



## Unity Federation: Excelling as One

### Meeting of the Resources Committee of the Governing Body on 21 January 2026

At Sandy Lane Primary School

## MINUTES

The meeting opened at 4.03pm

### Attendance

#### Governors

Sue Duffy – Chair, Sandy Lane (Chair/SL)  
John Henkel – Chair, Resources (Chair/Res)  
Chris Whiley – Chair, Federation (Chair/FGB) – *via Teams*

#### Apologies

Hamzah Ashfaq (Steeton Governor observer)

#### Others

Faye Andrew – Federation Business Manager (FBM)  
Amanda Campbell, Bradford School Improvement (BC/SI)  
Sohail Mahmood (Bursar)  
Helen Osman - Clerk  
Fiona Newsome – acting Headteacher, Sandy Lane (aHT/SL)  
Claire Redman – acting Headteacher, Steeton (aHT/Stn)

### Documents

A. Q3 budget monitors – 2 papers	Item Res 29/25	Issued with agenda
B. Audited School Fund account – Steeton	Item Res 30/25	Issued with agenda
C. Note of meeting with Bradford Council School Funding Officer 05-12-2025	Item Res 31/25(a)	Issued with agenda
D. Funding schedules 2026-27 and covering e-mail from BC/SFO – 3 papers	Item Res 31/25(a)	Issued 19-01-2026
E. Note of Chair/Resources and Strategic Director meeting on 19-11-2025	Item Res 31/25(b) & (d)	Issued with agenda
F. Five-year buildings plan – 2 papers	Item Res 31/25(e)	Issued with agenda
G. Staff Room and kitchen renovation, Steeton	Item Res 37/25	Issued with agenda
H. Project costings and justification	Item Res 38/25(c)	Issued with agenda
I. Unity Strategic Risk Register	Item Res 42/25	Issued with agenda
J. Annual safeguarding self-audits – 2 papers	Item Res 43/25	Issued with agenda
K. Health and Safety policy handbooks – 2 papers	Item Res 45/25	Issued with agenda
L. School calendar 2026-27, Sandy Lane	Item Res 46/25	Issued with agenda
M. Rationale for decision not to reduce Sandy Lane PAN	Item Res 47/25	Issued with agenda

### Summary of Actions

Action No. Res:	Action	Person	Deadline
106/24	HoS/SL to send to Chair/SL the advert for a lollipop person for publication through the local Facebook page.	F Newsome	18-07-2025
29/25 (i)	BC/SI to provide to Committee members details of the cost saving arising from the decision not to recruit to the SDF vacancy for two terms.	A Campbell	13-02-2026
29/25 (ii)	aHT/SL to circulate to Committee, Bursar, BC/SI and BC/SFO the assumptions underlying budget figures and forecasts.	F Newsome	31-01-2026
30/25	Entries in the Steeton School Fund account relating to income from sale of items to be described as sales rather than purchases in future.	F Andrew	Autumn 2026
31/25 (a)	Comparison between expenditure of the two schools, at the level of the budget headings in the quarterly monitoring reports, to be brought to the next meeting.	F Andrew	13-03-2026

32/25	Draft SFVS returns to be circulated to Committee in sufficient time to contribute meaningfully, with changes from the previous return highlighted or summarised.	F Andrew	13-02-2026
37/25	BC/SI to prepare an agreement between Steeton and Sandy Lane for the loan and repayment of capital funding to support the renovation of Steeton's kitchen and staff room, for signature by both aHTs and Chair/Resources.	A Campbell	Before project commencement
38/25 (d)	S Duffy to take up with the LA its decision not to pay for fencing required at Steeton for Safeguarding purposes on the grounds that it had paid for works to the doors.	S Duffy	31-01-2026
39/25	S Duffy to take up with the LA the re-emergence of issues with damp and mould in Room 4 Steeton and the non-completion by the LA of the actions it had agreed to undertake following works carried out in summer 2025.	S Duffy	31-01-2026
42/25	Chair to send detailed comments on the Federation Risk Register to BC/SI and aHTs.	J Henkel	31-01-2026
44/25	S Duffy to pursue with the LA the safeguarding risks associated with the split site at Steeton.	S Duffy	31-01-2026
45/25 (i)	SL to check and update contact details and dates in its H&S policy handbook and replace each deliberately blank 'phone number with a statement that personal 'phone numbers were known to staff.	F Newsome	13-02-2026
45/25 (ii)	Each school to include in its H&S policy handbook the name of the school's nominated Competent Person on Health and Safety if schools are required to appoint one.	F Newsome C Redman	13-02-2026
47/25	Each school to include an addendum to all policies reflecting the interim leadership structure.	F Newsome C Redman	13-02-2026

#### Res 25/25 Apologies for absence and their acceptance

- All Committee members were present.
- Apologies had been received, and were accepted, from Hamzah Ashfaq (Steeton Governor observer).

#### Res 26/25 Notification of other business and request to vary the order of the agenda

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

#### Res 27/25 Declarations of interest in items on this agenda

- Sue Duffy reminded governors that, as Bradford Council's portfolio holder for Children and Families, her remit included education. She would withdraw from any discussion that presented a conflict of interest.
- No other interests were declared.

#### Res 28/25 Minutes of meetings of 08 October 2025 and matters arising

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

#### Update on actions arising from previous meetings

Item Res:	Action	Status
106/24	HoS/SL to send to Chair/SL the advert for a lollipop person for publication through the local Facebook page. To be done.	Ongoing
06/25	Bursar to provide updated Year 2 and 3 budget forecasts for FGB 14-11-2025. Completed.	Closed

07/25	Chair/SL, CSO/Stn, Chair/Res to review financial benchmarking data 2024-25 and report to the FGB meeting on 14 November 2025. Completed.	Closed
07/25	Chair/Res to prepare a paper for FGB 14-11-2025 on the benchmarking information which would recommend that the FGB establish a Working Group to review budget options and scenarios. Completed.	Closed
11/25 (a)	SDF to send person specification for Federation Business Manager post to Clerk. Completed.	Closed
11/25 (a)	Clerk to conduct Decision by e-Mail procedure on approval of pay and grading of Federation Business Manager post (within 2 w/d of receipt of Person Spec). Decision by e-Mail procedure initiated but overtaken by events. Decision agreed at Federation Governing Body meeting.	Closed

## Finance

### Res 29/25 Review Quarter 3 (end of December) Budget Monitors – Documents A

7. The Bursar reported the following headline budget position: a forecast 2025-26 in-year deficit of £33.5k and carryforward balance of £142k, or 6.92% of budget.

School	Sandy Lane	Steeton
<b>Revenue budget</b>		
Q3 forecast in-year balance	£33.5k	-£6.5k
Q3 forecast carryforward balance	£142k	£2.5k
Forecast carryforward as % of budget	6.92%	0.13%
<b>Capital budget</b>		
Q3 forecast carryforward balance	£22.5k	£8.5k

#### Sandy Lane

8. The Bursar said that the £142k forecast carryforward reflected decisions made in relation to staffing. Although some additional pupils had joined Year 1, the number of pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1 remained low and would lead to a reduction in funding in future years: he estimated that the reduction in 2026-27 could be some £150k. The £242k carryforward balance would enable the school to maintain the current staffing structure for one year only. The Chair added that, in discussion with the Bursar and leaders, he had hoped to use some of the carryforward to invest in resources and the learning environment for pupils. It is clear, however, that it would be needed to enable the school to absorb the impact of falling pupil number and increasing cost pressures.
9. **Governors asked** where in the budget figures they could see the saving arising from the decision not to recruit to the Strategic Director of the Federation (SDF) vacancy for two terms. The Bursar said that the salary costs of the SDF were still included under the budget headings for staffing. Governors noted that they had been asking for some time for details of the cost saving and **asked again** that this information be provided.

#### **Action: BC/SI**

10. The Bursar said that it might be necessary to spend some of Sandy Lane's capital carryforward in 2026-27: the acting Headteacher (aHT/SL) said that she had plans for its use.

11. The Chair observed that Sandy Lane's budget fluctuated significantly over short periods of time in a way that Steeton's did not. For example, the forecast carryforward at Sandy Lane had reduced by £30k during this Quarter. The Bursar said that this reflected the departure of the Business Manager, decisions taken on staffing and changes in Nursery funding. He reminded governors that Nursery funding was estimated and adjusted termly in light of actual numbers of children. aHT/SL added that the original budget had been based on a conservative estimate of pupil numbers. **Asked** whether Steeton was unaffected by these factors, the Bursar said that it did not have a Nursery and confirmed that it was not affected by the other factors.
12. The Chair said that most organisations aimed for a carryforward of around 5%, which would equate to some £100k for Sandy Lane: 4% would equate to some £80k. With such rapid variations in forecasts, which were so large in relation to these figures, it was very challenging to plan. **He asked** whether the Bursar and aHTs thought that it would be sensible for the Budget Working Group to aim for a carryforward in the region of 3% to 7% of budget. The Bursar said that, in light of the increasing level of SEND need in schools and reducing funding due to falling pupil numbers, the schools would need to carry forward more than 3% to 4% of their budgets to safeguard staffing levels for the future. **Asked** whether he would recommend spending funding upfront, the Bursar said that the only scope to do so was staffing. It was difficult to assess the impact of this without knowing the details of which staff would be affected and the costs associated with a restructure. The Chair accepted this: he was trying to determine the bounds within which the Budget Working Group would need to operate.

#### Steeton

13. Governors noted that Steeton continued to manage the financial impact of the reduction in its PAN<sup>1</sup> in September 2025. The Bursar advised that the school could expect a reduction in funding of £50k to £60k over the coming years due to the reduced number of pupils.
14. **Replying to questions**, the Bursar said that the costs related to the security issues at Steeton had not yet been included in the budget.

#### Both schools

15. Governors noted that both schools had positive carryforwards and congratulated the aHTs and their teams on this achievement against a challenging financial background. They further noted that these carryforwards would be needed to manage the continuing impact of reduced funding due to falling pupil numbers and increasing cost pressures due to unfunded national pay cost increases and increasing levels of SEND need.
16. **Replying to questions**, the Bursar said three-year budget forecasts for the schools were not yet available. Governors noted that, when he had attended the meeting of this Committee on 08 October 2025, Bradford Council's School Finance Officer (BC/SFO) had emphasised the need to review the three-year budget forecast as a matter of urgency. The figures that had been discussed with governors late in the autumn term had been alarming and their basis unclear. Further discussions with BC/SFO indicated that the outlook was not as gloomy as those figures had suggested and appeared to be based on different assumptions. The Federation Governing Body (FGB) had established a Budget Working Group to work with BC/SI, BC/SFO and the aHTs to review the forecasts, clarify the assumptions on which they were based and provide options to manage the budgets for the coming years. That work needed to start urgently.

---

<sup>1</sup> PAN – Published Admission Number: the maximum number of pupils that the local authority believes a school can accommodate. Typically expressed as the number of pupils per year group: eg a PAN of 30, meaning a single form entry school

17. aHT/SL said that she and the Bursar planned to meet in the week of 26 January 2026 to start on this work. For many reasons firm figures would not be available until mid-April, but work could begin and information be brought to governors. The Bursar advised that final budget allocations for 2026-27 would be published on 11 March 2026. Governors agreed that, in light of the urgency conveyed by BC/SFO at the last meeting, it was not realistic to wait until April to make decisions on how to manage future year budgets.
18. Noting the importance of all parties – governors, the aHTs, the Bursar, BC/SI and BC/SFO – working to the same assumptions, the Committee asked that the aHTs circulate those assumptions to all: aHT/SL undertook to do this for both school budgets.

**Action: aHT/SL**

19. **The Committee approved** the Quarter 3 Budget Monitor returns or submission to the local authority (LA).

**Res 30/25 Approval of the audited School Fund account: Steeton – Document B**

20. The agenda paper was taken as read. Noting the references in the income column to the purchase of items such as biscuits, **Governors asked** how purchasing items could be classed as income. aHT/Str explained that these entries referred to income from the purchase of items by others, which provided income to the School Fund. Governors requested that, in future, these entries be described as the sale of items rather than the purchase.

**Action: Business Manager (BM)**

21. Having noted the explanation of the references to purchases in the income column, **the Committee approved** the audited School Fund account for 2024-25.

**Res 31/25 Preparation for planning the 2026-27 opening budgets – Documents C to F**

22. The agenda papers were taken as read.
  - a) Note the record of the meeting with Andrew Redding (Bradford Council School finance Officer (BC/SFO))
23. The Chair said that BC/SFO had suggested that the Committee review in detail a comparison of costs on the two schools to identify and understand the reasons for differences. For example, it would be useful to understand the reasons that Sandy Lane spent more than Steeton on meals. aHT/SL said that she had looked into this difference last year. Sandy Lane had a larger working kitchen, and served more meals, than Steeton. She had reduced kitchen staffing by one member of staff but Sandy Lane continued to spend more than Steeton on meals for these reasons.
24. Governors noted, despite having lower income than Sandy Lane, Steeton sent more on staffing. aHT/SL said that this reflected the point that governors often made that schools had certain fixed costs regardless of the number of pupils. Steeton had fewer pupils, and thus less income, than Sandy Lane but nevertheless had to staff the same number of classes.
25. Governors understood these explanations and observed that this – asking these questions and understanding the explanation – was the value of the comparison suggested by BC/SFO. **They asked** that a comparison of the expenditure of the two schools, at the level of the budget headings used in the quarterly budget monitoring reports, be brought to the next meeting.

**Action: BM**

- b) Endorse the outcomes of the meeting between the Chair of Resources and Federation Strategic Director
26. Both aHTs confirmed that they had seen the note of the outcomes of the meeting between the Chair of Resources and the then Federation Strategic Director and were content.

- c) Report on Governors' detailed review of financial benchmarking data 2024-25
27. The Chair, Sue West and Sue Duffy had reviewed the financial benchmarking data for 2024-25 for both schools and had reported to the Federation Governing Body. Where the data of the schools varied from comparator schools they had understood the reasons – examples included the additional costs of managing older buildings and the investment that Sandy Lane had made in ICT in 2024-25. There had been no unexplained anomalies.
- d) Options for achieving the budget savings required in light of the forecasts for reducing pupil numbers and the process for developing a three-year strategy
28. The Committee noted this paper, which would be taken forward by the Budget Working Group.
- e) Three to five-year building maintenance and improvement plans and Andrew Redding's suggestion of some revenue contribution to these

#### *Sandy Lane*

29. aHT/SL said that Sandy Lane had completed a significant amount of improvement work in the last year while maintaining a substantial carryforward. This work had included routine refreshment of décor and furnishings as part of a ten-year programme, as well as installation of soundproofing measures in the hall.
30. There was an urgent need to install maglocks in the external fire doors in the hall: a child had recently twice exited the hall using these doors, which led into the car park area. **Replying to questions**, aHT/SL said that the cost of installation of maglocks on the hall external fire doors would be some £2k. Notwithstanding the need to minimise spending to maintain the carryforward to meet future budget pressures, **the Committee agreed** that this work, which addressed the safety of children and staff, should be undertaken as a matter of urgency.
31. aHT/SL said that the agenda paper included the estimated cost of adapting an external area to form a classroom. This would enable the Nursery to expand by offering 2-year-old provision. Governors noted that the costs would be significant: they looked forward to seeing a full business case in due course.

#### *Steeton*

32. aHT/Stn said that the Steeton five-year buildings plan had not been updated beyond 2026-27. Items highlighted in green were routine refreshment of décor and furnishings. Though the plan did not show 2024-25, much of the work planned for that year had not been carried out. The main work carried out to date had been the creation of the Woodlands suite.
33. The main item for the future was the proposed refreshment of the kitchen and staff room, which would be discussed at Item 37/25. The school's six elderly boilers required continual maintenance and repair. **Asked** whether the boilers were sufficient to meet the needs of the school's large site, aHT/Stn said that this was the question that the school continued to put to the local authority.
34. The playground had no shelter from rain or sun and nowhere for children to sit to eat outside. The Friends of Steeton were helping with this. The Early Years unit had moved into the main school building in September 2025, but its outside area was not fit to meet the needs of the curriculum. The current budget included provision to carry out this work in 2025-26.
35. The school would continue with routine refreshment of décor and furnishings as it could afford.

36. Governors noted these building and maintenance plans with thanks. They noted the suggestion of BC/SFO that the schools consider making revenue contributions to capital to support some of this work. This was challenging in light of the pressures on the revenue budgets, but the Committee recognised the value of this option in principle and would bear it in mind for the future as circumstances allowed.
- f) Three- to five-year ICT maintenance and renewal plans: update
37. The aHTs reported that they had been unable to prepare three-to-five-year ICT maintenance and development plans for this meeting because the schools' ICT had not yet been audited by LA Comms, the new provider of ICT support. Both schools had class iPads nearing the end of their life; and staff laptops and interactive whiteboards that were no longer efficient and causing difficulties with teaching.
38. **The Committee agreed** to defer this sub-item to the next meeting.

#### Res 32/25 Agree arrangements for governor involvement in preparation of the School Financial Value Standard

39. The Committee agreed that the draft SFVS return should be circulated to members in sufficient time to allow meaningful contribution to its development. Governors asked that changes from the previous year's return by highlighted or summarised in a brief note.

**Action: BM**

*Sohail Mahmood left the meeting at 4.44pm*

#### Staffing

#### Res 33/25 Review staff pay statements

40. The Business Manager confirmed that pay statements for all staff had been prepared setting out their full entitlement, and awaited signature by the Chairs of the School Governing Bodies, which she was arranging.

#### Res 34/25 Report on staff performance management at Steeton

41. aHT/Stn confirmed that the autumn term performance management meetings had been held at Steeton and that mid-year reviews were scheduled for February 2026.

#### Res 35/25 Termly report on progress of, and support for, Early Career Teachers (ECTs)

42. aHT/SL reported that Sandy Lane had one ECT who was entering the second year of their ECT period and had recently appointed a new ECT who had joined the school at the start of the third term of their first ECT year. aHT/Stn reported that Steeton had one ECT who was in the first year of their ECT period. Both aHTs reported that the ECTs were progressing well and receiving the support, mentoring and additional non-directed time to which they were entitled.

#### Res 36/25 Update on staff issues since the last meeting

43. aHT/Stn said that the apprentice site supervisor was coming to the end of their apprenticeship early due to the rapid progress they had made. While this was great news, the school could not afford two Site Managers and would therefore have to give the apprentice notice. The Committee greatly regretted this but accepted that the school simply did not have room in the budget to employ a second Site Manager.
44. aHT/Stn reported that she had met PACT HR to discuss a leadership restructure.

#### Premises and other infrastructure

#### Res 37/25 Approval of building project: renovation of staff room and kitchen – Document G

45. The agenda paper was taken as read. aHT/Stn said that the kitchen and staff room at Steeton were unpleasant and unhygienic. They did not support collaboration, collective responsibility, staff retention, a positive working environment or staff health and wellbeing. The total cost of structural work, replacement of kitchen appliances and fittings and redecoration was £15,718. **Replying to questions**, aHT/Stn confirmed that these costs were firm and the BM said that four quotes had been obtained.
46. As set out in the agenda paper, aHT/Stn proposed to fund this as follows:

Proposed sources of funding for Steeton kitchen /staff room renovation	
Sum (£)	Source
8,327	2025-26 capital budget
4,500	2025-26 revenue budget – provision already exists
2,891	2025-26 revenue budget – provision does not exist
<b>15,718</b>	<b>Total</b>

47. The local authority had agreed to reimburse the school for the £14k cost of urgent safeguarding works. This sum was not included in the current budget forecast and could be used to fund the £2,891.
48. Governors understood the desirability of this project, which would have a significant positive impact on staff. This needed to be weighed against the need to save as much as possible to enable the school to maintain staffing against a background of significant pressure on the budget in future years. The following points were made in discussion:
- Staff had been working in this highly unsatisfactory and unsanitary environment since 2021 and deserved better.
  - aHT/SL agreed that the kitchen and staffroom at Steeton really were “awful” and emphasised the importance of schools having a communal space where staff could work together. The Steeton staffroom was not fit for this purpose.
  - The layout of the area made it difficult to gather staff to gather in teams.
  - The proposed project would open the area up to become a useful working space.
  - The proposed project would provide a hygienic place for staff to prepare and eat food.
  - In the absence of a governor from Steeton at this meeting, the Clerk said that the Steeton School Governing Body supported the proposal despite its recognition of the importance of maximising budget carryforward.
49. Governors agreed that they would support this proposal if it were not for the other pressures on the budget. The Chair asked whether there was scope for Sandy Lane to advance the required £2,891 from its capital budget for repayment over time. aHT/SL said she would be happy to advance £3k to Steeton to enable the school to carry out this work. Governors welcomed this solution, which would enable a project to support staff productivity and wellbeing at Steeton without adversely affecting its carryforward: this was an example of the ways in which the Federation enabled its schools to support each other.
50. **The Committee approved** the proposed project, at the costs set out in the agenda paper and funded on the basis set out in that paper, with the £2,891 that was currently unfunded to be provided through a transfer of funds from Sandy Lane, to be repaid over a period to be determined, recorded and signed by both aHTs and the Chair of this Committee.
- Action: BC/SI**
51. aHT/Stn expressed her appreciation to aHT/SL and the Committee for enabling this project to go ahead: it would make a very great difference to staff.

a) Steeton: heat detection in the boiler room

52. aHT/Sn said that this work had been commissioned awaited the arrival of parts.

b) Steeton: boiler repair work

53. aHT/Sn said that this work had been commissioned awaited the arrival of parts.

c) Steeton: Installation of new doors (2 external, internal) that will require fobs for entry and exit

54. The agenda paper was taken as read. aHT/Sn reported that the two composite doors had been fitted by Bradford Council. One had been poorly fitted, and the Council would return to refit it.
55. Quotes for timber doors had been high. The contractor who had fitted the maglocks had indicated that it could put a new maglock on the existing doors, which he thought would save approximately £4k compared to timber doors. In practice, and in light of the existence of several different systems that had been installed in school over the years, the work had been more complex and therefore costlier than anticipated, but it had nevertheless led to modest savings.
56. The Committee noted that the combined cost of the three linked projects exceeded the £10k threshold above which schools were required to obtain four competitive quotes. It further noted the advice in the agenda paper that the urgency of the work, which was necessary to safeguard pupils, made it reasonable in this instance to proceed without doing so. **Governors asked** whether, bearing in mind that this work had been outstanding since September 2025, it could really be said to be so urgent that it precluded competitive tendering. aHT said that the fact that a number of obstacles had prevented the work being done sooner did not detract from its urgency. Governors accepted this.
57. **Replying to questions**, aHT/Stn said that there was no reason why all three elements of the work had to be carried out by the same contractor. **Asked** why school was obliged to use a particular company for the work on fire alarm door-release integration, she explained that company was the contracted provider for the existing fire alarm infrastructure and the only supplier permitted to modify or integrate with it.
58. **The committee agreed** that, due to their importance in safeguarding pupils, the required works were of sufficient urgency that it was reasonable to proceed without seeking four quotes. It therefore **authorised** the school to proceed.

d) Steeton – installation of higher fencing and gates to prevent unauthorised entry and exit

59. aHT/Stn reminded governors that the LA had indicated that they hoped to be in apposition to provide emergency funding for this work at the end of financial year. The LA had now indicated that, because it had paid for work to the doors, it would no longer pay for the fencing. Governors considered this unreasonable: Sue Duffy would take the matter up with the LA.

**Action: S Duffy**

**Res 39/25 Update on other premises issues arising since the last meeting**

60. aHT/SL said that she would bring to the next meeting a paper on plans to expand Nursery space at Sandy Lane.
61. aHT/Stn reported that, when Steeton had re-opened following the Christmas break, the condition of Room 4 had been poor: the works carried out by the LA in the summer had clearly not resolved the long-standing issue of mould and damp. She had emailed the LA, which had not carried out the actions that they had agreed to undertake since then. S Duffy undertook to pursue this with the LA.

**Action: S Duffy**

## Cross-cutting matters

### Res 40/25 Realising the benefits of federation

62. Governors noted as an example of a benefit of federation the agreement at this meeting that Sandy Lane would advance funding from its capital budget, to be repaid over time, to enable Steeton to carry out a project to support staff productivity and wellbeing.
63. The Federation had established a Strategic Leadership Group, consisting of the Chair and Vice Chairs of the Federation and the Chair of this Committee, to meet regularly with the aHTs and BC/SIS. The committee agreed to replace this standing item with a standing item to receive reports from that Group.

### Res 41/25 Monitor compliance: Asset Management

64. aHT/SL said that the schools would prepare a report on how the school complied with requirements around asset management for the next meeting.
65. The Business Manager confirmed that each school had an asset register that was compliant. **Replying to questions**, she said that the systems that underpinned the asset register differed: for example, Sandy Lane used stickers on every asset, whereas Steeton did not. **Asked** whether there would be benefit in adopting a consistent approach to asset registers, aHT/SL said that it would require work to align them and that it was not clear what the benefits would be. **Asked** whether they could be aligned through use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), leaders were doubtful: AI could not put stickers on physical assets.
66. **The Committee agreed** that, while the asset management systems and asset registers of the schools should ideally be aligned, this was not a priority at present. It would reconsider this in July 2027.

### Res 42/25 Monitor the Federation Risk Register – Document I

67. aHT/SL said that the Risk Register had not changed since it was reviewed at the Federation Governing Body meeting on 14 November 2025. The then Strategic Director of the Federation had updated the section on allergies.
68. The Chair said that there was a danger in all organisations of paying lip service to risk management. Risk needed to be managed actively. For example, more was now required to address the two highest rated risks:
  - *Risk RMR-001 (Reduced government funding or unexpected expenses may lead to budget constraints, impacting the school's ability to maintain quality education and facilities) – mitigated risk score: 10.* The internal controls in place to mitigate this risk now included significantly more than the monthly financial reviews indicated on the Risk Register.
  - *Risk RMR-002 (Changes in the local population or demographic trends leading to a decline in school-aged children, reducing pupil numbers and affecting school funding and resources) – mitigated risk score: 8.* The contingency plan now needed to be expanded beyond adjusting resource allocation and increasing marketing efforts to attract pupils.
69. The Chair had a number of such comments, which he would send to BC/SI and both HsoS.

**Action: Chair**

### Res 43/25 Receive annual LA safeguarding self-audit reports and agree action plans – Documents J

70. The agenda papers were taken as read and the Named Governor for Safeguarding confirmed that she was content with them. The Committee welcomed the positive outcome of the self-audits and approved both agenda reports.

71. Noting the absence of a header sheet covering the two school self-audits, the Committee reminded BC/SI and the aHTs to provide header sheet setting out the key messages from the papers for each agenda item.

**Res 44/25 Notification of any material safeguarding incidents since the last meeting**

72. aHT/Stn said that a dog had gained access to the playground at Steeton in the week prior to this meeting. While this had not of itself been of major concern, it was a further indicator of the risks associated with having a split site. The LA Safeguarding Officer had indicated that there was nothing more that could be done to address this. S Duffy undertook to raise this with the LA.

**Action: S Duffy**

**Res 45/25 Approval of Health and Safety policy handbooks – Documents K**

Steeton

73. Governors noted that the Steeton policy handbook in the Team folder for this meeting appeared in fact to be a second copy of the Sandy Lane document. aHT/ST would provide the Steeton Health and Safety policy handbook for approval at the next meeting.

Sandy Lane

74. Governors noted that the Sandy Lane handbook included a number of dates and contact details that were no longer correct, including those of Paediatric First Aiders. **Asked** why some of the contact details were blank, aHT/SL said that the version of the handbook published on the school website did not include personal telephone numbers. Governors understood the reasons but asked that, in each case, the handbook be amended to insert in place of the 'phone numbers, "Contact on personal phone, the number of which is known to staff".

**Action: aHT/SL**

75. Governors noted that other organisations were required to nominate a Competent Person on Health and Safety. BC/SI said she assumed that, for schools, this was implied in the fact that Headteachers were required to be Designated Safeguarding Leaders (DSLs). The Committee asked that each aHT check whether schools were required to nominate a Competent Person on Health and Safety and, if so, include their names in their Health and Safety policy handbooks.

**Action: aHTs**

76. Subject to these amendments, **the Committee approved** the Sandy Lane Health and Safety policy handbook.

**Res 46/25 Approval of Sandy Lane Holiday schedule for 2026-27 – Document L**

77. **Replying to questions**, the aHT/SL said that the Sandy Lane holiday schedule had not been available in time to be approved at the last Federation Governing Body (FGB) meeting or submitted to the LA by its deadline. This needed to be addressed urgently: it could not wait until the next FGB meeting on 27 February 2026. **Asked** whether this Committee had power to approve the holiday schedule, the Clerk said that it did not: however, it could recommend that the FGB approve it and aHT/SL could submit it to the LA making clear that it had been recommended by this Committee for approval at the FGB meeting on 27 February 2026.

78. aHT/SL explained the reasons underlying proposed schedule. **Replying to questions**, she said that, from last year, the school had ceased to close for Eid. This followed consultation with families and reflected the difficulty of anticipating when Eid would fall. Children were entitled to be absent from school for up to three days per year for religious observance and could use this to be absent over Eid. aHT/Stn confirmed that Steeton had also ceased to close for Eid.

79. **The Committee recommended** that the Federation Governing Body approve the Sandy Lane 2026-27 holiday schedule as set out in the agenda paper.

## Closing items

### Res 47/25 Any other business referred from Item Res 26/25 above – Document M

80. Noting the agenda paper on a potential PAN reduction at Sandy Lane, the Chair said that this was a decision for the Federation Governing Body. aHT/SL explained that the paper simply stated that she did not propose to pursue a PAN reduction at present in light of changes in the locality. Sue Duffy, who was also a Bradford Councillor, advised that those changes would not take effect for four to five years; she outlined two other potential developments and their possible benefits in terms of future demand for school places. aHT/SL said that a local school had recently reduced its PAN by 15, which was the total reduction required in the locality.
81. Governors agreed that this agenda paper should be re-presented as a recommendation to the Federation Governing Body and considered by the Budget Working Group alongside the other strategic financial options that it was reviewing in consultation with BC/SFO. They thanked aHT/SL for this useful contribution.
82. aHT/Stn alerted the Committee to a potential complaint about her and the Inclusion and Welfare Leader at Steeton: a parent had asked for a copy of the complaints policy. The policy was on the school website but it was based on a leadership structure of a Strategic Director/Executive Headteacher and Head of School. Under the current interim leadership arrangements, it was unclear to whom complaints about the aHT should be submitted.
83. The Clerk suggested that, for this interim period, complainant be advised to submit complaints to the Chair of the School Governing Body. BC/SI said that she could act as Investigating Officer for complaints if needed. aHTs asked whether all policies needed to be amended to reflect the interim structure: governors considered that it would not be a good use of leadership to amend all the policies now with the prospect of having to re-amend them from September 2026. Instead, they agreed that each school should include an addendum to policies reflecting the interim leadership structure.

#### **Action: aHTs**

*Chris Whiley left the meeting due to a technical failure at the school end. A governor rang her to apologise. The meeting was no longer quorate.*

### Res 48/25 Date of Next meeting

84. The next meeting would be held at **4.15pm on 25 March 2026 at Steeton Primary School**. [*Please note that this is 15 minutes later than the previously planned start time.*]

**The meeting closed at 5.39pm**

**Helen Osman Governance Services**  
*Supporting excellent governance in Bradford*