

FINANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD AT 3.00 pm ON THURSDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2018
at THE SUTTON ACADEMY

MINUTES

MEMBERSHIP:

- * Dr J Burford
- * Mr G Pennington (**Chair**)
- * Mr N Jackson
- Mr R Molloy
- * Mrs A Sherman (**Principal**)
- Mr P Winter

* Denotes Member present

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs J Tallant, Chief Financial Officer
Mrs C Jones, Clerk to the Governing Body

In the absence of Mr R Molloy, Mr G Pennington took the Chair.

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF LOYALTY

All Governors present acknowledged at the start of today's meeting that whilst potential conflicts of loyalties may exist, they must act only in the interests of the Academy.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr R Molloy and Mr P Winter.

3 NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

- a New Clerk to the Governing Body (**Chair of the GB**)
- b 1 Residential visit/trip (**Principal**)

4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2017

The open and confidential minutes of the previous meeting were **agreed** and signed as a correct record, subject to the following adjustment: The first page of the minutes should have indicated the following:

'In the absence of Mr R Molloy, Mr G Pennington took the Chair'.

5 MATTERS ARISING

Open Minutes:

- a Minute 5c p2 – Matters arising - Proposed scheme of delegation for the Governing Body

As directed by the Governing Body at the meeting held on 5 December 2017, the scheme of delegation for the Governing Body had been reviewed by the Principal and Clerk to mirror precisely the Academy's current working practices and terminology. The scheme of delegation will be posted on the website once completely finalised.

ACTION: Clerk to post the scheme of delegation on the website once completely finalised

- b Minute 5e p2 – Academy Development Plan

It was confirmed that the letters of thanks to staff who had offered their services to disadvantaged pupils in a parental role had been sent out.

- c Minute 7 p4 – Draft Annual Report and Financial Statements: 31 August 2017

The Annual Report and Financial Statements to 31 August 2017 had been approved by both the Governing Body and the Trust Body.

- d Minute 15 p7 – Annual CPD Report

The Annual CPD Report was scheduled to be presented at the next meeting of the Standards and Curriculum Committee.

- e Minute 18 – Governance Skills Audit

The identified Governor Development Sessions will be scheduled to be taken at the start of each Governing Body meeting, commencing with the 22 March 2018 meeting, at which the topic relating to disadvantaged pupils and how Governors should discharge their duties in ensuring parity in performance for this group of pupils, will be taken.

Confidential Minutes:

- f Minute 6a p9 – Matters arising – NJC Local Government Salary Scales increase (non-teachers' pay award)

Consideration regarding the new staffing contractual arrangements with advice from the sponsor HR department remains an ongoing longer-term action. A progress report was requested at the next meeting.

ACTION: CFO to present a progress report on advice regarding the new contractual arrangements at the next Committee meeting

The feedback report following the recent DfE's visit was reported at this point, with the full report to be presented at the next meeting of the Governing Body, for External Governors only.

- g Minute 13 p9 – Performance appraisal and annual pay progressions

It was confirmed that the authorising of Chair's action in relation to the approval of the annual staff pay progressions had been addressed by the Governing Body.

h Minute 17 p10 – Cleaning Costs Benchmarking Report

It was reported that the Chair of Governors would bring up the topic with the Local Authority about the past historical pension deficit costs at the first opportunity.

ACTION: Dr J Burford – previously identified action

6 ACADEMY DEVELOPMENT PLAN:

6.1 Key Priorities: Financial implications

The Principal reported that all the financial implications relating to the key priorities of the Academy Development Plan were contained within the approved budget. A review of the Plan was currently underway by the ALT, with no issues reported, and value-for-money evidenced. The Committee re-affirmed the importance of obtaining feedback from staff relating to CPD.

6.2 Action Plan: Disadvantaged Pupils development plan

The Principal presented the latest Disadvantaged Pupils/Pupil Premium (PP) development plan, and the Committee was requested to focus on the financial implications of implementing the plan.

The Committee discussed pupil homework, and it was **agreed** that homework setting and associated progress of pupils should become an appraisal target for staff.

ACTION: Principal to introduce an appraisal target for staff relating to homework setting and progress

The Committee welcomed the reported improvements in pupil attendance.

The Disadvantaged Pupils/Pupil Premium development plan was accepted by the Finance and HR Committee as presented.

7 ADMISSIONS POLICY 2019

The Principal presented the Admissions Policies for 2019 and 2020, both of which were approved by the Finance and HR Committee as presented.

8 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS: 31 JANUARY 2018

The CFO presented the Management Accounts for the period ended 31 January 2018, which identified significant variances against the current forecast for the financial year 2017/18. The Academy's financial performance was summarised in the KPI Dashboard presented, with further detail on each of the KPIs included within the presented report.

It was reported that The Sutton Academy's financial results showed a deficit of [£47k] for the period ending 31 January 2018. The forecasted deficit for the same period was reported at [£42k], giving rise to an adverse variance of £5k.

The variance from the planned surplus was a result of the positive variances in income of £17k, and an adverse variance on overall expenditure of [£22k]. The main income variance related to a timing variance in relation to premises costs.

Cash and bank deposits at 31 January 2018 were reported at £503k compared with the £634k identified in the financial plan, giving rise to a negative cash variance against budget for the year to date of [£131k]. The associated detail was analysed within the presented commentary.

The importance of continuing to build the Academy's cash reserve position was emphasised by the Committee. The Committee welcomed the reduction in the KPI relating to staff costs as a percentage of income.

The Finance and HR Committee approved the Management Accounts to 31 January 2018, and recommended approval of the Management Accounts to the Governing Body.

9 CAPITAL PROJECT REVIEW REQUEST

9.1 IT Replacement Plan:

The CFO presented a report which requested approval for the implementation of a 3-year plan to replace IT equipment that was beyond its useful life and out of warranty, to ensure greater stability and reliability of the network in order that staff and students can teach and support lessons more effectively.

The Committee discussed the high initial cost of the IT network when first implemented at the Academy, and asked whether any external checks had been undertaken in relation to the presented capital request to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and value for money. The Principal confirmed that an external company had reviewed the position as part of the overall review. However, the Committee **agreed** that the sponsor CFO, who was also the Chair of this Committee, be requested to oversee a 'sensitivity' check of the proposal.

ACTION: Dr Burford to request the sponsor CFO and member of this Committee to oversee a 'sensitivity' check on the IT replacement plan for the Academy

10 HR KEY PI REPORT

The Principal presented the HR Key PI report, which included a detailed staffing profile of teaching staff and support staff, including ages, gender and ethnicity profiles.

The report also included details of the staffing absence statistics, and also the number of appointments and leavers.

The Committee discussed the current occupational health arrangements for the Academy and the effectiveness of the arrangements.

The latest HR Key PI report was accepted by the Finance and HR Committee as presented.

11 PLANNED SAVINGS/EFFICIENCIES REPORT

The Finance and HR Committee considered the above item to be confidential, with the details therefore recorded within the confidential minutes of this meeting.

12 PAY PROGRESSION AWARDS (NON-TEACHING STAFF)

The CFO presented a report which outlined the NJS Pay Award details for support staff which was payable from 1 April 2018 as part of contractual agreements.

It was noted that all eligible staff had completed a satisfactory annual appraisal.

The associated costs for the 2-year pay deal (April 2018 to March 2020) were currently under consultation, with the potential costs as detailed within the presented report.

The Principal added that £4k had been saved through the implementation of the Leave Policy, which was welcomed by the Committee.

The Finance and HR Committee approved the incremental pay award for non-teaching staff, as detailed presented report, and recommended approval to the Governing Body. The NJC pay offer was also approved, subject to the national agreements being reached.

ACTION: CFO to present the Pay Progression Awards for non-teaching staff to the Governing Body for approval; the NJC pay offer was also approved, subject to the national agreements being reached, as recommended by the Finance and HR Committee

13 URGENT ITEMS (as notified under Item 3 above)

a New Clerk to the Governing Body (Chair of the GB)

Dr Burford reported that the new Clerk to the Governing Body was due to commence post on 12 March 2018, with some background relating to the Clerk's previous experience provided for information. The new Clerk would attend her first Governing Body meeting on 13 March 2018 as part of the handover period with the new Clerk, who would retire on that day.

b 1 Residential visit/trip (Principal)

The following residential visit/trip was approved by the Committee:

- A maths educational residential visit/trip (scheduled on 23 February 2018) to Rivington Pike for Y11 pupils. The trip was primarily for revision purposed and aimed at primarily but not solely disadvantaged pupils. This venue had been used previously by the Academy and it was confirmed that all tasks and activities were in line with DfE requirements, including parental consent. The Committee asked the Principal to ensure that all activities, including the 'night walk' were thoroughly risk assessed before approval.

14 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING: 3.00 pm on Thursday 14 June 2018.