



East Reading Federation

Minutes of the Meeting of the Resources Committee (Part 1)

Thursday 6th November 2025, 4pm

Present: Adedayo Benson; Dave Dymond; Kris Jones; Laura Kerr (HT ASPS); Christian Lim (HT RPS); Chris Robinson (Chair)

Apologies: Aaron Hatherley; Francis Jakeman; Andrew Burrell

In Attendance: Alice de Croos, Head of Operations; Liz Newton, School Business Manager

Clerk: Rowena Perry

	Section one – Procedural
1	<p>Welcome & Apologies:</p> <p>Apologies had been received and were accepted as listed above.</p> <p>Everyone was welcomed to the first Resources Committee meeting under the new structure. No previous minutes to be reviewed or matters arising/actions to discuss.</p>
2	Declaration of interest: none.
	Section two – Head of Operations report
3	<p>Governor Question: The SMRA report shows the starting (in year) deficit for Redlands at £55,942 (bottom page 2 of the SMRA report) whereas the second quarter outturn for Redlands shows a budgeted deficit of £52,273 (difference between total expenditure of £1,625,814 and income of £1,573,541). Can you clarify the Redlands budgeted deficit?</p> <p>Response - The -£55,942 in-year balance referred to in the SRMA report refers to 2024/2025. For 2025-2026 we budgeted a -£82,006 in year deficit, currently projected to come in a little less than this. Typo on the budgeted income on the Redlands report now updated, this error doesn't affect the bottom line. Corrected version uploaded to GovHub.</p>

	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Total revenue income	£1,486,913	£1,543,807	£1,520,305	£1,526,322
Total revenue expenditure	£1,542,855	£1,625,813	£1,704,056	£1,747,205
In year revenue balances	-£55,942	-£82,006	-£183,751	-£220,883
Brought forward revenue balance	-£237,123	-£293,065	-£375,071	-£558,822
Carry forward revenue balance	-£293,065	-£375,071	-£558,822	-£779,705

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Governor Question: 'Redlands financial recovery plan' (section 3, Finance). Table 3.2 starting on page 9 of the SMRA report indicates various opportunities and your recovery plan takes those points down a level; it may be easier for governors to see the link were there to be an additional column in the recovery plan that shows how the actions relate to the SMRA table. There isn't any specific linkage relevant to the unnumbered table at the top of page 6 which compares Redlands with a benchmark for numbers of FTE. Can we see the SLT considerations of how we can move towards the benchmark?

Response - Our starting stance was that we would assume all of the recommendations could be achieved in time. It was felt that the SRMA lead did not capture the context at Redlands. There are three children receiving one to one support, hence the apparent overstaffing. CL has spoken to Mo Galway (Senior School Standards Officer) ("MG") and Clare Warren (School Finance Business Partner) who recognise that decisions need to be made bearing in mind context and safeguarding. Its not currently possible to reduce staffing and MG recommends not reducing leadership team or other areas and that it is not realistic to expect strategic leads to also teach. The new deficit application form does reference SRMA recommendations.

Action: CL to send email to MG to confirm this advice.

Action: AdC to amend Redlands Financial Recovery Action Plan to ensure link to SRMA actions and to add what RAG ratings mean.

Governor Question: School fund audit – what do other schools do for audits? Perhaps governors can assist in finding an appropriate firm? We've emailed our cluster but everyone is struggling – if any governors can help, we'd be really grateful. Removal of school trip funds from ASPS school fund will reduce value of transactions, Redlands school fund is minimal; noted that the Friends of Redlands (PTA) is a separate entity.

Action: RP to check recent Facebook post for possible auditor.

Governor Question: Premises/H&S – does the Educational Assets Team have a separate budget to pay for these works or will we have to fund them? Have we been in contact with the university to ask them for some support on the basis that it appears to be their water causing an issue?

Response - The works outlined in the report are all in the pipeline with the Educational Assets Team. Helen Roberts will liaise with the university regarding the sluice gate. Also

	<p>need to look in basement at ASPS where there are leaks.</p> <p>Governor Question: Do the four incidents escalated to RBC on page 4 mean RIDDOR reporting or something else? When do expect any results to be shared with us?</p> <p>Response - No, they were not RIDDOR – we typically report any injury that resulted in a hospital visit to RBC, they provide recommendations and advice. All of the incidents have been investigated by LK, and risk assessments done/apparatus taken out of use/put in place as appropriate.</p> <p>Governor Question: do you know what is causing the disproportionate number of incidents at Redlands?</p> <p>Response - It is possibly conscientious reporting with even minor incidents being recorded. CL is reviewing break times/lunchtimes and the football has been removed as its use was causing issues.</p> <p>Governors congratulated HTs that schools are currently fully staffed,</p> <p>Action: AdC to add job titles in staffing section of report.</p> <p>Governor Question: Any maternity situations we might be aware of?</p> <p>Response - We have 2 teachers (one at each school) currently on Maternity Leave.</p> <p>Governor Question: Are there any general messages to be derived from the mental health issues mentioned in the table on page 5? Do staff make full use of the EAP and/or have any been referred to OH for support?</p> <p>Response - We work really closely with Amanda Lawrence on sickness absence, and OH advice is sought whenever required. The HSE have recently announced that more than 50% of sickness absence is due to mental health issues nationally, so in part that has trickled down to us. We are supporting staff members, to the point of making referrals to the EAP service, and in one case, booking GP appointments. This in turn impacts on the staff members supporting these colleagues. We share details of the EAP service, and the Wellbeing emails from HR to all staff on a frequent basis. We have five mental health first aiders, the need is currently high. Aim is to support colleagues but cannot deal with issues outside work. Need to be aware of longer term impact on colleagues. A staff survey is also currently in circulation.</p> <p>Governor Question: is this covered on Inset training?</p> <p>Response - Yes, it is discussed and senior mental health leads have also discussed at staff meetings.</p>
	<p>Section three – Finance</p>
4	<p>Budget Variance reports for revenue & capital for both schools:</p> <p>Redlands are currently doing monthly returns.</p> <p>Governor Question: some people may not know what CFR means and E01 etc– is there any reason not to use the actual spreadsheet with codes etc as well as this simplified</p>

	<p>version?</p> <p>Response - We can use the more detailed spreadsheet but in the past Governors have preferred the easier to read versions.</p> <p>By September we should be clear on staffing for the outturn reports, a graph would be sufficient for governors. Action: CR to send an example to AdC.</p> <p>Governor Question: is the Redlands in year deficit better or worse?</p> <p>Response - Very slightly better.</p> <p>Governor Question: Do we have any insight into energy costs for next year?</p> <p>Response - No but new doors and windows should help with energy efficiency. Hoping for new heaters at Redlands which should be more efficient.</p> <p>Governor Question: is there a plan for replacing IT?</p> <p>Response - We have asked Tri to do a plan. Needed new server, wifi, switches and ipads for children that had not been budgeted for.</p> <p>Governor Question: hopefully technology can be assured to last 5 years?</p> <p>Response - Our 5-year plan expires this year and will be renewed.</p>
5	Private Accounts audit: see under item 3 above.
6	Finance Link Governor report: Action : CR to arrange a date to meet with AdC.
	Section four – Premises/Health & Safety
7	Asset Management Plan: see under item 3 above.
8	<p>Health & Safety Link Governor Report</p> <p>Tours have been conducted, intention is to do pre-audits. All are welcome on site tours.</p> <p>Governor Question: what is the overall state of the fabric of the buildings?</p> <p>Response - The main issue is with the rooves. Prior to Covid there was a redecoration plan in place which worked well. Vacancies/sickness among premises team at ASPS have meant it has been difficult to get routine jobs done, at present they can only be reactive. Redlands caretaker is very proactive. With the vacancy are looking at revised job specification/working hours.</p>
9	<p>H&S Audits:</p> <p>Governors noted that the audits are useful and comprehensive.</p> <p>Governor question: is there anything Governors need to know or be aware of?</p> <p>Response - Not specifically – we have commissioned a playground survey at ASPS (and will copy the ideas for Redlands) and it's the most unstructured part of the day, where</p>

	<p>behaviour issues typically occur.</p> <p>This summer we recruited 3 new Lunchtime Controllers (LTC) to start in September, and since then we've had three resignations from existing LTCs, and this is a recurring issue. Add in sickness absence, and we are frequently 4 LTCs down a day, which means we end up supervising on the playground regularly. I think the issue is partly team dynamics, but also because lots of LTCs use the role as a stepping stone to LSA roles.</p>
10	<p>Playground audit at Alfred Sutton:</p> <p>ASPS is a large site, with lots of nooks and crannies which are hard to supervise. The purpose of the audit will be to help us zone the playground, and consider how many staff we actually need, as they assure us they typically find they recommend less staff that we employ. The package includes a site audit, audit report and action plan. They will return twice to help us embed it. Alongside this, they will provide training materials for the lunchtime team. Outcome will be fed back in the new year.</p>
11	<p>Risk register:</p> <p>Action: CR and AdC to review at their meeting.</p> <p>Governor Question: is there anything that governors need to be aware of?</p> <p>Response - No. The operational risk register is lengthy, governors need a strategic risk register – this tends to be same for all schools so can look at examples from other schools. Action: review strategic risk register at strategy day.</p>
	<p>Section five – Human Resources</p>
12	<p>Staffing & recruitment update: see under item 3 above</p>
13	<p>Staff CPD:</p> <p>This is listed in the Head of Operation's report. There is joint CPD across both schools and where possible curriculum teams are operating across the two schools.</p> <p>Governor question: is the strategic intent to bring schools in line as regards the curriculum?</p> <p>Response - We need to show that the curriculum is bespoke to the cohorts, this is easy to do where there is a national curriculum eg geography, less so in other areas eg English teaching.</p> <p>Governor question: phonics teaching was less good at Redlands, has that improved?</p> <p>Response - Yes, now a real strength across both schools as Redlands have caught up.</p> <p>Governor question: how well are the staff working together and is the intention to have similar delivery across both schools?</p> <p>Response - It depends on the subject, there are challenges in imposing consistency so it has been done where it is possible/easy to do.</p>

	<p>Governor question: is staff morale good, is there a staff survey?</p> <p>Response - Staff survey is in progress.</p>
	<p>Section six - GDPR</p>
14	<p>Update (standing item):</p> <p>Two interesting reports; the Judicium one looks much better but the content in the TIO report feels more useful and actionable.</p> <p>Governor Question: Will we standardise on TIO now that they are the ERF provider?</p> <p>Response - The support from Judicium is in a different league to TIO, and they provide a full action plan as well as the audit shared on GovHub – but they are more expensive. Alongside the annual audit they also provide a bank of resources such as model policies and privacy notices, and respond to queries really quickly. We are tied into a contract with TIO until end of March.</p> <p>Action: AdC to contact Judicium to see if they can offer us a federation discount.</p> <p>Governor Question: is there governor training on GDPR?</p> <p>Response - There was an online package but it had a few issues. Action: AdC to investigate.</p>
15	<p>GDPR audit: see item 14 above.</p>
	<p>Section seven - Policies</p>
16	<p>Charging and Remissions: decision: approved.</p>
17	<p>Appraisal scheme for Teachers decision: approved.</p> <p>Teachers Pay Policy: Governor question: has the teachers' pay policy been signed off by the Unions?</p> <p>Response - No but RBC is not making any further changes so this policy has been approved. Decision: approved.</p>
18	<p>Appraisal scheme for Support Staff decision: approved.</p>
19	<p>Freedom of Information Policy & Publication scheme: decision: approved.</p>
20	<p>Health and Safety Policy, this is an RBC model policy: decision: approved.</p>
21	<p>CCTV Policy: this is a Judicium model policy: decision: approved.</p>
22	<p>Data Protection Policy: this is a Judicium model policy: decision: approved.</p>
23	<p>Data Retention Policy: this is a Judicium model policy: decision: approved.</p>

	<p>Governor question: do we always delete electronic/soft copies of documents?</p> <p>Response - We are better at destroying hard copies. Have recently been made aware that we need to keep a 'destruction' log.</p>
	<p>Section eight – Other business</p>
24	SRMA visit and action plan: see item 3 above
25	Clerk's update: new ERF emails will be issued shortly. Action: Clerk to post on Gov Hub
26	<p>Any other business:</p> <p>SFVS training is on 25th November, this is worth attending, Clerk is booked on.</p> <p>Strategy Day – this will be on 18th November 11:00-16:00 (followed by Community Engagement Committee) Lunch will be provided. Action: LK/CL to contact Aaron regarding leading this.</p> <p>Decision: to swap FGB and workshop dates in January. Action: Clerk to update GovHub and send Outlook meeting invitations.</p>
27	Issues for parents/confidentiality: see part 2 minutes.
2	Date of Next Meeting: 03-Feb-26, 16:00-18:00

The meeting closed at 17:50

(NB please scroll to next page for action log)

Action no	Agenda Item	Action	Responsible	Timescale	Update
29	3	send email to Mo Galway to confirm advice regarding staffing at Redlands	Christian Lim	ASAP	
30	3	amend Redlands Financial Recovery Action Plan to ensure link to SRMA actions and to add what RAG ratings mean.	Alice de Croos	for next meeting	
31	3	check recent Facebook post for possible auditor	Clerk	ASAP	completed, none found
32	3	add job titles in staffing section of HoO report	Alice de Croos	for next meeting	
33	4	send an example staffing graph to AdC	Chris Robinson	ASAP	
34	6	arrange a date to meet with AdC to discuss Finance Link Governor report and review risk register	Chris Robinson	ASAP	
35	11	review strategic risk register at strategy day	All governors	18-Nov-25	
36	14	contact Judicium to see if they can offer us a federation discount	Alice de Croos	ASAP	
37	14	investigate GDPT training for Governors	Alice de Croos	ASAP	
38	26	contact Aaron regarding leading Governors Strategy Day	Laura Kerr/ Christian Lim	ASAP	

39	26	update GovHub and send Outlook meeting invitations for Strategy Day and January FGB/Governors' Day	Clerk	ASAP	completed
40	25	post on GovHub regarding new email addressess	Clerk	ASAP	Completed