

**The Viridis Schools Federation of Orchard, Southwold and Hoxton Garden Schools**

**Resources Governing Body Sub-committee  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

**On Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 at 4.30pm**

**Committee Attendees**

Sara Walsingham (SW)  
Laura Theobald (LT)  
Giuseppa Colella-Mare (GCM)  
Clerk: Sandra Rodrigues

James Gowland (JG)  
Hanna Lownsborough (HL)  
Rachel Davie (RD)

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**1. Apologies/Consent for Absence**

Laura Theobald not present.

**2. Governing Body Organisation**

Sara Walsingham nominated and elected Chair  
Hannah Lownsborough nominated and elected Vice Chair

All attendees in agreement.

**a. Membership**

No changes have been made or noted.

**b. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda & Register of pecuniary interests for 2020/2021**

(SW) noted that she has been stated as a 'Co-opted' Governor and this should be changed to 'Associated Governor' **(RD) to amend.**

**c. Acknowledgement of TOR**

No changes have been made or noted.

**d. Code of Conduct**

No changes have been made or noted.

**e. Governing Body Annual Calendar 2022-2023**

Confirmed No changes.

**3. Agreements of the minutes from the last meeting**

All in agreement.

#### 4. 1/2 Year Budget Review & Forecast, Current Status

##### 1<sup>st</sup> page Income

(GCM) No changes to report to the delegated funds received from the LA currently at 68% for the first half of the year. This is because the first payment given in April includes three months in advance, the final payment will be received in January.

SEN/PPG - These funds are subject to change during the year according to PPG students on each Census and how many children are on the SEN register. A quarter of the funds received so far so on track for now.

(GCM) confirmed that Hackney Education have now appointed a new member of staff to track the SEN funding and its accuracy.

- PPG will be recalculated after the recent October pupil census. Then in January and again in May following each Census.
- 35% Other Government Grant - pay received for training teachers.
- Other grants and payments, some funds were allocated to the Erasmus project that the MFL team are leading and some have been received for a trainee apprentice via an ITT provider.

(RD) confirmed that one apprentice took a different route for the Early Years apprenticeship through an external training provider.

- Income from facilities at stands at 115% - high for this stage of the budget. This is due to more parents paying top up (above 15 hours) for children to join our nurseries. Bank interests have been raised when compared to previous years, this is due to the current climate and economic situation where inflation has risen. This means that we are receiving around £1.5k interest monthly into our bank account. Giuseppa has calculated approximately £15K by the end of the year due to interest.
- Catering, is slightly down as no funds are received during the end of July and August however there is also a drop in children taking meals. Giuseppa is analysing the data in order to establish if there is trend of decline.
- Other income: Trips are lower than expected due to funds being collected in the previous year – this will even when collecting money for summer trips.
- Donations: These are collected through payments made from the sale of all photos bought by the children. Donations collected for Red Nose Day / Jeans Day/ Winter Fair, etc.
- Sports Grant & PPG/UFSM: 98% initial budget received however the Government are likely to claw back some of the advance funds given towards Lead Tutoring as Giuseppa had to submit a yearly return on how much the school has used.

(JG) Asked why would this be clawed back

(GCM) stated that the Government through the annual pupil census do their calculations and either claw it back or not depending on their findings.

(RD) Due to the Covid recovery, the government continue to subsidise however, the National Tutoring Programme has certain conditional requirements. The Viridis Schools are actively engaging access of the tutoring through our Homework clubs and evaluate outcomes, the payment to tutors will be slightly higher in 2022/23 and the year after in order to reward staff adequately. This is to start in January and will run for two terms.

Shift in income forecast of £50k more than the initial Budget due to bank interest and DFE extra funding.

(SW) asked if the schools had received 'The Supplementary Schools Grant' (cost of living grant/ N.I. uplift in costs) that should have been given in April of approximately £230K.

(GCM) confirmed that no such supplementary grant had been given nor was she aware of it being forecasted to arrive. GCM advised she would need to investigate this and SW would provide GCM with the relevant link. **GCM to enquire with Hackney Education.**

(SW) mentioned that she would have expected to see at least 300K allocated to the budget (GCM) confirmed she had not received such funds.

(SW) asked if what is received in IO1 has been reconciled to the Budget Statement. GCM confirmed yes and no variants between April to May.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> page Expenditure

(GCM) confirmed the same general expenditures:

- 47% Teaching
- 55% Agency
- 47% TA
- 49% Site Managers
- 48% Admin

(GCM) explained there are slight variant in the Teaching Assistants having done overtime. As long as staffing continues to be steady up to end of March, then there should not be any major changes under staffing expenditure.

E07: 50% Midday Support

E08: 50% DBS – staff welfare

E09: 50% CPD

E23: Insurance expense is already known and therefore no change

(SW) asked if support staff have been given their "pay award". GCM confirmed that she is aware of a lump sum to be allocated however as yet no information has been received with regards to this. Apparently the four Unions who are still in discussion; two of which agreed to a pay award and the other two have not. **(GCM to advise if any information is received at a later stage).**

(SW) asked if GCM has built this into the budget which GCM confirmed it has been.

- Building and Maintenance budgets are mostly spent at this stage. Giuseppa confirmed the major projects were carried out during the summer therefore, only small jobs are to be completed between now and March 2023.
- No changes to Gardening and the Cleaning contract.
- Energy/ Rates are set costs

(JG) asked if there were any major variants with respect to Energy rising costs.

(GCM) confirmed she had budgeted £60K more than last year, forecasting the energy increase costs. So far only 11% of the costs have been paid in these six months, partially as the suppliers are slow in sending their invoices. Giuseppa confirmed that due to Hackney Education holding the umbrella account for the Viridis Schools they have negotiated a good rate and an agreed increase on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022 with the energy supplier which will not see huge increase in this budget ma. Next year is unknown at this stage.

(RD) confirmed that GCM along with the EHT carried out a breakdown of the costing and analysis over the past 12 months and going forward over the next 12 months and with the cap negotiated by Hackney the school budget in this respect should be stable. Another analysis will be carried out in February 2023 to see the performance.

- Curriculum: 73% of the budget is committed or spent.
- ICT: 81% of the budget is committed or spent. GCM announced that all the leases on computers, iPads, chrome books and photocopies have now been paid and the schools are lease free.
- One item to highlight E26/E27 at 59% & 76% which relate to supply costs for teacher supply and support staff remain high.

(RD) added that a number of children with high needs, who are either in process of applying for Educational Health Care Plans or already have one, mean 1:1 support is needed. Overall the recruitment of calibre Teaching Assistants remains a recruitment challenge.

(GCM) E30: set aside £430K to be moved across to Capital at the end of the year if applicable. Relating to the refurbishment of the Caretaker's House at Hoxton Garden.

At this stage a carry forward in the budget of £607,062 is a prediction. GCM noted that the second column shows a figure of £905K which is committed expenditure, however this may fluctuate and may come back into the carried forward figure.

(JG) asked for a reminder of the carry forward figure for last financial year.

(GCM) noted that the year before last there were funds of £1.5 million carried forward and £1.2 million last year was carried forward. To break it down the carry forward represented £800K plus £400K which was ear marked to be spent for the house, and this did not happen as we need to follow Hackney procurement procedures and this are very long. The hope is now to be able to refurbish the house this financial year.

#### Page 2 Capital

(GCM) confirmed that actually Capital funds for the three schools was very little at £27,316 for the three schools.

Actual capital expenditure figure is £32K plus £24K on IT - iPads & computers for communal areas with in the schools, 7 new computers per school.

(HL) advised that it was more than likely that teachers will take strike action and questioned what financial impact this would have on the school's budget if any.

(GCM) confirmed that it would not affect the budget as those who strike do not get paid.

(RD) confirmed that teachers on strike cannot be covered by agency staff and where needed partial school closures may need to take place.

### **5. Staffing Update (including risks to recruitment and retention)**

(RD) discussed the comparison across all three schools of children on roll noted that staffing is stable with no major differences to note.

(SW) asked if there was a pattern with Southwold and Hoxton pupil vacancies, to which RD confirmed that there is stability year on year but both schools remain under roll.

(RD) also noted that no resignations in the first term other than one teacher at Orchard who left after a short period of sick leave.

(JG) asked if the staff relocating are staying in the profession.

(RD) confirmed that they were staying in the profession but that the rising costs in London are pushing people to move. Noted that Apprentice teachers have dropped in the last two years, due to the new Early Career Teacher framework which is now over two years. The schools have to ensure they have leader capacity to develop the Early Carer Teachers as well as the Apprentice Teachers without over stretching the teacher profile. Therefore balancing the number of those being recruited.

The current risks/priorities are:

- Ensuring effective operation leadership with enough capacity to operate and facilitate excellent outcomes for children. This is a consistent focus in terms of the number and quality of leaders. This is the same for DHT and AHT who are recruited and developed over time.
- ECT Level 1 and Level 2, for the first time as well as apprentice teachers and being mindful of the management of these.
- Teacher workload ensuring efficiency and the impact of pupil learning.
- The public profile of the Viridis in terms of communication and the induction of new members of staff.

## 6. Pay Committee Performance Management Update

(JG) confirmed the meeting held with (HL), (RD) and Hilary discussed the objectives set last year and compared with progress performance information the outcome continued to be exceptional for the EHT and the Headteacher's contributions.

EHT targets and objectives for the new school year are regarding:

- Performance KS1 & KS2
- Teaching profile
- Succession

Evidence presented and the reward update for EHT and Headteachers.

(JG) confirmed that the pay committee recommendations were all agreed and these were accepted.

## 7. Health & Safety

### a. Health and Safety Policy

The H&S Policy as a whole is the same and only a paragraph has been added regarding "COVID" (page 14) 3.17 Infection Control.

(JG) asked if The Viridis Schools were to offer Polio vaccines up to age 5

(RD) confirmed that according to news reports this maybe a possibility however this would be driven nationally and instructed via the NHS as yet no information has been sent to schools.

**b. Health and Safety Action Plan from audits**

(RD) noted to Governors to be aware that there is an action plan following a Health & Safety audit which is undertaken every year, and the number of items to address are minimal actions.

**c. GDPR**

(GCM) confirmed changes with GDPR and the Audit and data protection ensuring that the schools meet the compliance levels. The majority of the audit is green with a few orange areas, the finance is looking into to close the gaps and training has been arranged for SR who will take this area on.

(HL) asked if the orange areas was due to a lack of understanding from parents regarding permission of information or that these poor areas are due to limited knowledge and the risks are known.

(RD) confirmed that on the admission forms parents are asked to give permission for items with a tick box, however the audit would require more information as it does not split the information in the same way. This is an assessed risk and balanced against amenability and co-ordination. There is no breach of the GDPR laws within the current structure.

**8. Premises Update**

**a. Risks and long term planning**

See below

**b. Discussion façade works**

The façade works at Hoxton Garden is now complete. Orchard are likely to start in November. GCM and RD had a meeting where timing has been disputed. It has been set that the expectation of what façade works carried out, the requirement of minimal disruption and encouragement from the local authority to agree to compromise. A site visit is planned for 07/11/22 and a meeting planned for 8/11/22. RD confirmed that she has raised her concerns with Hackney Council.

(HL) questioned if the contractors were experienced in their field and RD confirmed that the consultants were the same people who worked at Hoxton Garden. RD also confirmed that Southwold would follow Orchard and Governors will be updated in time. The contractors are appointed by the Local Authority directly.

### **c. Hoxton Garden caretaker house**

(GCM) confirmed that small steps are taking place. There have been a number of mitigating circumstances that have held up the refurbishment of the house from Hackney Procurement Department to the after effect of Brexit. The three quotes were submitted to Hackney and the verdict is still pending. Thereafter a Consultant, Project Manager and Surveyor consultant will need to be appointed before anything can happen.

(RD) confirmed that length of time, challenges faced and delays in action points have been raised with the senior team at Hackney.

### **d. Library update**

(RD) confirmed that the Library has been budgeted Hoxton has commenced and ORC to follow.

## **9. Other Policies**

(RD) confirmed this is the annual process, noted that no changes to the policy content other than updating key names affecting staffing changes. These have been previously approved and Governors to agree.

- Procurement Policy
- Code of Practice and Scheme of Delegation
- Finance Procedures

(SW) asked if the sign off limits were sufficient for EHT as they haven't been changed in the last few years and does the level work for the schools.

(GCM) confirmed no changes and suggested leaving the levels the same as these were set by the Resources Committee and Hackney Education's Manual levels are slightly lower. Confirmed that £50K level is sufficient for the majority of the works needed at any time. Anything above would be brought to the Governors.

### **All Governors agreed**

- Pay Policy update

(RD) confirmed it is a statutory requirement for the pay policy to be updated annually. Pay awards decision and confirmation is currently with Parliament and due out 14/11/22. There are recommendations to increase teachers' salaries by a minimum of 5%. When the pay award is approved GCM will be informed this will applied to teacher's salaries.

A few minimal changes have been made to the Hackney Pay Policy out of the statutory school teacher recommendation document. This is related to the Threshold level (moving from main to upper pay scale) where less documentation is required although the evidence presented through two years still needs to be robust otherwise no further changes to the pay policy. Once the final policy has been confirmed this will be shared in the next Full Governing Body meeting

## 10. Any Other Business

### New iPads Estimate Comparison October 2022

(RD) and (GCM) presented document to the Governors and confirmed that preference of supplier would be Academia as they have supplied items in the past, they are reasonably priced and delivery of goods and service is good. The new company KRCS Group would require a managed service subscription which would conflict with the current managing of systems. **Governors all in agreement.**

### Catering Tender October 2022

Catering contract is out for tender next week. This has come about due to the expiration of the current contract due on 31/12/2022 and to concerns for the leadership and management within the incumbent company and the quality of service significantly not good. An independent person is currently evaluating this in order to make a robust decision.

## 11. Glossary of Common Terms

No additions

Meeting ended at 5.45pm