



MINUTES OF THE FEDERATION RESOURCES TRUST MEETING

Thursday 25 March 2021, 8.15am
The Gallery

Present

Emma Gautrey (Chair), Judith Gilboy, Rob Guthrie, Andrew Holt, Guy Magrath, Martyn Rhowbotham, Stuart Williams (Executive Principal).

In Attendance

John Harrison, Kelly Jackson, Sheryl Wilson (Clerk).

1. Welcome introductions and apologies for absence

Emma Gautrey welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Ian Dodd, Sam Hearth and Natalie Ray.

2. Declarations of Personal Interest and Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of personal or pecuniary interest.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 4 February 2021

The minutes were signed as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters arising from previous minutes

There were no matters arising.

5. Financial Reports

In Natalie Ray's absence, Stuart Williams presented the financial reports. The staffing projections look healthy, apart from catering. Some of the site works are currently behind, such as replacing the vinyl flooring at the top of the hellerup. The College however, is due to finish in an in-year surplus and Harington's year end has factored in recruiting a new position of Deputy Head of School. Catmose Primary has invested £23000 into an outdoor play area and the primary is oversubscribed for next year.

Trustees approved the budget for 2021/2022. There were no credit card transactions for the CEO and Emma Gautrey signed the BACS payments over £30,000.

6. ESFA Related Party Transaction

Stuart Williams advised he had chased the ESFA for a response to a related party transaction enquiry. The issue had arisen due to £37,000 being spent with R & H Technical Services in an academic year which related to a series of smaller contracts all of which were below £20,000. A response was received on 4 March 2021 and the letter was shared with trustees on the portal. Stuart Williams confirmed he had spoken with Andrew Holt and Natalie Ray about the outcome of the enquiry; essentially the ESFA are not changing their decision. Trustees agreed that any transactions relating to R & H Technical Services Ltd should go to the Resources Committee for scrutiny. Whilst it is

preferable that every transaction is taken to Resources, this may not be feasible given that R & H Technical Services Ltd have undertaken emergency call-out work.

Question: If emergency work is required, can Trustees sign off the purchase order via email?

It was agreed that this is not the best way forward.

The Operations Director has done some work on companies that are able to attend the site urgently should an emergency arise. There are a number of companies who have tendered for this work.

Question: For site works the protocol is to get three quotes, can three quotes be obtained similarly for service contract work?

Stuart Williams confirmed he has asked for this to be done, and an hourly rate has been requested. The Operations Manager can review the completed electrical work for the last few years to check if a service contract is a viable option. Trustees commented that it would probably be difficult to obtain service contracts for unknown faults and if a company doesn't know their way around the building works can take longer.

Trustees commented that the Rutland and District Schools' Federation should not be forced into using another supplier due to the relationship between a director of R & H Technical Services Ltd and a member of the senior team, if this company provides the best service and value for money. Any transaction should be open and transparent and this should be a regular agenda item for the Resources Committee.

Actions:

- The Operations Manager to look at historical electrical costings and review if a service contract would be justified.
- Any purchase orders that are not urgent relating to R & H Technical Services Ltd should be scrutinised by the Resources Committee. All orders with R & H Technical Services Ltd will be provided at the first available Resources meeting for scrutiny.
- The Operations Manager to have a number of companies on stand-by should emergency call-out work be required having compared hourly rates and value for money.
- Trustees to familiarise themselves with the Academies Financial Handbook and Related Party Transactions:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5f4754ac8fa8f5362e74ba76/Academies_Financial_Handbook_2020.pdf

7. Staffing Update

The following positions have been recruited to:

- Teacher of Science
- Premises Officer
- Teacher of Sport
- Teacher of MFL
- Teacher of English (one full time and one part time)
- Teacher of Maths

- Teacher of Humanities
- Client Services Advisor (internal appointment)

Question: What is the gender split for teaching staff?

Approximately 70% female, the profession has become increasingly dominated by females.

Question: Is the Federation looking at diversity when recruiting in the same way that other industries do?

Stuart Williams commented that when recruiting, the best candidate is offered the position.

Stuart Williams reported that a Payroll Officer had been offered the role, but had subsequently withdrawn. Trustees discussed the short-term and long-term issue of not having anyone available to do the payroll. Options included outsourcing, re-advertising the position, and training a member within the finance team. Trustees agreed to give Stuart Williams discretion to solve the issue. A discussion was also held on resilience within the finance team and the need to advertise for additional capacity, which would also assist with the College expansion project by freeing up the CFO.

8. Deputy Head of School (Harington)

John Harrison advised that at the last Resources meeting, trustees had agreed that an advert could be placed for a Deputy Head of School at Harington, however they would discuss the final sign off at this meeting having viewed the report detailing the rationale and financial impact of the appointment. The management structure at Harington has been slim, and the team leaders who support the Head of School have heavy teaching timetables. The predictions for the September 2021 intake look to be extremely strong which is reassuring from a financial point of view.

Question: Are any subjects attracting minority numbers?

John Harrison stated that the school had decided not to continue with A level music or Further Maths due to low numbers. Further Maths would be offered as an AS level course.

Question: Where are the hot spots in terms of capacity?

This is in psychology and economics. In Year 12 the amount of teaching in these subjects doubled. Other subjects at Harington benefit from the partnership with Catmose College.

Question: What is the capacity for next year?

Usually a year group would be 150, however, up to 170 students could be admitted due to the low intake in September 2020.

Question: Do you keep in touch with students who have applied to join Harington from September 2021?

Yes, admin and teaching staff are in regular communication via email. Students have also had a meeting with John Harrison.

Question: As a significant number of students have proactively engaged in joining Harington, as a result of the direct marketing, how will the school manage the numbers?
John Harrison advised that the appropriateness of the curriculum is key, and there is a delicate balance between students getting on the right course and promoting the school. The Admissions Policy states that students need to obtain higher grades in maths and sciences if they wish to continue with these subjects at A level.

Question: How does the new proposed structure compare with the management structure currently in place?

John Harrison advised that the new position will give the teaching and learning more drive, it will increase accountability and assist with decision making.

Trustees unanimously agreed to proceed with the appointment of Deputy Head of School.

9. Policies

Trustees unanimously approved the following policies:

- Federation Staff Grievance Policy
- Federation Stakeholder Complaints Policy
- Federation Staff Whistle-Blowing Policy

Question: If there is no change to a policy is there a need for this to be approved by Trustees?

Stuart Williams advised that trustees and governors have a responsibility to read and refresh themselves with the policies and this is usually done annually, unless there has been a change during the year.

10.A.O.B

Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 20 May 2021, 8.15am.