

**Moorlands Schools Federation**  
**Minutes of the Local Governing Body Meeting**  
**held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

**Present:**

Binky Clark (chair), Michael Farrier, Jo Reeves, Simon Weiss, Lou Abercrombie, Robin Nash, Clare Griffin-Felton, Caroline Cronin, Suzy Dinning

Apologies were received and accepted from:  
Ruth Balch, Jon Bentley, David Tilling

**1. Proposed staffing structure for September 2017 and supporting budget.**

CGF presented her proposal for the staffing structure for September 2017. A number of teaching staff are leaving and this opens up an opportunity to look at things afresh.

The key issue the proposed structure seeks to address is that currently leadership capacity across the Federation is very stretched the impact of which is that the executive headteacher is unable to focus on necessary strategic tasks to ensure continued school improvement.

SD presented the budgets for 2017-18 to support the proposal. They are currently based on a 'conservative best guess' scenario as the accurate figures from the EFA were not available. The budget does not show the surplus carry forward which will be in the region of £250,000 for the infant school.

SD commented that our pupil premium income is low, and a discussion was held about how we might ensure families that are eligible do register. CGF stated that she and BC had been invited to attend a pupil premium conference as our data for our disadvantaged children could be improved. The inclusion of a Diminishing Differences teacher in the juniors and TA in the infants will enable clear use of and enable us to provide evidence of the impact of pupil premium funding.

JR asked why there was a difference of staffing in this area in the proposal. CGF responded that there is already a TA in the infants fulfilling that role well, and that in the junior school the subject knowledge is key to closing gaps and that is more likely to be found in a teacher along with extra expertise.

LA asked what pupil numbers the budgets had assumed – SD said 171 for the infants, 238 for the juniors. LA went on to point out that even if the infant school were entirely full the shortfall would not be covered and asked if there was another plan to address this issue. SD responded that in the short term the shortfall could be covered from the surplus carry forward, but that the federation does need to come up with an income generation plan for the longer term, this is common in schools in the current climate of static funding and increasing costs to schools such as NI, teachers pensions and the apprenticeship levy. She shared that Trust Leaders were looking at how the Trust could benefit from the Apprentice Levy package to ensure that money is used to best effect. SD to provide governors with a list of revenue generation schemes and ballpark income made from other Trust Schools

SW asked what savings had been made within our budget already and what others are forecast. SD responded that there were savings on HR, Payroll, Photocopiers and IT

planned or already realised and that she would provide a breakdown list of these for governors.

SD informed governors that the procedure is that we approve the budget locally and it then goes to the trust audit committee for scrutiny also, and that they will be interested in our plans to cover any shortfall going forward.

CGF shared that ideally there would be an assistant head for each school, but that currently budgets mean she has had to make compromises. The SENCO provision will remain 0.5FTE but the assistant Head would take on strategic leadership of inclusion.

CGF pointed out to governors that the staffing structure proposed contained 8 classes in the junior school. There are currently 69 children in the current Y5 spread over three classes – these children would go into 2 classes.

BC said that now the schools are academies then we have the right as the admissions authority for the schools to cap the year group. We also have support from the Trust to do so. To cap the year group would mean that we were able to refuse any applications to join that cohort meaning that we are in a position to ensure that the classes would not enlarge as had happened in September 2015.

BC asked about how subject leadership would be provided in the staffing structure. CGF responded that the DHT would take on maths leadership as it is her specialism. English she was still looking at but there is scope to divide up that job into smaller chunks which could be led by our UPS teachers. We currently have 5 FTE UPS teachers and need to ensure we are getting value for money from them and that they are positively impacting on the school through their 'wider responsibilities' but that governors needed to be aware that this would be a culture change for some of those teachers.

RN asked if we needed to consult with the unions regarding the proposed structure. SD said that due to those staff leaving/asking to reduce their hours then we did not need to consult as no current member of staff will have a change to their terms and conditions that they have not requested.

CGF highlighted to governors that induction of so many new members of staff is going to be a great deal of work. BC asked if the new structure would mean we had 'enough bodies' for our site. CGF responded that it should be an improvement but that issue is a reason why she feels ideally there would be an assistant head in each school.

BC asked what impact CGF felt the new structure would have. CGF responded that it would enable her to remain strategic and to work towards a five year plan. She also felt there is a real risk of burn-out in the current leadership if there is no change. CGF said that we need to ensure there is capacity in the SLT to develop consistently good Middle Leadership and also to ensure good teaching and learning in order that the schools are able to move beyond problems such as the juniors being identified as coasting. She also warned governors that if things did not change there is a real risk of the schools losing their 'good' status in OfSTED as it is imperative that we can evidence clearly progress and outcomes despite all the new members of staff.

SW asked if the budget was for NQT's. SD responded that there was budget for a range of teachers. CGF added that 2 NQTs and 2M3 teachers have already been appointed, but that she was keen not to have too many NQTs as their induction and support have to be factored in to the capacity of the school.

RN proposed that the current Y5 cohort be capped at its current 69 and that the cap should be lowered should any pupil leave until it reaches 60. LA seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

LA proposed that CGF be given a mandate from governors to recruit to the shared structure. CC seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

SD reminded governors that posts could be withdrawn if required, that she would continue to update the budget as accurate figures became available and that she would alert the LGB should the accurate figures mean the risks of recruiting to the shared structure had significantly changed.

## **2. Recruitment of staff.**

CGF shared with governors that she was having great difficulty finding a suitable replacement for the Y5 teacher who left towards the end of term 4, and detailed the many actions she had taken to try to successfully recruit.

Parents are being understanding, but there are difficulties, for example they have not had their parents evenings this term.

Data shows that it is important that the class in question receives good teaching and CGF stated that she did not feel it was in the children's best interest to 'settle' for whoever was available.

BC asked how long CGF was comfortable with continuing the search. CGF said that she felt a decision would need to be made by the end of next week, and if no suitable teacher had been found then it would be necessary to move that year group into its classes for two classes planned for the next academic year in order to ensure that all pupils were receiving the best teaching that could be provided. She also felt that would be the right thing to do when considering the impact upon staff. Y5 will benefit from 15<sup>th</sup> May from a returning PGCE student who will be joining the Federation as a teacher in September which would provide some extra capacity to that year group.

BC offered governor support in communicating with parents if required.

## **3. Admissions Policy**

BC has drafted a policy to reflect the changes in process now the schools are academies. The criteria for how places are allocated have to remain unchanged from the LA policy as it is necessary to consult on changes to those. It is planned that Governors will initiate a consultation in Oct-Dec 2017, which is the next available opportunity.

Discussion was held about some aspects of the draft policy as the sources BC had used were conflicting in some areas.

Action: SD/CGF/SV to clarify the areas in question and finalise draft for governors to approve by email.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm