



# Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School

**Minutes of a meeting of the Staffing, Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at 4pm**

Membership: Mr A. Wright (Chair)\*  
Mr T. Wilson (Head)\*  
Rev L. Jørgensen  
Mr D. Williams\*  
Dep H. Jones\*  
Ms A. Frain\*  
Ms A. Godas\*

*\* denotes attendance*

In Attendance: Ms Alex Allan (Deputy Headteacher and Head of Children's Centre)

Clerk: Mrs Maxine Zeltser (Clerk)

Mr A Wright *in the Chair*

## **BUSINESS**

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received by Rev L. Jørgensen and Ms. Theresa Shortland.

### **2. Declaration of Governors**

There were no declarations of any personal and pecuniary interests in respect of items on the agenda.

### **3. Dates of Forthcoming meetings**

It was noted that the dates in the Agenda were incorrect. The next Full Governing Body Meeting is on Wednesday 6 December 2017 at 4:00pm and the next Staffing and Finance and General Purposes Committee is on Wednesday 28 February 2018 at 4pm.

### **4. New Staff Governor**

Mr Tim Wilson welcomed Ms Angela Frain to the Governing Body as the new Staff Governor in place of Ms Hosina Khan. It was noted that her term of office will be 4 years from 18 October 2017 or whilst employed at the School.

### **5. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 May 2017 and matters arising**

#### **5.1 Minutes**

Governors were referred to the draft Minutes of this Meeting which were contained in their Meeting Pack. The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

**RESOLVED** – that the Committee agreed the minutes as an accurate record.

#### **5.2 Matters arising**

Mr Andrew Wright discussed the Action Points noted in the Minutes:

- Road Safety: Dep H Jones explained that the works to the Square had been completed at the end of September and the remaining works are to be finished in December. Mr Tim Wilson explained that his main concern is that there is no barrier on the corner. He is worried that parents may try to cross the road at the corner even though there is no

crossing there. A barrier would prevent this. It was agreed that Mr Tim Wilson would write to the Project Manager, Ms Sarah Whitehall with copies going to the Director of School, Children and Community Services and other officers in the City of London Corporation.

**ACTION POINT 1: Mr Tim Wilson to write to the Project Manager, Ms Sarah Whitehall with copies going to the Director of School, Children and Community Services and other officers in the City of London Corporation.**

- Staff Survey: Mr Tim Wilson explained that new upgraded printers had been installed on the top and middle floors so that they are more accessible to staff. Improving storage facilities is an ongoing project which will be completed over time.

- LCVAP and S106 monies: This will be discussed later in the Meeting.

- Governors Work Plan: Mr Tim Wilson explained that this is now a standing item on the Agenda for Full Governing Body meetings.

- Teaching School Update: Mr Tim Wilson explained that the Single Year Plan was being written at the moment and would be put before the Full Governing Body Meeting for approval. The full 3 year plan, which will contain information as to how the School intends to develop its profile, training and teaching secondments with a view to becoming a Teaching School, will also be presented at the Full Governing Body meeting for approval.

## **6. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT and DEVELOPMENT PLANS**

Mr Tim Wilson explained that he is in the process of writing these plans and that he would like to receive suggestions from Governors as to what areas should be included and which items should be a priority. Mr Tim Wilson explained that he believed the following areas should be a priority:

Premises – although the actions regarding the building will depend upon whether the School receives s.106 funding monies.

Budget – in particular, budgetary constraints.

Communication – this issue is raised a lot by parents. Items would include reviewing the Newsletter and Website and considering other areas for communication.

Air Quality – This item and how to improve it, is always a top priority of parents when surveyed.

### **GOVERNOR QUESTION: Is there a need to focus on the level of support given to teachers and NQTs?**

Mr Tim Wilson explained that an item could be included in the plans relating to staffing, inductions and entrance/exit interviews with staff. It was agreed that it would be very useful for governors to be involved in exit interviews with staff. Mr Tim Wilson explained that, at present, all staff who join the School complete an induction checklist which includes performance management by an experienced staff member. The checklist is reviewed at the end of the first half term to ensure that everything has been put in place. NQTs complete the LDBS training package which involves a structured training package lasting 30 weeks. All staff are provided with more than the standard training time.

Ms Alex Allan explained that she interviews all teaching staff in the Early Years Centre for an hour every half term to discuss confidentially any difficulties that they are experiencing. These could include challenging pupils or parents; safeguarding concerns or relations with other staff members. It is proposed to extend these interviews next half term to all support staff who are providing 1:1 pupil support under an EHCplan.

Ms Angela Frain, as a new member of staff, outlined the support that she had received on joining the School. The support included being allocated a mentor who explained the School lesson structure. An experienced Teaching Assistant was allocated to her class to help explain the School's systems. The mentor provided Professional Development and support and was always available to answer any questions and give feedback. In addition,

all the SLT were helpful. Ms Angela Frain confirmed that the induction was very good especially compared to other schools.

**GOVERNOR QUESTION: How can communication be improved with regard to chasing outstanding payments?**

It was felt that letters chasing outstanding payments should always attach the relevant invoice and be clear as to what the payment is for. It was accepted that payments for trips which are part of the curriculum are voluntary and that pupils cannot be prevented from attending due to non-payment.

Mr Tim Wilson explained that a new business manager, Mr Kent Hadley, has been appointed. Unfortunately, due to a prior commitment, he was unable to attend the meeting. New processes have been adopted and it is hoped that the finance team will now be more on top of outstanding payments. In addition, the School will be looking at using software to handle payments by parents. The two main providers of this software are Schoolcomms and Parentpay and their packages will be considered.

**GOVERNOR QUESTION: What are the School's financial challenges?**

Mr Tim Wilson explained that the uncertainty surrounding the receipt of s106 monies was one issue. It is also necessary to find other sources of funding. These could include the seconding of staff. The School would also like to raise separate funding to provide more tuition such as for music.

**GOVERNOR QUESTION: What is the current situation regarding air quality?**

Mr Tim Wilson explained that the air quality in the main playground is now less of an issue than that in the small playground. The works to the surrounding roads and public square have resulted in a drop in traffic flow and noise levels and the School has now dropped off the bottom of the list of schools with the worst levels of air quality. Previously, staff were unable to read stories in the Children Centre playground due to the level of noise. However, now that the traffic is further away from the School, the playground is much quieter.

## **7. UPDATED FINANCIAL PROCEDURES MANUAL**

Governors were referred to the Financial Procedures Manual which was contained in their Meeting Pack. Mr Tim Wilson confirmed that the Manual was an update and not a new document. The delegation limits had not been changed.

**RESOLVED** that the Committee approved and adopted the new Financial Procedures Manual.

## **8. BUDGET MONITORING 2017/2018**

### **8.1 To receive update on school budget.**

Mr Tim Wilson explained that the new business manager, Mr Kent Hadley, would normally talk governors through the report and so, in his absence, he will mention the headlines in the budget, which is contained in the Governor's meeting pack.

Mr Tim Wilson commented that there is a £29K overspend forecast in the budget. The School will need to raise income and one method would be more use of teacher secondments. It is anticipated that the School will need to drawdown from its reserves for the refurbishment of the entrance hall and counselling room. £10K will need to be spent on minor repairs. There will be an overspend on teaching staff costs as the School was not wholly successful in its application to the Cass Foundation for funding for the science project. It was decided to still go ahead with the project as it will benefit KS2 and staff development.

Mr Tim Wilson noted that he is anticipating several staff retirements in the next 18 months. He commented that the School is in a good position regarding staff as all the new staff members are very good. This had been confirmed in recent staff reviews and is a good position for the School to be in given that many schools are struggling to recruit.

Whilst the School has the benefit of a reserve, it is necessary to plan carefully next year's expenditure and look at ways of raising finance. Ms Alex Allan explained that her secondment to City Academy Primary School in Islington is going well. The benefits are that Ms Alex Allen is able to gain experience in helping this new school to develop its Early Years programme which can then be used in the School. It has also been shown that secondments can help with recruitment and staff retention as the opportunity to gain experience and have new challenges encourages staff to remain at the School. The policy will enable the School to be over resourced with good teachers and to recover the costs by releasing staff. Mr Tim Wilson confirmed that the core classroom staff would not be seconded.

Mr Tim Wilson explained that it is hoped that additional income of £41,000 will be available this year because the School anticipates the next instalment of the Cass Grant for our Making Technology Real project. Mr Tim Wilson has completed a written evaluation which shows that all the performance targets for the first year have been met and so it is hoped that the money will be forthcoming. If not, there will be a hole in the budget as the money has already been spent as part of the project.

Other costs include increased National Insurance and salary increases of 2% for teachers on the main pay scale and 1% for all other teaching and leadership staff. Mr Tim Wilson asked the Governors to approve these salary increases.

**RESOLVED** – It was agreed to approve salary increases of 2% for teachers on the main pay scale and 1% for all other teaching and leadership staff.

Mr Tim Wilson explained that the Children's Centre budget shows that the fees income is expected to be similar to last year. The budget forecasts an overspend of £43K but he believes that the overspend will be closer to £20K. The overspend is the risk of the Local Authority and not the School. The Local Authority are in the process of reviewing the Children's Centre provision again.

## **8.2 SJC Delegated Budget Summary to end period 5 and 8.3 To receive update on the CCFC budget to end period 5**

Governors were referred to the above budget reports which were contained in their Meeting Pack and asked if they had any comments. There were no questions on the details.

### **8.4 To receive an update on the private fund account**

Mr Tim Wilson explained that £32K is not showing in the budget for period 5 as this sum had not yet been transferred as it has been reserved for the Science project. There is £33,692 in the private fund account of this, £18K was given by Dorsett hotels for the playground programme. Donations had also been received from Helical Bar and Spitalfields Residents. The School is always looking for projects that could be financed by outside sources.

## **9. PREMISES UPDATE**

### **9.1 Correspondence between the School and Sir John Cass's Foundation over the summer holiday.**

Governors were referred to this correspondence contained in their Meeting Pack. Governors were asked to note the letter from the Sir John Cass's Foundation regarding the proposed works and the letter from the School's solicitors in response, which it is hoped the Governors are in agreement with. Mr Tim Wilson explained that the threats of an injunction were unnecessary. The School has been paying regularly into the LDBS maintenance scheme for years to cover

the cost of repairs and so, no permission from Sir John Cass's Foundation was required. No response has been received to the School's solicitors' letter.

**GOVERNOR QUESTION: How often does Mr Tim Wilson meet with Mr Kevin Everett and Mr Richard Foley of the Sir John Cass's Foundation?**

Mr Tim Wilson explained that although there are tri-partite meetings Mr Kevin Everett rarely attends. Any suggestions from Governors as to how to improve communications with the Sir John Cass's Foundation were welcomed.

**ACTION POINT 2: Mr David Williams to consider ways to improve communications with Sir John Cass's Foundation.**

Mr Tim Wilson explained that he was looking at identifying outside sources of funding. It was noted that Mr David Williams had secured a £500 contribution for the proposed roof garden.

**9.2 To receive premises report**

Governors were referred to the premises report contained in their Meeting Pack. Mr Tim Wilson highlighted the ongoing legal wrangle regarding the wall which is in a terrible state. The work to the science laboratory has just been finished.

Mr Tim Wilson explained that the LCVAP allocation has reverted to the original formulation which means that the School should receive £90K per year again. However, the full amount will not be received this year.

**9.3 Diocesan Building Survey and priority works.**

Governors were referred to these reports contained in their Meeting Pack.

Mr Tim Wilson noted that it is important to set out the priorities of works needed in the School. The most important issue is the replacement of the boiler. Mr Tim Wilson has spoken to a City Corporation surveyor who has confirmed that £100K has been allocated for the boiler replacement but the Corporation is now discussing liability and considering whether it is responsible to pay for the works. Clearly, the School cannot operate without a boiler and would not be able to afford the costs of replacement. However, the School might well be expected to contribute between £50K and £30K towards the costs.

Mr Tim Wilson explained that there are several sources of income and the School will need to identify who pays for what. For instance, there is the Corporation money for the boiler, and also funding from LCVAP and the S106 monies. He explained that it would not be good value for money to spend the LCVAP funding on the boiler replacement as LCVAP would require to be involved in the supervision of the works which would add 20/30% to the cost.

Another outstanding repair is to the canopy as it is felt that the glass is unsafe. It is thought that this might be a good project on which to spend the LCVAP funding. Other possible items of repair are to the flat roof and skylight and to the CCTV which is not working.

Mr Tim Wilson explained that the School hopes to complete the items with A and B priority in the Survey report and all the other items to D priority if the School receives the s106 monies.

Dep Henry Jones gave an update on the s106 monies. He explained that Four C Hotels, despite having done all the ground works, wish to decouple their proposed development. The City Planning Committee agreed to the decoupling proposal against advice. This will allow Four C to get on with building the hotel and complete the residential part of the development at a later stage. As part of the development, Four C are required to pay £1.6 million to the Corporation of which £460K has been allocated to the School. The developers may wish to try to delay payment of some of the monies due to the proposed delay in completing the residential part of the development. Dep Henry Jones has spoken to the Corporation's finance department and asked them to transfer the money to the School as soon as it is received. It is hoped that the money is received within one week.

### **GOVERNOR QUESTION: Is there a longer list of works required at the School?**

Mr Tim Wilson explained that there is a 10 year plan of works which includes a 3 year priority plan for classroom refurbishment and updating. The Premises Report talks about how the s106 monies should be spent. Mr Tim Wilson explained that when the money is actually received it will be necessary to look at all the proposed works and prioritise them, as the School will need to use the money wisely.

The Governors thanked Dep Henry Jones for all his work in securing the Dorsett Hotels funding and the s106 monies.

Mr Tim Wilson asked for volunteers to form a working party to set the priorities for spending the s106 monies. He explained that the Corporation might want to meet with the working party to ensure that the monies are spent on the right things. It was agreed that Dep Henry Jones and Mr Andrew Wright together with Mr Tim Wilson should form the working party, which should meet when the monies have been received.

**ACTION POINT 3: Dep Henry Jones, Mr Andrew Wright and Mr Tim Wilson to form a working party to consider how the s106 monies should be spent.**

## **10. POLICIES AND STATEMENTS**

### **10.1 Whole School Pay Policy 2017/18**

Governors were referred to the Whole School Pay Policy 2017/18 which was contained in their Meeting Pack. Mr Tim Wilson explained that the Policy is a standard LDBS policy.

**Resolution** - It was agreed to approve and adopt the Whole School Pay Policy 2017/18.

### **10.2 Pupil Premium impact statement 2017/18 and 10.3 Pupil Premium Evaluation Report**

Governors were referred to these reports contained in their Meeting Pack.

Mr Tim Wilson explained that the number of pupil premium pupils is dropping so that by 2020 the School is likely to lose half its pupil premium funding. He explained that this is a national issue which is partly due to the introduction of Universal Credit because families on this benefit are not eligible for free school meals. This is a significant issue for the School, particularly as 30% of pupil premium children have SEN and 3 or 4 of them have EHC plans. At present, these pupils do well at the School compared with the national performance of non-disadvantaged children. They achieve more than the expected standards but less than expected for the greater depth standard. These pupils receive extra support and the School is considering the issue of homework and out of school access for them. One idea is to start a homework club which will enable them to receive tuition after to school. Other proposals include the use of Inspire Maths, free access to the playcentre and homework books in which parents can put their views. The School proposes to continue to offer to all disadvantaged pupils free access to music, performing arts and sports clubs/tuition.

Governors then approved the planned pupil premium expenditure for the forthcoming year.

### **10.4 Sport Funding impact statement 2016-17 and funding proposal for 2017-18**

Governors were referred to this statement and proposal contained in their Meeting Pack.

Mr Tim Wilson explained that the new PE staff member was very good and that he is in dialogue with other schools regarding the sharing of the School's specialist PE teachers. When the other PE teacher returns to the School he will need to spend half his time teaching in the classroom in order to gain his teaching qualification.

Areas for sports premium funding include the cost of providing specialist sports teachers. At present, the funding is £14K although this should increase next year.

Governors then approved the sports funding impact statement 2016-17 and the funding proposal for 2017-18.

## **11. CATERING**

Mr Tim Wilson explained that catering at the School is going well. There was a parent session to discuss catering today and it is proposed to hold them more regularly as they are popular.

At the last Full Governing Body meeting, it was agreed not to renew the Corporation's catering contract. However, the Corporation has agreed to allow the School an option as to whether to renew. The issue is that, whilst the existing model is satisfactory, there has been a change of ownership of the company. The new owners are less hands on and the prices now charged for food are higher as there does not appear to be a discount for volume. The new catering quote from the Corporation is expected before Christmas and then the issue will be brought before either the next Full Governing Body meeting or Finance Committee meeting whichever is the sooner.

## **12. PREVIOUS AUDIT REPORT and DRAFT SFVS**

### **12.1 Draft Schools financial value standard update 2017-18**

Governors were referred to the draft update contained in their Meeting Pack. Mr Tim Wilson explained that the draft had been provided in case Governors have any comments. The final SFVS does not need to be filed until March, which is the end of the School's financial year.

### **12.2 Verbal update about proposed internal audit of income collection and 10.3 Previous internal audit report.**

Governors were referred to the previous internal audit report contained in their Meeting Pack. Mr Tim Wilson explained that the internal audit would detail income collection. The person who was supposed to draft the report in November has left the School and so the report will now not be ready until January. The last report has been provided to Governors so that they can see the issues. Most of these relate to the splitting of roles within the finance department which has now been addressed.

## **13. STAFFING**

### **13.1 Verbal Update on staffing**

Mr Tim Wilson explained that the new teachers have been good and have settled in well. The new school business manager runs a consultancy business on school finance. His appointment has been successful. He is to stay at the School at least until Christmas and possibly longer. There has been a temporary member of staff in the office for a while and it is proposed to offer them a contract.

### **13.2 Performance Pay Progression Report**

Governors were referred to this report contained in their Meeting Pack. Mr Tim Wilson explained that the report outlines how various groups have been treated in pay terms. Pay

progressions have been either one or two main scale points. Governors are asked to receive the report only, as Mr Tim Wilson has delegated authority to award the pay increases.

**14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was none.

The meeting ended at 5.30pm.

CHAIR  ..... DATE 28.2.18.