

Resources Committee Meeting 14th September 2016

Members: John Paul Turnbull (Ch), Sarah Rogers, Helen Gill, Duncan Priestley, Marion Rucker

All present by email correspondence as meeting cancelled due to illness.

Agenda

Recap of budget process

- The school budget for the next three years has been approved as per letter dated 8th July 2016
- It is noted that the carry forward balance at the end of the 2016-17 year is beyond the 8% allowed at £15.2k, balance for 2017-18 will be in line at £11.7k
- We had a similar situation in the 2015-16 year and we were allowed to carry forward the extra balance as we need this to cover budget shortfalls in coming years
- Year three as per previous years shows low carry forward balances at £2.7k

Staffing update

Pauline

- Attended H&S training, subsequently submitted a written examination report for assessment by the course organiser. Outcome awaited.
- Attended fire warden training with DP and has prepared a new fire policy for school which she'll lead on in a staff inset on 2nd November.
- Is booking training to be event co-ordinator for school trips.

David

- Has liaised with county and Cowan's over roof. Has liaised with county and schools forum to have budget approved and ensured no claw-back after last year's surplus.

- **Cleaners**

Working under new hours of service since April. JH did have an issue with the new contract describing her job title incorrectly, which has now been rectified. Both staff continue to provide a good service in school and report being happy in their roles.

- **Teachers**

All have settled back to work well. JC, SP and KT joined DP for staff team-building INSET in September, a 10 mile fell walk near Derwent water.

Update on pupil numbers

This continues to be an area of significant concern and challenge for school management. The school has a falling role through declining birth-rate:

2016/17 = 26

2017/18 = 24

2018/19 = 23.

The school nursery reports that no children are currently on role to join school in 2017/18. Janet describes this as a unique situation. The school needs a more accurate picture of how many potential pupils live within catchment. Nursery committee (Karen & Clare) raised the question of wraparound care for pupils as a draw to the school & Nursery.

– I am approaching Nick Thomas at the Lyvennet Link to include an appeal for more information about future pupil numbers in our catchment. I intend to include a graphic of our catchment area. Additionally, I will float the possibility of morning and (or) wraparound care and appeal for feedback.

(Nursery also agreed with my suggestion of a re-name to 'Crosby Ravensworth Nursery'. We're working on a large banner to promote the school and nursery.

Latest financial overview

- Looking at the budget in detail the following points stand out
 - Overspend likely on midday supervisors possibly £400 for the full year
 - Overall employee costs in line with expectation
 - Some small elements of cost need to be moved to different categories
 - Premises costs in line with expectations
 - Subscriptions overspend but relatively small value at +£160
 - Awaiting outcome of grant request from School Trustees, helps with three year budget profile rather than essential for this year

Academisation latest

The government's position remains that it intends for all LA schools to convert to academy status by 2020. Although plans to force conversions were abandoned, the Government said it will bring forward legislation that all schools will be made to convert in cases where the local authority "can no longer viably support its remaining schools", for instance if a "critical mass" of academy schools already exist. Analysis of the revised strategy, however, suggests this will have a cumulative effect on schools – as more schools are converted, more local authorities will be taken over as a result. In effect, 100 per cent of schools will still be converted into academies by the year 2020 as planned.

In the May 'u-turn' announcement, it was noted that small, rural schools would be protected from closure and forced academisation as part of a "double lock", ensuring both local and national government are in agreement over a school's closure.

The new secretary of state for education, Justine Greening, has made no announcements to contradict this position.

I remain committed to opposing academisation, which I find not to be in the best interests of the pupils. Dialogue continues with other schools in the 'ERA' cluster group (Eden Rural Alliance) regarding future developments and the county's 'better places for learning' agenda. The diocese continue to promote their Multi Academy Trust model as a way forward. The concern is that our school would be unable to group with other non-faith MESS schools, with whom we already have a well-established shared working relationship.

Register of interests

- None

Premises work in progress

Premises work in progress

Roof

Please read attached scan of document from David Nattrass, who communicated with the Diocese's Sue Emery on her last day prior to retirement. In summary:

- The roof is water-tight. (Closely observed during recent extreme weather).
- The ceiling continues to attract condensation owing to the contractor's initial error.
- The contractor will not remedy the condensation issue on terms in-line with technical advice we've received from Cowan & Co.
- The LA have encouraged us to put in an insurance claim for making good on consequential damage to the interior following failure of the roof.
- Legal action is discouraged by the diocese and Cowan & Co owing to likelihood of success and incapacity to execute. I concur.
- We have £15,387 to spend on Formula Capital projects; should our insurance claim be denied, this can be accessed.
- Remedy of the condensation issue could be pursued through an LCVAP claim to the diocese (application required before October half term, if successful, work to commence summer 2017). If the bid is unsuccessful, concede the situation.

Fascia boards

Quotes for replacement of fascia boards to the front of the building in UPVC or similar material should be sought by the school immediately. The cost can be bundled with making good of interior following roof failure (if insurance claim fails) along with dismantlement and replacement of outdoor storage facility.

Outdoor storage facility

The shed is in a very poor state of repair. The intention (as noted above) is to replace it with a larger (around 6m x 4m), weather-proof structure over the area previously housing the septic tank. Designs are being considered and include 'log-cabin' and storage container.

AOB

Policy updates required

- Financial Delegation – no change proposed