

Batley Multi Academy Trust
Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and Resources Sub-Committee
held at School on Thursday 24 November 2016
Part A

The meeting had been postponed from 10 November because of unavoidable last minute apologies. Sam Vickers and Ellen Loughhead had met with Wendy Beasley and Ann McCall as originally scheduled and sent apologies for this meeting.

Present: Maurice Cook, Ann McCall, Wendy Beasley, Jeremy Townend, Pam Pickles.

In Attendance: Julie Haigh, Sally Cook

Apologies: Sam Vickers, Ellen Loughhead

Maurice was appointed as Chair of the Sub-Committee for this academic year.

1. October Management Accounts

Wendy presented the October Management Accounts to the Committee, reminding them that we are only two months into the year. Income is slightly higher than expected and expenditure slightly lower. Forecasts are in and no problems are apparent and although it is early in the year, the explanations demonstrate that we are fully monitoring the situation.

At present it appears that we will actually be in surplus, although a deficit had been planned for. The expenditure figure for books is high at present because of new specifications, but as part of educational supplies, the spend will be acceptable.

Wendy showed the Committee an example of the UBHS Governors' Report. Wendy and Jayne Shaw had done some work together developing reports and it was agreed that an Income and Expenditure report with an identical format would be used for both schools.

The Committee considered balance sheets for Upper Batley and Batley Girls'. Looking at consolidating the accounts, a summary sheet was distributed, showing a consolidated report with regards to the MAT position. At present we are approximately £12,000 better than anticipated within the MAT as a whole.

2. 2016/2017 Budgets

Budgets are set in June. Batley Girls' shows an in-year deficit over five years but it was pointed out that the amounts of funding cannot be accurately estimated and also that we have reserves. Upper Batley shows an in-year surplus this year because of last year's higher student numbers but later year budgets will depend on future numbers.

3. Risk Management

Following some discussion, it was agreed that the main risks are the same for both schools and the Trust but the way they are addressed and the amount of risk may be different.

The Committee discussed the handout circulated by Wendy. The first two pages are the current risk register for the ten highest risks. The register is currently for Batley Girls' although it is hoped it can be used for the MAT.

National Funding was discussed in the context of the risks considered. It was agreed that it would become complicated if there were three different registers and would be easier to

address if smaller. A third page had been produced to show how it was proposed to address this, with three columns for both academies and the MAT on one page. The Committee considered the format of having the MAT broken down into the academies and then the Trustees to decide the risks to the MAT.

The Committee were satisfied with the risk descriptions and controls and agreed that the columns for the two academies needed to be completed as quickly as possible and then passed back to the Trustees. Members of the Committee noted that it was important to remain proactive in considering the register.

Action Point: The columns need updating and a small Sub-Committee from each LGB should take on the task of reviewing it, looking at the rating score but not the content, in time for the Trustees' next meeting in February.

4. Staffing Structure

The staffing structure moving forward was discussed. The Minute and supporting documentation for this Item are confidential and therefore included in Part B of these Minutes.

5. Information and Discussion Points

Wendy circulated to the committee various documents for noting and discussion.

- **Academies Financial Handbook** - There are changes every year within the Academies Financial Handbook around Governance and Trustees need to be familiar with them to ensure we are fully compliant. Updates were circulated with the complete document being available on request from Wendy.
- **Letter from EFA** - A Letter to the Accounting Officer had been received from the EFA in October and was circulated to highlight some compliance issues.
- **Internal Audit programme** - We currently have internal and external auditors in school. The internal audit is usually held every term but the committee agreed that this was not necessary as a comprehensive external audit has just taken place.
- **Circulation of Management Accounts** - The committee asked for the circulation of management accounts on a monthly basis.
- **Finance Policy** - In accordance with Auditors' requirements, line 14.4 is revised relating to retaining records in line with statutory guidance. **IT WAS AGREED** to approve the policy.

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Part B - Confidential

4. Staffing Structure

At present Batley Girls' is spending more than is typical on Associate staff. Ann and Julie have been working on the structure for the past year, looking at benchmarking and how the needs of the school and student support have changed over the years. Teaching staff spend in the light of curriculum changes, for example more Ebacc and fewer Vocational teachers, will be needed in the future. A paper explaining the rationale was circulated and recent external appointments within the Admin team were discussed.

The implementation of the shadow structure is gradual and does not constitute a re-structure; rather opportunities will be used to appoint to the new structure. The farm is now a community farm but is not lost to the school.

Income will become tighter over the next five years so staffing costs must be slimmed down without losing quality, considering where vacant roles become redundant and where expansion is needed, eg Finance and HR.

SEN will move to a steeper structure which in some instances will cost more initially but lead to a reduction in spending in the long term.

A curriculum review was begun two years ago around Associate Staff. The Wellbeing Centre gives a high level of emotional support and this means that the role of the mentor will need to become more academic. This also links to Alternative Provision with investment in Maths and English.

An A3 spreadsheet was circulated showing comparisons between current and shadow costs. Since the start of the shadow structure last year total savings of nearly £80,000 in teaching costs would be achievable and there has already been approximately £20,000 savings in teaching staff costs.

The Leadership model would re-structure to add an extended layer which also creates a succession and progression opportunity.

At the moment the staffing structure meets our current needs for Ebacc, but should more stringent Ebacc requirements be implemented this would have to be reviewed.

Since last year £81,000 savings have already been made in Associate staff costs and over £200,000 is achievable. This would have a significant impact on the predicted in-year deficits.