

MINUTES OF MEETING

School: Round Hill Primary School
Meeting title: Meeting of the Finance & General Purpose Committee
Date and time: Tuesday, 12th November 2013 at 6.00pm
Location: At the school

Membership
'A' denotes absence

Mrs H Craik (chair)
Mr G Harvey
Mr R Jones (vice chair)
Mr R Di Miceli
A Ms J Munro
Mrs L Sun
Mr B Taylor
Mr A Nash (headteacher)

In attendance

Mrs C Matz
Ms J Hewitt (deputy headteacher)
A Ms S Yates
Mrs I Greenhalgh (business manager)
Mrs J Miller
Mrs H Williams
Mr R Mills (county council)
Ms S Williams (county council)
Mrs M Campbell (minuting secretary)

Action

F&GP/29/13 Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, introductions were made and apologies for absence were received from Mrs Munro and Ms Yates.

F&GP/30/13 Statement of pecuniary interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest for any items on the agenda.

F&GP/31/13 Maintenance and Estates Expansion plans

Ms Williams arrived at 6.15pm for this item.

Ms S Williams gave an explanation of her responsibilities in looking at capital projects to accommodate additional needs. Senior architects have visited the school and have done a desk top exercise to determine the possibility of a project on the school site and it is now at the feasibility stage. At this stage, more investment has been put into the project and project architects have been allocated, of whom Mr Mills is one. Mr Mills has started to work with the planners and the school to progress the development and is sharing the proposals at this meeting.

Mr Mills gave a power point presentation which included:

- Aerial view and outline of the new development

This shows how sections of the building will be brought onto site and there have been no objections to bringing sections through Lidl's car park. There will be a gateway through the boundary for pupils to enter and exit.

Ms S Williams said that talking to Lidl will help in terms of bringing units onto site for construction but there is also a good chance of a permanent arrangement with them for drop-off access. Mr Taylor spoke of a previous problem with Lidl when there had been fence damage and they had given the school £1K for planting. He asked if they will make the fence any higher but Ms S Williams said this will be a 2M standard fence.

Mr Jones asked if a third access point would cause any concern with regard to safeguarding and the headteacher stated that the gate would need to be time limited. Mrs H Williams had concerns about the back door at the Foundation end not being monitored but Ms Hewitt gave assurance that the push-bar door can only be opened from the inside.

- *Existing site photos showing where the proposed development will fit in*

Mrs H Williams asked about having to walk through the car park when there may be deliveries going on and whether modifications could be made for a clearer path. Mr Mills said that safety would be important and Ms Hewitt pointed out that children do already walk through the car park. The chair knew of arrangements at another school whereby Tesco stop deliveries at a particular time.

Ms S Williams said that the licence with Lidl had not yet been formalised but it is hoped to open up a good relationship with them.

- *Architects' plans*

Governors had the opportunity to study the paper plans and Mr Mills discussed with them how rooms are to be amended and the proposed use of various rooms. Ms S Williams confirmed that the proposal will give the school sufficient classes to meet their need and the headteacher said that it will be up to the school how they choose to organise the layout.

Mr Jones recognised that there will be 18 classes in effect and while the school grows there will be 3 empty classrooms. This will give some flexibility as the expansion will be gradual and deadlines may slip.

Mrs Miller asked if the headteacher is happy with the cookery, music and ICT rooms. Ms Hewitt said that although the rooms may need to be reduced in space or moved elsewhere within the school; those rooms will always be included. Mr Jones said that the school needs to retain its rich, diverse curriculum even if it is arranged differently.

Ms S Williams assured governors that the proposal does help the school maintain what it already has and if it was a totally new school, the same resources would not be made available.

Mrs Miller asked about the narrow corridors being accessed by the three extra classes. The headteacher recognised that the corridor could become crowded and internal decisions on moving furniture would be needed. Ms S Williams pointed out that each new classroom will have an external door as well. Mr Harvey asked about funding the cost of internal manoeuvring. Ms S Williams confirmed that the cost of the staff room will be met but there would be nothing further to fund the reorganisation of specialist spaces. There is a furniture budget of £7K per classroom but some schools choose to order equipment beyond that to fund themselves.

Mr Taylor asked if the £7K can be used as the school thinks fit but Ms S Williams said that there will need to be justification for the spend.

- *Examples of similar projects at Jesse Grey and Berry Hill showing the quality of the new modular classrooms and examples of layout of teaching spaces and meeting rooms, toilets etc.*

Ms S Williams emphasised that these are not mobile classrooms. They are manufactured off site and craned in to reduce the amount of construction needed on site. She suggested that governors take the opportunity to view the modular classrooms at other completed sites.

The headteacher asked whether the outside finish will be matched in but Mr Mills said there may be a time element to the decision on whether to have a brick or render finish.

- Retention of football pitches

Mr Mills showed where the existing football pitches are and that these will end up very close to the new buildings so further consideration is needed on how to mitigate the issue if the layout falls below the non-statutory guidance. Ms S Williams will be double checking the guidance and working with the school to get the best outcome.

Mrs H Williams asked how often all three football pitches are used. Mr Jones said that the school will need a conversation with Beeston Centurion about their use of the pitches as they potentially use two pitches and a third for training. Ms Hewitt acknowledged that the school is very lucky to have the football pitches and would not want to lose them.

- *Further issues raised*

Mrs Matz asked about the future sustainability of the new classrooms in terms of heating and efficiency. Mr Mills confirmed that they have 60 years of service life. Ms S Williams added that they are built to the latest building regulations and are well insulated with double glazing.

Mr Jones asked about the timing of the work on the staff room and this will happen by September 2014. Ms S Williams confirmed that after this meeting Mr Mills will talk to the contractors, Tomlinsons, to work with the school on a programme.

Decisions on phasing the fitting out of classrooms and using a mix of old and new furniture can be resolved internally.

Mrs Miller raised parents' concerns about the dining facility and the assembly facilities. Ms Hewitt has talked to kitchen staff about managing the dining hall through separate sittings. The headteacher pointed out that if this was a new build a dining room would not be provided and Mr Jones also reiterated that a new build would not include a hall space for a 525 school.

Mrs H Williams emphasised the need to sensitively package that message to parents.

The headteacher does have concerns that there is no way to have 525 pupils in one space and further discussion is needed on adapting and compromising to manage that situation.

On the proposal of the headteacher, seconded by the chair, governors

agreed

to adopt the proposal.

Ms S Williams confirmed that the proposal will go in before the end of the year and key decisions will be made on priorities. Mr Jones asked that he be involved in the process.

Mr Mills, Ms Williams, Ms Hewitt and Mr Harvey left the meeting at 7.10pm.

F&GP/32/13 Minutes of Last Meeting (Tuesday, 9th July, 2013)

The minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday, 9th July, 2013, having been previously circulated, were confirmed as an accurate record and were signed by the chair.

F&GP/33/13 Matters Arising

Matters Arising from Finance and General Purposes Committee

F&GP/23/13 Pupil premium

The headteacher confirmed that the action point regarding anonymising the pupil premium document had been actioned. The latest pupil premium information has not yet been circulated but will be on the school website.

In 2012/13, the school received £28,658 which is £600 per pupil premium child. April 2013 – March 2014 £38,700 will be received, £900 per child. Around £1400 per child will be received next year.

Mr Taylor asked how pupil premium will be worked out in future with regard to FSM for all. The headteacher felt that parents who do not apply for free school meals do not understand that it brings funding into the school.

Mrs Williams asked what plans there are to monitor pupil premium next year. The headteacher responded that Karen Rainford will be monitoring the use of PP funding and this would be reported in the termly HT report.

Ms Miller asked whether there is a centrally held list of FSM children which the school can access. The headteacher said that it is not easy to determine who is FSM and we were still investigating this with the LA.

F&GP/24/13 Developments to the Outdoor Environment

The headteacher updated that the Trim Trail has now been completed and gave thanks to Mrs Greenhalgh for the work she has done to facilitate this.

F&GP/26/13 Update Website

The headteacher confirmed that the website is regularly updated and plaudits are received for its content. He is open to suggestions as to what to include on the website. Mr Jones gave thanks for inputs to the governors' page which now has photos and supporting text for all.

F&GP/34/13 Finance report

Mrs Greenhalgh gave a brief update. The finance report has been circulated and all is going well. The finance officer will be visiting on 25th November, 2013 and a further report will be sent after that date.

F&GP/35/13 Policies

Lettings Policy

A revised version of the lettings policy had been circulated following work on it by Mr Jones and Mrs Greenhalgh.

Mr Jones raised the issue of Beeston Centurions and whether their use of the school is captured in the policy as there is no formal agreement or exchange of money in that arrangement.

Mr Jones has also had some feedback on the use of the dining room during school hours for parent groups and prayer groups and felt this needed further discussion.

The headteacher would like the governors' opinion as to whether it is appropriate use of the school to hold events such as MacMillan coffee mornings, prayer meetings and after school cookery.

Mrs Greenhalgh stated that any group wishing to use the school has to complete a form and this is looked at in terms of risk assessment and convenience.

The headteacher pointed out that the school does prohibit political parties and Mrs Sun questioned the reason why. The headteacher believed this was historical when hustings were held at the school and there was a risk of protests outside the school with the potential to bring the name of the school in disrepute.

As long as safeguarding is in place, the headteacher believes it is a good thing to allow community groups to use the school during the day. Mrs Williams stated that during schools hours, this should be closely monitored.

Mr Jones quoted from the policy that the school is a “community asset” and he believes exclusions should be kept to an absolute minimum. Only single political organisations should be named as an exclusion and everything else can be looked at on a case by case basis. The chair and Mrs Williams agreed with that approach.

Mr Taylor raised the issue of whether the EDL, who are not a political party, would be allowed to use the school. Mr Jones felt the wording of the policy would mean that would not happen.

Following the discussion about careful wording in the policy with regard to politics the governors

resolved

that the statements in the exclusions section of the policy were adequate to cover all eventualities.

Charging and Remissions policy

Mr Jones reported that there is more work to do on the policy and he hoped it would be ready for the next Finance and General Purposes meeting. The headteacher explained that the policy is to help children go on school trips if their individual circumstances mean they could not otherwise afford it.

F&GP/36/13 Cashless Payment Systems

The headteacher is investigating the SQUID cashless payment system which a lot of schools have adopted and is a way to pay dinner money and for trips. He feels this is the right move and will give governors a more detailed update when possible. There are a few issues to resolve to ensure this is not discriminatory against those who are not willing to use the system.

Mrs Williams asked if this would be the only way to pay and the headteacher responded that in principle it would be and that training would be offered to parents. Mr Jones asked if it is possible to run a dual system but the headteacher said the school would not be able to offer that. Mrs Greenhalgh felt that once the system is put in place, people would be able to adapt to it.

Mr Di Miceli saw the need to introduce the system to parents in a sensitive way and not at all forcibly.

The headteacher said that SQUID is County Council recommended but you do have to put a minimum of £10 on and there is a £2 incentive to do so. Money can be refunded at the end of school.

Mr Jones asked when this might be introduced and the headteacher suggested the end of the Spring term but definitely sooner than next September. It may not have chance to come back to the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting so the headteacher asked that any further comments or questions be raised with him in the meantime. Mrs Greenhalgh invited governors to meet with her to get further information.

F&GP/37/13 Dates of next meeting

It was confirmed that the next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 25th March, 2104 at 5.00pm at the school.

F&GP/38/13 Confidentiality of business

Governors considered whether anything discussed during the meeting should be deemed confidential. It was

resolved

that there was nothing to be recorded separately.

It was recorded that the chair signed the following documents: fire log book, fire drill and accident report.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm

Signed(chair) Date

MC/aa