to send to EHT details of the Craven Trust.	D Mullen	18-03-2022
74/21(iv)	EHT to discuss with the SLT the scope for classroom donations such as competitions between classes to fill up a jar with small change.	J Cooper	30-04-2022

**Res 63/21 Apologies for absence and their acceptance**

Apologies had been received, and were accepted, from Sue West and Kevin Wheeler.

The Clerk informed the Committee that Lauren Wheeler, who had been appointed as an Associate Member of the Committee at the last Governing Body meeting, had notified her and the Chair of the GB of her resignation on the grounds that she did not have sufficient time to commit to advising the governors at present: she would contact the Chair if this changed in future.

**Res 64/21 Notification of urgent other business and requests for order variations**

No other business was notified and there were no requests to vary the agenda.

**Res 65/21 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

Governors noted that the Deputy Headteacher (DHT) was present in the office with the Executive Headteacher: she was not attending the meeting but would be able to hear the Committee's discussions.

**Res 66/21 Minutes of the meeting of 26 January 2022 and matters arising**

- a) *The minutes were agreed as a true record*, signed by the Chair and passed to the Business Manager.

**Action**

### Matters arising

<b>Item Res/</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Status</b>
24/21	<i>EHT to advise Committee members when the peri-Bursar would next visit the school, with a view to the peri-Bursar demonstrating the HCSS software.</i>	<b>Closed</b>
	For discussion at Item Res 70/21.	
29/21	<i>Chair to explore further the potential additional revenue streams identified under this item and circulate documentation prior to the next meeting.</i>	<b>Closed</b>
	For discussion at Item Res 70/21.	
30/21	<i>Chair to explore and recommend to the Committee whether Friends of Steeton, with or without charitable status, would be an appropriate vehicle to benefit from online retailers' and other organisations' charitable giving arrangements.</i>	<b>Closed</b>
	For discussion at Item Res 70/21.	
44/21	<i>School to investigate why increased use of iPads has not led to a reduction in reprographics costs.</i>	<b>Ongoing</b>
	The EHT confirmed that expenditure on reprographics had not reduced as expected following the increased use of iPads in Key Stage 2. Senior leadership would investigate further to ensure that the reasons – which might include the costs of existing the reprographics contract – were fully understood and addressed. The anticipated savings would be important for the 2022-23 budget.	
47/21	<i>HoS to send details of Chester Zoo trip to S West and S Mills.</i>	<b>Closed</b>
	Action completed.	
49/21	<i>School to press Primary T for a three-to-five year rolling ICT maintenance and development programme.</i>	<b>Closed</b>
	For discussion at Item Res 76/21	
57/21	<i>Chair/GB, S Mills and EHT to review Room 4/external gully and write to Council, cc MP, requesting urgent action.</i>	<b>Closed</b>
	Completed.	
61/21	<i>S Mills to support D Mullen to gain access to Teams meetings.</i>	<b>Closed</b>
	Completed.	

### **Finance**

#### **Res 67/21 Review budget position**

*Paper: Budget Monitor 08 March 2022 - shown at meeting and subsequently circulated by school*

- *s251 comparison 20221-22 vs 2022-23 - shown at meeting and subsequently circulated by school*
- *Final s251 budgets 2022-23*
- *Indices of deprivation*
- *IDACI<sup>1</sup> Infographic*

The Bursar said that the Budget Monitor took account of £15k of commitments. He highlighted two points:

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<sup>1</sup> IDACI - Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index

- Budget heading I10 (*Receipts from supply teacher insurance claims*) showed a forecast of £3k. The Executive Headteacher (EHT) confirmed that this reflected actual staff absences but said that it was not clear whether this sum would be received by the year end.
- Budget heading E26 (Agency supply teaching staff) showed a revised forecast of £60k. The EHT said that, due to the current sick leave of two members of staff, this forecast might be exceeded slightly.

Depending on these two points, the forecast outturn for 2021-22 stood at a cumulative surplus (ie carryforward) of £8.5k. Changes from the Quarter 3 budget forecast were minimal and most budget lines were between 90% and 100% spent.

### Outlook for 2022-23

The Bursar said that the indicative s251<sup>2</sup> allocation represented an increase of some £58k in the school budget for 2022-23, principally due to:

- an increase in funding per pupil and an additional four pupils in school, together leading to an increase of £40k; and
- additional for Pupil Premium funding.

In real terms, this amounted to an increase of £48k. The school would also receive a supplementary grant of £97 per pupil, or £35k, giving a total of £83k of additional funding in 2022-23.

The Committee thanked the Bursar for this helpful and reassuring update.

## Res 68/21 **Review financial benchmarking data**

*Agenda paper: SFVS Self-assessment dashboard*

The Bursar said that the self-assessment dashboard was taken from the DfE Benchmarking site: governors were encouraged to explore for themselves the wide range of information available on this site. Examples of this information were included in the agenda paper: he offered to demonstrate how to explore the data at a future in-person meeting.

The dashboard compared financial information for Steeton with that of similar local schools and was based on the proportion of school budgets spent on different areas (eg staff costs, premises) rather than absolute amounts. The data was from 2021-22 and governors should therefore bear in mind that it might be skewed by the extent to which schools had been obliged to close wholly or partially in light of Covid.

Noting the grant funding totals for the comparator schools, **governors asked** whether they implied that Steeton had generated 0.6% of its own revenues: the Bursar confirmed that it did. **Asked** why another school in the group appeared not to have generated any income, the Bursar said that this might reflect closure of the school to lettings due to Covid. The Chair added that, if a school had charitable status, any income generated as a charity would sit outside the revenue budget and would therefore not appear in the benchmarking data. Governors were interested to note that one school generated nearly 4% of its own revenues: the Committee would discuss the scope for further income generation later in this meeting.

<sup>2</sup> s251 - [Section 251](#) is part of the [Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009](#) that requires local authorities to submit statements about their planned and actual expenditure on education and children's social care. It sets out the funding allocation that the school will receive in the next financial year.

Governors noted that total expenditure at Steeton was toward the lower end of the comparator group. As a percentage of total budget, Steeton's expenditure on staffing was relatively low. Sandy Lane's<sup>3</sup> relatively high expenditure on staffing would reflect that Sandy Lane paid the larger proportion of the salary of the shared EHT; it was also in the fortunate position of being able to employ more support staff. The Committee was aware that Steeton needed to employ more support staff: its ability to do so was constrained by the impact on the budget of the school not being full.

The Bursar said that the variation in expenditure on premises could be due to schools undertaking one-off building improvement projects. **Asked** about the references to occupancy costs and cost of finance, he explained that:

- Occupancy costs included the costs of, for example, domestic materials, security etc.
- Cost of finance referred to the costs of servicing a loan or of being in deficit.

Steeton's expenditure on professional services was at the lower end of the group. Governors were interested to note that this expenditure was also low for the only academy in the comparator group.

**Replying to questions**, the Bursar explained that not all schools used the budget line for Special Facilities: Steeton did not do so.

Governors noted that variations in staffing costs would be accounted for, at least in part, by the size of each school. The benchmarking carried out one year ago had indicated that Steeton spent slightly more on senior leadership: this year, it was more in line with the one form entry schools.

The Committee thanked the Bursar for providing this interesting information and noted that the data did not reveal any significant unexplained anomalies.

#### **Res 69/21 Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)**

*Agenda papers attached*

The Committee noted that it had previously discussed the new element of the SFVS on related party transactions. It considered, and the Bursar confirmed, that the remainder of the draft SFVS return was similar to the response submitted in March 2021. The Committee agreed that:

- the Chair and Head would meet via Teams at 1.00pm on Wednesday 16 March 2022 to agree the final version of the SFVS return; and
- the final version would be sent to the Clerk who would circulate it to the Governing Body for approval by a formal e-mail process, since the GB would not meet until after the deadline for submission (31 March 2022). The Committee noted that the school would be charged for the eDecision process, which fell outwith the clerking contract.

#### **Res 70/21 Agree arrangements for demonstration of HCSS software**

The Committee agreed that, subject to the availability of the Chair of the Governing Body, the Bursar would give a demonstration of the new HCSS software on the **morning of Wednesday 23 March 2022**.

<sup>3</sup> Sandy Lane Primary school – Steeton Primary School's partner school

**Res 71/21 Pupil Premium funding: eligibility and applications**

The EHT said that there was nothing new to report on this occasion.

**Res 72/21 Update on joint review of contracts and SLAs with Sandy Lane**

The EHT said that Sandy Lane, with the support of its Bursar, had reviewed its contracts and Service Level Agreements (SLAs). The Bursar had indicated that the Academy Trust for which he worked employed a person to undertake work covered by several of the school's contracts and SLAs, including ICT support and administration. Sandy Lane would consider whether this might be a more cost-effective solution for the future. The review had also identified a large number of low-value SLAs with Bradford Council for minor jobs and repairs. The school had concluded that, while the large number of SLAs was untidy, the school was unlikely to achieve savings by contracting directly with suppliers for this work and would run the risk of being unable to find suppliers willing to undertake such small jobs.

The EHT said that Sandy Lane had found the exercise useful, and he planned to undertake a similar review for Steeton: he would report the outcome to this Committee.

EHT

**Res 73/21 Review 3-5 year rolling ICT plan**

The EHT said that Primary T, the school's ICT provider, had prepared an ICT strategy document which the school had received on the day before this meeting and would use to inform development of the 2022-23 to 2024-25 budget. He was mindful that Primary T had a vested interest in recommending the purchase of ICT: the school would take this into account in assessing and prioritising the recommendations. Governors noted that, due to investment in recent years, the school's ICT was in good shape.

**Res 74/21 Consider potential revenue streams**

The Chair said that, as agreed, she had explored a number of possible revenue streams. The following points emerged from discussion.

Amazon Smile – The Chair reported that:

- By establishing an affiliate link, the school could receive 0.5% of the value of any purchase made using that link.
- It would be necessary to persuade and remind people to use Smile when they made Amazon purchases and to select the school as their recipient.
- It would be necessary for the school to become a registered charity.

Replying to questions, the EHT confirmed that the staff used Amazon for some purchases, but that total expenditure on Amazon amounted to hundreds rather than thousands of pounds. Asked whether other schools used this form of income generation, the Bursar said that most used Amazon for some purchases and that, if it did so through a business account, it could reclaim VAT in UK purchases.

The Committee concluded that the amount of income that the school could expect to generate was small: on its own, it was unlikely to offset the time and effort required to establish the school as a registered charity. Charitable status would be discussed later under this item.

Recycling of clothing – The Chair said that there were two main ways to organise this:

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- one-off events where parents and the wider community were invited to bring unused clothing into school for collection by an organisation such as Rags to Riches for Schools; or
- establishing a clothing bank on the school premises.

The school could expect to receive between 30 and 50 pence per kilogram of suitable clothing.

Governors considered the following points:

- A passive fixture on the school premises would need to be located where it was accessible to parents and the wider community, did not inhibit free movement around the playground and was sufficiently distant from buildings to avoid presenting a fire hazard.
- There was a risk of a passive fixture being used for litter.
- One-off events would need to be publicised.
- Parents who brought their children to school on foot were unlikely to bring bags of clothing, whereas they might find it more practical to bring one or two items at a time to put in a clothing bank.

The Committee agreed that the school should arrange monthly collections for a trial period: the Chair would provide the details of companies that undertook periodic collections of clothing.

Chair,  
EHT

Grant funding – The Chair had sent to the EHT details of the Shine Trust, which worked with schools across the North of England to nurture creative ideas to help raise the attainment of children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Funding was by means of a competitive bid process. The Chair would continue to be alert to other possible grant funding opportunities. Governors noted that the school would need to weigh the potential benefits against the time that would be required for staff to complete the applications: it was unlikely that governors would have the detailed knowledge to take this on.

D Mullen

Dave Mullen undertook to send information about the Craven Trust to the EHT.

School-based donations – Governors discussed the following:

- The existing Biscuit Fridays, where pupils brought in 20p for a biscuit, were popular. Governors were aware that the Inclusion and Welfare Officer ensured that children received a biscuit even they did not bring 20p. The EHT confirmed that Biscuit Fund monies were ring-fenced and said that staff submitted bids to spend the monies on “above and beyond” resources for pupils, such as additional books.
- There might be scope to engage with staff to develop creative ideas for incremental donations. For example, classes could compete to be the first to fill a jar with small change, with the winning class receiving a small prize funded from their jar. The EHT undertook to discuss this with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

EHT

Governors recommended that:

- fundraising be targeted and specific so that parents and others were clear about how the funds would be used: for example, to purchase cooking equipment or microscopes for the use of pupils; and
- the school inform parents through the Newsletter, with examples, of how their Biscuit Fund and other donations were used.

Governors were sensitive to the need to avoid parents feeling pressurised to make donations or otherwise contribute to the school's fundraising efforts. The EHT said that the key was to ensure that parent had a truly free choice about whether to contribute, as had been the case with contributions to the cost of the recent visit to

On behalf of the Parish Council, Dave Mullen thanked the school for the letters that had been sent by pupils.

- a) consideration of future of Friends of Steeton, including whether it should apply for charitable status

The Chair said that, having explored the requirements associated with charitable status, which included the appointment of a president and treasurer and the holding of minuted meetings, she recommended that the school did not pursue this option. Replying to questions, the Bursar said that he had worked with schools that had sought charitable status and that the administrative burden of dealing with the required paperwork and meeting submission deadlines was not insignificant.

The Committee agreed that the potential additional income that might become available if the school had charitable status did not appear to outweigh the administrative cost and therefore accepted the Chair's recommendation not to pursue this further. It noted that this ruled out the option of using Amazon Smile.

## **Staffing**

### **Res 75/21 Update on appointment of support staff**

The EHT said that there was nothing to report on this occasion.

### **Res 76/21 Inclusion leader: Pay point**

This item was sensitive in nature and is therefore recorded in a separate, confidential minute.

[Sohail Mahmood left the meeting at 2.28pm]

## **Premises**

### **Res 77/21 Update on current building works**

- a) External groundworks, Room 4 and girls' toilets

The EHT reported that the Chair of the Governing Body (Chair/GB) and Stefan Mills had viewed the external groundworks, Room 4 and girls' toilets, taken photographic evidence of the impact of the ongoing issues and made a complaint to Ian Smart, Head of Client Services at Bradford Council (BC/CS). BC/CS had responded rapidly: within the week he had visited the site and started organising contractors to undertake the necessary work.

- The channel would be re-dug properly during the Easter break.
- The EHT had asked for Room 4 to be redecorated and the toilets completely refurbished due to damage caused by water ingress.
- The EHT had also asked that rubble channel outside the toilets be addressed.

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BC/CS had agreed to cost this work and to undertake the exterior work. The EHT would advise the committee on whether BC agreed to undertake the interior work. BC had also undertaken to reply to the complaint from the Governing Body once plan for the work had been firmed up.

The Committee thanked Chair/GB, Stefan Mills and the leadership team for the time they had spent on preparing and making the complaint to BC, and welcomed the encouraging signs that BC was responding positively.

The EHT said that, while BC/CS had been on site, he had shown him the Portacabin that housed Reception. BC/CS had indicated that the Council did not have a policy line on the use of Portacabins as classrooms. The EHT had conveyed the view of the GB that the best solution would be to level the Portacabin and rebuild. He had shown BC/CS the library and suggested that it should be converted for Reception: he had made clear that he would return to Ministers on this point. The EHT said that the response he had previously received from Baroness Berridge<sup>4</sup> had essentially said that it was a matter for Bradford Council. He would draft a further letter on behalf of the Governing Body, which he would clear with Chair/GB and copy to Robbie Moore MP.

b) Update on improvement of external learning environment

The EHT said that, as previously discussed, teams of pupils were working in afternoon clubs on wall displays that would be produced as vinyls. Although the school could not afford professional production of displays, he believed that the displays produced by pupils would be highly effective. The school would commission a banner around the school vision of Your Inspirational Community. The EHT said that the previous banner, which had focused on effective teaching, had generated eight expressions of interest and three recruitments.

### Closing items

**Res 78/21 Other business referred from Item Res 64/21 above**

There was no other business.

**Res 79/21 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will take place at **1.15pm on Wednesday 27 April 2022.**

**Res 80/21 Confirmation of Clerking time**

The Committee confirmed that the meeting had been scheduled to start at 1.15pm and was about to close at 2:36pm.

**The meeting closed at 2.37pm**

<sup>4</sup> Baroness Berridge – at the time of her letter, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department of Education