

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Strategy Committee of St. Giles School Governing Body
held on Wednesday 1st May 2019 at 6.00 p.m. at the school**

Present:

Michael Swadling – Resources (Vice Chair)
Caroline Horgan – Deputy Head Teacher

Virginia Marshall – Head Teacher

Also:

Katherine Lewis (Head Teacher Designate)

Colin Milsom (Clerk)

1. Apologies and Quorum

Apologies had been received from Callton Young (Chair) Ken Morcombe and Neal Fraser. The meeting was not quorate and no formal decisions could be made but the members present discussed a range of issues and agreed certain actions.

In the absence of the chair the vice chair took the chair as the chair for the meeting.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations regarding changes to current interests and the agenda items for this meeting.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on the 15th January 2019 and matters arising

The minutes were agreed as a correct record but would be signed at the next quorate meeting. There were no matter arising that had not been completed or were not covered by the agenda.

4. Urgent Matters

Financial Reports

Four financial reports had been sent to all board members, Quarter 4, 2018/19 year end schedules, proposed CFR report and an updated three year budget based on 103 pupils. These were agreed and had been signed by the chair. For the information of the head teacher designate, there was some discussion about the current level of reserves, the reason why the funds had not been committed at the present time and the identified plans should the LA decide not to progress with a new build.

In addition to these works, some of the funds had been identified as being necessary to cover anticipated cost increases over the next three years based on the budget plan which projected a deficit situation. The budget which had been set for 2019/2020 had an in year deficit of £123,000 although this was being covered by the carry forward reserve but over time this was diminishing.

Staffing

A more pressing situation was that the current SALT provider would be leaving the Health Authority at half term and as a temporary measure, to see the school through to the end of the summer term, one of the senior speech and language staff from the HA would be providing temporary cover. The committee discussed this and it was agreed to see what additional hours the school needed and to estimate the cost of this.

Action HT

There was already an issue with the HA provision for occupational therapy services and the areas they were contracted to cover and the committee discussed the possibility of commissioning support or training one of the schools support staff to

provide some of the services identified. This could also provide some support on other communication skills.

It was noted that the anticipated number of pupils was 103 but might rise to 105 on a temporary basis prior to transfers, however 103 pupils would present some logistical problems and one area of concern was the provision of hydrotherapy and swimming sessions as there would not be the capacity to provide it at the current level if the number did reach this estimate. The schools standard number was 100. There would need to be a review of the use and different planning for access to these facilities to ensure that pupils received the appropriate physical treatments and exercise.

Q. Will there be sufficient classroom space for this increased number of pupil?

A. This has been checked and discussed with staff and it should be manageable.

5. Site feasibility study update and consideration of actions as a result of the outcome.

It was anticipated that the board would receive the result of the study in a month. Irrespective of the actual decision to either refurbish the existing building, or to move to a new site with a new build, based on the known requirements of the pupils for September 2019 there would still be a need for some minor building works to make the classrooms suitable for the expanded intake and the physical needs of the existing pupils as they moved through the school. There would also need for some class bases to be remodelled. The School Business Manager was currently obtaining quotations for this work. Work had commenced on planning of the class moved for September and a revised Building Maintenance Plan would be circulated to all board members for discussion at the next meeting.

If the decision of the LA was that the school should move to a new site then the initial expectation was that this would take at least three years to accomplish and the earliest that the school would move would be during 2021. Although the LA would be commissioning any works, there would still be a need for the school to be able to project manage some elements such as new service contracts for the building and the physical move to a new site. This would put additional pressure on current staff.

6. Forward look at current delegated Committee issues and priorities for this term

The committee looked at the current programme of areas to be covered by committee in the summer.

a. Resources Committee

No additional items were added to the work list but there was discussion about the services charged for in the out borough recharge and it was noted that there could be a difference between the charges made by St Giles for a place, and by other Croydon Special Schools to OLA's for places. The head teacher agreed to ask fellow heads at the special schools forum what their charges were and how these might be calculated. This could inform the way the school carried out a review of its service charges and charge increases in the future.

The date of the Resources meeting had been moved from the 18th July to the 16th July but was still after the full board meeting.

b. Assessment & Standards Committee

There were no other items to add to the agenda for the meeting which was due to be issued but the focus of the presentation had been agreed between the head teacher and the committee chair.

- c. **Items delegated to Committees for consideration this term** – At the present time no additional items were agreed for delegation to the two committees.

7. School Development Plan - 2018/19 and planning for 2019/20

The first document circulated at the meeting was the current staffing structure and the attention of the committee was drawn to the current vacant TLR for computing. It was felt that this should not be allocated at present. The new head teacher would be in a position to review the structure once in post and it was possible that there could be some movement in areas or responsibility. The TLR could facilitate this.

The next document was the current SDP which had been highlighted in the progress column with the work which was planned for the current term. There would be a more detailed discussion at the Assessment and Standards meeting.

A sheet outlining the possible areas for the new SDP in 2019/20 was circulated and this had 6 areas, 5 of which covered particular aspects that the head teacher thought could be areas for further development. The sixth was entitled International year which could cover national and international events that were happening and could be themes that were followed in the school such as World Book Day and the Tokyo Olympics, but also a celebration of the diversity of the cultures across Croydon and in the school. The title was amended to Year of our Community and it was agreed that this be explored further.

The final set of papers was an outline of the possible action plans to support the 2019/2020 SDP and as the Development Plan continued to be firmed up so these action plans would be amended but they would form a good basis for the initial discussions.

School Admissions – The LA was changes the admission process in that rather than a child having to be already assessed and being given an EHCP prior to admission, from September as new admission would start on an Assessment basis and during the first 6 months the EHCP would be drafted by the school and the professional support staff before it was submitted to the LA for formal approval. The rationale appeared to be that in some cases an EHCP was created for a child without due external review of the assessment and in fact the child's needs might not be appropriately met as a result of the document.

The committee members expressed concern about this as well as how a pupil might be funded in the interim, however as far as funding at the school was concerned the child would still attract the place value and the average funding top up. The allocation of a place at the school would still be based on an allocated points system but not the formal EHCP which would be completed by the school.

OfSTED and the new SDP – The new Inspection framework was changing some aspects of how a school was judged and as a result the school would have to have a clearer understanding of some aspects of its curriculum and the expected outcomes. As a result there needed to be a review of the broad schemes of work as well as the mid-term plans which staff were preparing at the present time.

Reading Audit – As part of the preparation for the new SDP in the autumn a reading audit was being carried out.

Q. Does the school have an adequate stock of appropriate materials to promote reading?

A. In general yes however there is a need to review the current stock and to update it to ensure that the materials are suitable for the current pupils, and that they can access it effectively.

Staff wellbeing – it was suggested that this might be an area that could be covered as part of the new SDP.

8. Any Other Business

Croydon College – There were still numerous issues with post school provision in the borough and at the present time Croydon college was still not in a position to offer any suitable places or provision. The interim plan appeared to be places at Coulsdon College but its location in the south of the borough was not ideal and Croydon College site offered a better and more central location for offering services that pupils could access.

School events – The committee was reminded of the two planned school events.

9. Publication of Minutes

As there were no matters of a confidential nature contained in the minutes it was agreed that the minutes could be published after they had been agreed by the chair.

10. Dates of future meetings

All meetings would commence at 6.00 p.m.

A & S – 8 May

Full Board – 10 July

Resources – 16 July

Dates for the 2019/20 academic year

Autumn 2019

Strategy – Tuesday 1st October

Resources Monday 14th October

A & S Wednesday 6th November

FGB Wednesday 4th December

Spring 2020

Strategy - Tuesday 14th January,

A & S - Wednesday 22nd January,

Resources - Tuesday 24th March,

FGB - Thursday 2nd April

Summer

Strategy - Tuesday 28th April,

A & S - Wednesday 6th May – this date was still subject to further discussion

Resources - Wednesday 8th July

FGB - Wednesday 15th July

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.05 p.m.

Agreed and approved by the governors and signed by the chair of the meeting.

Date

Chairman