

# CARLTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2017 at 5.30pm

**Attendance:**

Tim Carew – **Chair**  
 Jacqueline Phelan – **Headteacher**  
 Sarah Kirkness  
 Jessie Brill  
 Mandi Howells  
 Michael Hollis  
 Yiannos Theodoridis  
 Georgina Harcourt-Brown  
 Jo Lomax (*Bursar*)

**Others Present:** Pete McGuigan – Governor Support Clerk

	<b>WELCOME</b>	<b>Action</b>
	Tim (TC) welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 5.35	
<b>1.</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>1.1</b>	There were no apologies for absence.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>2.1</b>	Governors unanimously agreed for Tim Carew (TC) to continue as Chair for the 2017-2018 school year.  Governors also agreed there was no need for a Vice Chair for the committee.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>3.1</b>	Jaqueline (JP) reported that in light of the high cost of repairing the school dishwasher, she had authorised buying a new one, supplied by her husband, (at cost price) and would <b>send a covering explanation letter to Governors.</b>	<b>JP</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING (25.4.17) AND MATTERS ARISING</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Governors agreed the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting. Pete (PM to scan and circulate to the Chair, school and LA)</b>	<b>PM</b>

	Governors considered the actions arising from the previous meeting and noted that:	
4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JP reported that in line with other local schools, pupil numbers in Reception and Y1 were low (38 and 29 respectively, although some children in Reception would move into Y1 by the end of term), and were projected to remain low in 2018 and rise in 2019.</li> </ul> <p>Governors noted their concerns and observed that since the low numbers were mainly in Reception and Y1, it was easier to manage than if they were low throughout school.</p>	
4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JP reported that the BAM contract had been terminated (with 4 disputed invoices still to be resolved) and <b><u>Governors agreed for the school to use RM Premises for premises maintenance.</u></b></li> </ul>	
5.	<b>STAFFING UPDATE</b>	<b>Action</b>
5.1	<p>JP updated Governors on the current staffing reductions, reporting that overall the staff team had risen very positively to the challenges and adapted their roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JP had been supporting the Reading Recovery teacher to find another post and working with her Union, in light of the post being cut by the end of term</li> <li>The agreed reductions and changes to LSA contracts (with Midday Supervisor time included ) had helped to improve the pastoral care system at lunchtimes, with a positive impact on pupil behaviour</li> <li>Previous advice given on pay protection for an individual staff member had been incorrect and had now been remedied in agreement with the member of staff</li> <li>Adaptations to the admin team had worked well</li> <li>Governors had been involved in resolving an issue around LSA starting times</li> <li>It had been particularly difficult for staff employed on both temporary and core hours: their salary had been reduced as they lost the temporary hours.</li> <li>There were still some late salary adjustments to be enacted and they recognized the importance of accuracy, particularly with staff on multiple contracts</li> </ul> <p>Governors observed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JP and the staff, well-supported by Christine at Camden HR, had managed a difficult situation very well</li> <li>everyone was working SMARTER and were managing it with minimal negative impact on pupils and their learning</li> </ul>	
6.	<b>PREMISES UPDATE (MBHS Group)</b>	

6.1	<p>Michael (MH) reported that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the replacement dishwasher had cost £3800, compared to original quotes of £5k</li> <li>Gate problems caused by jammed locks had been resolved</li> </ul> <p>Through questioning, Governors established that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>plans to re-site classrooms were being considered, so that Y1 and Reception classes could be based on the ground floor with outdoor access, with the aim of improving oracy by extending good EYFS practice further into Y1, including a Forest School approach</li> <li>having all work completed by September 2018, although it was recognised that this would be hard to achieve</li> <li>£12k of devolved capital was already earmarked for the project</li> <li>If the full project could not be realised through lack of funding, e.g. the high cost of creating a new doorway, the concept was good and all effort should be made to achieve as much as possible for the greatest educational benefit to pupils</li> <li>that the work would be completed by September</li> </ul> <p><b>Governors agreed for JP to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>try to access more funding, working with Challenge Partners and Camden</b></li> <li><b>put the project out to tender to get quotations</b></li> <li><b>plan for the classes to be in place for September</b></li> </ul>	JP
7.	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	
7.1	<p>Governors considered the previously circulated 'Model Scheme of Delegation and Committee Terms of Reference (ToR), agreed a number of changes and noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the importance of the committee overseeing the judgements of the Headteacher</li> <li>the importance of the FGB also having oversight of finances, given the current budget challenges</li> <li>the need for other committees and the FGB to agree further changes to the document</li> </ul> <p><b>Pete (PM) to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>check with Camden on advice on procurement spending – in particular the number of quotations needed for different levels of work</b> (Governors agreed 3 quotes for any work over £5k and would take advice from the LA on higher-value projects)</li> <li><b>update the ToR document and send to the school and Chair</b></li> </ul> <p><b>JP to add the appropriate SDP and SEF priorities to the ToR</b></p>	<p>PM</p> <p>PM</p> <p>JP</p>

8	FINANCE REPORT 2016-17 BUDGET UPDATE	Action
8.1	<p>Jo (JL) and JP presented a costed list of the school's Traded Services (Service Level Agreements [SLAs] for 2017-18 and 2018-19, noting that they were necessary for the smooth running of the school.</p> <p>Through questioning and discussion, Governors highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although the cost of many SLAs was remaining stable, the level of service was being reduced, reflecting Camden's reduced ability to support schools financially, therefor now nearer to real market costs</li> <li>• Although it was possible to go outside of Camden Learning (CL) for services, most Camden schools continued to use CL</li> <li>• The IRIS Connect resources were valued by the school and were good CPD tools, enabling staff to take control of their own professional development at classroom level. The resources included classroom cameras linked to computers that staff could be used to record and comment on lessons from a variety of perspectives and reflect on the impact of teaching strategies - either alone, with colleagues or as part of performance management if chosen by the teacher. JP stressed that the system was a supportive CPD system, not a staff management system.</li> </ul>	
8.2	<p>JL presented information on cost-saving plans to reduce the number of photocopiers from 3 to 2, but with new, better-value and higher specification machines, giving an annual saving of £4116.</p> <p>Through questioning, Governors established that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a need in the school for high photocopying usage partly for teaching and learning and partly for increased administration</li> <li>• <b>There was a need for clear protocols for staff to ensure efficient use of the new photocopiers</b></li> <li>• <b>JL and JP should check on the precise specifications of the new machines before agreeing the contracts and aim to have them in place during the spring half term break.</b></li> </ul> <p><b><u>The Committee agreed for the school to change the photocopying contracts as discussed at the meeting, having checked on the detail of the technical specifications of the new machines.</u></b></p>	JL / JP
8.3	<p>JP and JL presented the September budget review (i.e. the mid year point in the financial year), showing a predicted surplus of just £1918 and highlighted a number of issues, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The impact of national changes to Nursery funding arrangements and the challenge of maintaining Nursery</li> </ul>	

	<p>provision within budget. JP reported that with reduced staffing (because there were fewer children attending Nursery) but reduced income (lower numbers and the majority of Carlton children were in the lower band of funding), the school was currently only just breaking even with costs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents and the school had worked well together to establish entitlement for Nursery funding, using the Nursery portal and this had to be updated quarterly for each child. JP noted that Tracey had been particularly effective in helping parents.</li> </ul> <p>Through questioning Governors established that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a danger that any increase in the number of children would require an increase in staffing and this could have a negative impact on the overall school budget. JP reported that Nursery was not currently full, but that this would change and JP expected there to be 30 children in Nursery by the spring half term.</li> <li>• If Nursery numbers were to exceed 33, there would be a likely increase in staffing and therefore costs. The calculation of ratios was complex (1:13 for teachers and Nursery Nurses, but with a range of factors, including pupil needs, the roles and responsibilities of teachers and Teaching Assistants and lunchtime provision, to be taken into account). <b>JP agreed to continue to monitor Nursery numbers, funding and staffing very carefully and keep Governors informed</b></li> </ul>	<b>JP</b>
<b>8.4</b>	<p>JL updated Governors on individual budget lines, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a 2% pay rise for teachers on Main Pay Scale and a 1% pay rise for those on Upper Pay or Leadership Scales</li> <li>• some support staff were yet to decide on opting out arrangements and this could be an extra cost to the school, of c. £3k</li> <li>• Electricity and Gas costs were likely to be higher than predicted</li> <li>• The £5k legal fees budget was in effect a contingency for any unseen problems during the year, with £1750 likely to be needed for redundancy advice</li> <li>• The BAM contract had been settled, bar a few outstanding invoices</li> </ul> <p>Through questioning, Governors established that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each budget line is a cost centre</li> <li>• It was not possible to switch the school's services supplier since it was part of a corporate deal, negotiated by LBC</li> <li>• The Health and Safety budget was mainly for testing (e.g. Portable Appliance Testing or for Legionnaires Disease).</li> <li>• To control costs, all purchases or orders had to be approved by JL and this seemed to be working well</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Governors noted that the school had a system in place to control</u></b></p>	

	<b><u>expenditure and approved the mid year budget review.</u></b>	
8.5	<p>Governors noted that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The School Fund Account (money raised through Private and Voluntary contributions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ was important for supporting staff and maintaining their welfare and morale</li> <li>○ had a balance of £7155</li> <li>○ <b>needed clear objectives and Terms of Reference (JP to write a draft statement, with proposed areas for expenditure and circulate it prior to the next FGB)</b></li> <li>○ <b>had been audited in 2013 and should be audited again in 2018</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>The Pay Policy would be reviewed at the next FGB on 21.11.17</b></li> <li>• <b>The committee that had reviewed the Complaints policy would report to the next FGB meeting on 21.11.17</b></li> <li>• <b><u>The Finance Committee approved the policy for management of staff absence and sick pay, with some small amendments.</u></b></li> </ul>	<p><b>JP</b></p> <p><b>JP / FGB</b></p> <p><b>FGB</b></p> <p>Complaints committee</p>
9.	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>	<b>Action</b>
9.1	<b><u>Governors agreed the accuracy of the previous Confidential Minutes (tabled) and noted that the contents were no longer confidential.</u></b>	
10.	<b>CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS</b>	<b>Action</b>
10.1	Governors noted that a staffing issue was being resolved by tribunal.	
11.	<b>DATES OF FURTHER FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS</b>	<b>Action</b>
11.1	<b>6.3.18</b> <b>8.5.18</b>	

There being no further public matters to discuss, the Chair thanked those present for attending and closed the public part of the meeting at 7.30 pm.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tim Carew, Chair of Finance and Resources Committee