

Minutes of the meeting of the Resources Committee of Ivydale Governing Body, held via video conference on Wednesday 7th December 2021 at 6:00pm.

Present: Lynne Gravatt (LG) Helen Ingham (HI) (**Head**)
 Peter Lilford (PL) (**Chair**) Tom Tábori (TT)
 Rosh Wijayarathna (RW)

Clerk: Ayesha Sabri (AS) – (School Business Manager)
 Nicole Galea

1	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> PL welcomed Governors to the meeting. The Clerk advised that all committee members were present and the meeting was quorate.	
2	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> PL reminded Governors to declare any interests for items on the agenda. There were no declarations were made.	
3	<u>Minutes of the last meeting – 20/10/21</u>	
3.1	Approval The draft minutes had been circulated in advance. It was RESOLVED to ratify the minutes as a true reflection of the meeting.	
3.2	Matters Arising <u>Item 8: Staff pay for self isolation</u> HI reported that Southwark subsequently issued advice that maintained schools should pay unvaccinated staff for periods of self isolation; it has been put into effect and is having an impact. The challenge is that many of the staff in question work with pupils who have an EHCP and so the school must not only pay staff salaries but are also required to provide cover for their absence. There is a system for reclaiming the cost of cover, but it has numerous caveats and a high threshold. AS reported that this issue was discussed at a recent SBM briefing; calls were made for the government to issue advice and a policy given the widespread impact the pandemic is having on schools. <u>Item 9: Asbestos Plan</u> AS reported that she had obtained a quote for the work yesterday and it is hoped that the survey will take place on 22/12/21. <u>Item 12.2: Variance included on the budget monitor</u> AS confirmed that this would be in place for the quarterly returns. There were no further matters arising.	
4	<u>Review of Finances</u> The following documents had been circulated in advance and published on Governor Hub: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft 3 year budget Plan 2022 / 2025 • Budget Monitor – Period 7 • SRMA Report • Licensed Deficit Framework – draft V13 • Licensed Deficit Framework – flowchart V4 • Licensed Deficit Template – V8 	

4.1	<p>Budget Recovery Plan Update</p> <p>HI reminded the committee that she had requested documentation to assist with the budget recovery planning for some considerable time from the Southwark Finance team. The three Licenced Deficit documents were forwarded at the end of last week with Southwark informing schools that they would be using this process in future. She and AS are currently unpicking the documentation but are concerned with the 14 working day turnaround time required given the amount of work entailed. AS reported that the Finance team has offered support in completing the spreadsheet but she will need to re-organise her work plan to give this priority.</p> <p>ESFA Report</p> <p>HI reported that the ESFA consultant carried out her investigations over the summer and submitted her report to Southwark at the end of August. Due to an oversight on the Authority's behalf, the report was not forwarded to the school until 3/12/21, with the response due on 7/1/22. Governors asked if the school has been denied the time to respond they would have reasonably expected, because of Southwark's delay. AS and HI confirmed that it has. It will be challenging given the volume of useful information contained in the report whilst facing the level of Covid management required on top of the busyness of this point in the term and the other deadlines in place. AS advised that she postponed the GDPR audit in the summer term because of the ESFA investigation and is reluctant to defer it yet again now. LG noted the frustration that once again the school has not been provided with vital information in a timely manner by Southwark and is expected to respond in an unreasonably short time.</p> <p>HI added that there is also some uncertainty in how to respond given the lack of concrete information from Southwark around their plans: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southwark has not yet published its consultation on reducing the PAN and has not responded to update requests. If the 6 weeks consultation is not completed by 31/1/22, Ivydale could continue to be 3FE by default which would impact on both the budget and the BRP. • Southwark has not confirmed the accommodation plans for September 2022 - whether the school will be completely on one site or if the option to partially occupy the Inverton site for one year is likely <p>Governors noted that the core information required for the revised BRP in line with the licenced deficit framework is available but will require time to put into Southwark's format in addition to the unknowns as discussed above. They suggested that it would be reasonable to request an extension to the deadline in the circumstances.</p> <p>LG stated that the advice has been to work on the basis of 2FE on a single site but Southwark has not confirmed whether it expects a final plan or a first draft. AS reported that some aspects of the budget will need to be re-negotiated if it is confirmed that the school is returning to one site including some contracts (catering, cleaning etc but these will not necessarily be halved), staffing costs (increase in National Insurance, Support Staff pay increase, inflation etc) which are all based on assumptions and would need to be amended in the plan. HI added that the predicted pupil numbers upon which the school's current budget plan is based would also need to be amended as the census no longer reflects this.</p> <p>Governors asked if the modelling carried out for 4FE is available and if this would be useful given the PAN reductions planned in other schools. HI stated that the 4FE model pre dates the opening of the Inverton site when Southwark confirmed that 4FE could not be realised and so is now very out of date. Southwark is in the process of reducing PANs which may impact on the intake in that year but would not address vacancies across the school. 4FE would only be a valid option now if Ivydale was to merge with another school but this is not something the LA is considering.</p>	
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The committee discussed the steps needed to gain approval for a licensed deficit, critical to which is to reach as close as possible to a balanced budget within 3 years. They noted that a red line in this would be vertical year groups. HI stated that the difficulty has been the LAs multiple versions of plans with changing goal posts. Now that it has been received, the ESFA document has the potential to be powerful and useful and they will work on this. She highlighted that it was a very fair report.

The committee noted that the report clearly shows that when benchmarked, the leadership and teaching costs at Ivydale are above average, although the school has a sensible case for why this is so.

HI advised that when she discussed staff costs with the ESFA Consultant, it was unclear whether the school would be 2 or 3FE or based on one or both sites. The Consultant did not factor in the continuation of the Children's Centre in her suggestions as it was her view that it is an unnecessary distraction for the leadership team and as it is now operating as a satellite, this may be an opportunity to consider handing over the management to the LA or another provider. However, this does not take account of the CC's benefit for both the school and the local community. HI acknowledged that the leadership structure needs to be reviewed and she had planned to do this later in the year in line with anticipated staff movements.

Governors queried whether, subject to the timing issue, the school has the necessary information to respond to the report. HI confirmed that all of the information is available; the Integrated curriculum and financial planning tool referred to in the report is a spreadsheet of teachers' PPA and contact hours, however it will be time consuming to enter it in the required format. The report refers to moving to 2FE in one building but there is now the potential offer by Southwark of having a satellite site at Inverton rather than the initially proposed temporary classrooms at Bellwood.

Governors agreed that the timeline for response should factor in a reasonable period for the committee to discuss the report. They concluded that the options are to: -

- Inform the LA that the school will aim to meet the deadline while continuing to work through the process
- School to quickly respond with the information, leaving committee discussion and amendments until after submission. LG cautioned that this option carried the risk of Southwark running with the information initially submitted without allowing the time for the school and committee to subsequently discuss and amend.
- Miss the deadline and seek a 2 week extension to allow the committee a reasonable timeframe to discuss

Governors voiced concern that the autumn term is when the committee should be discussing the draft budget for 2022 /23 rather than this report. AS responded that she had begun drafting the 2022 / 23 budget for this meeting based on 3FE at both sites and it was too late by the time of receiving the report to change it to 2FE on a single site.

The committee voiced a strong preference for option 3; they suggested that the LA be told that the current response time frame is not realistic and request a 2 week extension, allowing the time for the response to be presented to the committee for discussion and amendment. PL undertook to draft a reply to Southwark stating that the committee had been looking at 3FE / two site scenarios for this meeting and therefore could not engage with the new assumptions at such short notice.

The committee then discussed the budget proposal documents and asked how staffing / other costs could be reduced. HI stated that

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • given the decision to avoid vertically mixed classes, the savings on teaching costs are limited as it would not be possible to make the more experienced and therefore expensive teachers redundant in order to employ cheaper replacements. However, if the budget does not balance by Year 3, this may have to be considered. • The ESFA Report suggests reducing the number of TLRs, however, if there is a staff restructure, these allowances would have to be protected resulting in no saving. • HI highlighted that she has declined any personal pay progression for the last few years, a fact that she has not previously flagged. • The number of TAs are currently at a minimum. • Savings have been made in the Admin team but if the school does reduce to 1 site, this could be taken further • Premises staff have been kept at a minimum • The Pastoral Team could be reviewed, especially if there is a return to 1 site <p>The committee acknowledged that there would be some savings by returning to one site (catering / cleaning / energy) but there would be losses to projected income from lettings and the two site leadership structure would remain in place. They asked if any redundancies would still be needed and whether redundancy costs should be included. HI stated that information from Southwark would be needed for this as the LA meets the redundancy but not pension costs, which are met by the school. If the school does reduce from 3FE to 2FE, staff costs could be reduced over time with year on year redundancies in addition to some natural wastage.</p> <p>It was agreed that the committee should meet again in week commencing 17/1/22 to discuss the response to the ESFA document and BRP. It was agreed to meet on Weds 19th Jan 2022 at 6:00pm.</p>	
4.2	<p>Budget Monitor</p> <p>AS referred to the Budget Monitor for Period 7, stating that there has been little change to the report since Period 2 with the exception of the projected year end increasing to £183k. AS advised that the year end deficit may increase further still if the anticipated income, including £60k falling roll grant, is not received. This grant is allocated towards the end of the financial year to which it pertains and highlighted that there is a strong probability that Ivydale will not receive it. Governors acknowledged that there had been uncertainty around this grant when the budget was set but it had been agreed to include it.</p> <p>AS reported that the next Budget Monitor will be the Q3 report, this will contain a more realistic projected year end figure, which is likely to be £243k (£183k plus £60k).</p> <p>Governors touched upon the variances contained within the report and noted that where possible these are kept to a minimum. They agreed that there was nothing to indicate that spending is not being controlled within reasonable expectations. It was noted that the TA overspend would have been of concern had it not been for the cover requirements of the pandemic. The committee asked why the Educational Support Staff costs are over budget. AS advised that it had been hoped that a couple of staff would have been made redundant so only half of the annual salary was included but this did not happen and so the full annual costs was subsequently included. Governors asked that this information is reflected in the comments column.</p> <p>AS reported that planned spending (other than bills and salaries) will end on 12/1/22; there is no income received from Southwark in March.</p>	
5	Personnel	

	There were no items reported.	
6	<u>Health and Safety</u> There were no items reported.	
7	<u>Premises</u> There were no items reported.	
8	<u>Policies</u> Governors thanked AS and HI for providing the policies in advance with highlighted changes.	
8.1	<u>Data Policies</u> The following policies had been circulated and published on Governor Hub in advance: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCTV Policy • Data Breach Policy • Electronic Information and Communications Policy • Social Media Policy <p>TT asked if there were issues with the previous versions and were they based on recognised guidelines. AS confirmed that the Data Protection policies were Judicium model policies which had been updated. She added that the school will need to work with the outsourced IT providers regarding the Data Breach Policy (one of the policies under the umbrella); Cyber security is a new policy.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to ratify the policies as presented.</p>	
8.2	<u>Freedom of Information</u> The following policies had been circulated and published on Governor Hub in advance: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme • Information Security Policy <p>It was RESOLVED to ratify the policy as presented.</p>	
8.3	<u>Charging and Remissions</u> It was RESOLVED to ratify the policy as presented.	
15	<u>Dates of Future Meetings</u> 19/1/22 at 6:00pm 2/2/22 at 7:45am 8/3/22 at 7:45am 4/5/22 at 6:00pm 15/6/22 at 7:45am	
16	<u>Urgent Business</u> There was no further business and the meeting concluded at 7:40pm. Items of confidential business were discussed and recorded under Part 2: Confidential Items.	

Signed:.....

Date:.....

IVYDALE:– ACTIONS LOG v 20/10/21

RESOURCES 7/12/21			
ITEM	ACTION	WHOM	STATUS
4.1	Additional meeting 19/1/22 to discuss response to ESFA report and draft licenced deficit plan		

RESOURCES 20/10/21			
ITEM	ACTION	WHOM	STATUS
5	TOR to be presented to Nov FGB for ratification	Clerk	Completed
6	PP Link Governor to come from Standards Ctee	PL	Completed
7	Pay Committee to meet by 1 st week Nov	LG	Completed
9	Follow up on Asbestos Management Plan with LA	AS	
11	Suggestions on updated SDP committee priority aims to be forwarded to ctee	HI	
12.2	Monthly monitoring reports to include variance information	AS/ HI	
13	Remove CPD from work planner	Clerk	Completed