

**Minutes of the meeting of the Resources Committee of Ivydale
Governing Body, held via video conference on Thursday 30th April 2020
at 6:00pm.**

Present: Alasdair Buckle (AB) Lynne Gravatt (LG)
Helen Ingham (HI) (Head) Suzy Kirk (SK) (Chair)
Peter Lilford (PL)

Also Present: Ayesha Sabri (AS) – (School Business Manager)

Clerk: Nicole Galea

1	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> SK welcomed committee members to the first virtual meeting following the imposition of lockdown arrangements due to the coronavirus pandemic. The Clerk reported that there had been no apologies for absence received and that the meeting was quorate.	
2	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> SK reminded Governors to declare any interests for items on the agenda; no declarations were made.	
3	<u>Minutes of the previous meeting of 29/1/20</u>	
3.1	<u>Approval of the Minutes</u> The Clerk advised that the minutes of the previous meeting had been distributed with the papers for the Extra Ordinary FGB on 27/2/20. It was agreed that the minutes would be recirculated for the next meeting.	Clerk
3.2	<u>Actions Log and Matters Arising</u> <u>Item 7: SFVS</u> AB advised that the document had been reviewed and some updates had been made. He undertook to check that the final version contained all amendments before circulating it to AS, HI and SK; it could then be signed off and returned to Southwark Finance Department. It was noted that the deadline for the return of the SFVS was 31/3/20 but that there was some flexibility due to the current circumstances. It was agreed to defer the remaining actions to the next meeting.	AB SK / Clerk
4	<u>Health and Safety</u> Covid-19 HI referred Governors to her report which had been circulated in advance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only children of Key Workers and vulnerable children are attending (8am – 6pm) • Restricted areas of the Bellwood site are being used in order to target cleaning • 2 of the 3 Premises staff are shielding; the focus of the remaining Premises Assistant is to ensure that the key health and safety tasks are carried out including stocks of necessary equipment, the general site safety and usual monthly checks. 	

- The Premises Officer (Vic) is shielding but is coming in to lock up when the school is empty and is also undertaking any jobs that can be carried out remotely.
- Pupils and staff are handwashing frequently and pupils are being reminded to socially distance although for the younger children especially, this is difficult.
- Staff presence is restricted on site and a 2-3 week rota is in place; a member of the safeguarding team and a 1st Aider is on site daily
- The government has now released a set of premises related actions that must be completed before schools re-open including water checks, recommissioning of systems and a whole school deep clean. There is concern that there is a restricted number of contractors available to carry out this work but that there is limited value in booking them until a firm return data is known.
- The DfE is sending daily document and procedure update emails; there is a twice weekly bulletin from the LA.

Governors asked

How has the school's cleaning regime changed?

HI confirmed that even prior to the lockdown the cleaners provided a greater attention to detail in terms of commonly touched surfaces, door handles etc. Staff wipe keyboards, mice etc at least twice daily and at the start of the day

What is the position regarding PPE?

It is a question of personal choice, there is no advice. Some staff are wearing gloves and masks.

What is the procedure for staff return following symptoms?

The government advice for is for people to self isolate for 7 days. Approximately 20% of staff have experienced symptoms over the last 5 weeks and 2 staff members have been off for longer than 7 days as they still feel unwell. AS is tracking all cases on a spreadsheet.

How many pupils are in school?

The numbers range 6-18 on any day and have increased since the start of the summer term. Most attend for 3-4 days, only 1 child attends daily. Of these, 2 are vulnerable pupils, the remaining are children of key workers. Attempts were made to encourage more vulnerable pupils into school but parents were unwilling and considered that their children were safer at home. There is also an element of parents being unwilling to have their child identified as vulnerable, the criteria for which is – having a social worker, an EHCP, an underlying health concern or if the school considers a child vulnerable for any other reason. However, with a 2nd round of phoning about to start, it is expected that there may be more parents who will want their child to attend, even for a few days per week.

The school remained open over the Easter holidays on a reduced rota with the exception of the Bank Holidays (due to lack of need); but it will be open for the Bank Holiday on 8/5/20 .

5 Personnel Issues

HI reported that: -

- 24% of staff are shielding which may result in some staffing issues if a phased return starts before the 12 week shielding period ends
- 20% of staff have self isolated at some point during lockdown; most were in the initial period and there was also a higher level of sickness prior to the start of lockdown. Due to the lack of testing it is not known if they were Covid-19 positive. SK confirmed that Sainsbury's has an approximate 25% absence rate at present and so this would be in line.

- 2 members of staff are stranded abroad (a member of the Children’s Centre team on holiday and a Midday Supervisor / Playworker who was on maternity leave)
- All staff had a 2 week break staggered before / during / after Easter with the exception of HI / JL / RF / AS. 2 members of the admin team who work all year round were in over Easter as were 2 members of term time only staff.
- Appraisals and any staff related procedures have been put on hold as performance cannot be measured.
- Those staff who had informally indicated that they would be leaving at the end of the academic year are now staying which means that there are no issues with staff capacity. It is not anticipated that any teacher resignations will be received before the 31/5/20 cut off date.

Governors asked

Are there any significant appraisal issues that have been put on hold? HI confirmed that there were no major issues, but there are some outstanding absence management and capability cases. The advice of Southwark HR is to defer these cases until after the school has re-opened.

What are the pay arrangements for staff self isolating / shielding? The LA has confirmed that all should be on full pay. AS asked the LA if staff whose salaries are covered through parental payments (Breakfast and After School) can be furloughed; it confirmed that no staff contracted to work for the school can be furloughed. Payments to agency staff must also be honoured via the agency until the end of contracted period – the end of term.

Is there any government or LA support for the additional costs brought about by Covid-19? HI stated that the DfE has advised that there is funding available (maximum £25k per school) and so AS is keeping track of additional costs. It is not clear at present what costs would qualify but agency fees alone are around £1k per week (and the agreement cannot be ended prematurely due to the lockdown). If the school is closed these staff are not needed but would be needed if it re-opened.

How many contractors have you considered stopping? AS confirmed that they asked the cleaning contractor to furlough some staff from the end of April, if this is extended until the end of August there would be a saving of £20k. The catering company initially advised that they would furlough staff and so the cost to the school will be lower. Some modelling has been tried but without further information it is not possible to have a good indication of the savings. Generally however, the school is looking to reduce any unnecessary costs.

6 2020 / 2021 Budget Presentation

AS referred Governors to her 2019 / 2020 year end report and CFR Budget monitor which had been made available in advance and highlighted the following: -

Budget Year End 2019 / 2020

- At year end, the budget was slightly better than forecast at -£137.9k versus the projected -£156k due to slightly higher income received. However, a cash advance of £65k was needed from Southwark to cover March payroll. This will be deducted from the 2020 / 21 school block share
- Lettings income was significantly higher than forecast at £17k and school generated income was £13k rather than the £600 projected
- A grant of £9.5k for playground storage was applied for and received at year end and so has been accrued for 2020/21

- There was a reduction of £16k in EYFS block funding and PP funding was also lower than expected following the issues discussed at previous meetings relating to the repayment to the LA of the cash advance in March 2019.
- Staffing costs equate to 76.38% of the school budget and were £35k more than expected due to the recruitment of an additional teacher and technical issues with pension and NI calculations in the planning tool used at the start of the year
- Savings were made in other areas – catering costs (£25k), the Bought in Services - curriculum budget was £20k underspent, agency teacher costs (£21k), building maintenance (£9k), water and sewerage (£7k)
- Additional costs came from Bought in professional and legal services (£15k), learning resources (£16k) although this was partially offset by income received, energy bills (£4.9k) rates (but the LA has confirmed that £47k will be rebated in 2020 / 21)
- The school carried forward an in year balance of £-234k resulting in an accumulated deficit of £-372k
- The capital budget in year balance was -£45k but there were savings in the Bellwood IT hardware upgrade. The brought forward amount was £116k, leaving an overall capital balance of £76k to be carried forward.
- The Children's Centre in year balance was £22k which was £11k less than projected at Quarter 3. The overall balance is £88k due to the £78k carried forward from 2019/20.
- The overall in year school balance is -£155k and the overall balance is -£206k

Governors asked: -

If the school had not been overcharged for rates, would the in year balance have been -£108k rather than -£155? AS confirmed that this was the case.

Is there a plan for the significant capital balance (£116k) and could it be used as cash flow or to invest in areas of the school now rather than waiting until more work may be needed later at a higher cost? AS reported that the LA Finance Team has previously advised that the capital funds cannot be used for revenue purposes but undertook to check if this is still the case and forward the response to SK. She stated that there is a 5 year premises plan which the funds have been allocated for, including the replacement of CCTV and the fire alarm in the current financial year. Quotes of £25k for the CCTV and £24k for the fire alarm have been received so far.

AS

HI stated that premises maintenance and replacement of 'big ticket' items was not included in the Budget Recovery Plan but there should be some consideration that costs may need to be incurred sooner to avoid higher long term costs. Governors supported this view.

Is there a cash flow planning exercise that sits behind the budget? AS stated that they started a conversation regarding cash flow with the LA earlier this year. Last year the school borrowed £140k and was in a good position throughout the year to the end but then needed to borrow £65k. At the start of the financial year many of the school's contracts are paid and there are uncertainties around a number of areas including the costs associated with Covid-19. Once the larger costs are known the school will liaise with the LA on the Budget Recovery Plan.

Has Terry Segarty retired as planned and if there is a change in leadership within Southwark's School Improvement Team, will they take a different view to Ivydale's position? HI confirmed that TS is still in post but there have been no further budget meetings during the pandemic and the LA have taken a more relaxed position on the School Improvement SLA.

5 Year Draft Budget

AS / HI referred Governors to the 5 Year Budget Plan which had been provided in advance; the following was highlighted: -

- 2 columns are shown for 2020 / 21 (actual and after Children’s Centre recharge) as the LA has not yet released the CC budget information
- The plan shows that the Budget Recovery Plan and restructure plans have been paused, this will delay the balancing of the budget proposals previously agreed by the Governing Body
- The document shows the true in year and 2021/22 deficit as well as any savings / loss of income resulting from the lockdown on the assumption that it will impact across the summer term
- The budget assumes that there will not be a restructure, staff leaving and that some staff will continue to be paid although there will be no income to offset this
- The School Improvement Plan should drive the budget but as this plan is currently on hold, it will roll over to 2020 / 21 with no major changes proposed
- There will be some savings due to natural wastage
 - A current TA will transfer to being a School’s Direct student from September and the number of School’s Direct students will reduce from 2 to 1
- Some additional EHCPs have been approved but the funding has yet to be agreed; it may be necessary to recruit to cover these needs.
- Pupil Premium funding should increase as a result of Covid -19, as families (approximately 10 pupils) who did not previously apply but were entitled now wish to do so in order to benefit from the FSM vouchers
- It is expected that there will be variances this year due to the changing and uncertain situation and so it is suggested that these are reviewed throughout the year.

Governors asked

Does the budget assume that the school will not be fully operational until September.

HI confirmed that this is the case, it will be an unexpected bonus if ‘normality’ returns earlier.

Are there additional Covid-19 related costs? HI stated the biggest issue is the catering cost. The catering company is only providing packed lunch for the 6-8 pupils who do not bring their own; the issue is that Southwark have 2 different funding streams for meals:-

- Southwark Healthy Free School Meals (all years) – the funding is paid into school budgets and is public money that must be spent on meals for all families. Until the school is clear on the catering contract costs they do not know what amounts need to be refunded to families, but it is likely to be about £2.20 per child per week.
- Government funded Universal Free School Meals (Reception and KS1)

HI confirmed that the LA expects the budget submission but the school has used the notes column to highlight the changes brought about by Covid-19. It is anticipated that there will be some understanding that the balanced budget that the LA required for 2020 / 21 will not be achieved as significant aspects of the Budget Recovery Plan cannot be actioned due to Covid.

Governors asked

To what extent is it that the school has been explicitly told that it cannot implement aspects of the Budget Recovery Plan or that it has chosen not to? HI stated that the aspects of the plan that hinged on a reduction of staff costs now cannot be done as

- the LA has advised that redundancies should be put on hold at this time.
- Aspects based on the opportunities for ‘natural wastage’ through staff that had informally notified that they intended to resign at the end of the year are doubtful to

	<p>happen as these employees had not formally resigned and are now unlikely to do so and cannot be held to it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There had been early talks with the LA regarding the opportunity for income generation through the LA finding a service to rent space at Inverton but there has been no further discussions following lockdown. HI confirmed that she will ensure that this is not forgotten post lockdown. <p><i>Is the messaging to Southwark that the budget was prepared against the original Budget Recovery Plan and further exploration of the use of the premises and that the school is open to further discussions?</i> HI confirmed that the budget, notes and a narrative document will be submitted. She stated that the Budget Recovery Plan, as discussed and agreed by Governors in February, remains the plan but the time frame has been shifted due to Covid-19. When it is safe and reasonable to re-open the school, the aim will be to re-start the Plan; figures will need to be updated but the restructure can begin as soon as possible.</p> <p>Governors agreed that the narrative document should make it very explicit that the restrictions on the Budget Recovery Plan are not as a result of the school or Governing Body's choice but due to the impact of Covid-19, government and Southwark directives. In addition, it was noted that upon return to 'normality', the expectation is that there will be pressure to act further within a climate of greater cuts to services.</p> <p>The committee thanked AS and HI for their hard work in monitoring the budget and enabling savings to be made, for the 2020 / 21 budget preparation and the good summaries provided. It was RESOLVED to recommend that the budget be presented to the FGB on 5/5/20 for ratification.</p>	
7	<p><u>Dates of Future Meetings</u></p> <p>24/6/20 at 7:45 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review cash flow 	
8	<p><u>Urgent Business</u></p> <p>There were no further items and the meeting concluded at 7:30pm.</p>	

Signed:.....

Date:.....