



Alma Park Primary School
Achievement Partnership Success
Staffing and Budget Committee Meeting (remote)
Thursday 7th October 2021 at 4:30 pm
Minutes

Present:

Afshad Ahmed	Parent Governor
David Cooke	LA Governor (Chair)
Karen Houghton	Deputy Headteacher, Co-opted Governor
Richard Williams	Headteacher

Apologies:

Kate Hickman	Co-opted Governor
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In attendance:

Kathy Crotty	Clerk
Anne Smyth	School Business Manager (SBM)

Any text in red bold italics represents Governor question (Q); challenge (C); Governor and/or clerk support (S). Black bold upright represents decisions and actions.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Governors were welcomed to the meeting by David Cooke. Shazia Dar has resigned since the last meeting and formal thanks were expressed for her work on this committee. Richard Williams was welcomed to his first Staffing & Budget Committee meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies have been received and accepted from Kate Hickman.

3. Elections

The election of chair of this committee will occur at the first GB (Governing Body) meeting of the new academic year scheduled for the 14th October 2021.

4. Approval of Terms of Reference

It was clarified the ToR for this committee must specify a minimum of three Governors of which two are non-staff.

Governors formally approved the terms of reference for this committee

5. Declaration of Any Other Business

There was one item reported in the Part 2 Confidential minutes

6. Declaration of Non/Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of any interests relating to business to be discussed at this meeting. Afshan Ahmed has two children in the school.

7. Minutes of last meeting held 10th June 2021 and matters arising.

The minutes of the meeting held 10th June 2021 were approved as an accurate record.

Matters arising

Action: Anne Smyth to seek advice about the pension liabilities if the (school meals) company is not part of the GM pension scheme.

There are no pension liabilities as Trafford MBC were awarded the contract and they are part of the Greater Manchester Pension fund

8. General principles of the PE budget allocation

- This agenda item related to a previous discussion about the use of the sports premium budget to employ lunchtime coaches and a concern raised about whether this was the best use of the grant funding. The Headteacher informed Governors there will be a review of the use of funds this financial year. The Chair reported the funding is designed to upskill teachers and the staff governor had questioned if this was happening. The budget this year is healthy and some of this could be reallocated into the PE grant. There are two new PE co-ordinators this academic year.

Q: Will these coordinators be making the decision about the best use of the funding?

They are new to the role and the leadership will be discussing the strategy for this year with the new co-ordinators. Quality first teaching is the priority, and the sports and PP (Pupil Premium) will support this. The offering of dance, PE and gymnastics will be of the highest quality.

- The Headteacher asked Governors if the school would like to allocate funds for CPD and £5,000 was identified as a healthy amount. It was clarified this relates to this year's allocation for expenditure in this financial year. The funds are currently used to pay for coaches and there is a commitment to continue this arrangement for this for this financial year. There is a surplus this year which could cover CPD costs.

Action: RW to explore PE providers and explore PE hubs across Manchester.

- It was clarified the previous heads felt the coaches were value for money, but they were not sufficiently targeting all children and key groups were not sufficiently engaging in activities. LOs (lunchtime organisers) were not sufficiently developing their skills.

C: If the school develops in-house capabilities would the changes needed then occur?

The Headteacher reported some current TAs may be able to work in the playground and there is encouragement to improve the participation of girls. The Headteacher was familiar with AYR (all year round) "this girl can areas" which can be run by TAs. Training is needed and TAs need timetable changes.

Governors approved moving £5,000 into the CPD cost centre for Quality First Teaching and the exploration of “this girl can” areas.

Action: RW to bring a formal proposal to the Spring 2 Staffing & Budget committee meeting regarding “this girl can” for lunchtime activities.

9. Finance and Current Budget Update

Opening budget report, budget variances for 2021/22 (CFR in-year 2021/22) & three year budget projections

- The report was circulated in advance of the meeting on TG. The budget currently projects an in-year surplus of £39,971 with a cumulative surplus of £192,115. The three year CFR projects a surplus and this means Governors can set a three year budget. The LA now requires a three year budget to oversee any potential future deficit. There are no issues at Alma Park. New staff will be placed on a fixed term contract.
- There are four supply TAs in the budget until end of the financial year (April 2022). The budget will have £44,000 extra when this supply ends. This school had reduced the supply budget significantly before the pandemic.
- The school led recovery plan is funded by extra money, allocated over two financial years, which is just under £30,000. The criteria for use can include staffing.
- The NFF (National Funding Formula) is still not known, and this can affect future budgets. The school led PP was part of today’s census, the aim is to use this funding directly on the children. This school has a slight increase in PP eligibility . (The change of census date from January to October resulted in a £2M loss of funding across Manchester).

Q: The PP funding in the budget has dropped, is this a pessimistic estimate?

The PP Funding will drop significantly in the next few financial years as the current Yr6 and Yr5 has 20 Ever6 premium children, the loss of these 40 children is not expected to be replaced. There are only four eligible children in the current nursery. The FSM (free school meals) area of the budget always fluctuates.

Q: Spending on staff development, training, learning resources and bought-in professional services is reduced, is there are a reason for this?

The bought-in professional services includes a therapist who is on maternity leave until Easter. There £56,000 spent out of the £100,000 allocated and some of this will be spent on supply TAs. As stated previously the supply TA’s have been allocated within the budget until the end of the financial year, this supply will no longer be need long term due to staff being employed once advertised. This will bring back just over £44,000 which will then mean the Allocated and Actual spend will be closer. The costs do fluctuate. There is £83,000 allocated for learning resources and only £36,000 has been spent so far but this will be spent by the end of the financial year. School closures meant some resources were not used last year

CPD requests

- The school needs a new SENDCO. An Assistant Head is keen to train at a cost of £2,000 and she will need support in this role after the staff changes at the end of the spring term.
- Two staff are keen to develop and enrol on the NPQSL (National Professional Qualification for Senior Leaders). The Headteacher requested funding to support this at a cost of £1,300 each.

Governors formally approved the request to support two staff attaining the NPQSL

- There is an outstanding amount in the CPD for the British Council, the expenditure was affected by the pandemic, and this might need to be returned.

Governors formally approved increasing the CPD budget by £4,000

LA Monitoring Period 6 (April-September 2021)

The P6 budget monitoring report has been sent to the LA (Local Authority). There were no questions on this report.

Proposed Revised Budget 2021-2022 / Nursery numbers and funding

- The SBM reported there are in total 42 children in the nursery, there are three full-time HI (hearing impaired) children, 14 full-time children who are paying or with the full-time code. There are 25 children attending part time. The three day part-time offering seems to be working well, and Karen Houghton was commended for organising the staffing. The spring term income has not yet been included in the budget.
- There has been some higher paid staff leave the school replaced by cheaper staff in recent months. There are 428 (Reception to Yr6) children on roll (Census day 7th October) meaning an increased income of three pupils than reported with these papers and a higher surplus. The PAN is 420 for these year groups. The HI resource base helps with the numbers.

C: How does this increase in PP numbers and the budget help the SIP?

It was explained the improved budget can further the priorities of the school.

Academic Year 2020-2021 Write Offs (if any)

There were no assets disposed of since the last report.

Approval of school fund

The school fund is audited and tends not to be used.

Governors formally approved the school fund.

10. Financial Competencies Matrix

Governors were asked if they identified any training needs. Governors on this committee are required to complete the R20 and return to the SMB. Governors were reminded there is LA training available, and Governors were aware of the information provided by The Key.

11. Health and Safety Report – Dave Cooke

- The chair has met with the Headteacher and highlighted the weaknesses in the system with regard to fire evacuation.

Q: What is being done about the company who provide the alarms?

The system changed some years ago from fire engines coming out when the alarm was set off, the school now must request a fire engine. If an alarm is activated the school is contacted to see if the fire service is needed. On this day there was no phone call, the company phoned the security G4S who followed up with a call to see if assistance is needed, this call arrived when everyone was back in the school building. The company claims they did ring before this time and the phone was not answered. There is no explanation.

Q: Does this happen with known fire alarm tests?

No, this function is switched off, this procedure is only for unknown alarms.

Q: When has there been an alarm previously and was there a phone call that time?

The last unplanned fire alarm was in the summer term and a phone call was made. This is the first time this system did not work.

- There is a fault in the sensors and these need replacing, the quote is for £2,500. To renew the whole loop will cost £8,000 and this might be more cost effective in the longer term. This is included in the £20,000 budget allocation.

Q: Is the bungalow included in these costs?

No, this is separate and will cost £3,510. The bungalow needs flashing lights rather than sound. This cost will then include the bungalow as part of the Alma Park fire system. The previous system worked well so Governors might want to keep the current system, but this has the risk of human error. (The current system relies on a call to the bungalow). Governors felt the upcoming fire risk assessment might make recommendations. It was felt the current system does not educate the children in the bungalow and there is a valuable life skill being missed. Governors were keen to explore if the sensory service would meet these costs.

Governors felt the risk of human error is high so approved the increase of the maintenance budget by a further £4,000 to £24,000 additional to cover the inclusion of the bungalow in the fire maintenance changes.

Anne Smyth left the meeting at 17:35

Governors formally noted the health and safety report actions.

The Headteacher reported on actions undertaken so far and there will be a calendar of health and safety repairs. There may be more delegation of duties associated with the statutory checks

Trip Hazards and perimeter fencing needs review, and this will be in consultation with the LA.

12. Ground Project Update

The Headteacher is keen to explore more play space for the junior children. The ground project was a scheme developed by parents regarding the upgrade of the school grounds

13. Staffing /HR Update

Site management capacity

The Headteacher reported before the summer there was a site manager and deputy site manager and now there is only one site manager working a split shift with no person on site during the day. Last term the previous Headteacher was opening and closing the building due to staffing issues, and this creates capacity issues. There are also duties needed during the day to maintain safety on the school premises. The Headteacher proposed employing a private company for site management and cleaning. The current staff would be TUPE'd to protect their rights. This would improve capacity and provide more key holders.

Governors agreed this contingency is needed and capacity needs to improve.

Q: How many staff would be TUPE'd to an outsourced company?

There are four staff on payroll and one of these is on long term sick. This means there are only three staff in the building and there are two are supply cleaners. A LO is currently undertaking some cleaning duties.

Action: The SBM will explore the tender process for cleaning services and site management.

Q: Are new staff settling in?

Governors were informed there are two new teachers in Yr1 and Yr2 who have completed their induction. The new Assistant Headteacher has much enthusiasm. A supply teacher working in reception (who has done part of her NQT at Alma Park) has agreed to now work in Alma Park until the end of the year as a TA3 which was included in the staffing budget. The school has employed two additional TAs, one is bilingual and knows the school well. There has been a replacement appointment of a TA4 who is skilled and positive. She is flexible with deployment and working well with the team in nursery for three days and undertaking some forest school teaching. The Deputy Headteacher is pleased with all new appointments. The Deputy Headteacher reported the SLT changes were working well.

The catch up budget will fund a KS2 teacher to support targeted children in their class. There are two children with an EHCP (Education Health and Care Plan) in reception, they may yet move to different settings and are currently supported by two staff. This is costed into the budget and the highest level of funding was attained. £7,800 is the highest amount allocated for the children with the highest level of need.

14. Premises Update

- There is an additional £20,000 allocated for repairs and maintenance and expenditure is planned for the soft surface; finger guards; new air conditioners; and there is some decorating needed. Quotes for replacement fire and smoke detectors have been sought at a cost of £8,000 and this is included in the budget.
- There are leaks in the school and expenditure is needed. The conservatory is probably beyond repair. The building is over a century old, so this is to be expected. There are drainage issues in the playground. The Headteacher will devise a rolling three year programme of decoration and there are mismatched doors which need replacing. Furniture also needs replacing and the budget should be able to withstand this.
- The chair raised the issue of storage in the classroom, Yr3 have not yet had this work undertaken

Afshan Ahmed left the meeting at 17:50

15. Safeguarding Issues

There has been 19 positive covid cases in the school, the Manchester Infection Management Team informed the school this one case short of an outbreak and advice was given about procedures and protocols. Small steps are being taken to return to pre-pandemic systems. There were six cases in Yr6 in two different classes, mainly household transmission. The highest age bracket is throughout the city is 13 and 14 year olds. There are also staff testing positive.

16. Policies & Procedures

The meeting was not quorate at this point so approval of these policies will be moved to the FGB meeting scheduled for the 14th October 2021.

Appraisal Policy; Charging Policy; Business Continuity Plan; Lettings Policy; Maternity and Paternity Policy; Pay Policy; and the Safer Recruitment Policy.

17. AOB

There were no items of any other business.

18. Dates of 2021/22 meetings: Thursdays 4.30pm – 6 pm

- 18th November 2021
- 3rd February 2022
- 17th March 2022
- 12th May 2022
- 23rd June 2022

A handwritten signature in blue ink on lined paper. The signature reads "DRCooke" with a horizontal line underneath.

Signed..... Date: 18th November 2021

David Cooke – Chair of Staffing & Budget Committee

The meeting ended at 18:05

Summary of actions

- Action: RW to explore PE providers and explore PE hubs across Manchester.
- Action: RW to bring a formal proposal to the Spring 2 Staffing & Budget committee meeting regarding “this girl can” for lunchtime activities.
- Action: The SBM will explore the tender process for cleaning services & site management.