

## Burlington Junior School

### Minutes of the Resource Committee held on Friday 7 October 2022

**Present:** Mr S Bown (Chair)  
Mr S Arbuthnot  
Mrs R Campbell  
Mr S Gilmore  
Mr J Kewley  
Mr N Shah  
Revd K Thomas  
Mrs P Utting

**In attendance:** Mr M Blow, Deputy Headteacher  
Mrs J Kerr, School Business Manager  
Ms K Bridgman, Clerk

#### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Mrs Hakim, Mrs Hall, Mrs Hickman and Mr West.

#### **2. Election of Chair**

Mr Bown was appointed as Chair of the Resource Committee.

#### **3. Declaration of Business Interests**

Governors were asked if they had any business interest to declare. No business interests were declared.

#### **4. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2022 were approved.

#### **5. Matters Arising**

- **It was agreed to review the Sickness Policy at the next meeting on Friday 10 March 2023.**
- **It was agreed that Resource Committee meetings will continue to be held at 8.00 am and will be virtual.**

#### **6. 2022-2023 Budget**

The School Business Manager reported that there have been a lot of changes to the budget. She explained that the budget was originally approved with a deficit of £89K. This has now reduced to £35K due to the school receiving more income than was expected and there have been also some staff changes, including the appointment of an ECT.

The School Business Manager reported that the government are proposing pay increases for teachers and support staff but schools are not receiving any additional income to cover this. The teachers' pay increase will be from 1 September 2022 and will be an additional £69K for the next six months. The support staff pay increase will be backdated from 1 April 2022 and is an additional £53K. This will have a big impact on the budget. It is very difficult to budget and plan for future years due to the lack of information about the proposed pay increases from the government and AfC.

*Governors asked about the school's business rate charges.* The School Business Manager explained that this was never previously included in the budget. The school makes this payment and it is then refunded by the local authority. There was a discussion on the school's rateable value and whether this was correct. The School Business Manager explained that this is reviewed by the local authority every few years. The Headteacher felt that this needed to be reviewed as part of the new build project.

The School Business Manager reported that the school currently has a fixed rate for energy and the contract will need to be reviewed next year. The school uses a broker to facilitate this contract for the school.

The School Business Manager reported that she met with the Headteacher and the Deputy Headteacher to review the unspent covid income which the school received for the catch up tutoring. The Deputy Headteacher gave details of the different interventions given to invited pupils last year. He explained that the model of teachers providing tuition has the biggest impact but this is not sustainable due to their workload.

The School Business Manager reported that the financial situation is very difficult due to the pay increases and higher expenditure. The school is likely to have a deficit budget next year. The Headteacher explained that a survey is being carried out with all Kingston Headteachers on deficit budgets. The Headteachers have regularly meetings with the local MPs and the results of the survey will be presented to them. The School's Forum is also aware of the difficulties being faced by schools and the unions are now talking about taking strike action. The situation is very serious and it is hoped that schools will receive more financial support.

There was a discussion on the pay increases and the staffing budget. It was noted that the pay increases were still recommendations and have not yet been confirmed. The School Business Manager explained that the school is able to set a deficit budget due to having a reserve fund. Schools that do not have any reserve fund cannot set a deficit budget. The local authority will become involved with a school that cannot set a balanced budget and does not have any reserve fund. A recovery action plan would be put in place.

*The Chair asked about the devolved capital funding.* The School Business Manager explained that this has been used. It was noted that this funding is ring fenced for spending on IT equipment and premises work.

*The Chair asked about the School Fund Account.* The School Business Manager confirmed that the money was still in a separate account and will probably need to be used for the new build.

## **7. Personnel Items**

The Headteacher reported that a teaching assistant was leaving at half term and another teaching assistant is planning to relocate. The school has recruited two new teaching assistants but there is little interest in these roles. Schools are struggling to recruit support staff

## **8. Pay Policy**

The Headteacher reported that due to the potential pay increases the staffing budget could be 110% of the total budget share within the next three years which is not sustainable. She recommended that the Pay Policy was amended to state that the school was no longer accepting applications for the upper pay spine at the current time. The school has to reduce its staffing budget as it could potentially have very experienced and expensive staff. This would be reviewed as there were staff changes at the school.

There was a discussion on the impact of this change and how this would be conveyed to staff. It was recognised that this may have to come into effect from September 2023.

*The Chair asked about the staffing arrangements when the school becomes 5FE.* The Headteacher explained that the school does not have to consider this at the current time.

**Governors agreed that the school would no longer accept any threshold applications from September 2023 and the Headteacher will seek advice on this before the Pay Policy is changed.**

## **9. Premises Issues**

The Headteacher reported that the plans are for the new build to start Easter 2023.

## **10. School Meals Contract**

The School Business Manager reported that the current school meals supplier has been given notice and a consultant has been employed to undertake the tendering process. This is a shared contract with the infant school and the two schools are working closely together on this. The current provider has been invited to tender for this contract as the school is not unhappy with the food they provide but has to undertake this process. The Chair of the Resource Committee and two representatives from the infant school will be involved in the process for choosing a new provider.

*Governors queried whether there will be a change in the cost of the meals provided.* The School Business Manager gave details of the current costs and what it includes. She explained that the consultant will do all the initial consultations due to this being a complicated process. The current kitchen staff would be taped over to any new provider and will continue to be part of the school.

There was a discussion on the tendering process and concerns were expressed that the cost of the meals could increase as this was not a good time to do any procurement. The School Business Manager felt that a lot of companies will be interested in tendering as it is a big contract. It has always been the flagship school for the current provider, Radish. It is a three year contract and it is felt that the school will get a good deal.

The Headteacher reported that a lot of Kingston schools have a group contract with Caterlink as they cannot provide their own meals. The school will ensure that the meals do not cost more than those provided by Caterlink as it can just join this contract.

## **11. Any Other Business**

### **Lidl**

The Deputy Headteacher reported that the plans are now in place for a new Lidl store to be opened opposite the school and this may impact on parents being able to use the car park. There was a discussion on the new store and the impact this could have on local traffic.

### **School Census**

The School Business Manager reported that the census was completed on 6 October and the school has seven vacancies.

## **12. Date of Next Meeting**

Friday 10 March 2023 at 8.00 am

Agenda: Sickness Policy  
2023-2024 Budget