

Present: Dick Whitcutt (DW - Chair), Douglas Mitchell (DMI), Stewart Harris (SH), Tony Bothwell (TBO)

Absent: Angela Entwistle (AEN), Rachel Jarvis (RJA), Keith Wilson (KWI).

In Attendance: Richard Perry (RJP), Conor Hewitt (COH) – Minutes

Meeting Started: 16:15

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were passed on from RJA and AEN. Unfortunately, they could not attend due to work commitments. KWI was also absent and DW informed the committee that KWI had made the decision to step down in order to accept a position on the governing body of the school his children currently attend. DW expressed his thanks for Keith's valuable service and said that he would write to him to this effect - possibly raising the idea that he might visit in the future to compare and contrast governing body operation.

2. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting (16/05/2018)

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record and duly signed by the Chair.

4. Matters Arising

None to report other than already planned on the current agenda.

5. Capital Developments

The previously discussed CCTV upgrades are almost complete. The new system will capture clearer images and give LG and other select staff improved access to recorded footage via their desktops. Currently the footage can only be viewed in the Building Services Manager's office.

RJP thanked colleagues for agreeing to the purchase of the new iMac machines in the Performing Arts department.

The previously discussed ventilation works are also progressing. The overall cost has risen slightly; however, it is still within the parameters of the contingency budget. RJP stated that the work will be completed over the summer period.

RJP notified the committee that the network improvements are not progressing as expected. RJP had been trying to source a consultant to assist on the project, however, due to costs, this was not feasible. The consultancy costs quoted were in the region of £20,000, which RJP felt was excessive. RJP suggested that by simplifying the work undertaken in the shorter term, it would allow the Academy's ICT Strategy Manager, John Ekpenyong, to oversee the project. Completion of the necessary updates can then be carried out in a timely manner whilst we continue to look at the more complex issues. Mr Ekpenyong is currently in contact with a number of companies, who are still interested in pursuing the tender.

Replacing the truss in the auditorium has been more difficult than expected. Finding companies to pursue the tender has not been easy and the Network Manager has been actively searching for a third company to quote us for the replacement. The quotes received have varied considerably and more research

therefore needs to be undertaken before a final decision can be made. The new truss would ideally be installed during the upcoming summer holidays, as the Academy has a number of events in September for which we would require the auditorium to be fully operational. These includes the annual open evening. TBO noted that he has connections within the events/audio-visual industry and will seek their advice on the matter. RJP to share the specification with TBO.

6. Revenue Funding (2017/18 update and 2018 onwards)

Revenue funding is in line with RJP's previous estimations. Spending was down but the overall funding received has also reduced. This academic year has seen a rise in examination costs: a 29% increase compared to last year's fees. This is due to an increase in the number of exam papers in certain subjects. The number of exams in total has also increased year on year with an extra 15 hours of exams in 2018 compared to 2014-15. RJP raised his concerns about the price of exams within the Sixth Form because the AS exams that we currently run are being phased out and the decrease in demand nationally has led to an increase in costs. DMI noted that he believes this may change. AS levels are very important to the Academy as they allow us to gauge the levels and progress of our Year 12 students and the majority of universities still value AS results.

The provisional pupil premium figure for 2018-19 has now been confirmed and the overall income for next year has been updated accordingly. RJP is currently in the process of finalising the 3-year funding plan for the Academy; this will be circulated among colleagues shortly. RJP then shared the staffing costs document with the committee. Over the last 3 years, our staffing costs have reduced significantly and RJP & DMI are finding efficiencies, where possible. The reduction in IT and D&T staff due to changes in the curriculum has also contributed to the savings. The number of support staff at the Academy has increased, albeit the Academy will receive funding from Wandsworth for the extra SEN staff in ARC. When the overall staffing costs are brought into line with inflation, they represent a significant saving. The net salaries as a percentage of total DFE/EFA income is in line and even reducing, even though the revenue grant is continuing to decrease.

7. Staffing Matters

Staff turnover this year has been higher than expected and recruiting replacements has been a challenging yet successful experience. DMI and RJP feel that they have appointed quality teaching staff who will help the Academy to continue to maintain its high standards and outcomes. Our unqualified teachers have graduated from the School Direct programme with outstanding grades. They were previously Associate Staff members here at the Academy. DMI noted that we must continue to source staff through different avenues, including training schemes, as there is a lack of quality staff nationally in a number of subjects.

Issues have arisen with the pensions provision for staff who were working at the Academy prior to the availability of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) to Associate Staff and who chose to remain in the original scheme known as the Foundation Pension Plan (the Plan). The Plan, in common with many previous final salary schemes was found to be in "actuarial deficit" at the latest formal valuation if present rates of contribution continued. The past deficit is largely due to lower predicted investment returns and increasing life expectancy. The calculated contributions that staff would now have to pay into the scheme for future pension benefits had increased by 4.5% because of this. RJP and DW had met with fellow trustees of the pension scheme and discussed the options which might be made available to Plan members. These include transferring to the LGPS that is now used for all Associate Staff joining the Academy. Alternatively, Plan members would have the option of paying a much higher contribution each month. Trustees are going to seek advice before putting options to members. RJP has spoken to the Plan's actuaries regarding transfer calculations and the local council for guidance on likely future contribution rates in the LGPS. The pension trustees will meet again shortly to determine the outcome.

8. Trading Company

Nothing new to report

9. Policies – Staff Well-being and Attendance

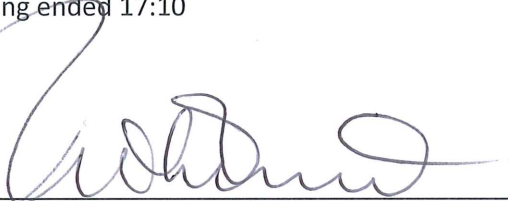
RJP asked the committee for their thoughts on the Staff Well-being and Attendance policy which had been circulated. RJP believes that the policy promotes our ethos and high standards. The Academy expects staff to have excellent punctuality and attendance as it does its students. RJP asked for comments between now and the next committee meeting.

10. Any Other Business

No other issues were raised.

Meeting ended 17:10

Signed: _____



Date: 9 Oct/2018

Richard Whitcutt

Chair of Finance & Resources Committee

