**The Governing Body of Steeton Primary School**

**Resources Committee meeting on 04 October 2023** *(via Teams)*

**MINUTES**

**The meeting opened at 1.19pm**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Attendance** | | |
| ***Governors*** |  | ***Others*** |
| John Cooper (Executive Headteacher – EHT) |  | Sharmyn Kennedy (IWO) – *to Item Res 21/23* |
| Stefan Mills (Chair) – *to Item Res 16/23* |  | Sohail Mahmood (Bursar) – *Item Res 06/23* |
| Claire Redman (Head of School – HoS) – *to Item Res 21/23* |  | Helen Osman (Clerk) |
| Emma Wainwright (Chair of Governing Body (Chair/GB) |  |  |
| Sue West |  |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Documents** | | |
| 1. Relationships and Behaviour policy | Item Res 21/23 | *Issued with agenda* |
| 1. Quarter 2 (end September 2023) Budget monitor | Item Res 06/23 | *Issued with agenda* |
| 1. Financial audit report | Item Res 09/23 | *Issued with agenda* |
| 1. Health and Safety action plan from audit of May 2023 | Item Res 15/23 | *Issued with agenda* |
| 1. School Incident – *two documents* | Item Res 19/23 | *Issued with agenda* |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Summary of Actions** | | | | |
| **Action No Res:** | **Action** | **Person** | **Deadline** | |
| 98/22 (i) | EHT to discuss with PACT HR how to ensure that contractual arrangements for the proposed AH position (advertised internally) guaranteed that the staff member could return to existing terms and conditions, including any TLRs, without detriment if the AHT position could not be sustained. | J Cooper | | 05-05-2023 |
| 05/23 | HoS to report to the next meeting on her discussion with Primary T about the impact that the school should see from Connect the Classroom. | C Redman | | 22-11-2023 |
| 06/23 (i) | School to investigate whether and at what cost it could exit the existing YPO/NOP energy contracts and the scope to make savings through a broker; depending on the answers, to invite the broker to the next meeting of the Committee. | C Redman | | 10-11-2023 |
| 06/23 (ii) | Bursar to investigate the school’s cash flow and advise on repayment of the bank deficit. | S Mahmood | | 10-11-2023 |
| 08/23 (i) | School to draft the SFVS return for 2023-24 and circulate to Committee. | C Redman | | 15-12-2023 |
| 08/23(ii) | S West (and any other available governors) to meet Business Manager to review the draft SFVS return for 2023-24. | S West  (& a*ll*) | | 17-01-2024 (*10.00am*) |
| 09/23 | HoS to confirm that Recommendation 6 of the financial audit of July 2023 (to check the IR35 status of individual contractors) has been implemented. | C Redman | | 31-10-2023 |
| 14/23 | HoS to check whether the unions had completed a Health and Safety visit in the summer term and, if so, circulate the report for the next meeting. | C Redman | | 10-11-2023 |
| 23/23 | HoS, working with the IWO, to add references to the use of “trauma-informed approaches” to the Relationships and Behaviour policy. | C Redman | | 20-10-2023 |

*The Clerk took the chair pending completion of item Res 01/23.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 01/23** | **Elect Committee chair** |

1. The Committee agreed that the term of office of the Chair should be one year, until the first Committee meeting of school year 2024-25.
2. Stefan Mills was nominated as Chair. There were no other nominations.

*Stefan Mills withdrew from the meeting.*

1. The Committee unanimously elected Stefan Mills as its Chair for 2023-24.

*Stefan Mills rejoined the meeting and took the chair.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 02/23** | **Apologies for absence and their acceptance** |

1. All members were present.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 03/23** | **Notification of other urgent business and requests to vary the agenda order** |

1. The Committee agreed to:
   * + take Item Res 21/23 after the minutes;
     + discuss the energy contract at Item Res 06/23; and
     + take an item of other business related to school leadership at Item Res 22/23, which would be taken after Item Res 23/23.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 04/23** | **Declarations of interest for items on this agenda** |

1. The HoS would withdraw for Item Res 23/23. There were no other declarations of interest.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 05/23** | **Minutes of meeting held on 05 July 2023 and matters arising** |

1. ***The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Update on actions from previous meetings** | | |
| **Item** | **Action** | **Status** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 98/22 (i) | *EHT to discuss with PACT HR how to ensure that contractual arrangements for the proposed AHT position (advertised internally) guaranteed that the staff member could return to existing terms and conditions, including any TLRs, without detriment if the AHT position could not be sustained.*  The EHT said that this action would be pursued on the return of the member of staff from sick leave. | **Ongoing** |
| 105/22 (i) | *HoS to send to Clerk for circulation details of the Connect the Classroom programme.*  The HoS would send the information to the Clerk to attach to these minutes. [*Attached*]  **Replying to questions**, the HoS said that the Connect the Classrooms work had been completed, although the school had seen little impact. She intended to discuss with the school’s IT provider the impact that should be expected. Governors agreed that this should be pursued: the substantial cost (£38k) had not been borne by the school’s budget, but it had been publicly funded and the Committee would welcome a brief report on her discussion with Primary T.  **Action: HoS** | **Closed**  **New action** |
| 119/22 | *EHT to arrange for Bursar to clarify how the budget and the bank account relate to each other.*  The Bursar would clarify this at Item Res 06/23. | **Closed** |
| 123/22 | *HoS to arrange for the updated Finance Policy Handbook to be placed on the school website.*  Completed | **Closed** |
| 124/22 | *EHT to update GB on progress towards securing permanent leadership for September 2023.*  The EHT would discuss this at Items Res 13/23 and Res 22/23. | **Closed** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 21/23** | **Approve revised Relationships and Behaviour policy** – *Document A* |

1. The Head of School (HoS) said that the school had adapted its approach to the management of behaviour to reflect latest best practice as discussed during the training that the Inclusion and Welfare Officer (IWO) was undertaking to qualify as a Senior Mental Health Leader.
2. The IWO said that her training had included a review of the behaviour policies used by participants’ schools. All course members had found that it was becoming increasingly challenging to implement their policies because they were too regimented to work effectively with the wide range of pupils’ needs. IT was invidious to enforce the policies rigidly for most pupils but to allow flexibilities for pupils with particular needs this led to a perception of inconsistency. Moreover, schools’ existing policies had included an element of public shaming (photographs of pupils on behaviour walls, red/yellow/green letters to parents etc) which was unhealthy. Teachers also felt that existing policies did not allow sufficient flexibility for them to manage their classes effectively: they needed scope to set their own expectations of behaviour within the wider school behaviour policy.
3. The school had reviewed the existing behaviour policy in this context and had found that so many adjustments were required that it had been more straightforward to prepare a new policy specifically designed to build on the relationships between pupils and staff. The key points of the new policy were:
   * + discussion of poor behaviour with the pupil concerned, with the aim of understanding and addressing the reasons for their behaviour;
     + discretion for staff to decide the appropriate action in each case, taking account of their knowledge of the child;
     + a clear set of expectations co-designed by pupils and their class teacher;
     + visiting staff and internal staff providing cover each having their own set of expectations: the IWO commented that the highest proportion of amber behaviour incidents in 2022-23 had been I classes led by cover staff, perhaps because they had not had ownership of the behaviour expectations;
     + continuing zero tolerance of discrimination, bullying, persistent searing, deliberate damage to property: these incidents continued to trigger a Senior Leadership Team (SLT) response, which might include a review by the IWO finding that the staff member had managed the behaviour effectively, a conversation with the child, a letter home or, in the most serious cases, exclusion; and
     + logical consequences for behaviour rather than punishment for its own sake (eg a child who had not been paying attention in class might have to complete that piece of work before moving on to more interesting elements of work).
4. The school planned to work towards the Mental Health Chartermark, which was awarded at Silver, gold and platinum levels, following which the school could offer training in mental health support to other schools.
5. A governor who came into school weekly commented on the positive impact of the new policy: she had found classes to be highly engaged and very enthusiastic about the dojos. The HoS said that many staff had already been operating in this way prior to introduction of the new policy but that they welcomed no longer having to send red letters to parents, which had tended to undermine the good work and positive relationships in the classroom.
6. The EHT strongly supported the new policy. **Asked** whether her work on trauma support would be included in the policy, the IWO was hesitant about implying that Steeton was a trauma-informed school because that was a specialist term that indicated that the school met a number of specific criteria: it would be better not to do this until the school had achieved the silver Mental Health Chartermark, which it hoped to do by September 2023. However, she agreed that the policy could make reference to using “trauma-informed approached”. Governors agreed that the policy should be amended accordingly.

**Action: HoS**

1. Governors congratulated the IWO on the new policy, which represented the culmination of a number of threads that she had been pursuing in recent years. They strongly welcomed the involvement of pupils in drawing up the behaviour expectations for their classes and were pleased to see the end of posting photographs on the behaviour wall: they disliked this public shaming and one had considered not sending her children to Steeton on the basis of this practice. The HoS said that similar feedback had been received from parents at a presentation that the IWO had given on the new policy. A governor who had attended that presentation said that it had been excellent and had left him regretting that the policy had not been in place when his children had joined Reception.
2. The IWO said that the policy had been co-created with staff. Steeton was fortunate in having staff who knew their pupils well, liked them and were willing to go the extra mile for them. This had enabled the school to develop this approach to behaviour management without any resistance.

* Subject to the agreed amendment, ***the Resources Committee unanimously approved*** the Relationships and Behaviour policy.

*Sharmyn Kennedy left the meeting*

*Sohail Mahmood joined the meeting*

|  |
| --- |
| **Finance** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 06/23** | **Review Quarter 2 (end of September 2023) Budget Monitor –** *Document B* |

1. The Bursar talked through the variances between the budget and forecast outturn as shown at *Document B*.

*Income*

1. *Budget heading I01 (Funds delegated by the Local Authority*) – 98% of the budgeted income had been received. The outstanding sum was made up of Mainstream Schools Additional Grant (MSAG) and a small amount of Teachers’ Pay Grant.
2. *I03 (High Needs Top-up Funding)* - £21k had been received. The revised forecast of £31k was based on the actual number of SEND children in school at September 2023 – more SEND children were joining the school.
3. *I05 (Pupil Premium)* – the original budget had been based on an estimate. The actual figure had now been confirmed by DfE and was £3k above the estimate.
4. *I06 (Other Government Grants*) – the substantial additional income (£58k) was made up of Warm Spaces Grant and Connect The Classroom funding to upgrade the IT infrastructure: the expenditure that corresponded to the latter was recorded at E20 (ICT Learning Resources).
5. *I07 (Other grants and payments)* – the additional £39k income included:
   * + reimbursement of the salary costs of the Myrtle Park Head of School, who continued to be paid by Steeton and seconded to Myrtle Park;
     + payment for teacher training provided by the school; and
     + payments from the Literacy Hub for the services of the Specialist Leader in Education. This category of income was lower than anticipated due to the sick absence of this member of staff.
6. This additional income was balanced by expenditure at E01 (Teaching Staff).
7. *I13 (Donations and/or Private Funds*) – the additional £11k represented a donation to the library.
8. *I18 (Additional Grant for Schools*):
   * + the school had to return £2.3k funding for School Led Tutoring because, as previously discussed, the school had not used it; and
     + the school anticipated that it would receive £7.5k additional funding representing 7/12 of the PE and Sports Grant (September 2023 to March 2024).

*Expenditure*

1. Staffing costs remained on schedule but would be monitored closely throughout the year. The teachers’ pay award had been confirmed and included in the Quarter 2 return. The pay award for support staff had yet to be confirmed and would be backdated to April 2023. Once the award was confirmed, the HCSS[[1]](#footnote-1) software would be updated and the budget re-calculated.
2. *E01 (Teaching Staff*) – The £41k additional expenditure was offset by the additional income at I07.
3. **Asked** why the budget lines for staffing casts were shown as being between 40% and 43% spent, rather than 50% as might be expected at the Quarter 2 point, the Bursar explained that the staffing figures did not include the September data which was not yet available. Based on end-August data, the staffing lines would be expected to be around 42% spent.
4. *E14 (Cleaning and Caretaking)* included the purchase of a scrubber dryer at a cost of £3k: at a later date, the school might wish to transfer that expenditure to the capital budget.
5. *E19 (non-ICT Learning Resources*) – the donation received for the library would be spent under this heading.
6. *E20 (ICT Learning Resources*) – the £58k Connect the Classroom funding had been spent under this heading.
7. *E26 (Agency supply staff)* – the increase in the forecast outturn included the costs of two additional Teaching Assistants unti December 2023 to support the high of pupil need in school.
8. A number of budget headings had been adjusted to reflect actual expenditure to date, as indicated in the agenda paper.

*Overall*

1. The forecast in-year surplus had increased from the £29k budgeted to £32.5k. The cumulative deficit had reduced from the £38k budgeted to £35k. So far this year if had not been possible to reduce costs substantially, although some savings had been made in Administrative Supplies (£2.4k). The Bursar hoped that it would be possible to identify further savings at around Christmas time to offset some of the additional costs.

*Capital budget*

1. The Bursar said that the school would keep under review the demands on the £14k capital budget as the year progressed.

*Discussion*

1. Governors were disappointed that reducing energy costs for the domestic sector had not been reflected in the charge made by NOP through the YPO[[2]](#footnote-2) contract. They noted that schools had been directed by DfE to use savings from reduced energy charges to meet the costs of staff pay awards. The Executive Headteacher (EHT) that some schools had found that their energy costs for the summer had exceeded the costs for the previous winter, boding ill for the coming winter.
2. The Head of School (HoS) said that the Business Manager had been approached by Northern Gas and Power, an energy broker, who had said that the school was paying significantly more than it needed to for energy and that they could find a deal that provided better value for money. The broker had suggested that they could reduce the cost of gas from £43k to £18k and achieve a similar reduction in the cost of energy. If this were accurate, it would enable the school to eliminate the budget deficit.
3. Governors advised caution: the broker had approached the school cold, was unknown and the industry was rife with less than perfectly honest players. Nevertheless, the school’s budget position was such that it could not ignore the possibility of substantial savings on energy. The Bursar suggested that the broker be invited to the next meeting of the Committee so that governors could question him.
4. ***The Committee agreed*** that:
   * + The school should establish when and at what cost the school could exit the YPO contracts for gas and electricity.
     + If the contracts could be exited at reasonable cost, it should explore further what the broker could offer, taking account of the broker’s commission.
     + If it seemed that the school could make a saving, and if there were no sign that the NOP charges would be reduced, the broker should be invited to the next meeting.

**Action: HoS**

1. ***The Committee approved*** the Quarter 2 budget monitor for submission to the Local Authority.
2. **Asked** by how much he thought the school would be able to reduce the budget deficit this year, the Bursar said that governors needed to bear in mind the cost of the additional staffing that had been required in Early Years. Taking an optimistic view of additional income and savings, he thought it might be possible to reduce the deficit by some £10k. Governors noted that the expectation set by the Bradford Council School Funding Team (BC/SFT) was that the deficit in the current year should be lower than in 2022-23 and that it should be eliminated in 2024-25.
3. **Asked** about the bank adjustment that BC/SFT had said was required, the Bursar explained that this related to cash in the bank, as opposed to the budget as set out in the budget monitor. Money was transferred to the school via advances to enable it to make payments. In 2022-23, the school had been overdrawn at the bank by £67k. The bank account also needed to be funded to ensure cash flow. The school needed to start paying back this deficit by some £5k to £10k er month – this would not affect the budget monitor. The Bursar undertook to review the school’s cash flow and advise further.

**Action: Bursar**

*Sohail Mahmood left the meeting at 2.09pm*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 07/23** | **Pupil Premium funding: eligibility and applications** |

*Impact of new software that uses parents’ NI numbers to identify automatically those whose children are eligible for PP funding*

1. The HoS said that, due to an administrative error that had now been rectified, there had been a delay to entering the National Insurance numbers and dates of birth of parents in the new software. This data had now been entered on the system and staff were working to enter the data for other year groups.
2. In Eary Years and Year 1, the software had identified 47 pupils who were eligible for Pupil Premium funding, compared with the 42 identified in the last October census. Out of 79 new applications, 11 additional eligible children had been identified. If all parents consented to the school submitting applications on their behalf, three could be up to 158 further applications to be made: the school continued to prompt parents to complete the consent form.
3. The school expected the October 2023 census to show 58 eligible children. This was 16 more than in 2022-23, bringing in an additional £22k Pupil Premium funding to support the narrowing of the gap with their peers. **Replying to questions**, the HoS confirmed that this £22k related to the current year.
4. Governors were delighted with the success of the software in identifying children who were eligible for Pupil Premium funding and noted that the benefits to these pupils clearly justified the £700 cost. They appreciated the efforts of staff in obtaining and entering the necessary parent information.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 08/23** | **Plan the preparation of the 2023-24 Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) return** |

1. The Committee agreed that the school should prepare the draft SFVS return for 2023-24 by the end of the autumn term. Sue West would meet the Business Manager on 17 January 2024 at 10.00am (in person) to discuss the draft return – other Committee members would be very welcome to attend.

**Action: HoS, S West**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 09/23** | **Receive report of the financial audit of July 2023 –** *Document B* |

1. Governors noted that the audit had made six recommendations and that the school had agreed to all of them. The HoS confirmed that the Business Manager had taken the necessary action to implement recommendations 1-5 and bring the school into compliance with requirements: she would check that recommendation 6 (on checking the IR35[[3]](#footnote-3) status of individual and one-person contractors) had been implemented.

**Action: HoS**

1. Governors commented on the value of audits in enabling the school to tighten its procedures further.

|  |
| --- |
| **Staffing** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 10/23** | **Update on appointment of support staff** |

1. The HoS said that additional High Needs Funding received in respect of two children with EHCPs[[4]](#footnote-4) had enabled the school to appoint another member of support staff in Early Years. Thus there were now five quality adults in Early Years for morning sessions and four for afternoon sessions. This had made a significant improvement in the running of Early Years.
2. A Teaching Assistant (TA) in Key Stage 2 and left to undertake teacher training. The cost of this member of staff had already been budgeted and the school had filled the post with two part time TAs.
3. One of two TAs working in a high needs class was released each Tuesday to attend college. If the other TA was needed on a Tuesday to cover for an absence elsewhere in school, that left the high needs class without any TA support. The school had therefore increased the overtime hours of two part time TAs to cover that class on Tuesdays.
4. As previously discussed with governors, the duties of the Sports Coach included:
   * + teaching PE in the afternoons to cover teachers’ PPA[[5]](#footnote-5) time;
     + leading after-school clubs; and
     + taking teams of pupils to participate in competitions.
5. This sometimes required the Sports Coach to be in more than one place at the same time. The school had therefore advertised in local colleges for a sports coach who could step in as and when required. A coach had responses to the advertisement, was currently shadowing the Sports Coch and, if he and the school were both content, would undertake *ad hoc* coaching on a zero hours contract.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 11/23** | **Setting of staff Performance Management objectives for 2023-24** |

1. The HoS said that the School Development Plan (SDP) for 2023-24 would be ready for the meetings of the Link Governors for Quality of Education and Leadership and Management on 22 November 2023. Staff performance management meetings would be held in the week of 09 October 2023. **Replying to questions**, the HoS confirmed that the performance management objectives for 2023-24 would reflect both the objectives of senior leaders and the Quality of Education section of the draft School Development Plan.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 12/23** | **Termly report on progress of, and support for, Early Career Teachers (ECTs)** |

1. The HoS said that the school currently had one Early Career Teacher (ECT). She said that the procedural requirements for ECTs were significantly more onerous that those for the old NQTs[[6]](#footnote-6). The Deputy Headteacher was responsible for the progress and management of the ECT and the school had appointed a mentor. **Replying to questions**, the HoS confirmed that both the mentor and the EHT received release the for this purpose and that the ECT also received the additional non-directed time to which ECTs were entitled.
2. **Asked** whether the ECT was making satisfactory progress, the HoS said that she was doing very well and had asked to perform with her class at a forthcoming Mental Health and Wellbeing assembly using Makaton[[7]](#footnote-7).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 13/23** | **Update on staff issues arising since last meeting** |

1. The HoS said that the Early Years, Phonics and English leader had now been absent due to illness for a full year. She hoped to return to school after the October half term break, but it was not yet clear in what capacity she would be able to do so.
2. Early Years was running well and the school would like to focus the energies of this valuable member of staff in the first instance on Reading For Pleasure and her consultancy work for other schools: as governors were aware, the income from the latter funded part of her salary.
3. In view of the school’s 2023 Phonics outcomes, the HoS proposed to create a temporary TLR to undertake the leadership of Phonics. **Replying to questions**, the EHT said that a TLR position would cost up to £1.5k per year, or approximately £700 to £800 for the reminder of the current financial year. It would be important to ensure that the returning staff member clearly understood that the appointment of a TLR to led Phonics was an adjustment to support her own health and wellbeing and not any kind of penalty for the disappointing 2023 Phonics outcomes. Governors agreed: the school had a responsibility to make reasonable adjustments to support the wellbeing of staff returning after illness. Moreover, it was in the interests of the school to support this valued member of staff to regain full health and wellbeing and it seemed sensible to relieve her of one aspect of a busy and multi-faceted job. **Replying to questions**, the HoS confirmed that Phonics leadership was the aspect of the duties of this member of staff that was most easily picked up by another member of staff: school staff were highly trained in Phonics. The staff in Early Years were excellent and needed only strategic oversight from this member of staff. The school needed her to focus her time and energies on Reading For Pleasure – particularly achievement of the strategically important Reading For Pleasure charter mark – and the work with other schools, neither of which could easily be taken on by a colleague.
4. ***The Committee agreed*** the proposal to create a new fixed term TLR3 position, lasting to the end of the 2023-24 school year in the first instance, to lead Phonics.

|  |
| --- |
| **Premises** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 14/23** | **Receive reports** |

* 1. *Local Authority Occupational Health inspection, summer 2023*

1. The HoS said that the LA Occupational Health inspector had been pleased to find that the school had actioned all the points in the action plan. The process had been useful in ensuring that all systems and procedures were in place.
   1. *Health and Safety inspection by the unions, summer 2023*
2. The HoS would check whether there had been a Health and Safety visit by the unions in the summer 2023 term and, if so, would provide it for the next meeting.

**Action: HoS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 15/23** | **Monitor Health and Safety Action Plan** *– Document C* |

1. The HoS said that all actions from H&S Action Plan had been completed with the exception of the fire risk assessment, which was in hand: all red items had been addressed, brining the school into compliance with regulatory requirements, and lower priority items were no being addressed.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 16/23** | **Parking outside school** |

1. The HoS said that, as governors who were parents of children in school had seen for themselves, congestion around the school at pick-up and drop-off times was worse than ever this year. She had again contacted the head of the Highways team at Bradford Council (BC/Highways), to with little effect. The PCSO[[8]](#footnote-8) had changed her shift pattern so that she could be at the school more frequently at pick-up and drop-off times, as had a parent who was a lice officer ad a colleague of his. Their presence had real impact but they could not be present every day. When they were not, drivers blocked the entrance to the school, footpaths and access to Market Street, and had total disregard for double yellow lines. Governors who were parents confirmed that the situation had worsened and badly needed to be resolved in the interests of safety. They also noted that the stress for staff was considerable.
2. **Asked** about the preferred solution of BC/Highways, the HoS said several options had been considered, none of which had proved feasible. The only real option was to prevent traffic from entering School Street at the times in question, so that parents would have to park elsewhere. Governors had previously discussed this and, like school leaders, had been concerned that this would simply shift the issue onto the main road. Governors acknowledged that this concern remained but considered that the risk to safety was now so great that doing nothing was not an option. ***The Committee agreed*** that the HoS should pursue the option of closing School Street at pick-up and drop-off times with BC/Highways. The HoS would continue to copy correspondence with BC/Highways to the Chair of the GB, who would continue to respond as necessary and copy the correspondence to the local Councillor.

*Stefan Mills left the meeting and Sue West took the chair.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 17/23** | **Update on planned building works** |

* 1. *Dining room and Annexe*

1. Sue West said that the refurbished dining room looked lovely and the HoS confirmed that it was working well. **Replying to questions**, she confirmed that the new round tables were having the desired effect. The work was complete aside from installation of signage, which had been ordered.
2. The HoS said that the newly appointed governor, who had been recruited to bring additional marketing expertise to the school, had arranged for a photographer to take shots of the dining room and the woodlands area which would be used in flyers to promote hire of the premises. Governors welcomed this, noting the importance of generating as much income as possible to reduce the budget deficit.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 18/23** | **Update on other premises issues arising since last meeting** |

1. Sue West, as Named Governor for Health and Safety, said that Bradford Council had again re-dug the trench outside Room 4 to re-do the work properly. The work appeared to have been completed satisfactorily on this occasion, though Room 4 continued to smell musty from time to time and would be monitored.
2. The HoS said that a number of issues had arisen in relation to access points:
   1. the main door into the reception area was a free door, and there was free access from the reception area to the school office. The school was seeking quotes to introduce fob access: the cost was likely to be high because the doors were linked to emergency systems.
   2. Similarly, the corridor to the office of the IWO was free access. Children knew that the IWO kept small treats in her office, raising the need to protect access. Again, the cost was expected to be high because the door was a fire door.
   3. The alarm panel in Annexe 1 had broken and, due to its age, could not be repaired. The cost of a replacement was £800.
3. In light of the need to reduce the budget deficit, the school was unlikely to be able to afford to address all three issues. Governors agreed that the risk to life should be prioritised ahead of risk to property. They noted that, of the three partner schools, Steeton was the only one where the office was not protected. The office manager had been badly shaken by the recent e-mail incident, which had underlined the need for office staff to be protected. The school would review the quotes with the Bursar to determine how best to maximise security while managing costs.
4. The HoS reported that the school had purchased staff radios to address a need identified during the management of the recent e-mail threat (see Item Res 19/23).

Cross-cutting matters

|  |
| --- |
| **Cross-cutting matters** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 19/23** | **Review school response to e-mail threat received by Steeton and other schools in Bradford in September 2023 –** *Documents D* |

1. The Chair of the GB said that, at the Joint Committee meeting immediately before this meeting, Chair/Sandy Lane, who was also a Bradford Councillor, had indicated that the e-mail threat had been a hoax and that children and staff had been at no real risk. This confirmation was welcome but did not lessen the need at the time for schools to communicate effectively with parents to inform and reassure them.
2. Governors considered that the incident had been managed effectively by the school, despite a frustrating lack of guidance from the police and LA until late in the day. They reviewed learning points for any future incidents:
   * + The lockdown policy had been effective.
     + A need for staff radios had been identified and addressed.
     + The school was looking into security for the school office.
     + The wait-and-see approach of the LA had been a cause of concern and, in the absence of guidance, the EHT had taken the decision to go ahead and communicate with parents.
     + The Named Governor for Safeguarding (NG/SG) should be engaged immediately when an incident occurred.
     + If the Chair was unable to respond immediately for any reason, she would contact Sue West.
     + In contacting the Chair, NG/SG and others in an emergency, governors agreed that the school should head texts etc with “Red Alert” or “Emergency” so that they could see immediately that the message was different from the many messages that they (especially those who were parents), routinely received from school.
3. The HoS said that feedback from parents following the incident had been uniformly positive. She and NG/H&S had given positive feedback to the office manager on her role in managing the incident.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 20/23** | **Notification of any material safeguarding incidents since the previous meeting** |

1. The HoS said that a child had evaded six members of staff, left the premises by the Year 1/2 gate and got into the car of a parent who was not his, without anyone in school knowing. The school had changed its practice in light of this incident: routines at that gate had been altered so that parents were brought into the playground and children released differently so that this could not happen again.
2. **Replying to questions**, the HoS said that the child’s parent had been content with the action taken by the school, had recognised that the child was a “Houdini” and had confirmed that the adult whose car the child had entered had been related to the family.
3. Noting that the car had been parked on a double yellow line outside school, Governors said that the incident should be highlighted in the HoS’s communications with BC/Highways about the parking issue as a further example of how safety was being put at risk.

*Claire Redman withdrew from the meeting at 2.59pm*

|  |
| --- |
| **Closing items** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 22/23** | **Urgent other business referred from Item Res 03/23 above** |

1. The EHT said that, now that Keven Wheeler, who had been substantive Head of School at Steeton but working on secondment to Myrtle Park, had now been appointed as permanent Head of School at Myrtle Park, discussions had been started with the Steeton’s acting HoS and Deputy Headteacher about permanent leadership at Steeton. He planned to discuss with the school’s HR partner the scope for them to be recruited from their substantive positions into their acting positions on a permanent basis as part of the leadership remodelling required of the school by BC/SFT. If this were not possible, the school would undertake recruitment procedure. Governors agreed that time would better be spent on preparations for the anticipated Ofsted visit.
2. If the positions could be filled as part of the leadership restructure, the implication would be that the school would not be able to slot an Assistant Headteacher position back into the structure at a later date. The EHT did not consider that this would be an issue.
3. If a recruitment process were necessary, the EHT proposed and the Committee agreed that the panel for the Head of School position should consist of three governors but not the EHT himself. The EHT said that the aim would be to complete the process before the end of the autumn term.
4. The EHT added that the handling of the support that the Steeton SENCo was providing for Myrtle Park would also need to be reviewed. He would report to the next meeting on this as well as the Head of School and Deputy Head roles.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 23/23** | **Date of next meeting** |

1. The next meeting would be held at 1.15pm on **Wednesday 22 November 2023**, v*ia* Teams.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Res 24/23** | **Closure of meeting** |

1. **The meeting closed at 3.07pm**

**Helen Osman Governance Services**

*Supporting excellent governance in Bradford*

1. HCSS - financial planning software for schools produced by HCSS Education, part of the Access Group, and used by Bradford Council [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. YPO - Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation: a publicly owned procurement organisation based in Wakefield, Yorkshire. It is owned and governed by a consortium of county, metropolitan and borough councils in Yorkshire and the North West of England [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. IR35 – also known as the off-payroll working rules. The term ‘IR35’ refers to the press release that originally announced the legislation in 1999. IR35 rules are designed to determine whether a contractor is genuinely self-employed or a ‘disguised’ employee, for the purposes of paying tax and national insurance. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. EHCP – Education, Health and Care Plan: Introduced by the Children and Families Act 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. PPA time - Planning, Preparation and Assessment time (teachers must spend 10% of their working week out of contact with their class in order to plan, prepare and assess class work) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. NQT - Newly Qualified Teacher. Qualified and undergoing 1 year training post. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Makaton – a **language programme**that uses symbols, signs and speech to enable people to communicate. It supports the development of essential communication skills such as attention and listening, comprehension, memory, recall and organisation of language and expression. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. PCSO – Police Community Support Officer [↑](#footnote-ref-8)