



ALFRED SUTTON PRIMARY SCHOOL
Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Resources Coordination Committee
Wednesday 6th November 2024. 7pm.

Present: Adedayo Benson (Chair); Dave Dymond; Kate Gordon; Andrew Burrell; Robert Howell; David Colwill; Sze-Hang Wong.

In Attendance: Alice de Croos – SBM.

Apologies: No apologies had been sent.

Clerk: Deborah Savage

Agenda Item	Permission was sought to record the meeting for the purposes of the minutes and this was given. The meeting was recorded and the recording was deleted after the minutes were written.
1	Welcome and Apologies. The Chair welcomed all to the first RCC meeting of the new academic year. There had been no apologies.
2	Declarations of Interest. There were no declarations.
3	Minutes of the meeting held on 24th April 2024. The minutes from 24 th April had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were accepted as a true record. ACTION: they will be signed in GovernorHub as soon as possible. Actions were reviewed. The staff/governor lunch in school did not take place in the summer term – there were lots of accommodation changes made including turning the staff room (where such lunches had been held previously) into the ARP.
4	Matters Arising. There were no matters arising.
5	Review of 2nd Quarter Finance Report. This report, along with accompanying notes, had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting. The report was in a new format – supplied by the same company that created the report format used by the EHT to report to the GB. It includes some benchmarking data. The SBM informed the GB that she was trying out this report – which did seem to have some “bugs” that need to be fixed.

The 2Q report is the financial position now we are half way through the financial year and this predicts a healthy end to the financial year – but this can be very hard to predict. Currently, our expected surplus for this year stands at a little over £77K.

Staffing

The 5.5% pay award for teachers will be paid in the November pay run along with any increments due. The support staff cost of living pay increase will also be paid in the November pay run. Both will be back dated to 1st September.

Governor Question: On page 2 of the report where there are benchmarking figures comparing our income & expenditure per pupil against the local, national and similar schools – our figures do seem very different. Can you explain this? We do have concerns over the accuracy of this report, especially the benchmarking comparisons. For example, the figure for self-generated income is incorrect and there appear to be lots of figures that are out of sync. I have emailed the company and asked for clarification of their data source but had had no response yet. This is a new product that clearly needs some work. We do know however, that compared to similar schools we perform ok in comparison. For benchmarking figures, it is better to use the DfE website, as we do when we complete the SFVS. The DfE website uses colour coding and it is much easier to understand. There have been no problems with the data on the DfE site.

Governor Comment: This report has us performing very differently to the data produced in the league tables and DfE data. The figures in this report do not look right at all and some are misleading. For example, it records us as having 667 children on roll with a capacity of 682. We are not actually 15 children below capacity – this is to do with nursery places and how half day and full-time places are calculated. The school is actually full.

Governor Question: Our energy usage is also higher than the average in other schools according to this table. Again, we would question the accuracy of these figures. School sites are never the same and we have some old buildings.

Governor Question: With the apparent issues in the package, are you keeping it? We currently have a £20 trial subscription at the moment. We have not yet made a decision – we may keep elements of it. We will look at DfE benchmarking data in February, so we can make a comparison then to the figures reported by this package.

Governor Comment/Question: Thank you for your commentary notes which are very useful. Looking at the chart of Key Financial Checks on page 7 of the report – there are some red areas including that fact the finance committee does not meet 6 times a year. Should we be concerned by this? When we complete the SFVS, which we do annually, that requires us to report on the financials of the school 6 times a year. We do report 6 times a year as the SBM reports to the GB 4 times a year and twice a year to the LA. There are two areas that need improvement and these do have plans in place but time is limited at the moment as the SBM manages the finances of both schools. There are improvements that the school wants to make, and these will be done in the future, but currently time is very limited.

	<p>Governor Question: The figures on page 4 of the report – the forecast expenditure is based on an algorithm? Yes – these figures are the same actually that were predicted when we reported to governors in April when we produced a 5-year forecast where the school is predicted to be in the red in future years. Predicting 3 -5 years ahead is very hard – for example after the recent budget we are very concerned about our NI payments for next year. We recently read an article about how hard budget setting is in schools, especially a few years into the future. We have had 19 staffing changes since budget setting in April and all these changes have financial implications. All schools are concerned about the level of school funding and it is really difficult to recruit Support Staff as pay is so low. It is true to say that most schools in Reading are worse off than us as Federation has put us in a much better financial position. ACTION: SBM to send article on school budget setting to governors.</p> <p>Governor Question: Can you update us on the position with the auditors? Yes – we have just got the School Fund Account back, audited and we are trying to find an alternative auditor for next year – however this is proving hard.</p> <p>The SBM was thanked for her report to governors.</p>
6	<p>Pay Committee Verbal Update.</p> <p>The Chair of the Pay Committee gave a verbal report to the meeting: <i>The Pay Committee met on October 23rd^h to consider the EHT recommendations on increment rises awarded for teaching staff after the last round of Performance Management. The committee looked at a variety of redacted PM reports from a range of teaching posts including unqualified, UPS, AHT and DHT reports and concluded that they had followed the PM process and were carried out fairly with targets being appropriate to the individual staff member and differentiated for different roles. Targets were allied to the SDP. The committee noted that the school had made efforts to ensure that the PM process had minimal impact of staff workloads. After confirmation from the SBM that there was budget allowance set aside to fund increment rises,</i> DECISION: the committee unanimously approved the increment rises recommended by the EHT.</p>
7	<p>Policies for approval / adopting.</p> <p>All policies had been circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>a) Charging & Remissions policy (no changes since last approval) DECISION: Approved. Governor Question: Is it possible to work out how much any exemptions from payment cost us? We don't have a total figure no, but we don't deny a child a place on financial grounds. There is money allocated from the Pupil Premium budget every year to help fund trips for eligible children. Governors asked if it was possible in the future to supply a figure for the cost of exemptions covered by the school. It was noted that a new recommendation has been made that cooking ingredients should be included in this policy in the future.</p> <p>b) Data Protection Policy (no changes since last approved). Governor Question: Have there been any breaches since the last report? No – but we have had some FOI requests. There is no requirement to inform governors about FOI requests. These were responded to within the deadline. DECISION: Approved.</p>

	<p>c) Staff Grievance Policy (RBC Policy for adopting). Governor Comment: There are some typos in this policy, but as it is an RBC policy we are reluctant to make any changes to this. DECISION: Adopted.</p> <p>d) Health & Safety Policy (Some comments had been sent to the SBM by the H&S link Governor already) DECISION: Approved.</p> <p>e) Appraisal Scheme for Support Staff – RBC Policy. DECISION: Adopted.</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Site tours and H&S verbal update.</p> <p>The Link Governor for H&S gave a verbal report to the Committee. The modular building was removed as planned during the half term break and some photos of its removal had been shared with governors prior to the meeting. There were no issues with its removal which was a complex operation. The foundations of the building remain to be dealt with and the floating road is still in place for the completion of the works.</p> <p>Site tours for this year are on track, and following a resident complaint about untidy and litter strewn premises hedge cutting has been carried out and the site is looking a great deal tidier now.</p> <p>The roof maintenance work has been put back to the spring or summer term now – which is fine as long as it is outside the time of statutory testing for the children as it will be noisy.</p> <p>The site manager has now left and Mr Jake Dawson was commended for the work he has done since the site team has been understaffed. Governors were encouraged to thank him if they see him on site.</p> <p>It was recognised that there are now 9 staff members who are working across both schools – something that is going well although everyone is aware that the biggest pressure now is on the SBM. This is a situation that is not viable moving forward and administration of the Federation is being looked at for the longer term. Staff are buoyant and looking forward to federation putting us on a firmer ground.</p> <p>Governor Question: I would like to ask the SBM how she is and how she is coping? It is an awful lot of work – producing two financial reports and policies in both schools but I do get support. We have some new job roles that are currently with the RBC HR team to be graded. Once filled, we hope these posts will support the running of the school operationally so the SBM can focus on more strategic issues.</p> <p>The committee chair asked that the school inform governors if there is anything they can do to support and he thanked the whole school team for their work.</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Wellbeing.</p> <p>There was a discussion amongst governors about their own wellbeing.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Issues for parents/FGB/Confidentiality.</p>

	There were no items that need communicating to parents/carers, nor anything to update the FGB with at the next meeting. There were no items of a confidential nature requiring Part 2 minutes.
11	<p>AOB.</p> <p>Governors asked about the Federation consultation and the level of engagement from parents. Reminders about the open meetings being held in both schools on 11th November will be sent out to parents.</p> <p>PEC</p> <p>There was a reminder that governors have the opportunity to visit school on Wednesday next week – 13th November – to talk to staff leads about their subject work. This will be in the staff meeting slot. Governors would be able to hear from staff and look at books and ask about work being done to strengthen assessment – an Ofsted area of improvement. Practicalities were discussed which would be followed up in the coming days. Those unable to attend on 13th could hold meetings via Teams with subject groups which are best arranged via the DHTs. Governors were reminded that a short report should be written following the visit ready to share in the PEC meeting in early December. The format of the report should be the one used last year – which is available to download from the PEC meeting folder in Governor Hub.</p> <p>Governors were thanked for their attendance at this Resources meeting.</p>
12	Date of next Meeting: To be confirmed after Federation

Meeting Closed: 8pm

Actions:

Action:	Owner:
Sign approved RCC minutes from 24th April 2024 in Governor Hub	AB
SBM to send article about the challenges of school budget setting to governors.	SBM

Attendance at RCC meetings 2024/25 (1 meeting to date)

Dave Dymond	1 of 1 meeting
Robert Howell	1 of 1 meeting
Adedayo Benson	1 of 1 meeting
Kate Gordon	1 of 1 meeting
Andrew Burrell	1 of 1 meeting
Hajar Alami	0 of 1 meeting
Vincent Onuchi	0 of 1 meeting
David Colwill	1 of 1 meeting
Sze-Hang Wong	1 of 1 meeting