



**ALFRED SUTTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Resources Coordination Committee.**  
**Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021. 7pm.**

**Present:** Ian Church (Chair); Dave Dymond; Adedayo Benson; Andrew Burrell; Kate Gordon; Robert Howell; Adam Jones; Hajar Alami.

**In Attendance:** Alice de Croos.

**Apologies:** There were no apologies received.

**Did not attend:** Faruq Bilbe.

**Clerk:** Deborah Savage

| <b>Agenda Item</b> | <b>NOTE: this meeting was held on line due to the rising cases of Covid within the community.</b>  |
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| <b>1</b>           | <b><u>Apologies</u></b><br>No apologies had been received. The only committee member absent was Faruq Bilbe.   |
| <b>2</b>           | <b><u>Declarations of Interest.</u></b><br>There were no declarations of interest. The chair welcomed all, especially our new Governors, to the meeting and reminded all present that all contributions should be respected. He asked that people raise their hands if they wished to make a contribution and he would make sure all had an opportunity to speak.  |
| <b>3</b>           | <b><u>Minutes of the previous meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021.</u></b><br>These had been circulated in advance of the meeting and the chair asked if anyone had any questions on them. These minutes had been formally approved in a joint RCC/FGB meeting on 28 <sup>th</sup> April so did not need to be approved at this meeting. They had been circulated for information purposes.<br><b>Governor Comment:</b> This meeting discussed a skills audit. I want to take this forward and produce a training plan involving all governors. <b>ACTION:</b> skills audit to be forwarded to our newest governors for completion. <b>ACTION:</b> skills audit to be reviewed and governor training plan drawn up. |
| <b>4</b>           | <b><u>Matters Arising.</u></b><br>There were no matters arising.   |
| <b>5</b>           | <b><u>Terms of Reference.</u></b><br>The TOR had been circulated in advance of the meeting and governors were informed that the annex of policies which the RCC was responsible for had been updated. Some policies were no longer stand-alone policies but has been subsumed into other policies (such as allegations of abuse made against staff was now part of the Staff Disciplinary  |

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|   | <p>Policy). Other polices were no longer in use nor could be traced. The Cover Policy mentioned could not be found but it was believed this most likely covered paying LSAs who covered classes at a higher hourly rate for doing this cover. This is now part of other staffing policies. The travel plan could not be located either and had not been used in school for some years. The suggestion was made to remove these policies from the TOR.</p> <p>The meeting discussed the fact that some new polices had not been assigned a committee to oversee them. The CCTV policy and the Health &amp; Safety Policy were two such examples and it was suggested these should be added to the RCC list of polices.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> It was agreed to add CCTV and H&amp;S Policies to the RCC TOR.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> Should the RCC have a Vice-chair? Yes, ideally. <b>Should this not also be in the TOR? ACTION:</b> other committee TORs will be reviewed to see if they have references to vice-chairs for committees.</p> <p>The meeting was informed that policy review dates vary from Policy to Policy – some are annual, some every two years and others are on 3-yearly cycle. The policies reviewed at this meeting will be dated November 2021 for purposes of review dating.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> The TOR will be updated to remove certain unused polices from the annex and add the two new polices of CCTV and H&amp;S to the RCC so this committee takes ownership of them. The TOR will then be reviewed again at the next RCC meeting in February 2022.</p>   |
| 6 | <p><b><u>Review of 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Finance Reports.</u></b></p> <p>a) <b><u>Expenditure and Income to 30/9/21.</u></b></p> <p>A report with accompanying notes had been circulated in advance of the meeting and the SBM talked the meeting through the main headlines. With regard to teachers pay, the school has now received confirmation that there will be no inflationary pay rise awarded this year. 1% had been budgeted for. All teachers who were due an increment rise (these were approved by the pay committee last month,) and back pay to September 2021 were processed in October’s pay run. There are three staff currently on maternity leave and one going to start maternity leave in February. The school has just received the resignation of one teacher who will leave at Christmas. As 3 staff will be returning from maternity leave shortly there are no plans to replace this teacher at this stage.</p> <p>With regard to Support staff, the final inflationary pay award for support staff continues to be debated nationally, and the budget forecast has been changed to reflect a 1.75% uplift instead of the 1% previously allowed for. However, strike action has been called for and the pay award may rise to 2%. Three new lunchtime controllers started this week but there has been an additional resignation. The school has recently started working with Get Active Sports to offer two lunchtime games coaches/coordinators for the rest of the academic year so this LTC post will not be replaced at this stage.</p> <p>With regard to staff development and training, the school are encouraging staff to engage in any training opportunities they might find beneficial this year and this</p> |

reflects the move to a coaching method of staff appraisal. 7 members of teaching staff are about to start funded NPQ training courses. Other staff undertook Level 1 & 2 Health & Safety courses in September, and 4 new staff will undertake First Aid at Work courses before Christmas. 8 staff members who completed the First Aid at Work course 3 years ago, will do their refresher training in February. The school has purchased the Read Write Inc online training package, so we can maximise the number of staff who are fully trained in this package. The majority of the SLT attended a Recovery Curriculum conference hosted by BFFC in October. Lots of Governors have also undertaken significant amounts of training offered by BFFC and Governor services.

**Building Maintenance & Improvement** – The old PPA room has moved to the new block, which required some electrical works but teachers are appreciative of this and 2 teams can fit in the room. The nutritional learning suite has now been completed, and is almost ready to open. This was part funded by the Building and Maintenance allocation, and partly by the capital budget. The year 6 children have been moved to the modular building, freeing up space in the Junior building for a drama room, and the group spaces required for phonics. The Year 6 team have told us that the modular building is a much better base and learning environment for year 6. Unfortunately, the school are still no clearer on whether the lease for the modular building is going to be finalised. There has been no feedback from senior staff at RBC. This is very frustrating and concerning, because it would be a huge blow to have to move Year 6 back. Year 3-5 packed lunches have been moved into the Junior Hall as the Infant Hall became too crowded. This has resulted in a far nicer lunchtime experience for the children. Quotes to replace the flooring in Year 2, Year 1 classrooms and the annex dining room in the Infant Hall will be sought in the new year and, depending on the quotes and how the budget is looking at that stage, some of these works may be carried out within this year's budget.

The SBM informed the meeting that the school had not yet been impacted by the rise of energy costs as RBC had agreed a fixed price for the 2021/22 financial year. However, the RBC Energy team have recommended that for budgeting purposes for the next financial year the gas budget allocation is increased by 45% and electricity by 18%. The 2 new boilers have been installed, so it is hoped this new efficient heating system will help keep costs down. The school has also been approved to have solar panels fitted on the whole of the new block. This is likely to need another Salix loan agreement to cover this installation which needs to be carried out before the end of February 2022.

The school expects to spend the majority of the Education Supplies allocation - basic stationary supplies across the school have already been restocked and an allocation has been made to restock the non-fiction books in the libraries, as well as stock the nutritional learning suite. A small underspend in the ICT Learning Resources line is expected. A new laptop trolley was purchased and this has been in use since September.

Governors were informed that since school resumed in September, high sickness absence levels across the school have caused problems. Absence has been due to the 'super cold' as well as 6 staff absent with covid, and several others who had family members with covid which has meant they have had to take time off for childcare.

Cover was provided in the majority of cases in house, but three days supply cover was also needed. However, it is still expected that there will be an underspend in the agency staff budget line.

The meeting was also informed that, in addition to the services the school buys in from RBC and BFFC, this year the school has started to buy in music provision from Berkshire Maestros to cover the music curriculum, and to enable year group PPA provision. So far feedback has been really positive, and children are benefitting from external expertise. Support for the school choir, who will perform at The Hexagon later in the month, as well as the O2 in February has also been brought in. Some lunchtime clubs/games provision has also been bought in as it was realised after children returned to school in September that children were struggling with their social skills and behaviour at lunchtime. 2 coaches now support each lunchtime (on both playgrounds), and they model pro-social behaviour and organise traditional and new playground games to encourage children to develop these vital skills. This has been funded by the school's recovery premium. The school are also in the process of changing the broadband supplier at a saving of approx. 1k a year combined with better customer support.

With regard to Income, the SBM informed the meeting that the school continues to buck the trend in the local area, with a virtually full roll. On census day (7th October) the school reported only 2 spaces across the whole school. We know however, that the low birth rate will see falling numbers join primaries in September 2022 so the school has planned a programme of engaging parent tours, both in school and virtual, during November and December. The intention is to really show the school off by focusing on ASP's broad curriculum and including the new nutritional learning suite as part of the tours. The income we expect per pupil place- the AWPU (Age Weighted Pupil Unit) is £3231 per head. If the school dropped just 10 children, that means the loss of the equivalent of an annual salary for an Early Career Teacher.

Governors were informed that the SEN funding figure has been recalculated as the school's SENCO has worked with families and the local authority to find spaces in special schools for some of the highest need pupils who started at these schools in September 2021. At present there are only two SEN children across the school who are funded, though a number of EHCP's have been submitted for approval.

The Pupil Premium grant level was also confirmed at a slightly higher level than expected and payment 1 of 3 has been received.

Income from lettings has resumed, with 2 regular lets of the school halls and income resuming from wrap around care provision. However, the lease for Crescent Under 5's is still not complete, although the school have been told it should be through by Christmas. The agreed increase will be backdated to September 2020.

Governors were also informed that the school has been told it will benefit from 2 new additional grants this academic year. The Recovery Premium, confirmed at £14500 for the academic year, has the same conditions as the PP grant. Some of this fund has been used for the bought in lunchtime provision. The second grant is the school Tutoring Grant. This has very strict conditions, which if not met, money will be clawed back. The school has to provide 15 hours of tutoring to 55 of the most vulnerable pupils, and each hour of provision has to cost £18 per child. 75% of this is funded, and

the remaining recovery premium will fund the additional 25%. The school has taken on a retired teacher, well known to the school, to provide support to Year 1, and a part time teacher has agreed to increase her hours to support year 2. For the upper key stages, the school are buying in tutors from the national tutoring programme. Children the school have identified to participate will benefit from maths and English tuition on a 1:3 ratio.

**Governor Comment:** The recommendation to increase the allocation for gas costs in the budget figures is concerning. Yes, but our heating is now more efficient and we hope energy usage will reduce because of this and the solar panels.

**Governor Question:** Can you give us more information about the modular building lease? The modular building was installed whilst we had our new building completed and it was due to go to another school – but was not needed there in the end. We hope we can keep it as it has been very useful extra space for us during the pandemic and the need to teach in bubbles, but we still don't know what RBC's plans for it are. They have had so many senior staff changes that the people we spoke to about this before have been replaced. ASPS is now the largest primary school in Reading, and due to falling rolls in some schools there is talk of reducing some 3 form entry schools down to two form entry and some two form entry schools down to one form entry. It is possible some smaller schools may not survive. Some of our accommodation (such as the old year 6 area) is not suitable for class teaching and year 6 are certainly better off in the modular build.

**Governor Question:** With the possibility of Support Staff having a 2% uplift in pay, how confident are you that the budget has the resilience in it to pay this? I am not concerned as we have some savings in other areas of staff costs.

The School Business Manager was thanked for her report to Governors. **DECISION:** the Governors unanimously accepted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Budget report.

b) Capital Budget to 30/9/21

A report on the capital budget had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The school has spent £20K from the capital budget to date on the Nutritional Learning Suite and has no other plans for capital spend at this stage. It is expected there will be a 6K carry forward towards the cost of replacement flooring. **DECISION:** the Governors unanimously accepted the Capital Budget report.

c) Bank reconciliation Report

This had also been circulated in advance of the meeting and governors were informed that this was a monthly report sent to RBC which was countersigned by the head teacher.

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|   | <p>The chair thanked the SBM for her reports and updates to the committee, which the committee appreciated involved a great deal of work. It was noted that the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter reports had been circulated to the GB electronically over the summer.</p>   |
| 7 | <p><b><u>Financial Procedures Manual.</u></b></p> <p>This document has been circulated in advance of the meeting and the SBM informed the committee that this is a working document to manage the finances of the school. It incorporates a number of policies that used to be separately listed on the TOR and is updated annually although it is only reviewed by the RCC every two years. The school has been told that it is RBC's intention to create a master Financial Procedures Manual for the whole borough. The meeting was informed that setting up BACS payments has been very complex and is not yet complete, so the Manual would be updated again once this is completed.</p> <p>Governor attention was drawn to appendix 1 where areas of the financial procedures that are relevant to governors are outlined. These include the Declaration of any Interests, receiving of gifts, use of the school charge card, Roles and Responsibilities and Statement of Internal Control. It was noted that it was standard practise in education to have a Financial Procedures Manual and that a main purpose of the document was to ensure separation of duties to prevent opportunities for fraud.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> the Governors unanimously accepted the Financial Procedures Manual.</p> |
| 8 | <p><b><u>Statement of Internal Controls.</u></b></p> <p>This had been circulated in advance of the meeting and was delayed from April. It outlines how the GB will discharge its duties to oversee the financial management of the school. Once approved, it needs to be signed by the HT, CoG and Chair of the RCC.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> the Governors unanimously approved the Statement of Internal controls and <b>ACTION:</b> DD and IC are to sign the document in school as soon as possible.</p>  |
| 9 | <p><b><u>Verbal update from the Pay Committee Chair.</u></b></p> <p>The Pay Committee chair gave a verbal update on the recent meeting of the Pay Committee (which took place in early October) to review the teachers performance appraisals and pay recommendations. He informed Governors present that the Pay committee is a statutory body required by law.</p> <p>The terms of reference for the Pay Committee were reviewed and confirmed and the pay committee looked at an anonymised sample of teacher performance reviews to ensure they had been carried out fairly and consistently. The pay committee confirmed the schools' appraisal policy had been followed. The pay committee confirmed that money was available in the school budget to pay the recommended increments. After some discussion and a formal vote, the pay committee endorsed the 2021-22 pay recommendations for approval. The Chair was asked to notify the SBM of the decision so that the pay award could be processed for pay roll ASAP.</p>  |

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|    | The meeting was informed that Support Staff appraisals are due in the spring.   |
| 10 | <p><b><u>Policies for approval:</u></b></p> <p>A number of statutory policies, all of which are RBC standard polices that have been edited to reflect the name and maintained school status of ASPS had been circulated to Governors in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>a) <b>Teacher Pay Policy 2021</b></p> <p>Governors were informed that no fundamental changes had been made to this policy. This policy had been drawn up in consultation with the Trade Unions. As ASPS employs a sports coach who is the equivalent of an unqualified teacher provision had been made to pay TLRs to unqualified teachers. Governors were reminded that there is no inflationary pay rise for teachers this year.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> the Governors unanimously approved the Teacher Pay Policy 2021.</p> <p>b) <b>Teachers Appraisal Guidance 2021.</b></p> <p>Governors were informed that there had been a change away from a “tick-box” approach to appraisal post covid with more emphasis being given to mental health considerations and training opportunities to encourage retention of staff. Whilst there is still an element of judgement, the emphasis is much more on training including training staff to be coaches and mentors. Both generic and specific targets will be set. The school informed the meeting that SLT were very pleased with the level of staff buy-in to this approach and staff were undertaking a significant amount of training. Appraisal forms are now designed to be much more engaging and participant based so that it is easier to identify training needs. In the future, there will be much more of a narrative from the appraisee and staff have welcomed these changes.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> Could you consider giving the GB a briefing on this? We could do this after an appraisal cycle has run through this new system, yes.</p> <p><b>Governor Comment:</b> It is useful to hear an explanation of the background to these changes and your intention to identify training needs as a result of the changes.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> the Governors unanimously approved the Teachers Appraisal Guidance 2021.</p> <p>c) <b>Managing Poor Performance 2021.</b></p> <p>Governors were informed that this Policy came from RBC and any necessary action would be taken in consultation with, and following the guidance from, RBC’s HR department as there are statutory time frames and procedures to be followed.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> It was noted that a typo needed correcting.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> the Governors unanimously approved the Managing Poor Performance 2021 Policy subject to the typo being corrected.</p> <p>d) <b>Staff Disciplinary Policy 2021</b></p> <p>It was noted that there is a similar typo that needs correcting on this policy. <b>DECISION:</b> the Governors unanimously approved the Staff Disciplinary Policy 2021 subject to the typo being corrected.</p> |

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|                  | <p><b>e) Staff Grievance Policy 2021</b></p> <p>The meeting was informed that any issues raised by staff in the past have been settled informally, but this policy would be followed, if required, in consultation with RBC HR department. <b>DECISION: the Governors unanimously approved the Staff Disciplinary Policy 2021.</b></p> <p><b>f) Staff Code of Conduct 2021.</b></p> <p><b>Governor Question: Are staff issued with a copy of this document?</b> Yes – and it is reviewed with all new staff during induction. Schools are required by statute to have a code of conduct for staff. <b>DECISION: the Governors unanimously approved the Staff Code of Conduct 2021.</b></p>   |
| <p><b>11</b></p> | <p><b><u>Site Tours and Health &amp; Safety update.</u></b></p> <p>The Lead Governor for H&amp;S gave a verbal update to the committee. The management of Health and Safety is a statutory function required by law. The Governing Board has overall responsibility for H&amp;S in school and as part of that duty there are regular school site Health and Safety tours with school managers and governors. The purpose of the tours is to confirm all school classrooms and playground areas are fit and proper places to undertake teaching and identify any minor issues. It is a requirement that specified Health and Safety training is undertaken by some managers. This includes the appointment and training of fire marshals, the appointment and training of first aiders and the first aid treatment room. All staff have some Health and Safety training in order to understand their responsibilities.</p> <p>As governors may know, the school has a reporting app for safety problems and a risk register to help manage the bigger safety concerns such as covid.</p> <p>Reading Borough Council oversees the schools Health and Safety provision and usually undertakes an annual Health and Safety audit.</p> <p>The school also administers some statutory tests such as fire safety equipment testing, fire drills, electrical equipment testing and legionnaires testing of water supplies.</p> |
| <p><b>12</b></p> | <p><b><u>Wellbeing and Equality (including an update from the school wellbeing committee).</u></b></p> <p>Governors were reminded that this item is now a standing item on governor meeting agendas. The meeting was informed that the school's Wellbeing committee is now established - it consists of 12 members who have met twice this term.</p> <p>A display board has been created in the staff room giving information on who the committee members are, along with wellbeing signposting and mental health information. A post box has been created and placed in the staff room for staff to post their concerns.</p> <p>The committee is in the process of establishing the purpose of the committee and once this is completed all staff members will be advised. Plans are underway for a staff social in November as well as a Christmas social.</p>  |



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|    | <p><b>Governor Question:</b> Issues raised are collected and considered? Yes – wellbeing representatives collect these and they are discussed at the committee. The wellbeing committee is minuted and these minutes can be shared with Governors.</p> <p><b>Governor Comment:</b> Whilst it is still early days for this committee, it may be that further down the line there may be budget requests to support wellbeing initiatives. There may be grants from government to support this. Governors were informed that the school needs to check carefully what they are legally allowed to spend school funds on. Governors were also informed that a number of clubs had been established including a running club that might run the Reading half marathon to raise some funds. A book club might also start soon – all positive and encouraging actions.</p>   |
| 13 | <p><b><u>Issues for Parents/FGB/Confidentiality.</u></b></p> <p>The newly approved policies would go onto the school website where they will be available for parents to read. The FGB will be informed at the next meeting that the RCC accepted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter budget reports. There were no items of a confidential nature requiring part 2 minutes.</p>  |
| 14 | <p><b><u>AOB.</u></b></p> <p>The Head teacher informed the meeting that two mornings of face-to-face site tours had been arranged – 23<sup>rd</sup> November and 7<sup>th</sup> December, both starting at 10am. Governors were asked if any governor(s) could be present to support these tours and offer a governor perspective to prospective parents. Some virtual open mornings were also being planned, and if face-to-face events proved popular then additional dates may be added. There will be a banner outside the school and a leaflet drop is being carried out. Open mornings have also been advertised at local nurseries. A governor offered to support at the open mornings and <b>ACTION:</b> the Clerk would post the dates on GovernorHub and seek additional governors to support.</p> <p>There are some final things to be carried out in the Nutritional Learning suite but it is hoped to have a formal opening soon. <b>ACTION:</b> some possible dates to be offered to AB to communicate to his chef friend.</p> |
| 15 | <p><b><u>Date of next meeting:</u></b> Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022 – format TBC.</p>  |

**Meeting closed: 20.20pm**

**New Actions:**

| <b>Action:</b>   | <b>Owner:</b> |
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| Skills audit to be forwarded to newest governors for completion.   | Clerk         |
| Skills audit to be reviewed and governor training plan drawn up.   | DD            |
| Committee TORs reviewed to see if they have references to vice-chairs for committees.  | DD            |
| The TOR will be updated to remove certain unused policies from the annex and add the two new policies of CCTV and H&S. TOR to be reviewed at February RCC meeting. | SBM/Clerk     |
| Govs to sign Statement of Internal Control in school ASAP.   | DD/IC         |
| Typos in the policy headers to be corrected.   | SBM           |

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| Open Morning dates to be posted on GovernorHub to seek additional governors to support. | Clerk |
| Nutritional Learning Suite opening dates to be sent to AB for liaison.                  | RH/AB |

**Governor Attendance at RCC Meetings 2021/22 (one meeting to date)**

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| Ian Church     | 1 of 1 meeting |
| Robert Howell  | 1 of 1 meeting |
| Dave Dymond    | 1 of 1 meeting |
| Adedayo Benson | 1 of 1 meeting |
| Andrew Burrell | 1 of 1 meeting |
| Kate Gordon    | 1 of 1 meeting |
| Adam Jones     | 1 of 1 meeting |
| Hajar Alami    | 1 of 1 meeting |
| Alice de Croos | 1 of 1 meeting |
| Faruq Bilbe    | 0 of 1 meeting |