



Q: Does a forecast need to be made on what it would cost to implement the use of additional space via a classroom to ascertain whether this would be worthwhile or not and to consider how well the provision is utilised now?

A: There are more preschool children joining that are requesting places at before and after school club. Preschool and in year admissions definitely impact the numbers as parents are very keen to have the wrap around care provision in place.

Q: Is the provision at capacity?

A: There are 60 places available and most days the provision is at capacity or just below.

The issue that will impact expansion is the additional staffing required to meet the ratios which is a direct cost to the school. The provision is staffed until 6:00pm but only very few children stay until this time and while most schools do not run until 6:00pm Lostock Hall made the decision to maintain the timeframes as the purpose of the provision was to provide a service to parents and to not to make a profit.

Governors were informed that central government have released £600 million of funding across the country to ensure wrap around care provision. RP is engaging with the LA to ascertain if the school can access an element of this funding. Poynton village has been highlighted as amber in terms of preschool wrap around care provision and the school have also raised this with the Trust as a selling point of the school.

Q: How much funding would the school be potentially able to access and can it be used for capital projects?

A: The announcement of the funding is very recent and the school are engaging with the LA to ascertain what school may be able to access and what the funding could be spent on.

It was noted that last year an analysis of the income over the previous two years was provided and that this level of detail should suffice for the purposes of the governing board.

Governor Comment: Wrap around care is key to securing the attractiveness of the school from a marketing perspective.

Governors noted that RP has a meeting scheduled with Cheshire East to discuss this funding further and to put the school forward as a potential candidate for receipt of funds.

It is important to clarify that the school is assisting the LA by increasing the PAN and via in year admissions. However, the school is now at capacity and so the logic is that if the school could access some capital funding to build a



	<p>designated space for after school club this would enable expansion and free up space within school for additional growth.</p> <p>Q: Do SEND children require 1 to 1 staff support during after school club? A: EHCPs do not cover this provision and so school have to cover the cost of any additional staff where this may be required. It would be difficult to ask parents to pay additional funds cover the staffing and therefore the school take on this financial impact.</p> <p>The school will wait to find out further information regarding the additional funding and report back to governors in the summer term.</p> <p>ACTION: Add discussion of additional wrap around care provision funding to the summer term Finance and Staffing Committee meeting agenda.</p> <p>Governor Comment: The main concern is to ensure that the wrap around care provision at the school is not limited in order to allow for increase in income generation and availability of provision for all.</p> <p>All other actions were marked as complete.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>FINANCIAL MATTERS</p> <p>a) TC provided an update on the latest financial position following circulation of the management accounts and forecast to governors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>It was highlighted that the budgets set are taken to the Finance Audit and Risk (FAR) committee at the Trust for approval and the budgets set in the summer term were amended in August following pay award updates which provided more accuracy in terms of the budget position. The Trust had estimated a 5% increase for support staff however in reality the award was slightly more than 5%. Governors noted that in comparison to budget there was 95% accuracy prior to the pay award amendments.</p> <p>Overall, the School is recording a surplus of £6,800 year to date for the five months to the end of January 2024 which is £4,600 worse than the FAR approved budget.</p> <p>The school has experienced some staffing challenges and long term absences have had a negative impact on the financial position.</p> <p>In terms of the actual figures against budget to the end of January 2024 the year to date is £9,500 better than predicted due to increased income. The increased income has materialised from the teachers' pay grant and from Ofsted income. There has also been income from Cheshire East for funded places. The Early Years income is currently less than it should be however the Trust financial year differs to that of the LA and this will need to be monitored going forward to decide if any action needs to be taken.</p> <p>In terms of staff expenditure, there has been a £20,000 YTD overspend on teachers' salaries with £11,500 on teacher salaries and £8,500 on supply due to</p>	



long term absence. This is as a result of staffing changes agreed since the original budget in May, including an extra 0.6FTE teacher to cover long term sickness and unbudgeted progressions being backdated to September 2023. There has been a high level of staff illness and also some additional staff training which has required cover. Currently the cost of support staff is an additional £650 per month than was originally forecast.

There are some positive elements to expenditure including utilities where there has been a significant underspend than predicted. The LED lighting has provided increased savings over those predicted and the savings on gas expenditure have also reduced post COVID due to windows being closed. Similarly, in terms of water usage, staff and pupils are not washing hands as often as during COVID which has provided cost savings. Other expenditure streams are being considered on an individual basis such as administrative costs. The clerking costs are covered centrally by the Trust and then recharged to schools individually.

In terms of other expenditure the school is £20,000 ahead to the end of January and then there will be a £14,000 overspend for the remainder of the year.

It was noted that the position illustrated is based on all elements of expenditure being spent therefore illustrating the worst case scenario but there may be savings to be made. The detailed assessment prior to the Easter holidays will provide a clear position for the finances in terms of expenditure and forecasting.

Q: In terms of the support staff, there is an overspend of £15,000 of which some is related to the pay award - are the school due to receive a refund on any of these monies?

A: No, as this is paid on a monthly basis. At the Trust FAR Committee the monthly amount was estimated at £650. Any overspend may be due to the staffing profile at the school and allowances have been made where possible. The school are looking to cease the use of supply staff and have brokered a deal with some teaching assistants to take on cover and they will be financially recognised for any additional work.

Q: Can the school use TAs to cover classes?

A: In some situations yes, but this is only worthwhile in the short term however the school are experiencing some long term absences which is having an impact.

It was noted that staffing costs have been highlighted as an issue and these costs are being monitored closely both in school and by the Trust on a monthly basis.

Purchase request forms have been introduced and issued to staff to help manage the purchase of resources more efficiently which has improved the internal controls in place within the school. RP is monitoring this situation.

There are many unknowns with regard to the school finances in terms of staff absence and pay awards which is incomparable to other industries. It was noted



that schools cannot continue financially with the uncertainty surrounding pay awards and funding in the long term.

There are additional funds in the form of income for renting the school hall during the holiday periods to the amount of £3,000.

Q: The most significant issue appears to be the staffing costs. Can governors be assured that this is being managed centrally by HR and sensitively with the staff concerned?

A: 82% of the Trust income is spent on staff and this is framing questions that the Trust are now asking in terms of how savings can be made. All schools have been asked to work to reduced staffing costs and put together a plan to show how this will be achieved. There may be opportunities to share staff in the Trust for cover in the future. Many secondary schools currently have on roll a cover supervisor and this member of staff is the first port of call for cover where absences arise. It may be that if this was managed centrally by the Trust, this could be applicable across the primary schools as well. Creative solutions will be needed to resolve this issue.

Q: What is the reason for the high staffing costs across the Trust?

A: This is largely due to high levels of staff retention.

- b) There were no updates to receive on the current three-year budget forecasts. Governors noted that funding statements were due to be released in February but had not yet been received and a revised position would be reported on at the summer term meeting.

ACTION: Add three-year budget forecast update to the summer term agenda for the Finance and Staffing Committee.

Clerk

- c) Governors were updated on the current position of the contracts register. The school are reviewing all contracts that are currently in place to ensure best value for services to the school and any changes will be brought to governors for consideration where required.

- d) Work on the asset register is underway with all items in school currently being assessed. Governors noted that this is an ongoing process.

- e) They school risk register had been circulated prior to the meeting and work will continue on this document. Governors agreed to review the risk register and further detail at the next meeting.

ACTION: Add risk register to the next Finance and Staffing Committee meeting agenda in the summer term.

Clerk

- f) The school's critical incident plan had been updated and circulated to governors prior to the meeting. Governors confirmed receipt of the document and there were no questions raised.

- g) It was confirmed that the completion of the school resource management self-assessment checklist was underway, managed by the Trust and would be submitted in line with the deadline of 15.03.24.

An additional financial item was raised for discussion relating to the growth funding from the local authority (LA). Governors noted that last year Cheshire East were



	<p>approached regarding agreement to fund the 7th class teacher until such time as the school reached capacity at 210 pupils. Agreement was received from the LA that they would fund the £37,000 for the seventh class teacher salary and it was forecast financially that this would be received up to the point that the school reached 210 pupils. However there is now an issue with the application for growth funding as the LA are claiming that there has been a misunderstanding in relation to the amount of growth funding the school is eligible for. The LA are claiming that growth funding is only provided when a new teacher is recruited to help cover the costs until the Dedicated Schools Grant funding catches up with the pupil numbers and therefore if the school decides they can manage the pupil numbers with the existing staff in place then there are no additional teacher costs to cover.</p> <p>The usual scenario for growth fund is where a school increases on a yearly basis from reception class upwards in new primary schools such as Woodford. Lostock Hall is a unique case whereby the school applied to expand the school by one class and that the contract for that same teacher is renewed to fill this position to maintain this growth. The school have escalated this issue to Jo Prophet at the LA and are still waiting to hear back. It may be that the issue needs to be escalated higher to Steve Reading at Cheshire East who did agree to the funding in principle. However, given the uncertain financial situation currently at Cheshire East this does remain a risk for the school.</p> <p>Q: Does the school have access to the technical wording of the eligibility criteria for growth funding? A: It is a technicality relating to the wording and the school will need to continue to liaise with the LA. If the school does not qualify for criteria one of growth funding the school will definitely qualify for criteria two which is half the growth funding expected and this financial implication would need to be addressed.</p> <p>Q: At what point will the funding catch up with pupil numbers? A: There is always a 12 month lag period in funding.</p> <p>Q: Given the financial uncertainties at the LA, if they were to be declared bankrupt what would be the implications for the Trust? A: There would be very few implications for the Trust as the majority of services provided to schools are undertaken centrally. Some services are bought back however such as health and safety, safeguarding, and SEND.</p> <p><i>TC left the meeting at 5:44pm.</i></p>	
5.	<p>GDPR There were no data breaches or subject access requests to report on at this meeting.</p>	
6.	<p>PREMISES a) There were no updates on Health and Safety following completion of the recent audit. Governors noted that the report has not yet been received but that there were no actions on the previous audit and the school do not anticipate any new actions. Q: Are there any issues on the premises that need addressing?</p>	



	<p>A: There are ongoing problems with the foul drainage and blockages that occur. The school are liaising with the utilities provider on this. There is also a requirement to refurbish the school toilets.</p> <p>Q: When can the school approach the Trust about funding for the toilet refurbishment works?</p> <p>A: This will form part of the forthcoming application for SCA funding.</p> <p>Governors were informed that today the Trust has received a £2,495,000 grant from the Saalex fund which will enable Poynton High School and Disley Primary School to have new boilers installed which will mean that these works will not impact on any SCA bid funding.</p> <p>Q: Is the timeframe for any drainage works urgent?</p> <p>A: It is a health and safety issue but can be managed at present although this is not a long term solution.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>Staff training is ongoing with recent training including attendance at a SENCO conference and an Early Years conference.</p> <p>There has also been training for staff on the use of epipens, allergies and diabetes.</p> <p>ED and GH have completed safer recruitment training and BS has completed online safer recruitment training for governors.</p> <p>Training has been provided from Gary Bevin, acting CEO at the Trust, on Ofsted.</p> <p>There are two members of staff undertaking the national professional qualifications (NPQ) for teachers.</p> <p>The maths subject lead is continuing to engage with the maths hub and this training and networking is informing and driving curriculum conversations.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE: F&S</p> <p>The school development plan (SDP) had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting for review. The headteacher confirmed that the SDP was currently being amended but no formal changes were planned to be made at this time.</p> <p>In terms of updates, governors noted the following:</p> <p>Walkie talkies for within school to enable staff communication have been purchased.</p> <p>In terms of the computing curriculum there is a clear need to add an additional suite of tablets to each classroom due to the way the curriculum is becoming digitised.</p> <p>Q: Can a business case to the Trust for the purchase of additional suites of iPads be prepared?</p> <p>A: This can be done but it is important to be aware that the Trust are also under pressure in terms of finances. However this is an educational need for the school and there are only 60 iPads on site and some of the equipment is becoming obsolete.</p>	



	<p>Q: What is the cost for 120 iPads? A: A class set of 30 iPads would cost approximately £10,000.</p> <p>Q: Does the school have a strategy in place for the rolling replacement of items? A: This has been discussed at Trust level but has been placed lower down the list of priorities in recent times and is not an immediate action.</p> <p>Governors noted the degradation in the road surface at the entrance to the school and that a request to upgrade the surface will be made.</p> <p>Q: Who is responsible for managing PTA funds? A: PTA funds are held in a separate account. Currently there is £10,000 of funds in the account and £4,000-£5,000 has been given back to the school in the form of resources.</p> <p>Governors noted that the school have asked the PTA to provide new books for school.</p> <p>It was highlighted that there have been significant difficulties recruiting new members to the PTA but it would be well worth while retaining this body as it performs a very useful function for the school. A recent social was held for any new members with any interest in joining but unfortunately nobody attended. The school agreed that from a funding point of view the PTA are an important asset.</p> <p>ACTION: Compile a business case for the purchase of additional suites of iPads to be submitted to the Trust.</p> <p>The priority linked to grant funding relates to the wrap around care funding that was previously discussed earlier in this meeting. The school will need to wait to find out the outcome of any funding applications.</p> <p>The fifth priority links to complying with the outcomes of various reports including the recommendation to upgrade the fire alarm system. The school will continue to approach the Trust regarding upgrades to the fire alarm system.</p>	GH
<p>9.</p>	<p>DIRECTOR'S REPORT Governors were briefed on relevant items from the director's report including: 3.1 and 3.2.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>POLICIES The following policies had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting for review: a) Anti Bullying b) Behaviour</p> <p>The school explained that the reason these policies had been brought for review is following recently released government guidance on mobile phones in school and the policies have been amended to reflect this guidance. The rule on mobile phones in school is that pupils hand in their phones to their teachers at the start of the school day to be stored securely and these are then collected at the end of the day.</p> <p>Governors recommended approval of the above listed policies for ratification at the LGB meeting on 19.03.24.</p>	



	ACTION: Add anti bullying and behaviour policy to the LGB meeting agenda on 19.03.24.	Clerk
11.	<p>GOVERNOR MONITORING AND TRAINING</p> <p>Governors discussed training and it was noted that BS has undertaken safer recruitment training.</p> <p>The school confirmed that Helen Topliss has been contacted regarding the change to governor link contact with JH due to take over VM's subject link roles in the summer term.</p>	
12.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>a) The business case for audio enhancement had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting. Governors were informed that TC has communicated that funds would be available if the school and board decide to pursue installation of this equipment. Governors noted that it was challenging to obtain three quotes for the works and the school managed to obtain two quotes.</p> <p>Governor Comment: It is important to consider whether every class would benefit from installation of this equipment.</p> <p>Governors agreed to submit the business case to the Trust for consideration.</p> <p>ACTION: Submit the business case for classroom audio enhancement equipment to the Trust for consideration.</p>	GH
13.	<p>POINTS TO HIGHLIGHT/COMMUNICATE TO THE LGB AND TTLP</p> <p>The following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take the anti-bullying and behaviour policies to the LGB for ratification. • Business case for audio enhancement equipment to be submitted to the Trust by the school. • Compile a business case for submission to the Trust for purchase of additional suites of iPads. • It was noted that the school would include the provision of additional iPads within the SDP. It was highlighted that it would be important to have funds available for a rolling replacement of technology equipment and to ensure provision within the budget for this going forward and that this should be raised with the Trust. 	
14.	<p>IMPACT OF THE MEETING</p> <p>Governors help to move this go forward in the following ways during this meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors reviewed and recommended for approval changes to policies. • The wrap around care provision at the school was discussed with governors raising the benefits of expansion and how this could be incorporated. An action was taken to undertake further due diligence on the eligibility for recently released central government funding for wrap around care provision to be reviewed at the summer term meeting. • Governors reviewed the financial position of the school and challenged the additional staffing costs which are having an impact on school budget. • Governors monitored health and safety issues receiving an update on key items. • Governors challenged the financial planning for rolling replacement of IT equipment and an action was taken to raise this with the Trust. 	
15.	<p>DATES OF NEXT MEETING:</p> <p>The date of the next Finance and Staffing meeting was confirmed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 18th June 2024, 5:00pm. 	



	<p>ACTION: Send an invite out for the summer term meeting. BSL issued his advanced apologies for the LGB meeting and it was agreed that VM, as vice chair, would chair this meeting in his absence.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
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The meeting moved to Part 2.

.....Chair

.....Date